

**The Groundwater Pollution of
Korneuburg, Austria**

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**Its issue life-cycle in the public discourse
and collaboration and confrontation strategies
of actors**

By

Nicolas Bauer
Masters of Science in Corporate Environmental Management
Jyväskylä University

ABSTRACT

Author: Nicolas Caspar Bauer	
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<p>Abstract: This thesis is a case study about the groundwater contamination of Korneuburg, Austria. The company Kwizda was responsible for pesticides leaking into the groundwater. The contamination was kept quiet with the help of local authorities and would have never come to light if not for the diligent efforts of affected residents. Their collaboration with environmental activists and a journalist led to the uncovering of the incident, eventually leading to remediation measures and lawsuits. While public attention to the issue was high, the authorities approved a controversial remediation measure that would lead to further pollution.</p> <p>With a particular reference to environmental and social issues, this thesis sought to uncover the key events and stakeholders that contributed to the development of the issue. It investigated the issue using an issue life-cycle approach. Two research methods were applied. Firstly, online newspaper articles were examined through a quantitative media-analysis, uncovering the issue's development as a mediatized phenomenon. Secondly, qualitative interviews with six major stakeholders of the issue were conducted, shining light on the stakeholders' influence strategies. The incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative research led to a greater understanding of the impact of the various strategies used during the issue and their influence on the issue life-cycle.</p> <p>Factors that contribute to the increase of issue salience, after a period of low salience, have not yet been conceptualized in the literature. This case study strongly indicates that framing an environmental issue as a social one is crucial for creating and sustaining high salience. Two theories regarding stakeholder influence strategy selection were examined, and their applicability to this specific environmental issue was challenged. Several factors were found to be crucial for the strategy selection and the issue's development, including: transparency and its importance for reaching justice; the role of the media and social networks in disseminating information to all stakeholders, and the key role of a whistleblower.</p>	
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Location: Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics	

Author's address Nicolas Caspar Bauer
Corporate Environmental Management
School of Business and Economics
University of Jyväskylä
nicolas.bauer@posteo.de

Supervisors Marjo Siltaoja, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher
Corporate Environmental Management
School of Business and Economics
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

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1 INTRODUCTION

On the 13th of September, 2012 the Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Global 2000¹ held a press conference where they informed the public about what would become Austria's largest groundwater contamination. The company responsible for the contamination had polluted the ground water of Korneuburg for several years before the issue was brought to the public sphere. In Austria's recent past, several environmental incidents have slipped under the radar and many believe those responsible have not been properly brought to justice. Civil rights activists have been curtailed on many occasions, and there are often many open questions left regarding such cases, such as in the groundwater contamination scandal of Korneuburg. Particularly poignant in the Korneuburg case are unanswered questions, unordinary occurrences and stand alone facts that lack congruency and clarity.

Activists not only played a major role in uncovering the issue and bringing it to the public, but they also found ways to create instant pressure on the company and the responsible public authorities leading to remediation measures. These activists were met with numerous challenges in their efforts to stop further pollution ordered by public authorities, generate greater transparency, and access justice. A closer look at the case of Korneuburg reveals not only the plight of local activists fighting the unjust behaviour of a private corporation and winning, but also the strategies different actors used in order to achieve their goals. In many regards, the case of Korneuburg sets an example of a successful case, in that the actor responsible for the pollution has been charged and is now covering the costs of the remediation.

The case of Korneuburg will be studied in this thesis as an *issue*, as understood in business and management literature. Generally, issues have been studied within a variety of fields and business and management literature has focused predominantly on strategies from firms' perspectives on how to 'handle' an issue. Typically, the literature made a distinction between strategic and public issues. In more recent years, a stakeholder approach has been repeatedly added to the assessment of issues. Moreover, strategic management literature has contributed the discourse of issue salience, which quickly became recognized as a central driver of firm responsiveness (Bundy et al., 2013). Influence strategies of stakeholders are closely connected to the development of

¹ All important actors and terms are described in ANNEX 3.

an issue. While the influence strategies of firms have been studied in great detail, those of stakeholders have not. Few attempts have been made to conceptualize the influence strategy selection of stakeholders, the most notable being those by Frooman (1999) and Hendry (2005). These models were not designed for specific issues. New findings suggest that a firm is not always the centre of an issue but rather one of many stakeholders (Frooman, 2010). Therefore this thesis applies these models to the stakeholders of the issue of Korneuburg.

This thesis' use of an issue life-cycle approach to analyse the contamination of Korneuburg provides a framework for the development of the issue, mapping the different stages through which it developed. The research contributes to other studies conducted on environmental issues by using a life-cycle approach to study a narrow topic; thus far life-cycle approaches have been limited to broader environmental issues, such as global warming.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods will be applied to this case study; this approach is unique as most environmental issue life-cycle assessments are conducted using solely one of these two methods. First, an in-depth media analysis is applied, attempting to gain insight into the development of this issue in time, as well as to create understanding of the public opinion. Second, interviews with stakeholders from all sides of the issue have been conducted in order to: assess valuable information which may be unobtainable through publicly available data; learn about the actors' role in the development of the issues; and subsequently create knowledge from behind the scenes on the confrontation and collaboration strategies actors used to reach their goals. The incorporation of qualitative research in the form of interviews is unique to a study of this kind, and in doing so, the author seeks to reach greater depth and accuracy in the results. Specifically, the interview analysis will complement the media analysis by providing additional knowledge on key stakeholders and their behaviour before and after key events.

Within the study, influence strategies of stakeholders will be analysed. Furthermore, the ways in which environmental issues are framed by stakeholders will be assessed and how this, in turn, influences the salience of an issue. In sum, this thesis aims to create in depth knowledge on the development of the contamination of Korneuburg as a social and environmental issue and mediatized phenomenon. It also aims to generate further understanding of stakeholder influence strategies.

1.1 Motivation for the research

The original motivation for my research was to write a thesis based on an environmental incident. During my Master's degree, a local environmental incident greatly impacted Finnish society as well as my course content and student life in Finland: toxic materials, such as Uranium and Nickel, leaked from a gypsum pond of the Finnish Talvivaara Mining Company plc into the surrounding area leading to "Finland's biggest chemical catastrophe in history" (Fitzgerald, 2012). This incident is one of many environmental catastrophes caused by a private company in which the general public played a major role in pressuring the company to take responsibility to clean up the mess that they created. In other events, such as the Bhopal disaster in India (when a chemical plant blew up 1984, killing 8000 people), local activism was integral to the development and on-going struggle towards the resolution of the issue.

After learning about these issues, I became inspired to dedicate my research to investigating a similar environmental contamination incident. A Google search of recent incidents in German or English speaking countries, in order to decrease the language barrier for in-depth analysis, was conducted and subsequently produced the case of Korneuburg, Austria.

What specifically drew me to the case in Korneuburg was the mass mobilisation of residents that the environmental incident drew, resulting in a successful remediation process. A quick analysis of the case at hand revealed that it had potential for a thesis topic: During the early stages of the research on the topic, the case had already been public for two years, thus extensive information could be gathered. Also, it had not yet been studied scientifically, which left room for creating a niche.

1.1.1 Who is directly affected by the contamination

Several groups of people were affected by the contamination of the groundwater. There is a significant amount of private wells in the district of Korneuburg. Many use that water for their gardens, among which some noticed that specific plants watered with groundwater showed malformations, others give the water to their animals. One neighbourhood is completely dependent on groundwater wells, as the district is not connected to the municipality's water system. In addition to the aforementioned usages, residents there also use the water in their households, e.g. for cooking or drinking. The pesticides were found in groundwater where the EVN wasser GmbH (EVN) pumps up water, which then enters the region's water supply network. Thus, residents of the greater area were likely subject to contaminated water.

1.1.2 Who are the actors

Figure 1 shows all the actors and actor groups relevant to this case. In some cases, leading actors emerged from their specific groups, and their names are therefore written in quotation marks in the figure. For further detail on the involved actors, companies and organizations discussed in this thesis, please

see ANNEX 3. Also see Figure 15, in which the actors' positions regarding the firm Kwizda are depicted.



Figure 1: Important actors and actor groups mentioned in this thesis

1.1.3 Why is this case special?

As mentioned above, the prosecution of those responsible for environmental incidents has been a difficult task in Austria. In the Korneuburg incident, the company was punished more severely than others in the past, in large part due to the instantaneous pressure created by local activists. Taking a closer look at this case may help uncover the ways in which public authorities in the past have handled situations

When first reading about the issue at hand in late 2013 the remediation activities were well under way and it was already - before the true scale of the contamination became clearer in late 2014 - deemed Austria's worst groundwater contamination in the country's history. As more truths surfaced, those following the issue noticed that the Bezirkshauptmannschaft/District Commission of Korneuburg (BH) and Kwizda Agro GmbH (hereinafter referred to as Kwizda) were, for years, trying to keep the issue restrained along with the fact that their failings were too evident to have been merely accidental. The question at this point remained, whether there will be serious investigation and possibly severe consequences for the involved or whether it would become another case of mild fines for severe environmental damages done by a company.

Several oddities and irregularities surfaced through an analysis and interpretation of the available data of the incident in Korneuburg. Already in late 2012 and early 2013, the local newspaper stated that it was obvious that both the company and the BH have been trying to keep the issue low profile (Löwenstein, 2012, September 25; Grundwasser, 2013, February 21). In all this time between Kwizda first reporting an incident at the factory in 2010 and Global 2000 and the *Am Schauplatz* documentary uncovering the pollution in September 2012, the public officials of the BH did not once test the area for the chemicals produced at Kwizda. Furthermore, the BH did not inform the public

of the incident until the information leaked to the press that Thiamethoxam was found at 80-times the drinking water limit in a drinking water well in Korneuburg in 2011. Even after this hard evidence, both Kwizda and BH denied any connection between the Thiamethoxam contamination and their pesticide factory, despite residents repeated complaints about certain plants deforming when watered with groundwater. Eventually the BH and Kwizda took action, which can be described, in hindsight, as buying time: They initiated a plant-watering test where a variety of plants were watered and their development analysed. They did not however use the groundwater for watering, but instead used clean water that was artificially enriched with Thiamethoxam. A possible explanation of why the company wanted to buy time, is that the company possibly saved millions of Euros in disposal costs through the remediation measures installed in 2010 (Grundwasser, 2013, February 21; H. Burtscher, personal communication, 2014, August 13). The aim of the remediation pumps and filtration system installed in 2010 was likely not principally meant to clean the water of Thiamethoxam, as Global 2000 found large amounts of Thiamethoxam and Clopyralid in the water coming out of the remediation wells. Thus, the remediation measures did not work, but rather had the effect that it reduced the amount of pesticides in the groundwater by pumping evidently contaminated water up and channelling it into the Donaугaben² and thus directly into the Danube: "They turned the improper filtration pumps off sometime during the night before the press conference" (on September 13th, 2012; A/N). (H. Burtscher, personal communication, August 13, 2014).

Open questions regarding the Korneuburg case:

- Responsible BH officials were transferred to other regions
- Possibility of wrong test administered to NOT find pesticides in water
- Dependence of municipalities on employer Kwizda (especially Leobendorf)
- Connection to similar environmental cases in the past
 - Wrong methods were used that cannot find the substances
 - Similar people involved
- Mass mobilisation of people
- Clear involvement of public officials to look away or even cover up incidents. (e.g. Mayor Leobendorf did not comment on affairs but once)
- Authorities from BH never searched for pesticides produced at factory
- Prosecution of environmental crimes against companies/employees of companies is very rare in Austria. The sheer magnitude of the event made it impossible for the public prosecution to ignore case, especially when similarities to the water contamination in Wiener Neustadt came to light, where there were practically no consequences for the polluters. Kwizda and its employees were sentenced to fines, however from the point of view of environmental activists, it is seen as very doubtful, that the damage to the environment was unintentional. After all, how can

² A small stream in Korneuburg leading directly into the Danube

negligent conduct explain how several hundred kilograms of pesticides (stored in watery solution further increasing the overall amount leaking into the groundwater) disappear out of a wastewater container that measures incoming and outgoing amounts, thus saving the company possibly millions in cleaning costs?

- Legal consequences for both public officials and Kwizda Agro

The incident in Korneuburg is not the only environmental accident that has occurred in Austria in recent years. A quick search of Austria's latest history of environmental accidents revealed that firms did not have to fear State prosecution, as punishments have thus far been mild, consisting of low fines against the polluter and without custodial sentences. An example of severe environmental pollution without consequences for the polluter is the plastic pollution of the Danube by the chemical company Borealis. In 2010, strong rains flushed plastic from the sewage system into the Danube. The company did not inform public authorities about this incident, but it was rather workers at a national park who notified the Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft / Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW) of unusual amounts of plastic in the water (Wetz, 2009, April 4). When Borealis noticed scientists analysing the Danube water, they had (the same) scientists secretly analyse their own facility's sewage water (Wetz, 2014, March 30; Apa, 2014, March 29). The company then repaired the damaged sewage water system. Interestingly, neither public officials nor the company informed the public until 2014, after the scientists (Lechner et al., 2014) published their widely discussed study that quantified plastic pollution of the Danube. Their findings concluded that around 4.2 tons of plastic are flushed from the Danube into the Black Sea per day and nearly 80% of the plastic found is industrial raw material. Another study (Kienzl, 2015) concluded that the majority of the pollution does not stem from the German part of the Danube but from within Austria. Unfortunately, the polluters are unknown (Wetz, 2015, March 12). There is no on-going investigation against Borealis.

Another important environmental case is the soil contamination on a company's (GAT Microencapsulation AG) property in Wiener Neustadt in 2007. This environmental issue is in many ways similar to that of Korneuburg; Global 2000 was also involved. In many ways it was a similar issue to Korneuburg, though the connection only surfaced later. The case went to court but the affected residents were dumbfounded by the mild response of the court in comparison to the damage that was done to the environment and the neighbouring residents. As of April 2015, it was still not clear who would cover the costs of disposing the highly contaminated soil, which is estimated at more than 350.000€ (Streihammer, 2010, March 25). A similarity to Korneuburg came to light in 2013 in the second *Am Schauplatz* documentary (Gordon & Zweckmayr, 2013): In both cases, specific water and soil testing methods were used that could in no circumstance find the contaminants. Also, in both cases the same public expert, Axel Tschinkowitz, was in charge and had the tests

administered. The documentary insinuated that this was an effort to cover up the pollution.

Another case where public authorities turned a blind eye occurred in 2012, when volunteers were cleaning a side arm of the Danube and found hundreds of oil drums at the bottom of the river. Public authorities did not start investigations, perhaps because the drums had officially been used as cheap buoys to lift a jetty by a public company (Schmidt, 2013).

Any individual citizen caught dumping paint or garbage in public space (see Bundeskanzleramt, 2009) may be fined and prosecuted harsher than corporations committing similar crimes have been in the past. As a matter of fact, it seems that persons acting to protect the environment are to face harsher punishment than polluters. The most prominent case supporting this argument was the so-called Tierschutzcausa (animal protection causa) when public attorneys of Wiener Neustadt falsely accused 13 animal rights activists of having committed over 200 criminal offenses in the past decade, one of which was forming a criminal organisation. Though the defendants were ruled innocent in all charges, they had to cover the costs of the defence amounting to ~400,000€ per defendant or ~5.2 Million € in total (Der Standard, 2012), in addition to being subject to incredible infringements on their personal and professional lives throughout the trial period (e.g. Profil, 2009, October 28; Sterkl, 2009, March 31).

What conclusions can one draw about environmental protection in Austria? Firstly, the case of Korneuburg is only one of several recent examples of the Austrian government trying to discourage noisy civil rights activists by making an example of protestors through harsh punishments³ or by condoning companies that threaten activists and even politicians with lawsuits, as was the case in the Korneuburg incident (M. Schabl, personal communication, August 29, 2014; E. Kerschbaum, personal communication, August 18, 2014).

Secondly, one can see how politics and the economy (companies) are very intertwined. Politicians can have very strong influence over the press in Austria (see chapter 4.2.2). Erwin Pröll is the head of the conservative Österreichische Volkspartei / Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) in Lower Austria, the State where the incident of Korneuburg occurred. He has been in power for an astonishing two decades, since 1992. One journalist, from the national newspaper, Der Standard, recently wrote that Pröll believes that "his intent is law" in the state of Lower Austria, and that he frightens journalists (Frey, 2014, May 11). Another Journalist, C. Chorherr, (2008, February 25) describes both the regional weekly newspaper die Niederösterreichischen Nachrichten / Lower Austria News (NÖN) and the national public broadcaster Österreichischer Rundfunk (ORF) of Lower Austria as uncritical of the ÖVP - due to Pröll. NÖN is the largest recipient of the State's press subsidy fund. Also, after critical articles by

³ See for example the story the German student Josef S., who participated in a demonstration against a right-wing ball in Vienna, Austria. He was, as the only person who participated in the demonstration, sued for and convicted of breach of the peace, malicious criminal damage and attempted aggravated battery to 3 years parole. Evidence did however support his innocence very strongly (see ORF 2014)

print media, publishers have been threatened that the state government or “friendly” companies withdraw advertisements.

In Korneuburg, an interesting *coincidence* was that the vice head official, who was directly involved with the Kwizda incident in 2010, and the head official of the BH Korneuburg both switched to positions in other district commissions and were thus unavailable to answer questions from the municipality of Korneuburg. The new head official, Mrs. Waltraud Müllner-Toifl, arrived in due time in the summer of 2012 without any knowledge of what had happened, and was thus also not able to answer questions. The mayor of Leobendorf, the municipality on which territory the Kwizda factory is situated, gave no statement to either NÖN or Österreichischer Rundfunk / Austrian Public Broadcast (ORF) about the groundwater contamination or the company Kwizda (see Chapter 5.1.2). He was however seen on the first *Am Schauplatz* documentary (Gordon & Moschitz, 2012) in which he mentioned Kwizda as being an important employer.

1.2 Research task

After discovering the case of Korneuburg, the author sought understand how the case evolved and how various events and actors tie together. This first look revealed strong collaboration between different actors, who generated knowledge and instant media attention, creating pressure on the company and the public authorities to achieve their means.

Due to a lack of coherent information on the case of Korneuburg, the first stage of this very new and scientifically untouched environmental case was to understand and describe the case, including the important political and administrative contexts. This stage revealed numerous remaining questions, which the author sought to answer through (1) a media analysis and (2) interviews.

Thus, the overall aim of this thesis is to extend the knowledge of environmental issues, issue life-cycles, actors and most of all, strategies used by actors in environmental disasters.

In order to achieve this aim, the research task was established of answering the question: *How did the issue of the groundwater contamination of Korneuburg, Austria evolve?* The research task led to four central research questions to address throughout this study:

- (1) Who were the main and supporting actors?
- (2) What were the main and supporting actors' positions in the issue?
- (3) How did the case evolve as a mediatized phenomenon?
- (4) What were the confrontation and collaboration strategies of the actors?

In the second stage of this study a media analysis was performed that aimed at understanding the case from an issue-life-cycle point of view. The information was gathered from online articles from OFR.at and NOEN.at. The media analysis is important to describe the evolvement of the case as it helps reveal the public attention to the case.

The third stage of this study included in person interviews, which provided greater depth to the analysis. Conducting interviews is seen as imperative for achieving the research task, particularly with regards to identifying which actors played a crucial role in the unfolding of the issue, the actors' positions in the issue, and their influence strategies (questions 1, 2, and 4).

1.3 Thesis outline

The outline of the thesis is as follows:

Background	This chapter introduces the reader to the case/issue of Korneuburg by highlighting key events of the environmental issue in chronological order. Additional themes and information, necessary for the reader to understand the case to its fullest extent, are explained.
Methodology	In chapter three, the methods used in this thesis and their applications and limitations are introduced.
Theoretical Framework	Chapter four presents key concepts and theories behind both the quantitative and qualitative research conducted in the thesis.
Results	In this chapter results from both the media analysis and the interviews of main actors are presented.
Discussion	Chapter six discusses the findings from the previous chapter and connects these with the concepts and theories introduced in chapter three (methodology).
Conclusion	The last chapter contains a reflection on the case study and summarizes and discusses the main findings and their significance and contribution to research. At the end of this thesis, the reader will find the study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

2 THE GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION IN KORNEUBURG

This chapter contributes to uncovering a deeper understanding of the course of events, including the important action of the aforementioned actors, through constructing a chronological storyline of the contamination and the subsequent responses from the stakeholders. The below storyline is the result of extensive research collected from in person interviews, media analyses, and documentaries, in order to provide a coherent and accurate depiction of the chain of events. In order to fully comprehend the actions and roles of relevant actors and the interconnectedness of events, the administrative and political situation in Austria will be touched upon. Additionally, the pesticides found in ground water and their impacts on plant life and human health will be discussed.

2.1 The issue of the groundwater contamination in Korneuburg

From the perspective of the public, the contamination issue in Korneuburg began in August 2010 when the company Kwizda reported an incident in their chemical factory in Leobendorf, Austria to the district commission – the BH. Kwizda reported that several pesticides had leaked from a tank. In the following years, due to the diligence of residents, reporters and the environmental NGO Global 2000, the contamination received widespread media attention and ultimately led to extensive remediation measures (paid for by Kwizda) and criminal investigations against officials of the BH, Kwizda, and several of Kwizda's employees.

2.1.1 Chronological overview of groundwater contamination

The following pages will give the reader a short overview of publicly available information concerning the groundwater contamination in Korneuburg. It is written in chronological order, though some additional information connecting events is added to provide context. Information gathered from interviews,

newspaper articles, documentaries, and other mediums, was used to provide this overview, which maps the issue of Korneuburg from the first publically available data until March 2015.

- August 2010: The pesticide producer Kwizda, located in Leobendorf, Austria, informs the BH about an incident during which Thiamethoxam and small amounts of three other pesticides leaked from a defect wastewater reservoir. The fire department of Leobendorf is, against regulations, not informed about the incident.
- September 2010: Kwizda takes protective and remediation measures in close coordination with public officials from the BH. The company Porr-AG implements these measures that plan to excavate contaminated soil, and pump up groundwater to treat contaminated groundwater with active carbon and then discharge it into the Donaugraben (see Figure 2).
- December 2010: Chain of remediation wells, consisting of seven wells, goes into operation. The ground water being pumped up, partly filtered and partly unfiltered, is discharged into Donaugraben.
- March 2011: Thiamethoxam is detected in the groundwater downstream in the municipality of Korneuburg and in the well field Bisamberg of EVN. Later it is announced that Thiamethoxam is measured at 80-times the limit in one of the wells. The BH Korneuburg and Kwizda foreclose a possible connection with the incident from August 2010.
- Spring 2011: The BH announces a contamination of the groundwater with the insecticide Thiamethoxam.
- Summer 2011: Owners of private wells in Korneuburg observe significant deformities of tomatoes and other plants that have been watered with groundwater. Deformities were first noticed in 2010. Hydrologists argue, that due to the very slow movement of groundwater, there is no connection between the Thiamethoxam in the groundwater and the incident at Kwizda in 2010.
- 27.11.2011: Korneuburg's councillor for the environment, Elisabeth Kerschbaum, delivers the district's public prosecution a Sachverhaltsdarstellung / Statement of the Facts concerning the pollution and explicitly presses charges against *unknown*. The public prosecution however dismisses the case, as there is reasonable suspicion that Kwizda is the polluter.
- Spring 2012: The municipality of Korneuburg and the BH agree to start a plant watering assessment to discover if there is a connection between plant deformities and the Thiamethoxam contamination. Kwizda agrees to cover the costs.
- May 2012: Plant deformities continue to occur in the municipality. On the initiative of the municipality of Korneuburg, Kwizda contracts the Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit / Austrian Agency for Nutritional Safety (AGES) to examine a deformed tomato plant provided by affected residents.

- July 2012: The plant watering assessment commissioned by BH, with the use of water artificially contaminated with Thiamethoxam, rules out that a contamination of the groundwater with Thiamethoxam caused the observed plant damages and deformities.
- July 2012: The AGES analysis rules out possible plant diseases and Thiamethoxam as possible causes, however a growth promoting herbicide is named as a possible cause. The report is issued to the BH and Kwizda. The public agencies for trade and water law do not intervene.
- August/September 2012: Councillor Kerschbaum (11.08.2012) and other members of the environmental panel of the municipality of Korneuburg (07.09.2012) demand that the BH have the groundwater screened for growth promoting pesticides.
- August/September 2012: The ORF broadcast *Am Schauplatz* and, on their request, the NGO Global 2000 become aware of the groundwater issue in Korneuburg. They take water samples from groundwater wells and the Donaugraben and contract the Umweltbundesamt (Federal Environmental Agency) to test the water for a wide range of pesticides. The results show that the groundwater is contaminated with the insecticide Thiamethoxam (up to 80-times the drinking water limit) and in even larger amounts with the herbicide Clopyralid (570-times the drinking water limit). The latter is seen to be causing the plant deformities.
- 05.09.2012: Global 2000 presents the report from the Umweltbundesamt and a Sachverhaltsdarstellung (presentation of facts of the case) to the BH, stating proof of what happened.
- 08.09.2012: EVN Wasser analyses the drinking water wells in Bisamberg and finds Clopyralid in all four wells. Their public communications will later state however, that the well field Bisamberg was closed for reasons of precaution.
- 12.09.2012: The BH decrees to stop the discharge of groundwater into the Donaugraben and suspend all on-going remediation measures.
- 13.09.2012: Global 2000 and Councilwoman Kerschbaum, inform the public about the contamination during a press conference.
- 14.09.2012: ORF broadcasts an *Am Schauplatz* documentary exclusively covering the groundwater contamination in Korneuburg (Gordon & Moschitz, 2012).
- 26.09.2012: Newly found citizens' initiative *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg* organises a demonstration with approximately 200 attendees. The demonstrators walk from Kwizda to the BH, demanding more information.
- 28.09.2012: The public prosecution of Korneuburg investigates Kwizda.
- 01.10.2012: Kwizda declares that they are the most probable cause of the contamination and will cover all costs of the remediation procedures.
- October 2012: Information about additional leaking pesticide wastewater reservoirs and sewage pipes become publicly known.
- October/November 2012: Kerschbaum gives a sheet of facts to the public prosecution of Korneuburg and presses charges against person/persons unknown. However, the prosecution stops the investigation with the

justification that there is no connection between the incident from August 2010 at the Kwizda factory and the current contamination.

- Since 26.11.2012: The BH decrees that unfiltered groundwater is discharged into Danube as part of the remediation concept, which is ultimately against European and Austrian law. The amount of unfiltered discharge is repeatedly increased and as of November 2014 accounts for around 30% of total pesticide discharge (Wruss & Kardjalieff, 2014.1).
- 21.02.2013: Global 2000 accuses the BH of involvement in groundwater contamination and delivers thorough Statement of the Facts to the public prosecution of Korneuburg. On the same day, ORF broadcasts another *Am Schauplatz* documentary drawing similarities between the cases of Korneuburg and Wiener Neustadt. (Gordon & Zweckmayr, 2013).
- 29.04.2013: Kwizda announces that they will surround the facility with a security wall built 15 metres into the ground, at costs of around 2 million Euro. This measure is not part of the remediation plan and goes beyond legislation (what is asked for by law).
- May/June 2013: Public prosecution is now also investigating the BH.
- October/November 2013: The last chance of municipality of Korneuburg to have a say in BH proceedings against Kwizda are sabotaged by ÖVP - The notification of BH to decline the municipality's request to be part of proceedings were "lost in the town hall" leading to the time to appeal pass by unnoticed by the Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich / Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the Grüne / Green Party.
- November 2014: Since January, the groundwater of Ohlsdorf, a municipality in Oberösterreich/Upper Austria, is found to be contaminated. Months later, the pesticide Clopyralid is detected as pollutant and the source is the local landfill. In November, it becomes known that H&E, a company contracted by Kwizda, subcontracted the firm Vorwagner to dispose of their chemical waste. The company is located in the municipality bordering Ohlsdorf, and is thus a prime suspect as the polluter.
- 27.11.2014: Lawsuit against Kwizda and six employees comes to an end. Charges of intentional damage to the environment, for which up to five years of imprisonment are possible, are dropped. Five of the six defendants, including the owner, are however charged with negligent conduct and fined between €3.000 and €38.000 dependent on gravity and income, and Kwizda is fined €250.000.
- February 2015: The Expert Team in charge of the remediation procedures announces that 93% of Clopyralid and around 70% of Thiamethoxam have been removed from the groundwater. The total amount of pesticides in the groundwater at the start of the remediation practices was approximately 62.5 kg and 24 kg respectively.
- March 2015: The Capital Court Vienna rules that the investigation against the BH officials will be moved from the Lower Austria State court at Korneuburg to the State court in Vienna due to suspicion of bias. (ORF, 2015)

2.1.2 Administration in Austria

The extent of the contamination of Korneuburg was possible, *inter alia*, due to certain state authorities not carrying out their duty, as it is already insinuated in the chronological overview in chapter 2.1.1.

Austria has a “four-tiered administrative structure” (Bundeskanzleramt 2009, 3): Bund - Land - Bezirk - Gemeinde / Federal government - Federal state - District - Municipality. A district is not however a territorial authority but rather a part of the administration of the federal state. The *Kastalgemeinde*/cadastral municipality, as seen in Figure 2, is the smallest divisional entity and has no authorities of its own. The different administrative tiers have different authorities, though only a small selection of these is important to understanding this case:

- The Federal State has responsibilities for environmental protection
- The Federal State District Commission / *Bezirkshauptmannschaft* is a general administrative body representing Federal States in its various districts but also acts for the Federal Government (Bundeskanzleramt, 2009). Among its various responsibilities are commercial and water law. The state government nominates each district’s governor.
- Each district has a district court and therefore its own public prosecution, sometimes also a State court.
- A municipality acts in its administration autonomously concerning “educational, social, environmental and cultural infrastructure” (Bundeskanzleramt, 2009: 3). Residents and municipal councillors elect the mayor and the councillors are elected directly by the residents. Councillors act as the political representatives to the residents and fulfil a wide range of tasks within a municipality, such as issuing directives, carrying out resolutions, and releasing statements (Landtag von Niederösterreich, 2009: § 35). A municipality has its own independent fire and rescue services.

2.1.3 Political situation in Austria

Austria is a democratic republic consisting of nine States. The parliament is made up of two chambers: the National Council (Nationalrat) and the Federal Council (Bundesrat). The National Council is elected every five years, while the Federal Council is not elected directly but consists of delegates from the States. The head of State is the Federal Chancellor who is elected by direct vote (BM.I, 1).

During the last election of the National Council in 2013 the SPÖ was the strongest party receiving 26,8% of the votes. Placing second was the ÖVP (Austrian Peoples Party) with 24%, and in third, Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs / the Liberal Party of Austria (FPÖ) with 20,5% of the votes. This also reflects the order of the 2008 elections, with slight changes in the exact percentages. While both the ÖVP and FPÖ gained more votes, the SPÖ lost almost 3 per cent (BM.I,2). The 2013 results led to a repetition of a coalition between the SPÖ and the ÖVP under Chancellor Werner Faymann (SPÖ) (Der Standard, 2013). The last election of the President of Austria took place in 2010 and will be held again in 2016 following a six-year cycle. Heinz Fischer was re-

elected for a second term in the 2010 election with almost 80% of the votes (BM.I, 3).

The last elections of the State of Lower Austria (Niederösterreich) took place in 2013, the same year as the last election of the National Council. State elections are held every five years. Similarly to the national election, the top three parties were SPÖ, ÖVP, and FPÖ. There is however a significant difference in the shares of the votes. The ÖVP received 50,8% of the votes, losing four percentage points compared to the 2008 elections. The SPÖ received 21,6% of the votes, losing four percentage points as well. The FPÖ has the lowest results compared to the national election gaining only 8,2% of the votes (10,5% in 2008) (Land Niederösterreich, 2013). The State government now consists out of six members from the ÖVP, two members from the SPÖ and one member without a party. Erwin Pröll (ÖVP) is the head of the government for the current term (Land Niederösterreich, 2015).

The elections for the regional council of Korneuburg were held in 2010. The strongest party was the ÖVP (47,6%), followed by the SPÖ (35,6%) and the Green Party (9,6%). The FPÖ gained only 5,8%. Compared to the elections in 2005 there was a large powershift. The SPÖ lost 14% while the ÖVP gained 11,2% (Korneuburg, 2010). This also led to a change in the party of the Major of Korneuburg; the position is now held by Christian Gepp from ÖVP (Gebhart, 2012, March 2).

This concludes the short introduction to the political situation in Austria, Lower Austria, and the municipality of Korneuburg during the time of the issue from 2010 to 2015. It reveals several interesting facts relevant to this case study. Lower Austria and Korneuburg are both led by the same party, ÖVP. As stated in 2.1.2, the State government nominates each district's governor, which may explain strong ties between BH and State government. For example, this might provide an explanation as to why the Mayor of Korneuburg did not advocate strongly for an investigation of those responsible at the BH or for a prosecution of officials, as he was likely bound by party loyalties. It is important to note that the ruling Party of the State of Lower Austria (ÖVP) is in opposition to the leading Federal Party (SPÖ). The aforementioned decision of the Capital court to move the investigation against BH officials to the court in Vienna due to suspicion of bias can also be seen from a political point of view: The case was taken from a court in a State where the ÖVP is leading and moved to a court where the SPÖ is leading. This also reveals the important role of political and judicial actors in this case.

2.1.4 An overview of the contamination site and municipality borders

The municipality of Korneuburg is a small municipality in the eponymous district of Korneuburg, part of the state of Lower Austria. Figure 2 shows the factory that caused the contamination of Korneuburg's groundwater, and the surrounding municipalities. The factory is situated in the municipality of Leobendorf, which is also part of the district of Korneuburg, and closely borders the Korneuburg municipality.

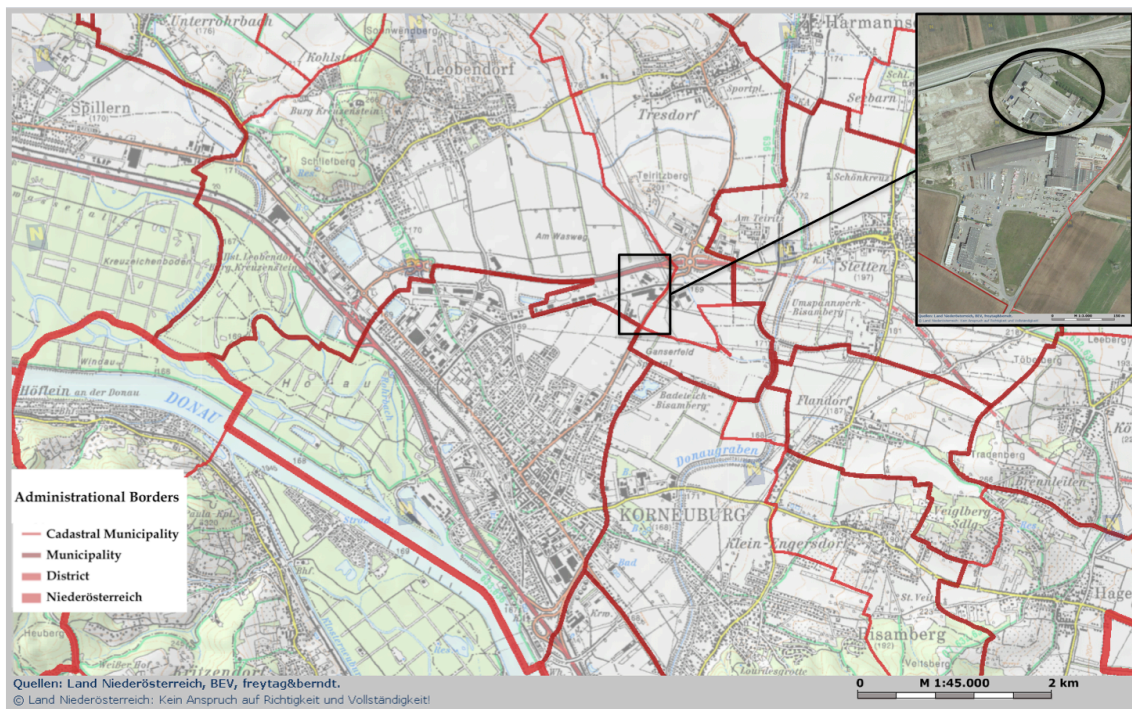


Figure 2: The municipalities of Korneuburg, Leobendorf, and Bisamberg and the Kwizda premises enlarged in the corner (altered from Atlas Niederösterreich)

A depiction of the groundwater contamination of the two pesticides Clopyralid and Thiamethoxam (as of late 2012) can be found in Figure 3. The highest concentration of pesticides in the groundwater clearly indicates Kwizda, located at the top of the map, as the source of the contamination.

Similarly to rivers, groundwater is in constant motion downstream (Brutsaert, 2005). The groundwater of Korneuburg is moving in the direction north-north-west towards the Danube river. Thus, the pesticides leaked on Leobendorf soil but the contamination of the groundwater occurred mainly in the municipalities of Korneuburg and Bisamberg. Residential areas of Korneuburg are clearly affected, as can be seen in the areal image.

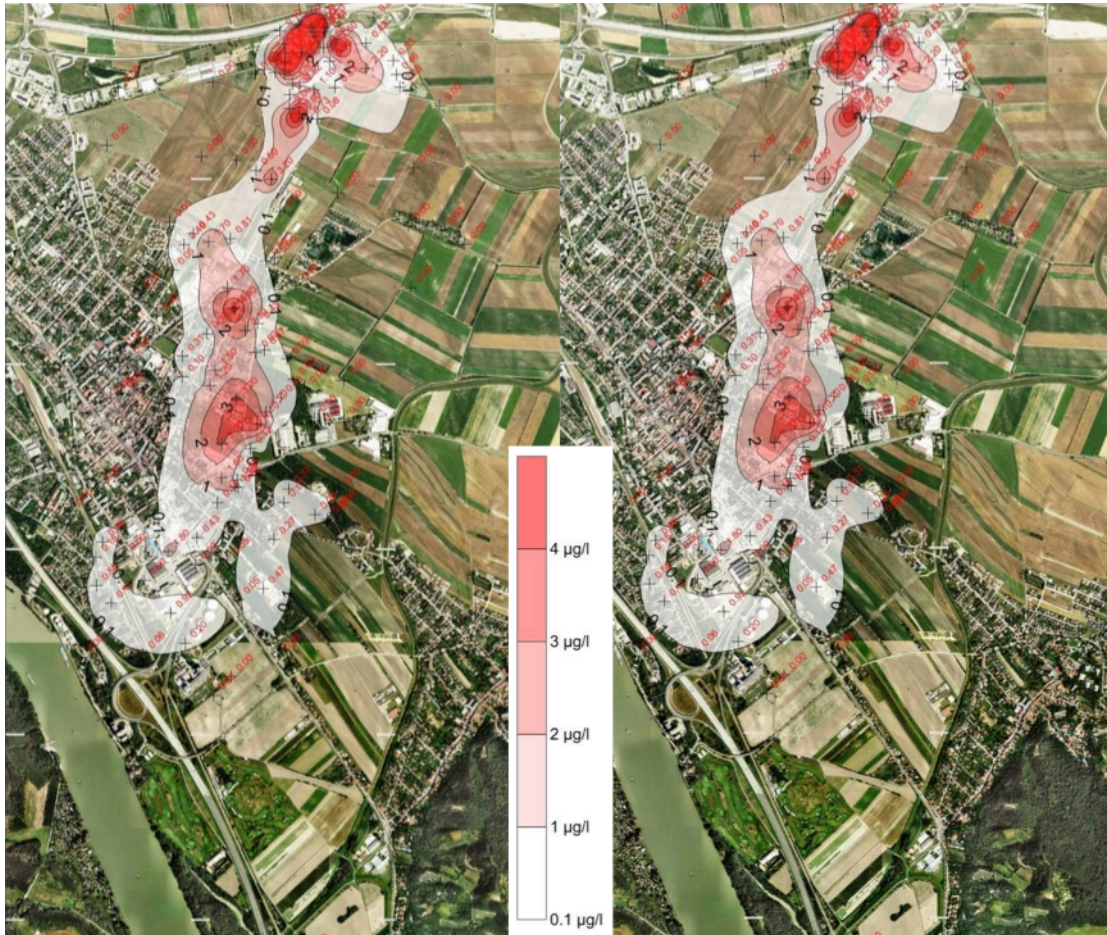


Figure 3: Areal image of the Clopyralid (left) and Thiamethoxam (right) contamination of Korneuburg as of late 2012 (adapted from Wruss & Kardjaleff, 2014.1)

2.2 Environmental impacts of the pesticides

The environmental impacts of human-induced pesticides, i.e. the effects on other organisms but the target species that they are initially used for, are progressively discussed in the research community (Damalas & Eleftherohorinos 2011). This is especially the case for synthetic pesticides and their metabolites (Boxall et al. 2004). One trend that can be observed is that the undesirable effects of formerly common pesticides have led to pesticides being developed that are decreasingly persistent and increasingly plant-specific. As an example, Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, better known as DDT, was the most common insecticide until the 1970s due to its effectiveness against a wide array of insects. In the long term, however, the use of DDT has shown to have catastrophic impacts on human health and has led to the disruption of ecosystems and mass destruction of bird life (Oreskes and Conway 2014).

In the case of Korneuburg, the effects of the pesticides on the environment depend on a vast amount of factors such as the pesticides volatility to organisms, deposition attributes and solubility, speed of degradation and the

attributes of their metabolites, and the movement of the groundwater (USGS 2006). The following chapter will discuss the pesticides found in the groundwater and both the effects on the environment and on human health.

2.2.1 The pesticides found in Korneuburg

Several substances produced by the company Kwizda Agro leaked into the groundwater of Korneuburg. These are known as pesticides, a broad term that is defined by The Food and Agricultural Organization (2002, p.6) as “any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, or controlling any pest”. Extensive groundwater testing found *two* pesticides, Thiamethoxam and Clopyralid, in large amounts of around 80- and 570-times the drinking water limits respectively. Furthermore, several other pesticides as well as two metabolites - degradate compounds - of Thiamethoxam were found in the groundwater although in significantly smaller quantities. Therefore, the next chapters will focus only on Thiamethoxam and Clopyralid.

For this case only two of the many types of pesticides are relevant: Thiamethoxam is an insecticide and Clopyralid is a herbicide. By definition, insecticides primarily affect insects and herbicides primarily affect plants or weeds (IUPEC 2006). Pesticides can be both of natural and of synthetic origin. The origins of biological pesticides are vascular plants, fungi, nematodes, bacteria and viruses (US EPA). Both Clopyralid and Thiamethoxam are synthetic (FAO 2000 and EU Commission 2008).

2.2.2 Effects on the plants and the environment

Thiamethoxam is widely used in agriculture and its use is primarily against termites and bugs (FAO 2000). Most concessions (the formal allowance to use a pesticide) were granted for rapeseed, corn, sugar beets and potatoes (EFSA 2013) but it is also marketed as a wood preservative. Thiamethoxam belongs to the class of neonicotinoids, which aim to disrupt the nervous system of insects (FAO 2000). Recent studies have shown however, that neonicotinoids are showing a previously unknown persistence in nature and possibly affecting bee populations negatively (EFSA 2012). A formal peer review of 2013 shows that neonicotinoids pose a clear threat to bees, and also specifies that the Safety of Use for Clopyralid was based on possibly flawed industry-sponsored science (EFSA 2013). The EU subsequently banned the use of neonicotinoids on crops attracting bees, such as rapeseed and corn (EU Commission 2013).

The herbicide Clopyralid is classified as selective and designed to affect broadleaf weeds mainly for the protection of rapeseed, corn, and onions (Hagood et al 2012) and is toxic for water organisms (Cox 1998). However, it has shown to be very persistent in dead plants and compost thus accumulating to phytotoxic levels (Michel et al. 2012). Furthermore, it was assessed in the USA that Clopyralid damages pea, tomato and sunflower plants as well as make potatoes, lettuce and spinach inedible (Michel et al. 2012). This coincides with the findings in Korneuburg, where residents watering their plants with contaminated groundwater particularly noticed tomato plants dying. The substance is banned in several states in the USA and the manufacturer

deregistered it for the use on lawns in 2002 (Michel and Doohan 2003). Ironically, the substance entered the European market in 2007 (EU Commission 2006).

2.2.3 Effects on human health

Both pesticides are seen as slightly toxic to humans. According to the FAO (2000, p. 20), Thiamethoxam is "moderately hazardous to humans" due to its toxicity when swallowed. More recent studies indicate possible health risks for mammals, including carcinogenic long-term effects, though these may not indicate a hazard to human health (Green et al. 2005). The U.S. EPA classifies Clopyralid in toxicity class III with low toxicity (U.S. EPA 2002). Its long-term effects are of yet unknown due to a lack of research, however it seems unlikely that the substance is carcinogenic (U.S. EPA 2002; Follansbee & Durkin 2004). Nonetheless, studies have shown that there are some negative effects on animals (Cox 1998; WSDOT 2006).

Reports conducted by the AGES (AGES 2012; 2013) indicated that neither substance, nor any other metabolite or pesticide found in the groundwater, affect human health in the concentration found in the groundwater of Korneuburg. All pollutants combined, however, could affect human health: An assessment carried out by the Fachhochschule Technikum Wien (2012), a University of Applied Sciences in Vienna, states that there are signs of the groundwater affecting human cells as an endocrine disruptor. These claims were assessed as unsubstantiated by the AGES (2013b). A recent report found no toxicity of the drinking water in Korneuburg (Grummt & Heinze 2013).

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 3 is divided up into two main sections. The first will investigate issues and their developments, including the introduction of the terms *issue* and *issue salience*, as well as an assessment of media perception of environmental issues. Following, is a description of issue life-cycle models and an analysis on how researchers have studied the development of environmental issues. The section of this chapter narrows in on stakeholder influence strategies. Frooman's (1999) model and Hendry's extension will be discussed, and underlying terms introduced.

3.1 Issues and their developments

An *issue* is a widely used term in business and management literature. Therefore, it is not unusual that both scientists and business communicators have offered a variety of definitions for the term. Hainsworth and Meng (1988) state, for example, that an issue arises as a consequence of some action taken and that it can result in actions in civil and public policy, adjustments in companies or in private negotiations. Regester and Larkin (2005: 43) take a corporate view by defining an issue as "a gap between corporate practice and stakeholder expectations [...] a condition or event, either internal or external to the organization, that if it continues will have a significant effect on the functioning or performance of the organisation or on its future interests". Mahon and Waddock (1992) believe issues generally emerge from the socio-political environment, for example, through new standards and regulations, shifting responsibilities, competition, and tragedies or disasters. A more general definition is that issues are developments, which have an impact on the performance of an organization and its ability to meet objectives (Ansoff, 1979; King, 1982).

A review on issues literature in the business and management field concluded that issues are centred around three main themes: impact, controversy and expectancy gap (Wartick & Mahon, 1994). They (Wartick and Mahon, 1994) provide a definition taking all these three themes into account, in

which an issue is: “(a) [a] controversial inconsistency based on one or more expectational gaps (b) involving management perceptions of changing legitimacy and other stakeholder perceptions of changing cost/benefit positions (c) [something] that occur[s] within or between views of what is and/or what ought to be corporate performance or stakeholder perceptions of corporate performance and d) imply[ing] an actual or anticipated resolution that creates significant, identifiable present or future impact on the organizations.” (Wartick and Mahon, 1994: 309). What the latter definition implies is that multiple and powerful actors should be attracted to the issue in order for it to become relevant.

Public policies involving multiple actors and themes are central for issues, as shown in the definitions above. Buchholz (1988: 53) defines public policies as actions that address a specific problem of public concern. These actions are taken collectively by society, or by a legitimate representative of society, thus reflecting particular segments of their interests. Thus, public policy issues are those that involve competing stakeholders and their actions. Issues have also been intensely studied from a strategic point of view (e.g. Ansoff, 1980; Dutton et al., 1983; Dutton & Jackson, 1987). There, the focus lies on organisations, their decision makers, and underlying processes. For example Dutton and Jackson (1987) studied whether labelling issues as threats or opportunities affects responses and actions within the organisation (Dutton et al., 1983: 307-8). Strategic issues and public issues have been defined as distinctive. Moore (1979), for example, sees the former as environmental forces and trends, that is, demographic, sociological, political, and economic concerns determining how corporations do business. Public policy issues on the other hand are issues stemming from the public domain that require a response but are not always seen as vital to the company. This view however is out-dated; over the years businesses have grown to become more concerned and responsive to regulatory and legislative environments, responding to their stakeholders needs, interests and concerns. These stakeholders do not only include government and consumer shareholders, but also communities and their members, employees and other associated organisations (Frooman, 1999; Matten & Crane, 2005).

3.1.1 Issue salience

A reason why companies would engage in policies outside of their main tasks can be found in strategic issues management. Generally speaking, companies manage various issues in order for them not to become ones of high salience. Companies can however gain or lose reputation and legitimacy depending on if they are leading or lagging behind societal expectations regarding an issue (Zyglidopoulos, 2003). Examples for why companies should manage issues can be found in actions taken by NGOs such as Greenpeace or PETA, organisations which aim to create instant media attention to a specific issue by using extreme campaigns against (single) companies. Subsequently, companies are forced to respond to these claims, occasionally leading to real changes in a company's strategy. In the case of Nestlé, Greenpeace's Orang-utan campaign, started with a YouTube video and later became a social media battle, - with Greenpeace as the winner (Steel, 2010, March 29; Warner & Yeomans, 2012). Nestlé and

Unilever were forced to drop their palm oil supplier, Sinar Mas, the largest Indonesian palm oil producer (AFP, 2010, March 18). The real goal was however to compel Sinar Mas to change their operations (Mitnick & Ryan, 2015). Unilever complied with Greenpeace's demands earlier on and thus evaded a possible campaign against them.

Indeed, issue salience is regarded as one of the central drivers of firm responsiveness (Bundy et al., 2013). According to this view, companies and managers respond to issues and concerns that stakeholders advocate. The challenge is, as described in the example above, that issues attracting a large segment of people are more likely to receive wide media attention. If the majority of the public agrees on what a company has to do at any point of time of an issue with high salience, the company has no other option but to comply (Zyglidopoulos, 2003). Issues with low salience on the other hand are usually limited to a few stakeholders and resolved without public discourse (Bonardi & Kleim, 2005). This means, from a business perspective, that issues that are likely to gain high salience need to be dealt with preparation as they can potentially harm the business. Very complex issues, such as Shell vs. the Ogoni people (see Andrews, 2015; Konne, 2014) or land disputes between Metsä Botnia and Argentina and Uruguay (see Lehtimäki & Kujala, 2015), or the building collapse in Savar, Bangladesh in 2013, have created widespread attention and affected corporate policies beyond a single firm.

A variety of factors influencing the growth and decline of issues have been examined in the literature. It is argued that factors that are in direct connection with the issue itself are the most important in affecting its dynamics (Bigelow et al., 1993). Post (1978) describes the so-called *expectations gap*, arguing that a gap between public expectations and corporate practices is essential in creating high public awareness and concern for an issue after it has been triggered. Similarly, the term *legitimacy gap* was used by Sethi (1979) to describe discrepancies between the public perception on what a company is doing on one hand, and what is expected of that company on the other. His approach uses legitimacy theory to explain this gap that can occur when the image does not resemble the identity of a company. Others subsequently argued that the identity of a company could become an issue itself (Christensen & Cheney, 1994).

The literature however, usually separates stakeholders from issues and there has been very little understanding how single groups or actors act strategically in order to bring an issue into evolution. Thus, there is a need to understand the way issues gain widespread salience. Bonardi and Keim (2005) theorized how some issues gain widespread salience and what role certain activist groups played in the process. They modelled the process of issue salience by using information and reputations cascade literature, concluding that for an issue to become salient, information needs to be created and spread. For this, the most important factor is the amplification of the media, as it is the main source of information for many in modern. Journalists as well as activists and activist groups play an important role here, as they often try to attract media attention in order to gain salience for an issue (Frooman, 1999). The importance of experts and analysts need to be highlighted as they impact individuals who make decisions based on the information they received. For

example, reporters and experts work under the influence of social pressures, thus leading to their consensus over an issue. Through a complex process of distribution of thresholds among experts and reporters, the issue gains more salience because the number of users who have adopted the issue increases its value (Bonardi & Keim, 2005).

The difference between an environmental issue and a public or social one is marginal, if not non-existent. In fact, McGrail et al. (2013) argue that an environmental issue based on scientific data and evidence is limited in its development – unless it becomes a public issue. This is evidently somewhat of a dilemma, as humans cannot live without the environment they live in. Downs (1972) noticed that environmental issues are susceptible for increasing and decreasing salience, as they are experienced unequally and that usually only small amounts of people are affected directly by the issue. Also, these issues often emerge through a benefit for another minority by social arrangements. Mass media does however tend to capture attention to issues, thus increasing salience.

Hannigan (2006: 78) names six factors that influence the success of an environmental issue, which are very similar to the aforementioned factors influencing saliency: Scientific authority and validated claims over the issue; focal change agents that combine scientific knowledge with environmentalism; enduring and high media attention that highlights the importance and the novelty of the issue; dramatization of the issue; economic incentives for taking positive action; and institutional sponsor(s) that ensure legitimacy and continued existence of the issue. Similar to the salience introduced earlier in this section, his (Hannigan, 2006) model hints at phases that issues evolve into. The following sections will elaborate on environmental issues in the media and issue life-cycle models in order to illuminate the process of issue evolution in more detail.

3.1.2 Environmental issues and the media

An important aspect of issue salience is recognizing that a problem exists. The media plays an integral part in the recognition and definition of a problem in society (Trumbo, 1996) because it is a place where society's reality is defined and constructed (Gurevitch & Levy, 1985).

This claim is also supported by the agenda setting theory. The theory posits a relationship between the public agenda, the salience of a topic in the society, the media agenda, and the relative emphasis given to a topic by the media. In this relationship the media agenda is not mirroring the public agenda but rather is setting it (Ader, 1995). In other words, if the amount of reports on a certain topic is increasing in the media, the interest in these topics will grow in the society. Studies have shown that the effects of agenda setting are especially strong in contexts where the media is the only or main source of information on a particular topic (Zucker, 1978). Environmental issues were identified as one of these topics (Eyal et al., 1981).

To prove this in an environmental context, Ader (1995) analysed the media agenda, the public agenda and the real world conditions of environmental pollution between 1970 and 1990. The media agenda was gathered through

content analysis of the New York Times and measured in inches reporting about environmental pollution. The public agenda was conducted from polls and the real life conditions were measured with data on waste production and environmental quality. Ader found support for her hypothesis that the media agenda influences the public salience on the topic while the real life conditions do not influence the public agenda or the media agenda directly. Agenda setting shows how important the role of the media is but it mostly focuses on quantitative aspects of media coverage without considering the process of how it is presented.

Trumbo (1996) argues that making and framing claims are essential for creating meaning and recognition of a problem in media representation. In his study (Trumbo, 1996) he defined claims makers as the quoted source that gains media attention through representation in articles, which is a strong indicator for making claims successful. Themes that emerge in the representation of an issue in the media are frames. They are interpretation schemes that people use to evaluate information (Goffman, 1974) and to interpret how relevant events give meaning to an issue (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Furthermore, framing involves the selection of aspects of reality and creating salience through its representation by defining the problems, identify causes, make moral judgements and suggest solutions (Entman, 1993). Thus, frames can essentially be seen as claims that are made by the media (Trumbo, 1996). In this context, salience is defined as making the issue's information noticeable and memorable to its readers, and an increased salience will therefore enhance the chances to do so (Entman, 1993: 53).

Environmental news faces a variety of political, economic, cultural and institutional factors influencing if and how it is published (Boykoff, 2009). The news industry is confronted with tremendous changes due to an increasing economic pressure and further consolidation of the industry. Efficiency and profit are increasingly important factors that structure the news landscape. It has been shown that this also influences the training of news professionals in covering scientific and environmental topics (Bennett, 1996) and limits the funding for investigative journalism in general (McChesny, 1990). Moreover declining time for article production and limited word counts make it hard for journalists to comprehend different aspects of complex environmental stories (Weingart et al., 2000).

These factors also interfere with the journalistic norms that define what becomes news and how it is framed (Boykoff, 2009). Boykoff and Boykoff (2007) are analysing the following five norms: personalization, dramatization, novelty, authority-order bias and balance. The tendency to personalize stories means greater focus on a charismatic person and the effect the story has on a single individual, as opposed to diving deeper for more insight into the story. This is closely connected to dramatization that places the focus on dramatic event instead of a comprehensive analysis of the situation. Novelty can be understood as the demand for a new story or at least a new angle to look at an existing storyline. The combination of these three factors can easily lead to a trivialisation of the whole story. The fourth norm, authority-order bias, applies to situations where journalists rely on official sources or expert opinions.

Finally, the norm of balance describes when journalists are trying to fulfil the expectancy of objectivity by balancing different opinions on a subject.

3.1.3 Issue life-cycle models

Issue life-cycle models have emerged as a description how issues develop and gain salience. They are tools that help one understand developments and dynamics of an issue. When these are better understood, organizations can better influence events and their resolution (Bartha, 1982). The models also try to highlight the regulations affecting firms and how these firms can manage political measures stemming from them (Post, 1978; Buchholz, 1988). Issue life-cycle models describe the development of an issue as evolutionary (Downs, 1972; Ackerman, 1975; Sethi, 1979; Post, 1978; Hainsworth, 1990; Bigelow et al., 1991, 1993; Mahon & Waddock, 1992). The models started by describing the stages that issues go through (Downs, 1972; Ackerman, 1965; Post, 1978) to incorporating these into a life-cycle perspective (Bigelow et al., 1991, 1993; Mahon and Waddock, 1992). Furthermore, issue models progressed from a more strict linear development that an issue evolves through (Downs, 1972; Post, 1978; Bigelow et al., 1991) to allowing deviations from the path (see Mahon & Waddock, 1992; Bigelow et al., 1993), providing hints as to why some issues may remain low salience issues. Nonetheless, issues are seen as following a predicable trajectory (Mahon & Waddock, 1992).

Numerous authors addressed the topic and identified sequential stages that issues go through, usually from a period during which the issue is unthinkable or invisible, to a period of increased attention from stakeholders, and finally to a period in which “new solutions and routines concerning the issue get institutionalized within the society and/or the organization” (Zyglidopoulos, 2003: 72). Although most authors agree on the evolution of an issue, the number of stages (also called phases or periods) that an issue goes through in its life-cycle is seen ambivalently. Ackerman (1975) and Buchholz (1988) for example identified a three-stage model; Post (1978), Sethi (1979), Hainsworth (1990), Bigelow et al. (1991), and Mahon and Waddock (1992) a four-stage model, and Crable and Vibbert (1985) a five-stage model.

These models usually concentrate on different themes, which also has an impact on the stages the authors choose. Ackerman (1975) created one of the more frequently used issue life-cycle models (Näsi et al., 1997). In his model he analysed the responses of business organizations to a social issue and concluded that the responsiveness progresses three phases: from policy, to commitment, to learning. Post’s (1978) model for example concentrates on politicisation of issues. His four stages explore how an issue evolves from arising public concern, to being politicized and finally leading to actions in litigation and legislation. Similarly, Buchholz’s (1988) model addresses issue evolution on the basis of policies. His three stages evolve from *public opinion formulation*, *public policy formulation*, and *public policy implementation*. Their models (Ackerman, 1975; Post 1978; Buchholz, 1988) concentrated on civil society and policies as boundaries of their stages. This approach has however been criticized as it neglects industry strategies and company’s foci on more than one issue at a time (Mahon & Waddock, 1992). Also, they are inadequate in

illustrating the changes that the changing role of corporations, civil society actors and nation states has brought about. Also, the approaches by Ackerman (1975) and Buchholz (1988) do not recognize that issues can already be issues for certain stakeholders before they become public. The same can be said for the model by Crable and Vibbert (1985). In their model, an issue begins with stakeholders demonstrating an interest in an issue and formulating arguments for its cause. Then the issue can, but does not have to, evolve into a status where more important stakeholders accept the potential and assert influence in the issue. During the last stage, the issue has been dealt with and appears to be resolved. Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) take a completely different approach to the cyclical nature of an issue as seen by the public. Their public arenas model argues that the attention of the public is limited and that this scarcity leads to a competitive allocation in public arenas “of discourse and action” (Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988: 70). It is argued that an issue can gain or lose saliency depending not only on the development of the issue itself but also on other factors independent of that. Despite the varying opinions in the literature, it is evident that issue life-cycle models all try to describe an infinitely more complex issue, and therefore inevitably have shortcomings. As a result, based on research questions, existing models need to be adapted.

3.1.3.1 The issue life-cycle model by Bigelow, Fahey and Mahon

Bigelow et al. (1991, 1993) have been trying to overcome the limitations of linear evolving models (such as natural history models). The foremost difference is that they acknowledge that an issue’s evolution begins before positions of stakeholders are established. Their four-phase model begins with the *emergence phase*. Here, an issue emerges as facts are diffused to stakeholders, the implications are however not well understood. During the *interpretation* stage, if stakeholders try to increase the salience of an issue, they do so by formulating public interpretation of the issue. It is in these first two stages when individual stakeholders become active. The following two stages are affected by multiple stakeholders and advocates. The *positioning* stage means that the issue becomes framed by positions and opinions of the various stakeholders. This involves stakeholders being active, e.g. through lobbying, creating coalitions, and constituency (see Keim & Zeithaml, 1986). In the *resolution* stage, the case slowly draws to a close with agreements over an issue being reached. Similarly to the other models described above (e.g. Post, 1978; Buchholz, 1988), public policy formulation, e.g. negotiations leading to enforcements of standards, lead to a perceived end of an issue. Most importantly however, this does not mean that an issue will evolve from one stage to the last, in which it will inevitably be resolved for good. They (Bigelow et al., 1993) acknowledge three forces that cause deviations from the linear path of an issue’s life-cycle. Facts, and the emergence of new ones, can diffuse or increase the intensity of an issue’s evolution by influencing public opinion. This can also be the case long after an issue has subsided into low salience, i.e. in the *resolution* stage. Secondly, they describe that stakeholders increase and decrease their level of participation during an issue. Dedication by stakeholders and stakeholder groups can keep issues alive even if the attention of the majority is low. Also, the prolonged

attention can lead to the issue being brought back into public attention. Thirdly, they describe that other issues can emerge in the public agenda leading to a competition in public interest. Thus, the public can lose interest in one issue long before it has reached a solution.

3.1.3.2 Limitations of life-cycle models

How can models sufficiently describe issues? The answer is: they cannot. Jaques (2007) for example argues that a major weakness of life-cycle models is that their linear approach suggests that activities and events occur in sequential order. Furthermore, he argues that models imply that different issues are managed concurrently whereas similar issues are dealt with consecutively. But as described above, in reality an issue is not necessarily a linear or sequential process but is influenced by stakeholders and the issues complexity (Bigelow et al., 1993). Similarly, Lamertz et al. (2003) criticise life-cycle models following a natural history approach for being artificial due to issues frequently deviating from predictable and linear paths.

One reason why models have their limitations is that they concentrate on differing spheres. For example, Mahon and Waddock's (1992) approach is limited to corporations or public institutions facing issues. Other models emphasize the political sphere (e.g. Bigelow et al., 1993), corporations' point of views (e.g. Penna & Geels, 2012), or the public perception (Downs, 1972; Post, 1978). Furthermore, micro as well as macro perspectives of themes have been emphasized (Zyglidopoulos, 2003).

Another shortcoming of most models is that while they consider that the popularity and awareness of issues decline after the issue is addressed and actions are taken (Post, 1978; Bigelow et al., 1993) and that issues can increase their salience again after a period of low salience (Bigelow et al., 1993; Mahon & Waddock, 1992), it has not yet been conceptualized what factors are contributing to this. A look at the last stages of popular issue life-cycle models gives further address where this argumentation can lead; some authors have described the latest stage as a period of dormancy (Crabbe & Vibbert 1985) or resolution (Hainsworth, 1990; Bigelow et al., 1991). This indefinite "open" ending to an issue leaves room for more definite stages at the end of an issue's perceived life-cycle. Indeed, newer findings suggest that issue life-cycle models need better contextualisation. In their issue life-cycle study of corporations' political actions, Tian and Fan (2008) identified a so-called *policy trial*. This additional stage is exemplified in the study by China's government implementing experimental policies in order to analyse company responses for formal policies.

Another shortcoming of models is that they either do not question the rationality of actors' actions or they simply assume that actors act rationally (Bonardi & Klein, 2005). There are however several considerations showing that actors can indeed act irrationally. For example, stakeholder groups have been observed to act based on their identity, which is fuelled by interests and utility (Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003). Also, internet-based communications, such as social media or forums, often increases non-rational behaviour because showing support to certain topics is simple and does not necessarily require

high levels of commitment and self-interest calculations. Furthermore, a media-hype itself can be seen as an irrational reaction, which is further fuelled by moral entrepreneurs who can have a major influence on the creation or emergence of issues (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Cohen, 2002)

In sum, due to their inherent simplicity, none of the models can capture the phenomenon of issues moving back and forth between stages and phases. Instead of attempting to prove whether one model works better than another in terms of issue life-cycle, this thesis seeks to frame the issue of Korneuburg by locating and identifying the crucial events and how they were interpreted and proliferated by the media.

3.1.4 Environmental issues and their life-cycles

As already mentioned in chapter 3.1.1, environmental issues perceived by the public as disconnected from human society are more limited in their creation and salience than public social issues. Therefore, environmental issues are often framed as social and public ones in order to create higher salience. In a study analysing the greenhouse effect in print media (Wilkins, 1993) the importance of adjusting journalistic values from fact based scientific values is highlighted, as it increases the readers' accessibility to information. Otherwise, the information in the articles only serves the scientific, economic, and governmental decision making processes. Wilkins (1993) argues that an environmental issue that is framed as an environmental problem will only reach a very theme-specific audience and not the general population.

The analysis of mass media was the most used scientific approach to analyse environmental issues over time. Environmental pollution, risks, and specific environmental issues and their representation in the media have been studied extensively during the past decades. In the context of media analyses, the very broad issues of climate change and global warming, and air and water pollution, stand out in terms of the quantity of studies, the repetition of very closely related approaches to the topics, and the return to similar studies over time.

Climate change and global warming are the environmental issues that have been analysed by far the most frequently (Trumbo, 1996; Mazur, 1998; McComas & Shanahan, 1999; Weingart et al., 2000; Brossard et al., 2004; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007; O'Brian, 2006; McGrail et al., 2012), issues that are also usually seen as social issues, as they influence human societies, economically as well as socially. Interestingly, some scholars and politicians still deny that global warming is man made or even happening at all. Also, environmental issues (in general) (Sekar, 1981; Dunlap, 1991; Mazur & Lee, 1993), environmental risks (Dunwoody & Peters, 1992), and environmental problems (Parlour & Schatzow, 1978; Dunlap & Scarce, 1991) have been studied using media data to analyse their development over time; the latter two of which have been assessed based on the social dimension of the risk or problem.

The primary data sources for many studies on environmental topics are national newspapers, but also journals and magazines (Ungar, 1992; Wilkins, 1993), as well as polls (Dunlap & Scarce, 1991; Dunlap, 1991; Trumbo, 1995). In rare cases television broadcasts (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007) have been used. Also,

company disclosures have been repeatedly used to analyse environmental issues over time (Gray et al., 1995; Deegan et al., 2002; Cho, 2009; Summerhays & De Villiers, 2012; Rweyendela, 2014).

Many studies used quantitative content analysis as a method; in rare cases quantitative data was correlated (e.g., Ader, 1995; Sampei & Aoyagi-Usui, 2008). Doulton and Brown (2008) used discourse analysis for their ten-year study on climate change in United Kingdom press, similar to Weingart et al. (2006), who studied communication of global warming in German politics, media and science. Qualitative data was used only occasionally. For example Brossard et al. (2004) used a comparative case study on their otherwise statistical analysis of The New York Times and Le Monde articles on global climate change.

Environmental issues have been scrutinized mostly from the point of view of sociology and communications science. Therefore, many studies used associated theoretical frameworks, such as agenda setting (Ader, 1995; Trumbo, 1995; Mazur, 1998), narratives (McComas & Shanahan, 1999), social problems theory (Trumbo, 1996), claims making (Ungar, 1992), or framing (Trumbo, 1996; Takahashi, 2010). Moreover, legitimacy theory (Deegan et al., 2002; Cho, 2009; Summerhays & De Villiers, 2012; Rweyendela, 2014) has been repeatedly used in corporate social responsibility research.

Life-cycle models have however only been applied in very few studies on environmental issues (Ungar, 1992; Mazur & Lee, 1993; Trumbo, 1996; McComas & Shanahan, 1999; Brossard et al., 2004; Boykoff & Roberts, 2009). Ungar (1992) used the public arenas model by Hilgartner and Bosk (1988) for the assessment of global warming as a social problem. The study analysed several newspapers, journals, magazines and books in a five-year timeframe. Many other studies (Mazur & Lee, 1993; Trumbo, 1996; McComas & Shanahan, 1999; Brossard et al., 2004) used Downs' (1972) five-stage issue attention cycle model. However, only some studies (Trumbo, 1996; Brossard et al., 2004) question the limitations of the application of a natural history model such as Downs (1972) to an environmental social issue, whereas others do not discuss or question its limitations. In their recent case study, Boykoff and Roberts (2009) analysed the past criticism of both aforementioned models by Downs (1972) and Hilgartner and Bosk (1988), concluding that the latter's public arenas model is more fitting in its description of the topic of climate change and subsequently adjusted it slightly towards increased accuracy.

Nonetheless, both models have served well to increase the knowledge about issue life-cycles and their salience. Trumbo (1996) for example noticed in his study that actors played a different role in the media as well as throughout the issue's life-cycle. Scientists were quoted in the media most often about the causes and problems related to climate change and politicians and interest groups were quoted most often about (moral) judgements and possible solutions. Throughout the course of the issue's life-cycle, the percentage of scientists being quoted decreased over time, whereas that of politicians and interest groups increased. From the point of view of an environmental issue, similar to that of a social issue, high-attention events affect the salience positively (Ungar, 1992, 1995). More specifically, issues that raise controversy or inspire conflicts often lead to increased salience (McComas & Shanahan, 1999).

Social factors affect the attention paid to a specific issue both positively and negatively (Hilgartner & Bost, 1988). Mass media plays an integral role in the assessment of environmental issues by the public (Schoenfeld et al., 1979; Spector & Kitsuse, 1977) and the language used in the media can influence the salience of an issue (Weingart et al., 2000).

In a recent study, McGrail et al. (2012) created a new framework for analysing social issues based on a variety of existing models (Downs, 1972; Bigelow et al., 1991; Rivoli & Waddock, 2011) and technology analysis tools. As a result, their (McGrail et al., 2012) study contributed to existing models by adding a stronger temporal attribute, thus improving accuracy in the maturation process and more importantly in the future development of a social issue. Another recent study (Penna & Geels, 2012) successfully applied the issue life-cycle model with the *Greening of Industry*, a topic that concerns itself with integrating sustainability in the industry. Their historical case study analysed air pollution problems and the analogue reactions of automakers in the United States of America.

3.2 Actors and their influence strategies

Stakeholder theory was used in this study as a basis for assessing the various actors' behaviour and subsequently analyse the collaboration and confrontation strategies used in the course of this case. For the analysis of the issue of Korneuburg, three questions would need to be answered:

1. Who are the stakeholders?
2. What do these stakeholders want?
3. How will they try to achieve this?

Question one addresses the attributes and the constellation of the various stakeholders. Question two is concerned with the stakeholders' goals and objectives and question three with their means.

Following the introduction of stakeholder theory and the terms is a short introduction to stakeholder characterization schemes. One main aim of this thesis is analysing the intervention strategies of the issue's various stakeholders for which Frooman's (1999) model of stakeholder influence strategies was chosen. Stakeholder intervention strategies are shortly reviewed and Frooman's model will be explained in more detail as well as its limitations and criticism. Also, resource dependency theory is introduced, which is the basis of Frooman's model.

3.2.1 Stakeholder theory and the term stakeholder

Stakeholder theory has been flushed to the heart of management literature through the work of Freeman (1984) in which he details the individuals and groups who can affect a corporation and how corporations can give regard to these so-called stakeholders. It might be conspicuous that Freeman's (1984)

approach to stakeholder theory, and that of most other scholars as to date, is centered around a corporation whereas this thesis sees the issue in the centre of a network of stakeholders. Defining the term stakeholder will give more clarity in this regard.

The literature offers an abundance of definitions for stakeholders but little agreement over which is the best. Miles (2011) found as much as 435 definitions for the term stakeholder in the 493 analysed articles, further strengthening the belief that the terms definition might be too ambiguous to ever allow stakeholder theory to have the status of a theory (Freeman et al., 2010: 63). Therefore, one or many definitions can co-exist depending on the approach the research is taking.

Freeman (1984), as the forerunner of stakeholder theory, defined a stakeholder as any person, group or organization that can affect or is affected by a firm's actions. It is a very broad definition and has for that reason been repeatedly criticized (e.g. Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Mitchell et al., 1997; Phillips, 2003; Frooman 2010). Also, Freeman's hub and spoke model (1984) sees the firm as the centre of a hub and the stakeholders are connected to the firm through spokes. This goes well in hand with the view that stakeholder theory should by nature be from a management point of view (Donaldson & Preston, 1995) thus the stakeholders of a firm are determined by the viewpoint of the firm. Therefore, many scholars have tried to improve the stakeholder definition upon Freeman's definition. As can be seen in Table 1, numerous schemes have been developed to categorize the types of stakeholders into two, or three groups (Frooman, 2010). Most approaches divide the stakeholders into one group that help a corporation and one that do not help a corporation to achieve its goals through interaction. Other approaches include legitimacy and forms of power as defining characteristics of stakeholders.

This broad and firm-based definition of a stakeholder is however not fitting for this thesis as firms are also seen as existing in networks with their stakeholders (Mahon et al., 2004; Roloff, 2008; Frooman, 2010). Frooman (2010) argues that companies are part of issue networks and thus rather one stakeholder of many to several issues. Therefore, he (Frooman, 2010: 1) defines stakeholders "in terms of who has a stake in an issue". A quite fitting definition for this thesis, in which a stakeholder should rather be defined in regard to the issue of Korneuburg: the firm Kwizda Agro is not the center point of the case of Korneuburg but rather exists in a network with other stakeholders to the larger issue.

Table 1: Stakeholder characterization schemes (adapted from Frooman, 2010: 163)

Researchers	Categorization scheme
Freeman & Reed, 1983: 173	narrow – vital to the success of a firm wide – any group or individual affecting or affected by a firm (c.f., Preston & Post, 1975: 95-98)
Freeman, 1984: 53	legitimate – hold similar values and agendas for action as a firm illegitimate – hold vastly different values/agendas for action as a firm
Freeman, 1984: 142-143	cooperative potential – able to help a firm achieve its objectives competitive threat – able to interfere with a firm's objectives
Carroll, 1989: 21	internal – those inside the organization's formal boundaries external – those outside the organization's formal boundaries
Wood, 1994: 171	single issue – focused on one aspect of firm's operations multiple issue – focused on several aspects of firm's operations
Wood, 1994: 171	social – concerned with how the firm's activities affect issues usually not expressed in terms of dollars or tangibles economic – involved in the supply/distribution of firm's material and financial resources
Clarkson, 1994: 5	voluntary – bear risk due to investment of value in a firm involuntary – at risk by a firm's activities
Clarkson, 1995: 106-107	primary – engage in essential transactions with a firm secondary – engage in non-essential transactions with a firm
Mitchell et al., 1997: 865-870	urgent – exert claims that are time-sensitive and critical legitimate – exert claims deemed appropriate by societal norms powerful – able to force others to act in particular ways.
Frooman, 1999: 200	direct – possess a resource critical to a firm indirect – lack a resource critical to a firm
Friedman & Miles, 2002: 8	compatible/incompatible – whether ideas and material interests are shared necessary/contingent – whether parties are dependent/integrally connected
Rowley & Moldoveanu, 2003: 208	interest based – have shared material interests identity based – value common identity gained by membership
Phillips, 2003: 30-31	moral – contribute to the firm's success derivative – have power and can affect the firm
Hart & Sharma, 2004: 10	core – have power, legitimacy, or urgency fringe – remote, weak, poor, isolated, nonlegitimate, nonhuman
Pajunen, 2006: 1265	minor – have no influence on organization's survival potential – have potential to influence on organization's survival governing – have direct influence on organization's survival
Su et al., 2007: 308	core – managers responsible for firm's strategic decision-making major – supply critical resources or can harm firm directly peripheral – influence the major stakeholders, and thus the core indirectly

3.2.2 Stakeholders of an issue and their influence strategies

As already stated in 3.2.1, firms can find themselves in situations where they are one of many stakeholders of a specific issue, such as in the case of Korneuburg. Nonetheless, stakeholders of a specific issue will try to influence other, possibly responsible or more powerful, actors in order to achieve their means. Frooman (1999: 191) identified three questions that need to be answered in order to define interests that one actor can have in another: "Who are the stakeholders [...], what do they want [...] [and] how are they going to try to get it?"

The first question addresses the attributes of the stakeholders, whereas the second and third at their means and ends, respectively. Regarding the term stakeholder as defined by Freeman (1984), Goodpastor (1991) concludes that the definition implies that two types of stakeholders exist - strategic and moral stakeholders. Frooman (1999) argues that stakeholder literature overlaps with strategy literature in the case of strategic stakeholders and in the case of moral stakeholders with ethics literature. The strategic one can affect a firm and therefore has to be managed (Freeman 1984). The idea of managing stakeholders stems from strategy literature (e.g. Freeman 1984; Clarkson, 1995) and solely looks at the stakeholders from firms' perspectives. The moral stakeholder on the other hand is one that is affected by the firm. Here, the interests of the firm and the stakeholders are sought to find a balance, stemming from ethics literature (e.g. Wicks et al., 1994; Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Neither approach does however take the vantage point of the stakeholders, and can therefore not account for how they want to influence the firm, their decisions and thus their behaviour.

3.2.3 Frooman's model of stakeholder influence strategies

Frooman (1999) developed a model that aimed at finding answers to how stakeholders will try to influence firms. Generally speaking, the model assesses the resource relationships between the stakeholder and the firm: who is dependent on whom. These relationships will then give answers to which types of strategies a stakeholder will (most likely) choose.

The model (1999) is based on resource relationships and thus on resource dependence theory. This theory was foremost developed by Pfeffer & Salancik (1978). They argued that the power to control an organization externally, lies in the relationships of resources and dependencies. Resource dependence theory, a type of open-systems theory (Katz & Kahn, 1966), focuses mainly on social actors affecting focal organizations, and the organizations' possibility to actively respond to these actors (Oliver, 1991; Donaldson, 1995). It has been argued in several studies that while agency theory and network theory have helped in developing stakeholder theory, these theories cannot explain or foresee a development in which negotiations break off because interests diverge. In this case, power can be seen as the major determining factor for the outcome of such a struggle (e.g. Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Pfeffer, 1981; Molm, 1990, 1997; Molm et al. 1999). Thus, resource dependence theory can be a valid approach to help understand motives behind stakeholder actions.

Generally speaking, resource dependence applies when one actor is in one or more levels dependent on the supply of a resource that is under major control of another actor. This dependence can reach criticality when a firm cannot exist without the input of this resource or when the resource is the output (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). A second sphere essential for this theory is mentioned above: power. Salancik & Pfeffer (1978) argue that in terms of resource dependence, power of one organization exists when the exchanges between the two are asymmetric. Another step ahead, Lawler & Yoon (1995) add that one organization has power over another if their dependence is lower in relation to each other. Thus, the need for specific resources of one firm enables another to gain leverage over it. This leverage over another firm can therefore be called resource control (Frooman, 1999).

The access to resources can be controlled in two ways. Firstly, an actor can decide whether another other actor receives the resource it needs, and secondly by “determining whether the firm can use the resources in the way it wants” (Frooman, 1999: 196). Therefore, strategies to influence other actors or stakeholders can either involve *withholding* a resource/s from another or continuing the supply of a resource but only under certain conditions – the so called *usage* strategy. Furthermore, actors can be influenced by *direct* and *indirect* strategies. The former means that a stakeholder influences flow of resources itself, e.g. consumers boycotting a firm’s product, and the latter means that a stakeholder influences an ally to manipulate the resources of another stakeholder or firm, e.g. an NGO influencing consumers to boycott a firm’s product.

3.2.3.1 Types of resource relationships

This introduction to resource dependence and subsequent strategy possibilities is crucial for understanding the relationships between the resources of two stakeholders. Table 2 shows the types of resource relationships as stated by Frooman (1999). As stated above, power, and the power relations between actors, is the foundation of resource dependency theory. The table summarizes the different possible resource relationships between a stakeholder and a firm. In case of an issue, this model is also valid for the resource relationships between two different stakeholders. In this case, the questions would be “Is stakeholder A dependent on stakeholder B” and vice versa. Two answers would differ: if stakeholder A is dependent on stakeholder B, then stakeholder B has power over A, and vice versa.

Table 2: Resource relationships (adapted from Frooman, 1999:199)

		Is the stakeholder dependent on the firm?	
		No	Yes
Is the firm dependent on the stakeholder?	No	Low interdependence	Firm power
	Yes	Stakeholder power	High interdependence

3.2.3.2 Types of influence strategies

The aforementioned resource relationships suggest that they also drive the choice of possible influence strategy types, as shown in Table 3

Table 3: Influence strategies (adapted from Frooman, 1999:200)

, which stakeholders of a firm will apply (Frooman, 1999). Here, the degree of the firm dependence determines the strategy use of the stakeholder. The firm does not need to respond to a stakeholder it is not dependent on, and but will respond to those it is dependent on (Pfeffer, 1982). Thus, a stakeholder will use *direct* strategies if the firm depends on them and use *indirect* strategies if the firm does not depend on them. "As the degree of dependence increases, the more tightly the focal firm's outcomes become tied to its resource providers. Therefore, a high level of dependence of the stakeholder on the firm means that the welfare of the stakeholder is closely tied to the welfare of the firm." (Frooman, 1999: 200). Furthermore, as mentioned above, actors can use *withholding* and *usage* strategies depending on whether their actions against the firm could have a negative impact on themselves. Therefore, the former would be used if the stakeholder does not depend on the firm, and the latter if the stakeholder depends on the firm.

Table 3: Influence strategies (adapted from Frooman, 1999:200)

		Is the stakeholder dependent on the firm?	
		No	Yes
Is the firm dependent on the stakeholder?	No	Low interdependence -> indirect/withholding	Firm power -> indirect/usage
	Yes	Stakeholder power -> direct/withholding	High interdependence -> direct/usage

In the case of *low interdependence*, stakeholders will tend to influence a firm with *indirect* strategies, as the two actors' welfare is not directly linked. Another stakeholder will be needed to achieve their aims. As there would be no harm to themselves, they will try to use a *withholding* strategy. *Stakeholder power* occurs when the stakeholder is independent of the firm, but the firm depends on the stakeholder. Stakeholders would therefore choose again a *withholding* strategy, but would try to cut the firm off its dependent resource *directly*. In the case of *high interdependence*, it becomes tricky. Similarly as before, the dependence of the firm on the stakeholder will allow the stakeholder to *directly* influence the flow of resources. However, as their own fate is connected to the company, they will not want to cut the resource off but demand certain conditions to future supply of the resource. A *usage* strategy would be applied. In the case of *firm power*, the stakeholder can neither directly influence the resource flow nor does it want negative repercussions for itself by threatening the firm's success. Thus, an *indirect/usage* strategy, would be the prime choice of strategy.

3.2.3.3 Limitations and modifications

Like all models, Frooman's (1999) has its shortcomings. He himself states (Frooman, 1999: 202) that "although determining who is dependent on whom may not be problematic, determining the extent of that dependence may be." It can also be argued whether it is easy to determine who is dependent on whom. Reasons could be for example that not all information about the connections between two actors is usually known to a third person, i.e. the researcher. This information, such as hidden motives, illegal activities or even personal relations, between firm and stakeholder employees, could possibly turn the perceived power balance around. Also whistleblowers could give one stakeholder leverage over another without the researcher knowing it. Hendry (2005: 94) states that the "model is too parsimonious to adequately explain the array of influence strategies and related alliances. A more complex model is needed, addressing alliances formed not just with more powerful stakeholders of the targeted firm but with others whom the focal stakeholder organization identifies as being suitable partners."

Hendry (2005) empirically tested Frooman's (1999) model on Environmental Non-governmental Organizations (ENGOS) and noticed another deviation important for this thesis: Contrary to Frooman's belief that firms and ENGOS are in low interdependence relationships, it was observed that "ENGOS have power over firms if the firms believe the ENGOS have power and act correspondingly" (Hendry, 2005: 94). Also, partnerships between firms and ENGOS were created, hinting at a higher interdependence relationship. As a

result, Hendry (2005) created an adjusted model of ENGO and other stakeholders' influence strategy selection. As seen in Table 4, the model lists four factors that determine the influence strategy selection. (1) Stakeholders that have had previous experience using a particular tactic are likely to reuse it in a new setting. (2) Stakeholders have shown to pursue a certain tactic or strategy because the opportunity had arisen, e.g. Greenpeace informed NGOs about the imminent arrival of genetically modified organisms, and as a result, some NGOs decided to take action. (3) Often times the financial and human resources of NGOs and actor groups are limited and therefore they primarily use tactics that will produce large results with as little resources as possible. (4) All actors are prone to seek alliances. The type of alliance has a strong influence on the strategy the actors from the alliance will choose.

Hendry's (2005) research has revealed that stakeholders do not pursue lobbying in all circumstances. They will lobby their cause if they desire long-term and permanent changes, such as environmental standards, usually within an entire sector or industry. Also, lobbying is an option when firms of the targeted industry cannot benefit from the lobbying efforts. However, lobbying is not an option if the ENGO's public image is affected in an undesired way.

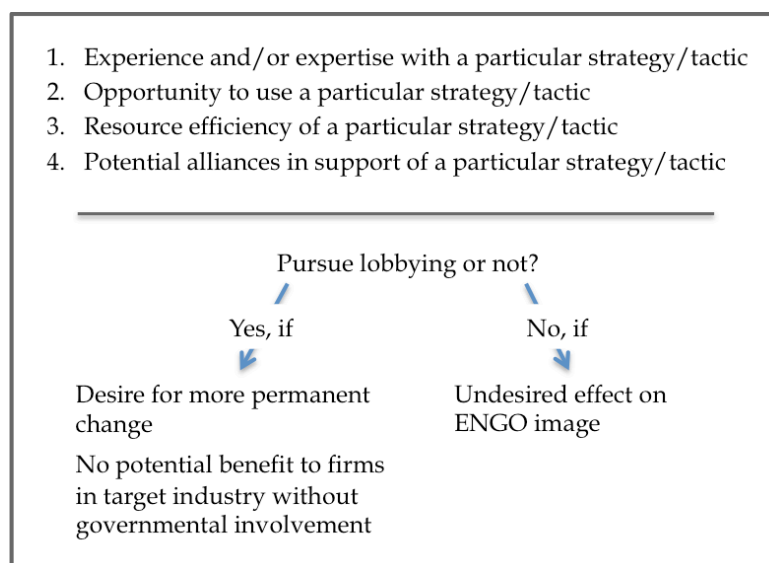


Figure 4: Stakeholder influence strategy selection (adapted from Hendry, 2005: 96)

This model is not particularly issue specific and aims at understanding ENGO strategies to influence firms. Nonetheless, Hendry (2005) also notes that the model, firstly, is not only applicable for ENGOs, but also for other stakeholders, and secondly, she gives examples of ENGOs creating partnerships with firms, other NGOs and activist groups in order to achieve mutual goals concerning an issue. Thus, the model is also usable for issues as well as stakeholder relationships.

3.3 The theoretical approach of this thesis

The theoretical framework of this thesis is comprised of two overarching themes: issue life-cycle models and stakeholder influence strategies. An issue life-cycle model approach is used to analyse how two newspapers reported on the groundwater contamination of Korneuburg. Several important terms have been introduced and defined as deemed suitable to this thesis. Furthermore, the literature review of other scholars analysing life-cycles of environmental issues revealed that agenda setting and framing have been repeatedly used. The model of Bigelow et al. (1991) was used as one of several appropriate and possible models as a framework for this thesis. Downs' (1978) model was by far the most often used model in past studies, and it focuses solely on the media attention to issues. This thesis does not solely rely on the two newspapers as sources of information for the issue, yet also other media sources as well as information gathered from interviews was used. After all, as stated by Bigelow et al. (1991), an issue can move from one phase to the other – and back. Thus, using a media based generic natural history model such as Downs' (1978) was ruled out. Furthermore, trying to fit a highly complicated issue such as the one in Korneuburg into any model would have been artificial, as this would not have represented reality. Therefore, the model by Bigelow et al. (1991) was used not to explain the issue itself, but rather as a framework for the development of the issue. This frameworks' main contribution was indeed the media data of two newspapers but also additional information was used in order to create a more detailed life-cycle description.

The second theoretical approach, stakeholder influence strategies, is also used to analyze the issue of Korneuburg. Although other researchers have been analysing the strategies used by stakeholders in general as well as environmental stakeholders, only few empirical studies have been conducted in this area. Therefore, the analysis of an environmental issue can be seen as a new approach within the field of stakeholder influence strategies. Again, the stakeholder influence strategy models by Frooman (1999) Hendry (2005) are used mostly as frameworks to create further understand of the issue of Korneuburg. The influence strategies of the stakeholders of Korneuburg were revealed through interview analysis, media analysis, and other publically available information. The real importance of some stakeholders for the development of the issue has however only been revealed in the interviews.

The theoretical framework of this thesis, as depicted in Figure 5, does not attempt to prove or disprove the influence strategy models or issue life-cycle models, but rather aims to create greater understanding of the issue. Furthermore, the combination of both theoretical frameworks leads to an understanding of the effectiveness and usage of the strategies over time, as well as an in-depth understanding of the issue itself.

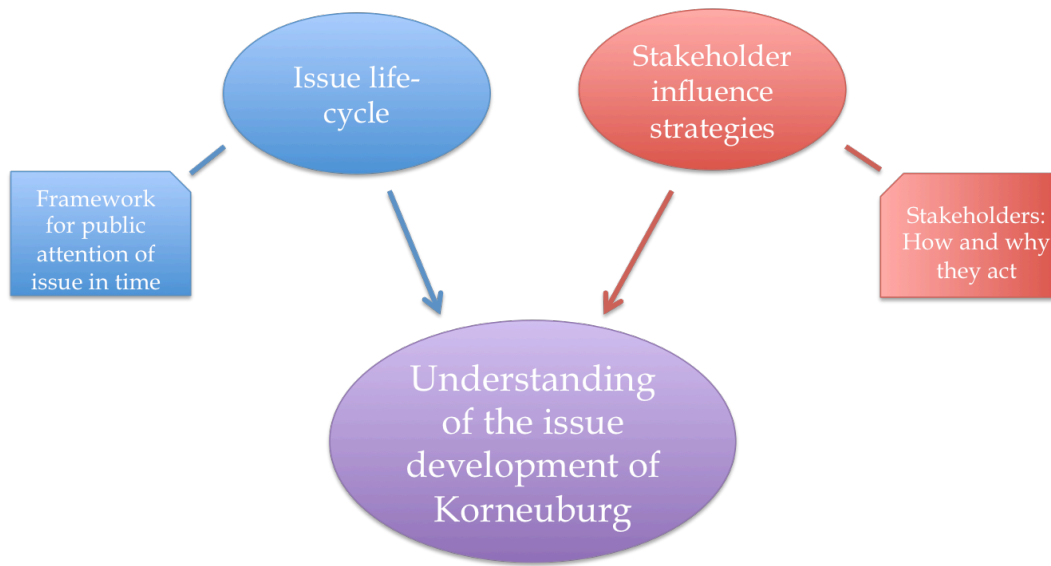


Figure 5: Model of theoretical framework

4 RESEARCH METHODS

The methodological approach of this thesis is divided up in several phases: understanding the groundwater contamination of Korneuburg, a quantitative media analysis and its subsequent update, and a qualitative interview analysis. Qualitative and quantitative approaches have been viewed for a long time as two different paradigms, though recently there have been tendencies to unite both approaches (Kelle & Erzberger, 2007). A combination of both can be advantageous by compensating the weaknesses of one approach with the strengths from the other, as for example in a case study approach (Kelle, 2008).

There are two ways to connect qualitative and quantitative social research. One involves the integration of the two methods, and the other, a separated implementation of both methods and a consolidation when compiling the results (Kelle & Erzberger, 2007). The former approach is used in this study where qualitative and quantitative methods are combined in a phase model. Table 4 gives a short overview over the phases of this thesis.

Table 4: Overview of methodological approach

Phase	Method	Sample
Understanding the case	Collection, analysis and summarizing information concerning the issue	n.a.
Quantitative newspaper analysis	Collection and analysis of newspaper articles	N=117
Qualitative interviews	Interviews and the analysis of the transcripts	N=7
Update of newspaper analysis	Collection of additional articles and analysis of newspaper articles	N=154

Traditionally, the qualitative phase constructs hypotheses and the quantitative phase tests these (Kelle & Erzberger, 2007), though this does vary between differing scientific cultures. For a case study approach, such an approach can be unsuitable: the case of Korneuburg was a blank page in the research field, thus research questions could only be raised after a significant amount of the resources available for this study were spent in understanding

the non-generic structure of the issue. During the preliminary research stages, in February 2014, the environmental issue of Korneuburg was still in progress, and far from being resolved. Moreover, very little to no scientific data was available. Therefore, the first step in this case study was to gain a deeper understanding of the case.

This proved to be a complex undertaking as the information was scattered in online newspaper articles, the website of the NGO Global 2000 (www.global2000.at), the website of the remediation team (<http://www.grundwassersanierung-korneuburg.at>) and the website (closed as of 03.10.2014 www.grundwasserverseuchung.at) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/grundwasserverseuchung/>) of the citizens' initiative *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*. The results are summarized in chapter 2 and were updated in April 2015.

After gaining this background knowledge, the next step was to formulate an approach that sought to analyse newspaper articles on the topic to (1) help understand how the issue evolved in time and (2) highlight questions that arose through the analysis. After an initial newspaper analysis was finished, a second set of research questions were created and interviews with stakeholders were conducted and analysed. As a last step, the newspaper analysis was updated to the recent proceedings.

4.1 Case study

The groundwater contamination of Korneuburg is a rather new and, scientifically speaking, unexplored phenomenon and many questions were unanswered at the time the research for this study started. Case study research was chosen as the preferred method over others because, as Yin (2014) describes: how and/or why are main components of the research question(s); the study focuses on contemporary events; and the researcher cannot control events based on behaviour.

There is no one definition for a case study but rather several and these definitions have evolved from being somewhat definite in approach, methodology and outline (see Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Yin, 1994; George & Bennett, 2004) to including ambiguity (Lewis, 2003; Gerring, 2004; Yin, 2004). Gerring (2004: 342) defines a case study "as an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units". This loose definition tries to encompass the large variety of approaches: qualitative and quantitative methods; single versus multiple cases; the unit that is studied (such as a natural person, a company, or an event). All of this is studied at a specific time or within a timeframe.

Yin (2014) describes the approach of a case study as a linear but iterative process evolving from a plan to an analysis that is shared with the research community (see Figure 6). Furthermore, the processes in between are interconnected which enables, in theory, constant improvement of the

approach. For example, it might become necessary to change the design of the research after the analysis of data shows faults in the design.

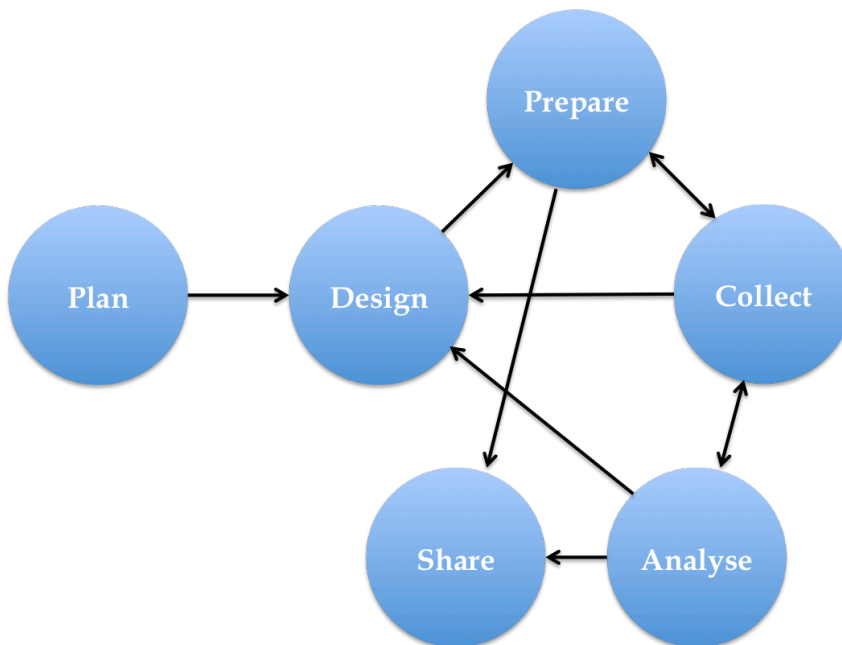


Figure 6: Case study research (adapted from Yin 2014: 1)

Similar to other research strategies, a case study approach faces criticism and certain limitations. The foremost criticism is that case studies have only a limited capability to create generalisations from research findings (Yin, 2014) and some authors even excluded the strategy from having the capability to generalize (Abercrombie et al., 1984; Campbell & Stanley, 1966). While this may be true in some cases, it nonetheless depends on the case and the hypotheses (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Also, case study findings can lead to new theories (Amaratunga & Baldry, 2001) improving the understanding of unique situations (Berg, 2001) and is a strategy used in falsification, a method during which propositions are tested with a case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Another common criticism is that the researcher's subjectivity may cause a case study to have a bias towards verification (Bromley, 1986; Diamond, 1996) and thus conclusions may lack reliability (Becker, 1986). Both criticisms however are present in other methods as well and the decisive factors for objectivity are reproducibility (Berg, 2001) and rigor (Campbell, 1975; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

There are numerous means for researchers to improve the quality of their case study, address its criticism and minimize its limitations. Yin (2014) for example established a strategy, which tests the reliability construct, internal as well as external validity, and reliability (see ANNEX 1).

To ensure reliability, the author of this case study created a protocol for the interviews, a database that contained the raw and edited audio records of the interviews, transcripts and notes taken during and after the interviews, and a database containing all the analysed newspaper articles for the media analysis

and supporting documents for the background chapter. External validity ensures that results from the case study can be generalized. Therefore, the author performed an extensive literature review before analysing the media data and before conducting the interviews. The author demonstrates causal relationships by addressing and building explanations from various angles in the data analysis phase, thus strengthening internal validity. The validity of the research construct is ensured by establishing the most complete chain of evidence about the case and by including multiple sources of evidence, i.e. documents, newspaper articles, and interviews. Triangulation was achieved in the media analysis by analysing two newspapers. Furthermore, the author engaged in close dialogue with the supervisor of the thesis in order to discuss findings of the case. The study could have been further improved by conducting quantitative research on the interview topic(s), though this was not achievable within the scope of this study.

4.2 Media analysis

The media analysis performed in this study covers two news broadcasters with a total of 154 articles. These articles were analysed in order to create in depth knowledge about the actors, themes and the development of the issue over time. Information was then added to chapter 2. After the compilation of the articles was completed, they were analysed quantitatively in order to scrutinise the development of the issue over time. Various phases of the issue life-cycle are described, from the emergence, to the interpretation, positioning, and resolution phase of the issue. Following the finalisation of the interview analysis, the media analysis was updated due to major developments in the case.

4.2.1 Choosing the newspapers and finding the articles

Several aspects and criteria were important for making the decision about which newspapers to choose:

- More than one newspaper was needed for the analysis in order to eliminate bias, e.g. by the politicisation of a newspaper, and create a possibility for comparisons.
- The newspapers should have reached as wide an audience as possible
- All articles of a newspaper had to be analysed in order to have a (more) complete representation of what the newspapers published regarding the issue. Also, a representative but manageable amount of data in terms of articles had to be found (154 articles were analysed in total).
- The selection should represent both a regional and a national broadcaster to detect differences between them,
- The newspapers should have an online presence for ease of accessibility, and
- The broadcasters should be financially and politically independent to decrease bias of the articles.

The national newspaper selected was ORF.at (Austrian Public Broadcast). It is Austria's most widely used online newspaper and publishes issues for the various states of Austria, thus ensuring coverage of regional affairs. As Korneuburg is in the State of Lower Austria, it belongs to ORF Niederösterreich / Lower Austria (or noe.orf.at). ORF is a public service broadcaster and is mainly funded by license fees, similarly to BBC in Great Britain.

The regional newspaper selected was the NÖN (Lower Austria News) weekly newspaper. With a newspaper circulation of around 120.000 per week (OEAK, 2014), it is naturally smaller than the major national newspapers, though considering its constraint on only one state, it has a very significant impact in the region in terms of readership; it is the most sold weekly newspaper in Austria and the State of Lower Austria and only free newspapers have a higher circulation (OEAK, 2014). More importantly, it has 28 local/district editions in print, and a webpage that combines the local and regional articles. Thus, it contains significantly more themes on local topics than a national newspaper.

Google and the webpages' (NÖN.at & ORF.at) search engines were used to find all articles concerning the issue. A large amount of articles were found and subsequently compiled in excel sheets and analysed.

4.2.2 Rationale behind newspaper choice and its limitations

Choosing other regional or national broadcasters with a very high circulation in Austria was a possibility. However, many newspapers highly depend on advertising for financing (Gabszewicz et al., 2001) and such dependence is becoming more volatile (Picard, 2008). Companies (Armstrong & Wright, 2007; Blasco & Sobbrío, 2012) and also politicians (Gabszewicz et al., 2002; Gal-Or et al., 2012) can, and have, influenced newspaper content through the use of advertisements, thus creating bias. Austria's largest newspapers by circulation depend solely or heavily on advertisements. ORF on the other hand is a publicly financed broadcaster, and is seen as very independent of politics and businesses (Breitenecker, 2011; Wenzel, 2012). Readers see it as the most politically independent broadcaster in Austria (Steinmauer, 2012). Furthermore, ORF is by far the most used online broadcaster in Austria (ÖWA, 2015).

The only substitute for NÖN, as a regional newspaper, was the Bezirksblatt Korneuburg. NÖN, a weekly newspaper, generates income from readers, advertisement, and state support. The Bezirksblatt however only advertisements and state support. When choosing any newspaper, the problem of political and financial independency cannot be completely ruled out, as not only the readers but also NGOs see the print media (in general) in Austria as biased (Steinmauer, 2012). Also, the influence of Erwin Pröll, the leader of the leading party in Lower Austria, on newspapers was already described in chapter 1.1.3. In sum, the State's newspapers are not seen as politically critical due to the power a political figure holds over them (Frey, 2014, May 11; Chorherr, 2008, February 25). While the Bezirksblatt has the larger issue quantity, and around 670.000 prints (NOEK, 2014) are dropped in nearly every mailbox in the state once a week, it remains unclear whether the two newspapers and the relevant articles are actually being read. The comparison of

the two newspapers' online presence proved to be difficult. Site access information (ÖWA, 2014) indicates that in 2013 the Bezirksblatt had around 1.870.000 site visits while NÖN had around 460.000 site visits per month. In comparison to other Austrian news sites both can be viewed as rather insignificant. Furthermore, the Bezirksblatt website covers all print versions for all of Austria, while NÖN is restricted to the state of Lower Austria. Thus, a comparison based on the significance of their online presences is rather difficult to achieve for this study. In sum, the Bezirksblatt and NÖN showed to be quite similar in terms of readership and (in-) dependence. Thus the decision for NÖN was placed largely on the subjective assessment that NÖN published more in depth articles on the issue of Korneuburg than the Bezirksblatt. Therefore, NÖN was chosen as the second print medium for analysis.

The limitation of selecting only two newspapers is a point of critique of this study. Naturally, an analysis of more newspapers, as well as a selection of written and online sources, would have given this study a more objective analysis of the issue's representation in the media and the issue's life-cycle. This would also have ensured a higher level of generalisation. However, limited resources prevented a more thorough approach.

4.2.3 Data analysis

The quantitative analysis of the media data took a very similar course to that of most prior studies analysing the life-cycle of environmental issues. Most studies (Mazur & Lee, 1993; Ader 1995; Trumbo, 1996; McComas & Shanahan 1999; Brossard 2004) applied a quantitative content analysis.

The aim of the media analysis was to analyse all articles that ORF and NÖN published concerning the issue. Therefore, a sophisticated search of articles was conducted as described above. All articles were compiled in Excel sheets to allow for statistical analyses. A sophisticated statistical analysis was deemed unnecessary to answer the research questions, and was therefore not used.

The articles were analysed in two ways. Firstly, the number of newspaper articles in relation to time was evaluated. Mazur and Lee (1993) found evidence that the level of public concern is affected by the media's attention in quantitative terms to an environmental issue. Accordingly, this thesis' data analysis investigated the number of articles written about the issue and when. This analysis was achieved by adding the date that the article was published to the excel sheets.

Secondly, the articles' content was analysed in order to draw a connection between article content and time. One goal was to find out who the key actors were and their representation in the media articles. This was achieved by documenting which actors were mentioned in each article. A list of all actors was created, providing for an assessment of the actors' occurrence in articles over time. Furthermore, the articles were scrutinized based on the main themes discussed in the articles and coded into four topics: moral, scientific, political, and legal. This allowed for an assessment based on the thematic development of the issue.

Lastly, the main topics discussed in each article were added to the excel sheet in order to create a database of content on what happened at what time in the issue. Thus, the various topics, events, and actions could be added to a timeline.

4.3 Interview analysis

The primary reason for conducting an interview analysis was to generate a greater understanding of how stakeholders were involved in the issue and how their involvement impacted the development of the issue. The objective was to obtain and assess information that was not available through the media analysis, such as stakeholders' confrontation and collaboration strategies and their influence on the issue.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Individual interviews with stakeholders were conducted using a semi-structured interview method. A semi-structured interview is a method of research commonly used in the social sciences and found in qualitative research (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003; Saunders et al., 2009), sometimes referred to as qualitative research interviews (King, 2004).

"Whereas the unstructured interview is conducted in conjunction with the collection of observational data, semi-structured interviews are often the sole data source for a qualitative research project and are usually scheduled in advance at a designated time and location outside of everyday events. They are generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewees. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are the most widely used interviewing format for qualitative research and can occur either with an individual or in groups." (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 315)

This research technique serves well for exploring perspectives on complex issues and increasing the participation of the interviewee, who is given the opportunity to speak and express opinions freely (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Interviewees also have the chance to highlight or underline issues that are relevant for them (Barriball & While, 1994). The overall process allows for the integration of new relevant information, which is key for topics on which little knowledge is available. Moreover, the act of talking to people enables the researcher to comprehend other perspectives (Burgess, 1982) and is thus imperative to social science research, as language has the power to bring meaning to any aspect and facilitate interaction leading to a deeper understanding of the topic at hand (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

In addition to a semi-structured interview, there is also an unstructured interview. The differentiation between the two is not always clear, though unstructured interviews are usually those in which questions are not

prearranged, and the understanding of what each mean differs in the literature. This may be explained by the various models that exist for each type of interview (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003) and the related circumstance that researchers individually design interviews in order to best suit the need of their work. Semi-structured interviewing was chosen as the preferred technique for this research as it allowed for enough structure to ensure relevance to the topic, while leaving enough flexibility to respond to the different perspectives and contexts (Legard et al., 2003).

Qualitative primary data was collected through conducting interviews. Specific themes and questions, which derived mainly from the preliminary stages of compiling the case study, as well as media analysis and the literature review, were then covered during the conversation. However, in the course of conducting the interviews, some questions became less structured than planned, primarily due to the varying capacity, interest and knowledge of the interviewees and the differences in their experiences and memories of the past events. There was not a strict sequence in the order the questions were phrased and questions were adapted, often to a large extent, depending on the course of the interview. Nonetheless, questions were asked in a manner as to increase the flow of the interview and to help remind the interview partners of the proceedings of the case. The central questions encompassed the individual's involvement in and point of view on the case of Korneuburg.

All interviews were conducted in a face-to-face meeting allowing for the inclusion of social cues, such as body language and intonation, supporting the researcher's analysis. Personal involvement was ensured through the choice of interviewees: A total of seven interviews were held, consisting of representatives from the most important stakeholder groups.

4.3.2 Participants in interviews

Annex 2 shows all the interviews that have been conducted or attempted to conduct. The selection consists of all major actors that have been identified in the preliminary research. Unfortunately not all interview attempts were successful, however the most important actors for the case study were interviewed.

The author contacted all interview partners via email and/or telephone. The emails introduced the author, the research topic and scope of the study, as well as the interviewees' role in the interview. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with individuals, over the course of several months. The interviews always took place in neutral settings, such as conference rooms, and in one case a separate room in a café.

4.3.3 Narrative data analysis

The conducted interviews followed a narrative form, as the author intended to tell a story of the events. The goal was to learn from the case and to use the analysis of the data to draw out a *description* of the case and to *conceptualise* the case, ultimately to provide a structure and deeper understanding of the issue. This narrative approach fits well to the overall objective of obtaining greater

detail on the development of the events over time, and the role of various stakeholders in shaping and influencing these events.

Through a narrative data analysis approach, the author produced, first, a chronological sequencing of events and, second, an analysis of interviews that combine the entire structure of constituent and related elements, in order to form a greater narrative, ultimately reaching a description and conceptualisation of the case study.

Emphasis was placed on influence strategies, by asking questions regarding how actors aimed to influence the issue, and subsequently by analysing their answers and explanations. Existing theory provided a framework to which the author compared the data, i.e. comparisons to Frooman's (1999) model were assessed, especially to find inconsistencies. Furthermore, the questions aimed at building a coherent narrative in order to link strategies with specific actions.

In understanding the course of events, especially in the case of a public scandal, it is the researcher who must interpret the data and make sense of the facts and information gathered through interviews (Turner, 2010). Therefore, the judgement of the researcher is very critical to the outcome of findings. In order to properly analyse data to a high standard with comprehensive results, a well-structured plan is necessary. The following figure illustrates the data analysis steps that were taken for the analysis of the qualitative data gathered for the case study of Korneuburg.

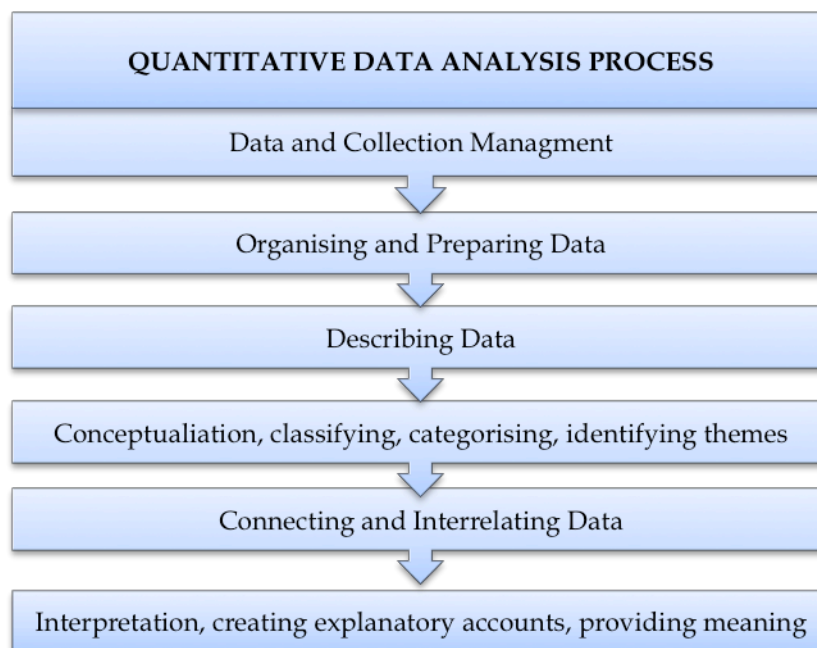


Figure 7: Quantitative data analysis process (adapted from Hoyos & Barnes, Slide 6)

The data was collected in the initial step, which included all the relevant data of the transcripts and written notes during the interview being selected and abstracted. This step helps to exclude off-topic talks during the interview, for example. The data was then organized and prepared; all relevant data from

the transcripts and notes from the semi-structured interviews were assembled, which allowed for the following analysis.

Description in this sense refers to providing an account of the considered case. This thesis provides two sections of description analyses, the first (see chapters 1, 2, and 4.1) includes a description of events, a chronological overview, and a subsequent media analysis. In the second section, data was collected through personal interviews to lead to a greater understanding of the events and actors involved. Focus and detail are important for a descriptive case study, as propositions and questions regarding a particular phenomenon are carefully scrutinized and articulated at the outset (Tobin, 2010). The descriptive theory (what is already known) helps specify boundaries of the case, contributing to the precision of the completed case study (Tobin, 2010).

Conceptualization of the case study was also achieved through the data analysis of interviews through the generalisation of general and abstract categories from the data, and establishing how these categories help explain the phenomenon under study. The researcher is required to gather so-called *think data*, often taking the form of face-to-face open interviews (Doorewaard, 2010). This type of data was then classified, categorized, and themes were identified in order to reveal connections and interrelations within the various narratives and accounts on past events.

Ultimately, these steps of analysis for the interviews built upon the results from the preliminary stages of research for the case study (chronological timeline of events and media analysis), to lead to an overall comprehensive interpretation of the issue in Korneuburg. The data analysis, conducted through a narrative approach, was able to create explanatory accounts of past events, contributing to the depth of the study.

4.3.4 Challenges to analysing influence strategies

During the beginning stages of the research for this case study, the author aimed at analysing the actors' influence strategies during the various life-cycle phases identified in the media analysis. This approach was however abandoned for several reasons. Firstly, the strategies were not separable from the timeline of the issue and overlapped into different phases. Secondly, the issue phases do not have clear timeframes, indicating when they start or end. Therefore, limiting certain strategies to certain but unclear dates would have been artificial. Thirdly, the interviewed actors only had a vague knowledge of dates, e.g. when exactly meetings happened and decisions for strategies were made. In sum, the strategies of the actors can be identified and imprecisely put in chronological order, but cannot be put in line with the issue phases.

5 RESULTS OF RESEARCH

This chapter covers the results from both the quantitative media analysis and the qualitative interview analysis conducted in this study. The former, conducted prior to the interview analysis, generates important knowledge about the contamination of Korneuburg, and identifies (most) key actors and events. The interview analysis provides insight on the central stakeholders' thoughts and actions. This qualitative study also reveals specific information about events, actions, and relationships that were unable to be identified in the media data. Moreover, particular collaboration and confrontation strategies are uncovered. Together, both methods add to a comprehensive analysis of the case study.

5.1 The issue life-cycle of Korneuburg

Looking at the issue of climate change in terms of Bigelow et al.'s (1991) issue-life-cycle is a useful way to present the history of the issue of Korneuburg, and will serve as a tool for approaching the results of this investigation. The media analysis was important for identifying the crucial phases in the issue as well as serving as an indicator of public attention. This section will cover a quantitative analysis of both NÖN and ORF articles and will try to identify the importance of actors and themes as seen by the media. Furthermore, the actors' positions in the issue as analysed through the media data will be presented. Finally, this section will apply Bigelow's (1991) model in order to frame the issue.

5.1.1 Articles and their publication quantity

In this section, articles and their publication quantity will be revealed. Figure 8 shows all articles released by ORF.at and Noen.at covering the topic until the 31st of March 2015. The graph is divided into four phases that illustrate local/regional and regional/national interest in the issue. Additionally, in Figure 9 the publications are grouped into the quarterly periods during which

they were publicised, thus giving more insight into the timeframes when the issue was covered.

NÖN has shown more interest in the topic throughout its life-cycle, having published 108 articles versus ORF having published 46, or proportionally 70% and 30%, in the same period. Particularly in phases I and III, NÖN covered the issue more often. Newspaper coverage started in early August, 2011, with the pesticide Thiametoxam having been found in a groundwater well meant for drinking water and with complaints of residents about stunted plants and the possible connection of the two issues. In this first and early phase of the issue development there is an absence of articles by ORF.at. This is a strong sign that the reported issues were primarily of local importance during this period.

Over a year later, there was a significant increase in newspaper articles with the documentary *Am Schauplatz* (Gordon & Moschitz, 2012) having broadcasted on national TV the extent of the contamination and how authorities have ignored residents' complaints for months. In this second phase, the issue is both of interest regionally and nationally, evidenced by both newspapers having covered the issue instantly. The issue was kept "hot" by more controversial information coming out, the polluter being found, and remediation plans being planned and put into action. In early 2013, remediation measures were already well on their way and the news coverage was primarily about stating such. Coinciding with the summer break, neither newspaper submitted any articles between early July and early September. This second phase clearly came to an end in these months and is over in October/November 2013 when ORF ceased broadcasting the topic altogether.

In the third phase, the issue became a regional issue again. The national newspaper stopped broadcasting the issue completely from November 2013 until Mai 2014 but the regional NÖN kept updating the topic. Nonetheless, in this phase regional interest was also dwindling, seen by a decreased amount of articles being published. Naturally, there was not as much to be discussed, as the remediation measures had become standard procedures and there was no progression about the investigations against both Kwizda and the BH to report on.

The fourth phase started relatively abruptly around the 1st of October 2014, when the investigations against Kwizda came to an end and the public prosecution of Korneuburg announced that there would be a lawsuit against Kwizda in late November/early December of the same year. This was covered by both newspapers and from then on both newspapers followed the topic closely until the end of the assessment period, the 31st of March 2015.

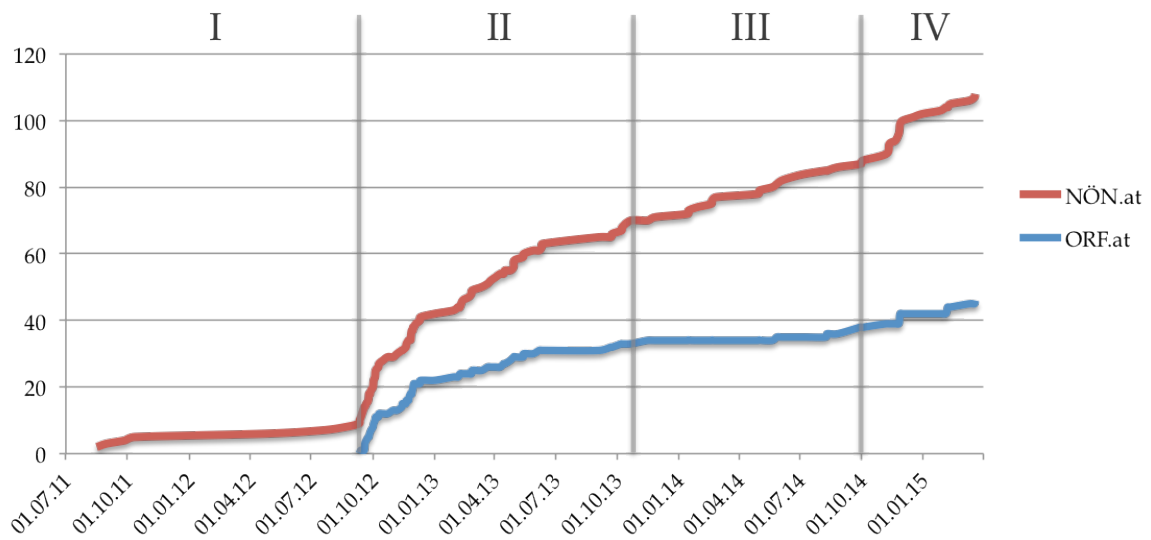


Figure 8: Phases of article releases

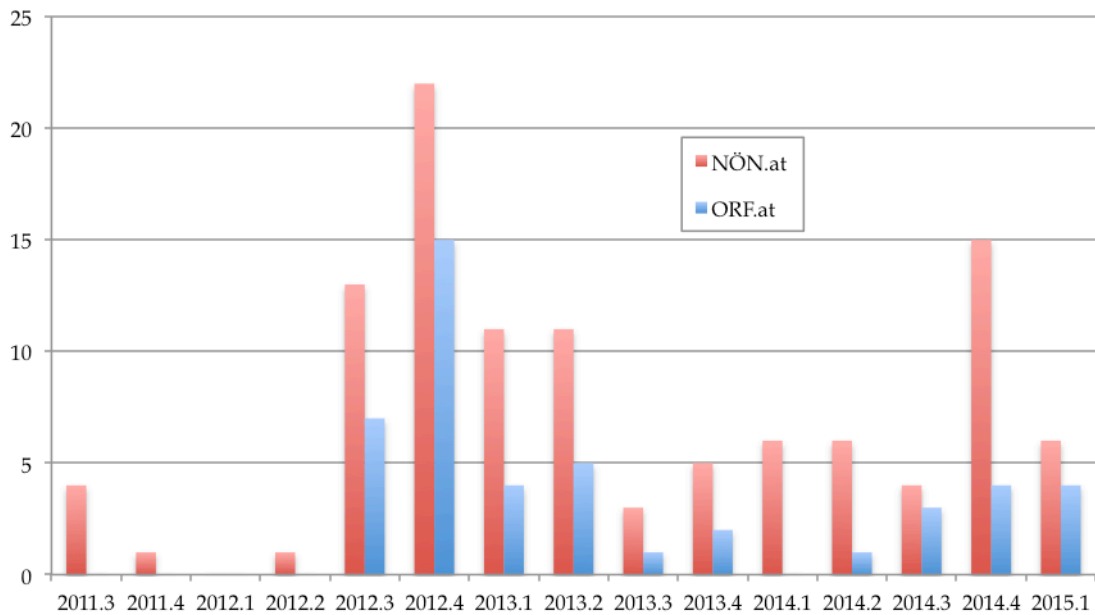


Figure 9: Quartile view of article releases

5.1.2 The actors in the articles

This section analyses the actors as they were mentioned in the newspaper articles. More background information on the actors, as well as their affiliations, is provided in ANNEX 3. The quantitative analysis as seen in Figure 10, revealed that three main actors were mentioned by far the most frequently: the

BH, the company Kwizda Agro, and the NGO Global 2000. In the newspaper articles, the BH was often represented by the district commissioner Waltraud Müllner-Toifl, vice commissioner Gerlinde Draxler, or the former vice commissioner Peter Suchanek. Kwizda was mostly represented by its spokesperson Michaela Hebein, an outreach consultant (Kapp, 2015), and in the latter phases also other Kwizda employees appeared in articles. The chemist, Dr. Helmut Burtscher almost exclusively represented Global 2000. Furthermore, residents and their initiative *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg* with their spearhead Mathias Schabl, and the various politicians, were also frequently mentioned. Of the politicians, the members of the Green Party account for almost half of all the political appearances in the articles, of which Elisabeth Kerschbaum was the most prominent member.

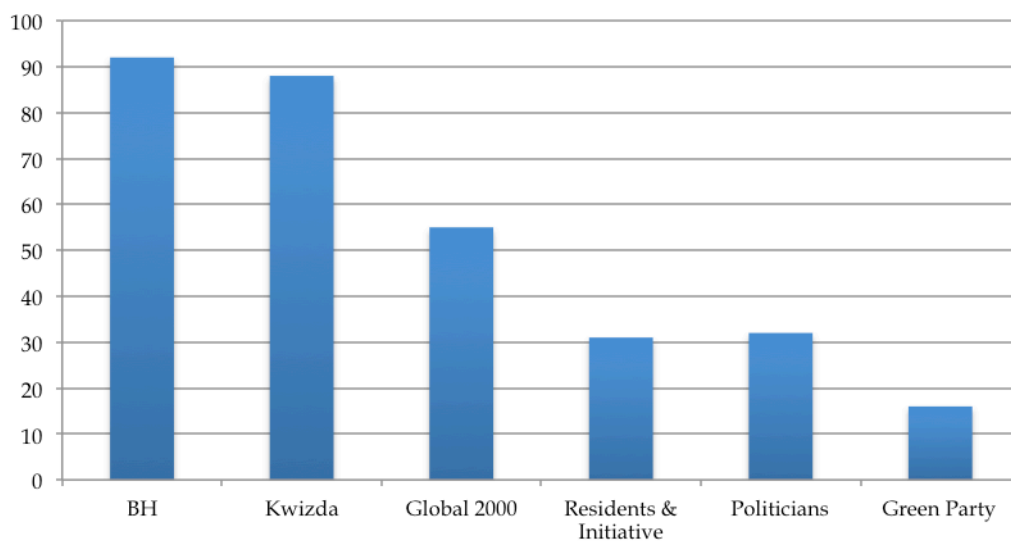


Figure 10: Mentions of main actors in articles

The quartile view depicted in Figure 11 helps further reveal the various actors and their appearance in articles, dependant on time. Whereas the BH and the company Kwizda were mentioned reasonably consistently throughout the issue cycle, it becomes evident that Global 2000 seems to have been a focal actor, especially in the “hot” phase, but was only mentioned twice in the news between June 2013 and November 2014. From then until the end of the assessed period, the NGO reappears frequently as one of the most often mentioned actors. Residents, and starting in late September 2012 also the initiative, were mentioned repeatedly in the first phase and the mid phases when general interest was low. They were, however, completely absent in the last nine quarters of the assessed period. Politicians seem to have caught interest in phase II and also kept their interests up in the later phases of the issue. Their number of mentions in articles does not however lead to the conclusion that the issue was politicised in these phases.

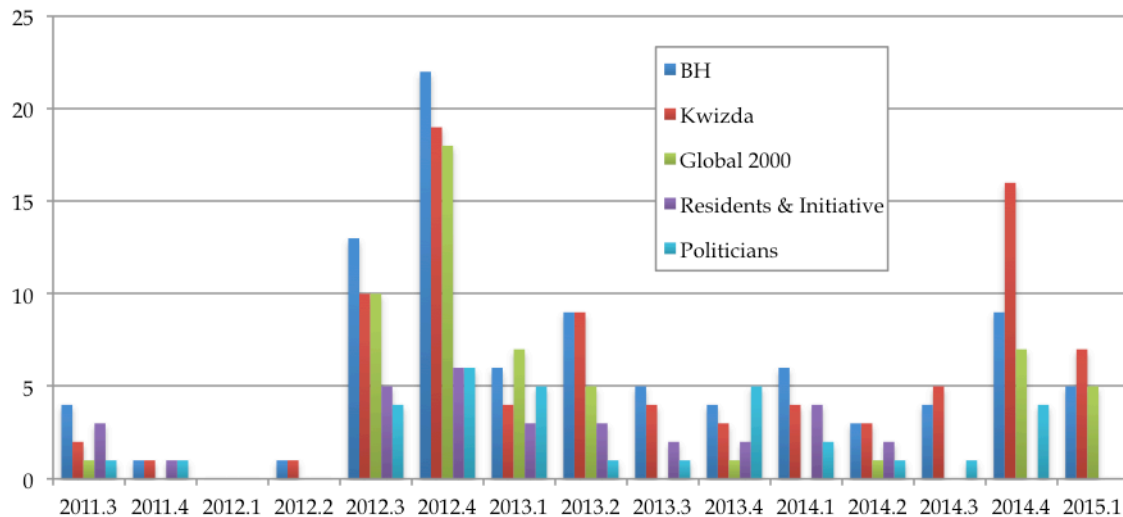


Figure 11: Quartile view of main actors mentioned in articles

Figure 12 shows other actors that were mentioned repeatedly in the newspaper articles and Figure 13 shows their appearance in time. The Expert Team is the remediation team centred around Prof. Werner Wruss, and can be seen as a mediator between the company Kwizda, the BH and the public to explain the various remediation actions. The information given by this actor was usually technical and scientific. Naturally, this actor did not appear until late 2012, when remediation measures started to be planned. In the latter phases, Wruss personally acted to demonstrate Kwizda's legitimacy, for example by commenting on claims by Global 2000. The strengthening of his role as an actor is seen through increasing appearances in the last three quarters of the assessment and he is also the only additional actor that appeared, since the first appearance, consistently in all quarters.

The EVN, a former Austrian state company, now operates in water treatment, natural gas supply and waste management business areas. They are in charge of the drinking waters in the contaminated municipalities. They appeared in articles almost exclusively in the hot phases of the issue when there was public concern about the drinking water being contaminated.

The Staatsanwaltschaft Korneuburg (hereinafter referred to as the public prosecution) is investigating (1) Kwizda as polluter and (2) the BH Korneuburg for complicity. The prosecution appeared first in phase II, when calls for prosecuting the polluters were raised, and then repeatedly in phase IV when their investigations against Kwizda came to an end and the lawsuit was announced and then won. In the last quarter of 2014 almost all articles discussed the lawsuit. Their investigations were concluded in early 2015, when it was decided to move the case to the state court in Vienna due to the possibility of bias. Thus, in the future it is likely that the Viennese state prosecution investigating the BH will appear on the news.

The AGES (Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety) is a public company. They were in charge of assessing the results of the water samples in relation to human, animal and plant health. Parallel to the EVN, they started

disappearing when the concern of water safety disappeared from public attention.

The municipality of Korneuburg was often mentioned in articles without the personal actor behind it being identifiable. Nonetheless, the municipality can be seen as representing its residents as it has a more or less clear position “against” Kwizda and the BH as they are (1) not receiving taxes and other direct benefits from the Kwizda factory and (2) are the ones suffering the consequences of the contaminated groundwater (such as upset residents, bad publicity and reputation, etc.).

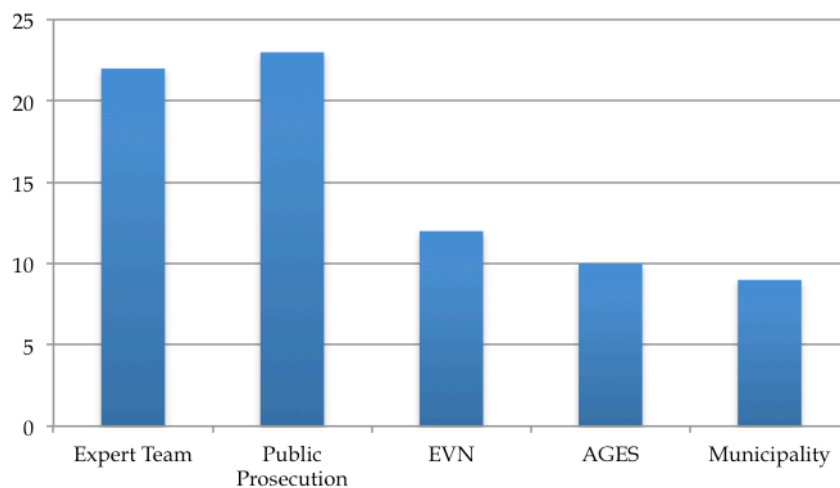


Figure 12: Additional actors

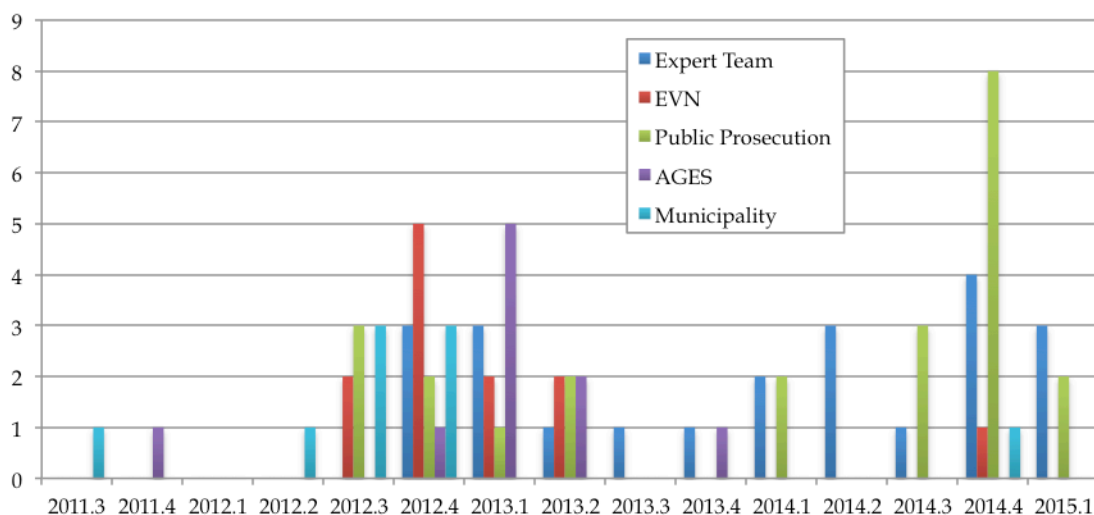


Figure 13: Quarterly overview of additional actors

The following paragraphs analyse differences in how the newspapers mentioned actors in their articles. In absolute terms, all actors found in the newspaper articles were mentioned 407 times of which all main and supporting actors were mentioned 374 times, 283 of these by NÖN and 91 by ORF (76% vs 24%). The newspapers also released 108 and 46 articles respectively. Thus, NÖN mentioned 2.62 and ORF mentioned 1.98 actors per article, which calculates to NÖN mentioning 32% more actors per article than ORF. Also, NÖN mentioned a total of 39 different actors in their newspaper articles whereas ORF mentioned 25 in total. In sum, NÖN has shown to represent more actors in total in their articles than ORF.

The actors as mentioned per published article in the two newspapers are shown in Figure 14. The graph serves the purpose to compare how often the two newspapers mentioned the actors independent of the fact that NÖN published significantly more articles than ORF. In sum, ORF mentioned only Global 2000, Kwizda, and the public prosecution equally as often as NÖN. All other actors were mentioned significantly more often in NÖN articles than in ORF articles. This is especially evident in the actors residents and the initiative, politicians, Expert Team, EVN and AGES. In sum, most supporting actors, the residents and their initiative, as well as local politicians are mentioned more frequently in NÖN than in ORF articles.

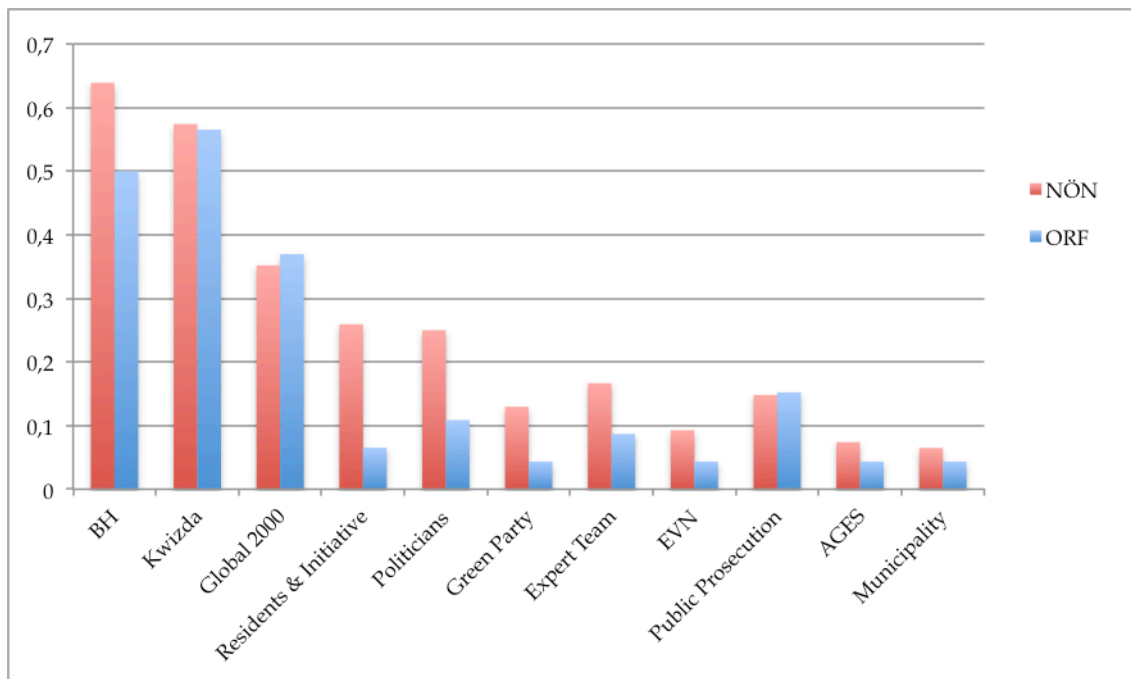


Figure 14: Actors mentioned per published article of NÖN and ORF

This type of analysis cannot explain why the actors are mentioned differently in the two newspapers, however other observations might. One possible explanation is that the newspapers most likely thrive to inform a different clientele: NÖN articles are mainly aimed at readers living in the state of Lower Austria and, with their district edition, also at people living in the

district of Korneuburg. ORF on the other hand aims at readers from all of Austria.

5.1.3 The actors and their positions in the issue

One important question in the issue is on what “side” the actors are. One actor that really defined the public opinion was Kwizda, the polluter. These stances can also be analysed on the basis of publicly available data. The aforementioned newspaper articles will also serve as the basis of this assessment and additional publicly available information, for example the *Am Schauplatz* documentaries or articles from other newspapers, have been used.

Figure 15 shows the important actors in the incident and their stance in the issue towards the polluter Kwizda as observed through the articles. The red and green bubbles represent actors, which seemed to be pulling in the same direction, some also working together as “partners”, whereas the grey bubbles are neutral actors. Thus, this figure not only shows who stands with or against Kwizda but also who stands on more or less opposite sides in the entire issue.

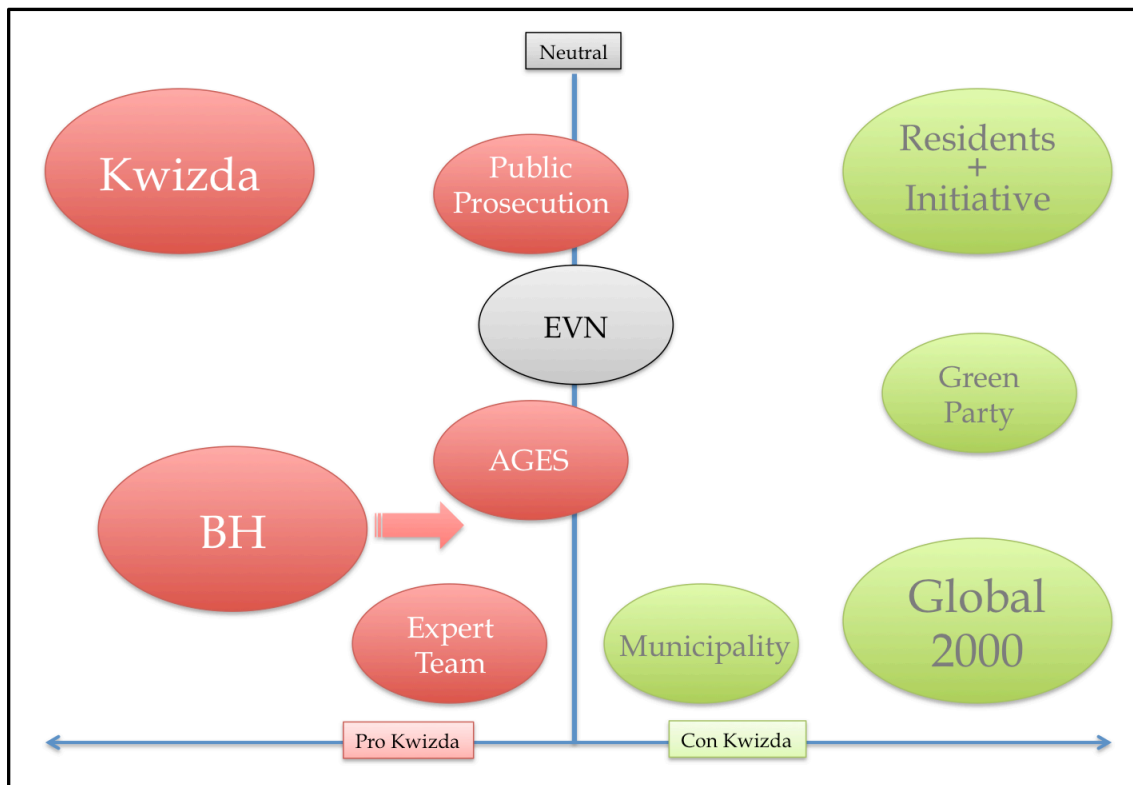


Figure 15: Actors and their position in the issue

The BH was accused by civil rights actors early on that they took a pro-Kwizda stance but their position changed later towards a more neutral position. The BH was protecting the company from the first moment on by not making public the first incident in 2010, when Kwizda reported a leak on the factory grounds to the BH. In the first article found about the topic, from August 2011, the BH stated that there couldn't be a connection with Thiamethoxam in the

groundwater and the Kwizda factory due to the distance⁴. On later occasions, the BH tried to strengthen their and Kwizda's position by holding back information and misinforming the public. The BH and Kwizda's efforts of non-transparency have backfired on several occasions, thus weakening their positions throughout the process. As a result, a public and more transparent debate was held and Kwizda ended up investing several million Euros in addition to the remediation costs in order to re-gain trust.

The Expert Teamteam, namely Prof. Wruss, was hired by Kwizda to plan and execute the groundwater remediation. Additionally, Prof. Wruss serves as a scientific/public spokesperson both for Kwizda and the BH and thus their position is pro Kwizda. Their stance becomes more apparent when analysing some remediation actions chosen by the consulting company, in accordance with the BH, that was discussed as highly controversial in the media⁵. Also a part of this pro-Kwizda group is the Stadtgemeinde Leobendorf. They, similarly to the BH, did not want to lose Kwizda's facility within their premises as taxpayer and employer. Leobendorf officials and their mayor have only been mentioned twice in the articles and have not played an active role in the issue. Their passive role however, can be identified as pro-Kwizda⁶.

A Statement of the Facts was passed over to the public prosecution, which, after having initially dropped a law case in 2012 due to "no obvious connection between the Thiametoxam groundwater contamination and the Kwizda facilities", seemed to have slowly changed positions towards con-Kwizda. However, their investigation against Kwizda and the BH were very slow, which has led to several politicians of various parties criticizing their efforts and calling for haste in the matter. However, dropping the case in the first instance and the controversial lawsuit in late 2014⁷ severely question their non-partiality.

The AGES was also mentioned repeatedly in articles. The agency is in charge of assessing the groundwater and the test results and giving out recommendations to the effect on nature and humans. They are answering

⁴ The BH was probably, as it is not stated clearly in the newspaper article, referring to the incident in the Kwizda factory in August 2010 where Thiamethoxam leaked from a well. As groundwater moves very slowly, it is not possible the pesticide it leaked in 2010 and moved the distance of several km to the well where it was found.

⁵ E.g. it was decided to discharge a significant amount of polluted groundwater directly into the Danube instead of filtering all the groundwater. This measure was taken in order to keep the contamination from spreading downstream (which was achieved). A study by the AGES showed that the pesticides become harmless when the groundwater is diluted more than 1:300 and in fact it was 1:10000. This is quite possibly a violation of EU water right, that forbids to actively decrease water quality. The (costly) ideas of Global 2000 to install additional filtration systems, or channelling contaminated water from downstream to upstream, were rejected for the cheapest method. Moreover, the discharge was increased during high water and not decreased after down-stream contamination was averted leading to more criticism.

⁶ The mayor appeared in the ORF documentary *Am Schauplatz* stating that he "stands to the company Kwizda" (see Gordon & Moschitz, 2012, 11:20min).

⁷ (1) the charges of intentional pollution were dropped even though there were clear signs against it, e.g. that the first remediation measures were not working properly and were running until the night before the press conference of Global 2000 in 2012. (2) the public prosecution never questioned that the BH knew of the scope of the pollution and (3) The district commissioner is the sibling of the president of the state's head court are both signs that the public prosecution does not want to dig too deep.

inquiries they receive by official. The ice cube controversy showed on which side they stood however.

On the other side, Global 2000, residents, the initiative “Pro Sauberes Wasser Korneuburg” and the Green Party (especially in the municipality) quickly developed partnerships. Politicians from other parties and higher institutional levels have also taken this “winning side” but most have only been named once or twice in the articles. This group, with Global 2000 bringing in a sophisticated scientific opinion on matters, was constantly criticizing the BH and Kwizda publicly and changing the issue to more transparency by the officials. Moreover, they (primarily Global 2000) helped in creating a lawsuit by unveiling and summarizing the various events and the laws that have been broken.

The municipality of Korneuburg and the mayor, Gepp, have taken a con-Kwizda position, after initially being seemingly not interested in the investigation⁸, and have used many opportunities to criticize both company and BH. Especially for the mayor, who is also of the state’s ruling party ÖVP, this was a difficult situation.

The EVN has been mentioned repeatedly in the articles but has taken no sides in the issue. Nonetheless, the company has been under attack for potentially misinforming the public about the contamination of drinking water and their un-transparent outreach.

5.1.4 The media as an actor

The online presence of ORF, the publicly funded Austrian broadcaster, revealed a very neutral observer that tried to only state what happened in the context of the issue. This is on one hand an advantage as only facts, or what is perceived as facts, are being presented to the public. On the other hand, the newspaper leaves it completely to the reader to create his or her opinion because this channel does not evaluate events, decisions, and actions by the various actors.

Neither ORF, nor NÖN.at can be seen as a neutral observer. News regarding the topic took a con-Kwizda stance. Especially the monthly column by a NÖN reporter - Veronika Löwenstein, who probably wrote most of the other articles about the topic (unfortunately the online edition only infrequently states the articles’ author) - contained critique of Kwizda and especially the BH. The column seemed to represent the residents’ and people’s opinion.

5.1.5 Quantitative thematic analysis

As described in chapter 3.1, many issue life-cycle models describe the development of an issue from being mainly a scientific issue, to becoming a political and finally a legal/policy issue. Similarly, it was observed that scientists were quoted in the media most often in the early phases of an issue, whereas the mentioning of politicians and interest groups posing (moral) judgements increased over time (Trumbo, 1995).

This analysis applies thematic framing as discussed in section 3.1.2. Therefore, for this analysis, the main frames of each article were detected

⁸ See ORF *Am Schauplatz* (Gordon & Moschitz, 2012: 10.00min)

and then grouped into *moral*, *scientific*, *political*, and *legal*, main concerns. One article could contain more than one main concern. For the content of an article, a *moral concern* is seen as the harms and wrongdoings of actors as illustrated in the articles, for example when one actor is blamed as being responsible, or when the journalist is comparing the issue with Austrian society. A *scientific concern* is when a main concern of an article is information about environmental harm, technicalities, biology or chemistry, and the remediation measures as such. *Political concerns* are main topics that deal with the politics concerning the issue, for example politicians requesting consequences. *Legal concerns* are frames containing legal information about the issue, such as news about the lawsuit against Kwizda.

The majority of articles, 102 of 154, discussed only one theme per article, whereas the rest of the articles discussed two or three themes per article. These numbers add up to around 1.4 themes per article. As shown in Figure 16, there is no real trend in terms of theme per article throughout the assessed period with some months having more homogenous and others having more diversified articles.

From a thematic point of view, the analysis indicates that scientific concerns, e.g. about the remediation measurements, water test results, or the impact to human/animal health, were in total by far the most important theme. The topic was also prevalent from the beginning to the end of the assessed period, in around 70% of all articles in total. The themes had no periodical climax, but evidently a large amount of articles concerning the theme were broadcasted in the hot phase between September 2012 and May-June of 2013. Only in the months before and after the lawsuit were less than half the articles concerned with this theme.

Moral themes are quite noticeably prevalent, primarily between September and December 2012. In this time, residents were demonstrating against the pollution and asking politicians to act, and reporters were questioning who is really responsible for the situation. After the remediation measures started in November/December 2013, the theme more or less disappeared from the articles for over a year. Only in February and May 2014 is the theme shortly brought up again before disappearing completely.

Political themes, such as politicians becoming involved in discussions, demanding for consequences or arguing with each other, are prevalent throughout the assessed period. Furthermore, they seem to have had more importance compared to other themes in the idle periods of July 2013 until June 2014, occurring in roughly 45% of articles and being the second most discussed theme in this period.

Apart from the occasional call for consequences for Kwizda and the BH, or news about the public prosecution investigating the two, legal concerns seem to have been not very important throughout the first three years of the issue life-cycle. Naturally, the topic became more prevalent once the investigations against Kwizda were completed and a lawsuit was approaching. In the quarter of the lawsuit it was the most discussed theme and was still represented in nearly every second article of the last assessed quarter.

The analysis has shown that from the newspaper's representation of the topics through time, the issue did not evolve from one theme to the other. All themes were apparent throughout the assessed period and only two themes, moral and legal, had periods where they were significantly more represented than the others. In line with the theory, the former was more apparent in the beginning and the latter more apparent in the later phases of an issue. Scientific and political themes however, were seen throughout the assessed periods and did not follow the order of evolvement as described in some natural history theories (see 3.1.3). As for scientific themes, there does not seem to be a more plausible explanation than that (a) the issue was seen as scientific from the beginning due to its environmental characteristics and (b) the on-going interest of the readers in updates to the remediation measurements. As for the latter, a media analysis is not an ideal method for measuring political activity in connection with an issue. For example, it is very difficult for the press to see a connection between policy and law changes and the lessons learned from an environmental issue if the politicians did not specifically mention it in the process. More so, if the changes are made at a federal or state level, and the journalists who covered the issue are more concerned with regional and local affairs, it might be overseen as well. Another possibility of why there does not seem to be more political themes seen in the last phase of the issue is that changes in policies and laws take time and the issue cannot be seen as solved yet (see next chapter). Thus, more political topics surrounding the issue could come up in the future.

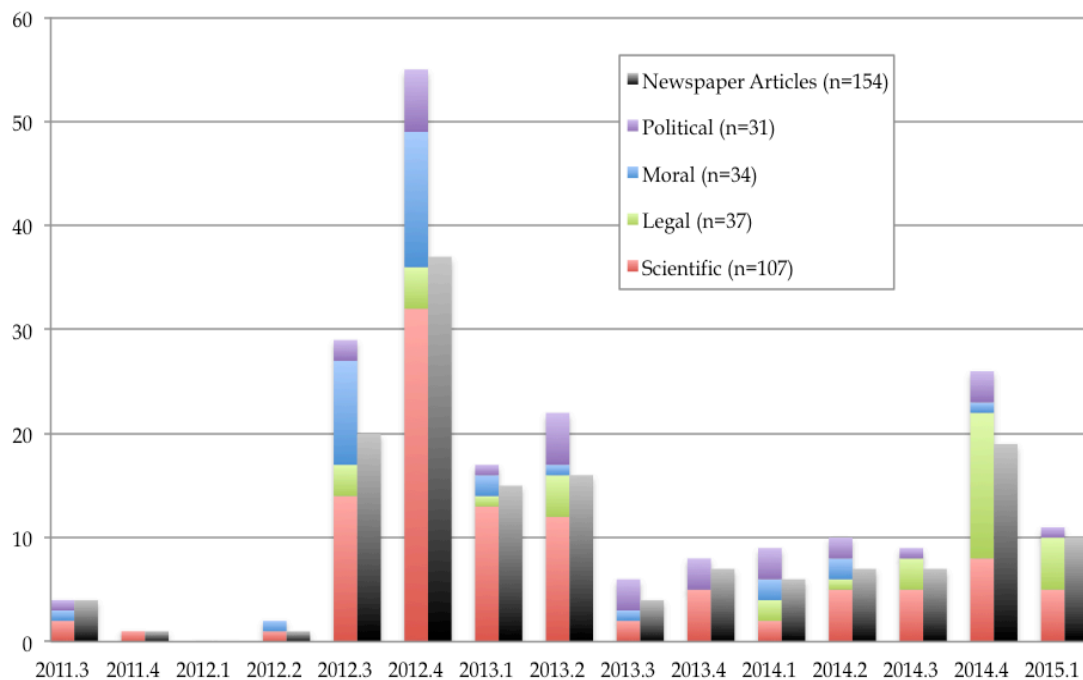


Figure 16: Thematic of main concerns

5.1.6 The phases of the issue life-cycle

The *emergence* phase of an issue life-cycle often starts with issues among local people and communities with companies' actions (see McAdam, 1982; Oberschall, 1973). It all started⁹ in May 2011 when the BH told the municipality of Korneuburg that the groundwater was contaminated and only months later it was revealed that the pesticide Thiamethoxam was found in a well in Korneuburg with 80-times the legal concentration. At this point Global 2000 made their first statement about the topic but did not appear in any article again until September 11th, 2012 – two days before the documentary was broadcasted. Several residents noticed that plant growth has been affected since 2010 and repeatedly informed the BH about this. Others made the connection that only plants watered from wells (=groundwater) were stunted.

Even though the NGO Global 2000 and officials from opposing sides were informed about the contamination, and residents' complaints, the issue kept a relatively low profile. Nonetheless, the Green Party and also the mayor of Korneuburg criticized the BH for their outreach and also blamed the BH for being responsible. Kwizda denied being responsible in this phase. In this period the issue salience was low as there were no hard facts published yet and the little media attention was limited to the region.

There was immediate regional media interest with Global 2000 informing newspapers about the contamination being more serious than anyone thought on September 10th, 2012. Shortly after, national media interest sparked after ORF broadcasted the documentary and Global 2000 held a press conference four days later.

As discussed in 3.1.2, as issues of high salience have more potential, both in attracting media visibility and attracting potential collaborators – in accordance with agenda setting theory. Therefore, the evident strategy of coming up with hard scientific facts, the involvement of residents and the well known Austrian NGO, Global 2000, and broadcast of the issue on national television in just two days, created almost instant issue saliency. It is very difficult to interpret where the **emergence** phase ended and the **interpretation** phase of this issue began. It can be assumed that these actors have been working together for several months before the broadcast of the documentary yet how long they have been in a partnership remained unclear with publicly available information.

The issue develops from here on with several incidents that kept media attention high:

- It came to surface that Kwizda was indeed responsible for the contamination after vehemently denying it at first
- The BH was responsible to a high degree as they did not test the groundwater thoroughly (even after public complaints)
- Discharging contaminated water into the Danube is a part of remediation plan and seen as illegal

⁹ According to *Am Schauplatz*, residents were rumouring that there was something wrong with the groundwater since 2010.

- Burtscher (Global 2000) and Kerschbaum (Green Party) present a Statement of the Facts to the public prosecution Korneuburg and subsequently the;
- Public prosecution Korneuburg is investigating against Kwizda and the BH
- The BAK is investigating the BH

Simultaneously, the remediation plan started relatively quickly and first successes were achieved. From mid 2013 on, only a few events kept the civil rights actors active. These events were the legal investigations, that contaminated water continued to being discharged into the Danube and that the discharge was increased during high water in June 2013. This last event is not mentioned by ORF as it occurred when coverage on the issue was reducing (see Figure 8). Admittedly, the main concerns covered by Noen.at are, with a few exceptions, becoming more and more trivial, thus explaining declining national interest.

With the media data, it is hard to define when the **positioning** phase of the issue began and the interpretation phase ended. It appears to have happened some time during the beginning and middle of the “hot phase” in late 2012 when the composition of the opposing groups, as interpreted at the end of the assessed period and as seen in Figure 15, starts to take shape and Global 2000 takes a central position in the issue. Some actors choose fixed sides in this phase, e.g. the Green Party and the municipality of Korneuburg, and new actors arise, namely the Expert Team building a more complex network.

Starting in July 2013, the issue salience is, from a national perspective, on a very low level again. The remediation plan is in full motion and the topic is becoming less interesting to non-regional readers. The regional newspaper Noen.at is still frequently broadcasting current events but the regional and local interests in the issue are also declining. Evidence of declining local interest at was the weekly column by Veronika Löwenstein where she states that only 60 people attended the public information event held by the BH in late April and several hundred attended the former event in January.

Thematically, the newspapers often report on relatively trivial matters in this phase, e.g. about the amount of the pesticides that have been removed, that “Place A” is free of pesticides, or that Kwizda started building a wall surrounding the facilities. The majority of articles state the progress of the remediation. However, other more controversial events¹⁰ did not raise public interest significantly, such as the BH not answering a 30 Question appeal by the Stadtgemeinde, mysterious pipe laying in Bisamberg, and the Stadtgemeinde controversially deciding not to have a say in the BH’s investigation against Kwizda¹¹. One article exemplifying where the issue was standing in terms of

¹⁰ Interestingly, the four (4) articles by ORF were only stating progress in the remediation of the groundwater, with the last critical article about the issue stemming from early June 2013. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, ORF did not report on the controversial increase of discharged contaminated water into the Danube, when the topic was still “hot”.

¹¹ In the Stadtgemeinde there was no appeal against the decree, that the Stadtgemeinde will refuse a say in the BH investigations against Kwizda, as the opposition, Green Party and

saliency was from early June 2014 and stated that the pond in Bisamberg was clean of pesticides and thus ready for the summer.

The issue then trickled on for a few more months without anything occurring until the public prosecution notified the public that they had completed their investigation and that they would file a lawsuit against Kwizda by the end of the year. This created instant regional and national saliency concerning the issue. Also, the next event was broadcasted by both ORF and NÖN: when Global 2000 requested that the investigations against the BH should be moved to another court because of the possibility of bias was first noted and then approved by the high court in Vienna.

As described in section 3.1.3, the **positioning** and **resolution** phases may overlap, but ultimately the issue becomes more mature and in the end has increasingly less saliency to the point that it can simply die. Kwizda confessed the pollution and decided to take over all remediation costs (and more) just a month before the issue became public and saliency stayed high for several months after that. Also Global 2000, the central actor in the issue, somewhat disappeared from the news. This could be a sign for the beginning of the resolution phase, when the focal actor sees the issue as solved, in the second half of 2013. However, the topic gained saliency again when the public prosecution finished their report on Kwizda and the case went to court. Simultaneously, Global 2000 re-appeared in the news, and their request of bias was approved. Thus, the situation cannot yet be seen as solved, as a probable lawsuit against the BH would most likely create an instant increase in saliency similar to the lawsuit against Kwizda. Only then will the issue likely be seen as solved and can slowly disappear and die. Thus, it looks as if the issue is as of April 2015 still in its positioning phase.

5.2 Focal actors and their influence strategies

The media analysis conducted prior to the interviews identified five major actors or actor groups as seen by the media: The BH, Kwizda, Global 2000, residents of the area and the residents initiative *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*, and politicians. These five stakeholders were not only repeatedly named and quoted in media articles, but also occupied important roles in the development of the issue as seen through publicly available data. Therefore, these actors have been identified as the most important interview partners for this thesis. Also, the documentary *Am Schauplatz* played an important role in creating national interest in the issue. Therefore, the documentary team was successfully contacted for an interview. Lastly, the media as an important stakeholder of the issue was chosen for interviews.

Twelve actors were contacted in total, of which seven were interviewed and six were used for this analysis. A short summary of the attempted

SPÖ, did not know about the decree. The decree was, for an unknown reason, presented in the urban planning committee, and not in the environmental committee as planned. Thus, until the opposition found out about this, the period for an appeal was expired.

interviews can be found in ANNEX 2 and additional information on the actors in ANNEX 3. Of the main stakeholders mentioned above, only the BH, by email from its district commissioner Dr. Waltraud Müllner-Toifl, declined an interview “due to the ongoing investigations” against the BH. While an employee or the owner of Kwizda was not available for an interview, the request was referred to Michaela Hebein, the company’s spokesperson. Also the mayor of the city of Korneuburg, Christian Gepp, was not interviewed. In his case, interest for an interview subsided on his side, even after emails and telephone calls with his bureau showed some prior interest. One of three attempts to interview newspaper media representatives was successful. It was unclear who wrote articles about the issue of Korneuburg on ORF.at as there is no author given. Emails to the general contact were not answered. Many articles by regional newspapers NÖN and Bezirksblatt Korneuburg (see also sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2) were written by specific authors, hinting that they, Sandra Schütz and Veronika Löwenstein respectively, were working closely with the topic. Unfortunately, an interview with the former did not occur. Lastly, Professor Werner Wruss, the head of the remediation team, was interviewed. The interview was however of technical nature, concerning the remediation measures, and it was not used for this thesis.

In sum, six important stakeholders of the issue of Korneuburg were interviewed (more background information, as well as their affiliations, is provided in ANNEX 3):

- Helmut Burtscher – chemist and campaigner of Global 2000 for the issue
- Michaela Hebein – spokesperson of Kwizda
- Elisabeth Kerschbaum – councilwoman for the environment in the municipality of Korneuburg; Green Party
- Veronika Löwenstein – NÖN journalist
- Mathias Schabl – activist and leader of *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*
- Robert Gordon – *Am Schauplatz* journalist; ORF

This section introduces the results from the interviews conducted with major actors of the issue of Korneuburg. The interviews aimed at showing information, unable to be obtained through the media and other publicly available data, about the actors’ role in the development of the issues and highlight confrontation and collaboration strategies used by them in order to achieve their means. The analysis will add more knowledge to why actors acted the way they did in the various challenges and situations they faced during the issue’s development. The actors all played an important role in the development of the issue and, as the interviews revealed, some were far more important than could be seen through publicly available data alone.

The following sub-sections are in chronological order based on when the interviews were conducted and are thus the order is independent of the content. The interviews started with Dr. Helmut Burtscher, chemist and campaigner of Global 2000, whose role was crucial for the development of the issue. Following are Michaela Hebein, Elisabeth Kerschbaum, Veronika Löwenstein, Mathias Schabl and lastly Robert Gordon. Each interviewee’s own

perspective and perception of events adds more knowledge to the issue and its development.

This section will also explore how the interviewees perceived other actors, their behaviour, motives and actions. Through this, a more complex picture of the relationships between the various stakeholders can be drawn.

For a more coherent reading experience, all quotes used in the following sections without reference were by the interviewed person that the sub-section discusses. In some cases however, additional references are used and referenced within the sub-section.

5.2.1 Helmut Burtscher - Global 2000

The importance of Helmut Burtscher in the development of the issue of Korneuburg is apparent in several spheres. Firstly, Burtscher represented the NGO Global 2000 as a chemist and expert in the field of pesticides and also as the focal actor of the NGO. As previously mentioned in section 5.1, Global 2000 was the third most named stakeholder and Burtscher was personally named in almost all these articles published by NÖN and ORF. Secondly, Burtscher was very active beyond the perception of the newspapers, as he worked closely with Robert Gordon to create the *Am Schauplatz* report and also with other important actors such as Elisabeth Kerschbaum and Mathias Schabl. Finally, Burtscher was close to the residents of Korneuburg, having been present at several press conferences hosted or co-hosted by Global 2000 and having answered questions, met with activists of *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*, and demonstrated for the initiative and other residents.

Helmut Burtscher was on paternity leave when the first news about Thiamethoxam in Korneuburg's groundwater became public in 2011. It was only when Robert Gordon called him in mid 2012, asking his expert's opinion on the pesticide, that he learned about Korneuburg. After seeing pictures of the malformed plants from residents, Burtscher decided to take water samples and test them because Thiamethoxam should not be able to do that. Burtscher did not have the budget to test the samples and therefore first asked someone from the municipality of Korneuburg to carry this out. Burtscher does not want to name the persons he asked, but he stated that, "there was surprisingly little response". He subsequently tried to finance the costs of 2400€ to test four samples by the Austrian Federal Environmental Agency (Umweltbundesamt) with Global 2000's budget. Burtscher recalled that the screening was very expensive and he only trusted the agency to "find the needle in the haystack": Kerschbaum had, through her role in the Austrian Parliament, already received the data from standard probes done by the BH that had not shown any results. After the results came back, Burtscher decided that they had to create a Statement of the Facts, containing all the relevant information, and with "suspicions against unknown" in order to not allow Kwizda to take legal actions against Global 2000. This Statement of the Facts was then handed to Müllner-Toifl, the BH commissioner, by Burtscher, Robert Gordon and a camera team, and two residents. "She wasn't involved in the incident of 2010 and could've tackled this issue without inhibition" but she was instead "rude" to the residents, Gordon and him, as it can also be seen on camera. He thought

that the BH would now stop the pumps directly, after learning that the remediation activities installed after the incident in 2010 are useless and that the pumps were in fact channelling contaminated water into the Danube. There was no reaction from the BH, even after Burtscher sent the authorities more updated information. After exactly four weeks, the legal limit to reply to the Statement of the Facts due to the Environmental Information Act, the BH finally wrote Burtscher saying the answer would take more time.

They [the BH] have the obligation to inform us within four weeks, and this can be extended once for another four weeks. [...] So that means, they took as much time as they could to give us as little information as possible, which raised our initial suspicion that the BH wants to cover something up, and possibly has something to hide.

Gordon and Burtscher decided that they wanted to release the information as soon as Gordon's report could be broadcasted because the BH was informed but large amounts of contaminated water were still being pumped from the groundwater into the Donaugraben. Therefore, they decided to have the press conference the day before the broadcast, to invite as much media as possible beforehand, and to also invite Elisabeth Kerschbaum to sit with Burtscher on the podium for the discussion: "I was already in contact with her at this point, because she had been, so far, the only one that made the issue visible to the public".

In the morning of the press conference Burtscher had a resident check if the dysfunctional filtration system was still pumping groundwater into the Donaugraben, because he did not want to proclaim at the conference that it was but actually had stopped pumping.

It was actually the case that they turned it off during the night. That means, that they used these twelve days I think, that passed between the time of the report [to the BH] and the time of the press conference, to dispose of as much toxin as possible into the Danube. At least I am claiming that.

After the press conference, Burtscher and the managing director of Global 2000 were invited to Kwizda. There, Kwizda stated that they were still assuming that the contamination does not stem from them, and also explained why it does not. Three weeks later, and one week after the citizens demonstrated, the company admitted their guilt.

Burtscher received numerous calls and emails from residents who "did not trust the BH," asking for information and wanting to know if their ground water was safe. Therefore, Burtscher and Global 2000 offered free water tests to residents and published this information through several newspapers. First the municipality decided to pay 20€ of the costs per sample and later Kwizda agreed to pay the remaining 50€ per sample, the latter generating controversy.

One particularly important event was the ice cube affair. Burtscher recalled Schabl having had the suspicion that while the drinking water might be not contaminated now - the EVN used a well in a contaminated area that was closed soon after the contamination became known - the drinking water might have been contaminated in the past. Therefore, Burtscher and Schabl had the

idea to involve all local newspapers, NÖN, Bezirksblatt, and Kurier, to ask residents that used groundwater for drinking purposes to send them ice cubes and their estimated age. Again the Austrian Federal Environmental Agency was hired to test 20 samples, of which 15 contained the two pesticides and 14 exceeded the drinking water limits. The two activists knew that this was a sensitive topic, therefore Burtscher first informed the EVN, and also send out the information to the BH. While the EVN handled the situation well, by having a press conference where they published all their data, the BH did not. Burtscher recalled receiving a harshly written email, asking where they have the samples from and requesting the samples for their own testing. The state of Lower Austria then had the samples tested by the AGES, and they only found that one of the samples showed contamination. From an official side, there was still no confirmation if the drinking water had indeed been contaminated or not.

When it became public that the remediation will also contain channelling unfiltered groundwater directly into the Danube, Burtscher and Schabl organized on short notice a large demonstration against this measure. The demonstration was unsuccessful in two ways. Firstly, the measure was not stopped, even though they organized boats and held a large press conference. After the demonstration, he still believed they could stop if they received another instrument: "I have to add here, at this point in time, we were always believing that there would be charges against Kwizda soon," but it ended up taking over a year. Secondly, also at the press conference, they brought another measure into play: an Environmental Complaint according to the Environmental Liability Act, which would've allowed Global 2000 to reach party status in the remediation case. This instrument has never been used in Austria before and therefore the NGO, with support of the legal umbrella organisation Ökobüro, tried to enforce it in the issue of Korneuburg. However, it was "rejected with all legal tools" even though all assessments, apart from that of the BH, conclude that the NGO should have the right to reach party status. Moreover, Burtscher found in the protocols between Kwizda and BH that Suchanek reported that the responsible Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Environment said that the Environmental Liability Act was not to be used. This meant, that all negotiations and decisions could be made non-transparently by excluding the public and other authorities by using the "emergency paragraph". When Gordon from ORF *Am Schauplatz* went to the Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Environment and asked about the request of the BH Korneuburg, no one knew about it: "It still needs to be settled, who was lying here," either the BH or the BMLFUW. Nonetheless, as a result, Global 2000 still had not reached party status.

Burtscher shared some of the most interesting and important information in the interview. Sometime after Kwizda admitted their guilt, an unknown whistleblower sent Burtscher negotiation protocols between the BH and Kwizda. Burtscher then worked through these with Kerschbaum and also Schabl, who he only spoke with for the first time after the demonstration.

The protocols start with the report of the accident by the company Kwizda until Global 2000 became active. They even contained the activities of the

investigation proceedings against Kwizda already. And we evaluated these protocols and found severe inconsistencies, that, in our eyes, not only require an explanation by the company Kwizda, but also substantial explanations by the people involved from the authorities, such as the vice district commissioner Dr. Suchanek, or the clinical expert Dr. Tschinkowitz, and other persons.

These protocols strengthen the theories of the BH and the state of Lower Austria having known about the contamination all along and helping the company Kwizda save a large sum in disposal costs:

The BH possibly knew about the contamination with Clopyralid in 2010, maybe even earlier. And they also knew that the discharge into the Tresdorfer Graben¹² leads, over the time period of 18 or 21 months until we stopped it, to dispose of Clopyralid in amounts that when you dispose of them legally it would cost a two-digit million Euro sum; that was my estimate at this time. Costs that Kwizda Agro would possibly not be willing to bear. That means they might have had to file for bankruptcy, and it is possible that the state of Lower Austria did not want that. [...] Mr Tschinkowitz, the chemical expert, and part of the conspiracy, said himself, at least the documents state that, 'we should at least do a pesticide screening'. And then they hired a company that does not do that. [...] They specifically hired the company Chemcon, which of course did not find anything, and the results were even interpreted in a way, so that Kwizda was cleared of their guilt, and that this other contamination, at the drinking water supplier [EVN], had to have a different origin. That is how it is in the files.

Burtscher stated in the interview that in almost all cases they were just reacting to situations and circumstances. In the case of these protocols however, Burtscher, Kerschbaum and Schabl were acting by creating the statement of facts so that this scandal could be uncovered and the responsible people prosecuted. A young lawyer helped them give the document the final touch and in February 2013 the Statement of the Facts was handed to the public prosecution of Korneuburg in the course of a press conference. This information was also highlighted in the second *Am Schauplatz* documentary showing again Dr. Tschinkowitz who, in a different contamination case, also hired the company Chemcon to conduct a pesticide screening that they cannot do and therefore did not find anything.

Burtscher reported that he worked closely together with Mathias Schabl after the demonstration that Schabl helped organized. Burtscher described Schabl as:

A very intelligent, let me say 'campaigner'. He knows how to think strategically, and always understood the nexus and relations of things very quickly, and also has an aim. He wants to resolve this issue and create transparency [...]. He became my most important co-operation partner in the following activities.

¹² A small stream in Korneuburg leading directly into the Danube

Mathias Schabl used our strength in public relations, organise press conferences and also our journalistic contacts, our network. We developed ideas together and I definitely appreciated his inputs. If he applies to Global 2000, I will hire him on the spot.

Kerschbaum was also a very close partner in the issue: “we communicated a lot, telephoned, emailed. There were no secrets between us, in any form.” Burtscher had a lot of support internally as well. When the issue emerged, he dropped his other obligations. While he did the vast majority of the work himself, other co-workers were involved from time to time, for example the second demonstration Global 2000’s action team helped plan and execute the event.

It was mentioned that the media was an important tool for Global 2000:

For us it is of course always good and important if we’re featured in the news. On one side, because of the fundraising reasons, but also because media cooperation is the most important tool to create political pressure to reach our goals - political and also [pressure] on firms.

Furthermore, the journalists of NÖN, Bezirksblatt and Kurier were all very interested in the topic: “I found the cooperation, insofar as I could inform them, always as good. I always wrote all three and they always came to the press conferences. And they also seemed keen to help: for example NÖN and Kurier helped in the ice cube affair by appealing to the people to contact Global 2000 if they had old ice cubes”.

Helmut Burtscher was in close contact with many stakeholders but the BH was not one of them. He stated that ever since he handed the statement of facts to commissioner Müllner-Toifl, “there was not a single other moment where I have talked to Mrs Toifl, because she was not available”. This very much shows the un-cooperativeness of the BH to work with the NGO. Similarly, there was barely any contact between Burtscher and Kwizda: they only met once.

5.2.2 Michaela Hebein – Spokesperson at Kwizda

Unfortunately, Michaela Hebein did not agree for the entire interview to be used in this thesis. Therefore a public, or censored, version of this thesis was created along with a non-public one used for grading. The public and non-public one will contain different content in this section, as well as in chapter 6.

The interview with Michaela Hebein took place in her company’s office where she was a partner. The company is a strategy and communications consultancy based in Vienna, Austria. Their webpage’s slogan is ironically “Truth. And Perception.” (Daniel Kapp, 2015). Kwizda hired an external communications agency, Hebein’s former employer RADIX PURE¹³, as Kwizda had no communications department and spokesperson themselves and also neither resources nor know-how in that regard.

[Kwizda] built up that know-how, how to treat the media and other

¹³ RADIX PURE is the public relations department of RADIX Marketingberatungs & Trainings GmbH, a marketing and communications agency.

stakeholders, about what is important, what is necessary, and I also pleaded that you have to take this step quickly, that someone from the company speaks, because it has also a different significance than when someone external speaks. That took some time, but I think we're on a pretty good track. (M. Hebein, personal communication, August 14, 2014).

From a strategic point of view, Hebein said that she told the company from the start, that they can only finish this issue positively for the company if they heed three basic rules: seek dialogue, open transparent communication, and active communication. Before that however, when only the one incident of 2010 was known of and reported to the BH, "the strategy was to keep calm and quiet¹⁴ and to see how it will develop" (M. Hebein, personal communication, August 14, 2014). The reasons for this strategy was that the company believed the remediation was in progress so that there would be no need to inform the public. Kwizda changed their strategy though, after two residents noticed malformed plants that were watered with groundwater: "And because of that, it, so to say, strengthened our consciousness to also deal with the public" (M. Hebein, personal communication, August 14, 2014). On the October 1st 2012, about three weeks after Global 2000 brought the contamination of the groundwater to light, Kwizda announced that they must have been the polluter.

Hebein explained that as an important step, they mapped the stakeholders of Kwizda in the issue of Korneuburg. She explained that their aim was to rebuild what was damaged and to renew the trust in the public in order to save the factory location. Based on that aim, they aligned their communication strategy. She described that they tried to get in contact with the media, namely NÖN, the Bezirksblätter and der Kurier (a national newspaper). She said that after Global 2000's analysis of the groundwater, they were also "confronted with the ORF" for the first time. Other contacts were made with the mayors of Korneuburg, Bisamberg and Leobendorf as well as the two residents (Mr. Rafalzik and Mr. Nowag) that noticed the connection with plant deformations and the groundwater. Later, the municipal councillors, especially those that emerged from the discussions, were also actively invited to information events.

She remembered only having had one dialogue with Global 2000. She believed that the NGO was concentrating more on the BH and the remediation procedures and that Kwizda was not in their focus anymore: "Because of that development, I believe that for us the need to get in contact with Global 2000 did not arise again, but for us it was a lot more important to get in contact with the residents". Therefore, *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg* came into Kwizda's focus, and Hebein names Mathias Schabl as an important contact. According to Hebein, the communication with the BH was one where basic information was exchanged: "We [Kwizda] tell them [the BH] when we do something, but only that we are doing something, content wise it is not attuned, and exactly the same way it goes the other way around." For example, the BH would tell Kwizda that they are having a press conference, but they wouldn't say what

¹⁴ Hebein used the German words "sich ruhig verhalten", which can mean to keep calm and to keep quiet.

they would be talking about. Kwizda would also not be present at the BH's press conferences. An exception, and apparently the only times Kwizda and BH worked together in the communication, were the public information events during which the BH informed the public; Kwizda was also present to answer upcoming questions regarding the company. When asked about the demonstrations against channelling water into the Danube, Hebein said that Kwizda did not react at all as the remediation concept was one of the BH and not of Kwizda.

Hebein described, that, also for internal purposes, a four-level communication process was developed. Firstly, the company had to learn to take responsibility for their actions, and apologize to the victims. The second step was the remediation. She highlighted the importance that the company communicate that they will pay for the remediation, that they will do everything to expedite it, and that security will be very important. Thirdly, other actions by the company, aimed at benefitting the public, were undertaken and communicated to the public. Fourthly, a plan for the future was developed that also had to be communicated to the public. Hebein described that the company wanted to implement "state of the art" stakeholder communication, production, and also modernisation of the facilities.

5.2.3 Elisabeth Kerschbaum - Green Party

Kerschbaum repeatedly highlighted the importance of collaboration with others as a means of strategy. In the very beginning of the issue, when there were mere rumours that there is something wrong with the groundwater, she received numerous calls from concerned residents. She believes that, concerning environmental topics, people trust the Green party the most as they follow such themes the most rigorously. However, she saw herself not as an Expert for this environmental issue and therefore looked for helpers. Firstly she named Helmut Burtscher as a strong partner throughout the issue's development and Mathias Schabl, a "strategist" who "joined" the group just a little later than Burtscher. The relationship between Kerschbaum and Burtscher started when she called Global 2000 asking for a chemist's opinion on the Thiamethoxam that was found in the groundwater. Later they talked repeatedly on the phone and also synchronised their moves because "there are things that I as a politician cannot do as easily as he can as an NGO and vice versa" (E. Kerschbaum, personal communication, August 18, 2014). For example, Burtscher used his expert's opinion on the pesticides while she would do political and parliamentary inquiries¹⁵. In their co-operation she highlighted the credibility that NGOs have among many people.

Kerschbaum defined her work with Mathias Schabl as co-operative. She described Schabl as someone that moves things forward. Especially the citizens' initiative was important because she did not know how to handle such a situation and achieve her means. For her it was important that her actions were also in line with her party's politics and she saw cooperation with Schabl and

¹⁵ Kerschbaum was not only a member of Korneuburg's city council, she was also a member of the Federal Council of Austria from 2003 to 2013 (Parlament, 2014).

the initiative as beneficial for the Green party. For example, she said that not many would come to a demonstration of the Green Party, but she would help being part of the demonstrations organized by Schabl. Kerschbaum collaborated with Burtscher and Schabl in order to co-ordinate moves and share information.

Kerschbaum describes the collaboration within the party as mainly regionally but also mentioned support from Wolfgang Pirklhuber, a member of the National Council of Austria for the Green Party, and at the time acting vice chairman for Agriculture and Forestry (see Parlament, 2014). She described the situation with other politicians that did not belong to the Green Party as difficult. For example, the opposition to the party in power, SPÖ and FPÖ charged in to take political advantage of the situation. She also described some co-operation with the Mayor Gepp from ÖVP (see also chapter 2) who was stuck in between his obligations to the residents of the municipality and his obligations to his party.

Well he [Mayor Christian Gepp] was basically always willing to support when the topic was “is the water drinkable or not”. When you wanted to know things. But of course, when it was about personal stories of party members, quote unquote, it was a bit difficult with the ÖVP. [...]. But considering that he was a ÖVP Mayor... I was actually surprised in how far he went with us. How far he supported me. Of course, many things were, due to political reasons, not possible for him.

As an example, Kerschbaum explained that she urged the Mayor to have the FH Technikum, see also section 2.2.3, test the water on possible hormonal effects on human health. “The BH really got angry” as the commune commissioned and also co-financed this study that indicated that drinking the contaminated water could have negative effects for human health. Such information was not wanted in the public, and therefore the Mayor backed out of the discussion completely. Nonetheless, Kerschbaum did not think that the issue became very political in the municipality, as she believed that it wasn’t the Mayor’s fault. She described the discussions in the council as objective, with “no, or very little party political bickering”.

She also described a type of partnership with the regional media NÖN and the Bezirksblatt as both being very interested in the topic. In comparison to the BH though, her approach was one of transparency with the media:

Lots of regional media was there in the beginning, in general. When it was only about Thiamethoxam, before Global [2000] took part and found Clopyralid, it was primarily a regional story. And it was in parts that we just telephoned each other, there were not that many [reporters], with whom you can talk. And I have to say, they were both, Bezirksblatt and NÖN, they were both very interested in the topic and I think also a little indignant over the practices of the BH, because they also repeatedly ran against walls when they asked questions. (E. Kerschbaum, personal communication, August 18, 2014)

Kerschbaum used transparency as a strategy as she saw herself as a representative of the people. She used Facebook herself to spread information and worked closely together to spread information over the Facebook group of *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*. She said that most information was spread through Facebook. But information was exactly what the residents needed. This lack of information resulted in many residents feeling unsettled and angry towards the BH, emotions that were then expressed publically. This was for everyone to see in the first demonstration organised by Schabl and the initiative when many local people joined the demonstration: "And there were people that usually never go on the street [to demonstrate] - even I was surprised how many there were".

Her approach of transparency was however not seen as desired by all, and also had an impact on the development of the case. She explained in the interview that one major problem of receiving information was that the BH handled the environmental pollution under the law that left the negotiations only between the BH and Kwizda (see section 2.1). This meant that legally, they did not have to inform anyone what happened in these meetings and no other party but the BH and Kwizda had access to files. The problem is that the BH is responsible for the groundwater, whereas the municipalities are responsible for the drinking/tap water that their residents use. She explained that this led to disputes because the residents came to the city's government demanding information. Meanwhile, in the beginning of the issue, the BH used tactics to buy time by saying that they had no possibility of publishing information, and that they can only publish information over the municipality - which they did not do. "Somewhat crazy, right?" Eventually, the BH invited the Mayors of the municipalities to participate in these meetings. Kerschbaum was chosen as a representative for the Mayor of Korneuburg and attended several of these meetings. She said that there was no right to a say but at least they received information. The practice creating transparency by opening up these formerly closed meetings and negotiations came however to an end, after Kerschbaum had reported to the press that the BH wanted to channel unfiltered contaminated water into the Danube river. She claims not to know whether the BH would have ever told the public: "Well, that was again the end of the transparency culture. It existed for a short time" (E. Kerschbaum, personal communication, August 18, 2014). After that, the Mayors were not invited to negotiations again between the BH and Kwizda. Kerschbaum described the information policies of Kwizda; in the beginning of the issue, Kwizda only talked to the media via their spokesperson and there was no communication between the firm and the municipality or other politicians. Eventually they did open up a little, also because the Mayor Gepp intervened, and they now (in August 2014) regularly invite both people and council member events. She made a point that, "the company representatives were always very, very friendly", including Kwizda's owner so that she had to pay attention not to stay too close in pictures.

5.2.4 Veronika Löwenstein – NÖN

Veronika Löwenstein emerged as one of the focal journalists in the issue of Korneuburg. She wrote most of the NÖN articles as well as a monthly column concerning the ground water contamination. As stated in section 5.1.5, especially her column showed that she seemed to represent the residents of Korneuburg, not by quietly observing but by taking a critical standpoint towards the public authorities, politicians and Kwizda.

Her critical standpoint, despite possible interferences by firms and politics (see 1.1.3 and 4.2.2), might be explained by her involvement in the issue very early on. She remembered that the first connection with the issue could be found in an NÖN article from the spring of 2011, which stated that pesticides were found in a private well in Laaer Street, a street leading directly from Korneuburg to the Kwizda facilities. Interestingly, the article Löwenstein quoted from in the interview was nowhere to be found on the NÖN webpage, even though she quoted from it. Her involvement really started after the *Kurier* wrote an article in the summer of 2011, reporting the incident at the Kwizda factory of 2010. After some residents complained about deformed plants she wrote an article about this upon which several other residents confirmed these observations. Here, she cooperated closely with Elisabeth Kerschbaum who gave her all the needed information.

After *Global 2000* and *Am Schauplatz* uncovered the contamination, Löwenstein informed herself about the pesticides, their toxicity and possible consequences of the contamination because she wanted to inform the residents. For example, people did not know the difference between groundwater and drinking water, “and many still have not understood the difference”. She also wanted to critique the BH and the state of Lower Austria by raising the questions in her articles on how it was possible for *Global 2000* to find the pesticides, but the responsible BH did not find anything, raising the question as to how they were actually monitoring Kwizda, a company manufacturing hazardous substances.

Löwenstein observed that the channelling of the water into the Danube and the subsequent demonstration did not lead to the same mobilisation of the wider population as the first demonstration.

I believe that the personal problems connected with the groundwater were in the foreground [for the residents]. Also at the information events of the BH the channelling into the Danube was less of an issue, there just weren't any questions asked about it. The questions were always related to them personally and their personal situation. [...] It was rather an issue for the NGOs and the Green Party.

Löwenstein repeatedly communicated with the BH, particularly during the later phases of the issue. Some weeks she spoke with the BH commissioner Müllner-Toifl several times. This has however not always been the case and Löwenstein described specifically the district commissioner's appearance in *Am Schauplatz* as one of several “catastrophic communication mistakes” between her and the BH. When the residents of Korneuburg demonstrated in the city, at least she communicated a little bit: “The residents presented the district

commissioner their demands. Which she also took [in her hand]. There we were on a level where you can say 'she [Toifl] at least communicated'. Because in the beginning, the people that just wanted to voice their worries at the BH were more or less kicked out." Löwenstein also stated that in time "the communication with the BH definitely improved" but simple things took a long time, such as informing the population about where the contaminated area was.

Löwenstein was also in relatively close contact with Michaela Hebein, Kwizda's spokeswoman and media strategist, with whom she had several interviews already before September 2012. Löwenstein solely talked to Hebein and never to any of the company representatives. Even when Hebein announced Kwizda's responsibility, there was no representative attending the press conference. Löwenstein did manage however to convince the owner of Kwizda Agro, Johann Kwizda, to accept an interview in late April 2013. She believes that the company understood more and more the importance of communicating and regaining trust with the residents. She saw the company's act to build a wall surrounding the facilities as one also done for the image of the company.

Additionally to the BH and Hebein from Kwizda, Löwenstein was in contact with all the other important stakeholders of the issue, such as local residents, Schabl and the initiative, local politicians, and also Global 2000. Her contact with the residents of Korneuburg was one of direct communication. For example, she interviewed the residents Berger, Rafalzik and Nowag in the emergence phase of the issue. She mentioned during this interview that residents were really concerned about health hazards and especially hazards to their children. Löwenstein also noted that they were concerned about the value of their real estates. All in all, they were concerned mostly about themselves.

Schabl was an important interview partner for Löwenstein. She remembered him from leading the first initiative to build a high school in the early 2000s and concluded: "In my opinion all credit belongs to him". She described his position in the groundwater contamination similarly, crediting him the needed know-how to use the media in order to reach the initiative's goals: "He was in charge when calling for information and consequences".

Löwenstein was also in close contact with three actors from three parties in the municipality of Korneuburg: Mayor Gepp from ÖVP, Elisabeth Kerschbaum from the Green Party, and Sandra Rauecker-Grillitsch from SPÖ: "With them I always communicated". Gepp behaved, in her opinion, defensive as if biding time: "He never openly attacked the BH, like the other parties. He couldn't venture to do so." Kerschbaum was primarily interested in gaining more information whereas the SPÖ was offensively trying to aid her party politics. Helmut Burtscher and Löwenstein were also constantly communicating and exchanging information "so that we would mirror the feelings of the residents, or to disclose the newest information. Because ultimately, the residents uncovered the contamination".

5.2.5 Mathias Schabl – *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*

The importance of Mathias Schabl for the development of the case of Korneuburg is relatively difficult to assess with media data alone. While the initiative was named frequently, his name and that of Peter Oboda, fellow ally and spokesman of the initiative, were only mentioned a handful of times (four and two times respectively). Both were however active on the former webpage and the Facebook page of the initiative. Peter Oboda was contacted via email as he was listed on the webpage as spokesman. Instead, Mathias Schabl answered the email and was willing to be interviewed.

Schabl was attracted to the topic in two ways. Around a year before the revelations by Global 2000 in September 2012, he read in the NÖN that something was wrong with the water but all was under control. He noticed that a completely different picture was drawn on the webpage of the city of Korneuburg. He recalled thinking that “there is more behind it. That doesn’t add up, someone is trying to keep a lid on something”. Also, he came into contact with Elisabeth Kerschbaum around that time. He supported her as she tried to obtain more information about the incident and he recalls how Kerschbaum did not receive any answers from the BH. Moreover, he recalled that Kwizda’s lawyers threatened politicians of the municipality with legal actions if they were to raise any speculations against the firm. Their cooperation further intensified in the summer of 2012, when Kerschbaum, not officially, photographed maps of the BH that showed different groundwater measurements of the area. They then tried to reconstruct the map in order to receive more information on the contamination: “It [the contamination] had to be over a wider area in Korneuburg, as they took lot of measurements. It was actually obvious, that it comes from Kwizda”. During that time, Kwizda still denied any connection with the contamination.

Schabl remembered a larger group of people, around 20 to 30, that worked together and tried to get more information about the groundwater, such as what is in the water, is it hazardous, who can they ask for advise, and who is responsible: “Everyone tried to set something in motion, in all directions”. He described one effort as the most important one - when Robert Gordon got involved: “With his [*Am Schauplatz*] report, from this moment on, we had leeway”. Gordon and Burtscher worked together on this, but Schabl was not yet involved with Burtscher at that time.

Schabl said that the *Am Schauplatz* hit Korneuburg “like a bomb”. The groups’ first objective, to obtain more information, was somewhat met and then the group of people asked themselves “ok, is that enough for us now?”. Peter Oboda then had the idea to organize a demonstration, because so far the issue seemed to be handled by a national broadcaster and a national NGO, and they, the residents, wanted to make a clear statement that they are also not happy with the situation and wanted information and retribution. Schabl used his network from the last citizen’s initiative, which he also led, to activate more people. He said that 230 people participated, “a landslide for Korneuburg with its 10.000 inhabitants. We hadn’t have that in the last 50 years”, and they also prepared demands for the BH and Kwizda. The group received wide support from a large part of the population after the *Am Schauplatz*.

Around one week after the demonstration, Kwizda announced its responsibility for the contamination, something that “everyone knew by then anyway”. Schabl described Kwizda’s strategy until their announcement as “denying, not admitting, cast suspicion on others, [and] intimidation, the Kwizda lawyers intimidated a lot”. This behaviour, as well as “providing impossible explanations for the widespread contamination”, made the company very unpopular among the residents.

From my point of view, Kwizda never had a plan of how to get out of there unscathed. They always tried, in the moment, to keep it as small as possible and not to let anything develop but no one there thought the thing to the end, that it [the groundwater] had to be remediated, that it will take years, and how they want to get out of there. So the great strategy, [on] “how do we get out of all of this”, I did not see it.

After the contamination became known due to Global 2000 and *Am Schauplatz*, Schabl described that the public officials were overwhelmed with the situation and were slow to react: “Because of the *Am Schauplatz* and the newspaper articles, the population was completely agitated. And there were no communication lines in place. The people didn’t have any information to know if they were even affected. [...] For weeks there was no information”. Therefore, the citizens’ initiative took over the task of informing concerned residents by operating an information hotline to give advice on what to do and what not to do with the water. Weeks later, the state of Lower Austria established an official information hotline. Schabl reported that the Mayor of Korneuburg pressured the state to do so because “day and night, he [Mayor Gepp] was bombarded with calls from concerned residents.”

Schabl and the residents saw the subsequent remediation from their point of view firstly as overdue and secondly as unquestionable. However, “the BH and Kwizda sold it to the media as a sensational story”. Also, Prof. Werner Wruss was “sold” as this independent expert in the field but was actually already involved in the first remediation measures, information Schabl knew because they received protocols of negotiations between the BH and Kwizda over a whistle blower (see below):

He [Prof. Werner Wruss] was indeed already part of earlier negotiations [between BH and Kwizda], we read that in protocols, so he could have opened his mouth earlier, or could have done something. And we were bothered a little bit about how he was hailed as this saviour, because he is just an uncompromising businessman, who sensed this opportunity to make really good money with the remediation.

Schabl described that the next scandal was about the possible contamination of the drinking water in early November 2012. It started that Schabl and Burtscher wanted to test old drinking water because the groundwater contamination went very close to an area that is used for drinking water by the EVN. Schabl and Burtscher then had the idea to ask residents via the media to if they had ice cubes made in the summer or earlier, and that they want to test them, too. Also, Schabl asked reliable sources from his former

initiative for ice cubes as a control group to create higher amounts of reliability. They had a few of the probes from both groups tested, paid for by Global 2000 and donations, and they found pesticides. In smaller amounts than in the groundwater, as it is mixed up in the water system of the EVN, but nonetheless in traces: “And that was information that the EVN did not want at all”. Burtscher and Schabl first told the EVN about the test results, in order to give the public company a chance at releasing the information themselves, otherwise they would do it. The EVN then held a press conference and “really gave out all data”.

Chronologically, the next important event that occurred was when the BH ordered a significant portion of contaminated groundwater to be disposed of into the Danube river. Schabl and the residents saw this as a scandal, as the BH clearly wanted to cut costs by disposing of the contaminated groundwater that way and also by trying to do it “very quietly”: “A resident cannot pour anything into the Danube without a fine, but when the authorities dictate it, then it is assumed that it [the contaminants] will dilute a million times and nothing will happen”.

From September until December 2012, Schabl, Kerschbaum and Burtscher created a Statement of the Facts (see ANNEX 3), which will help the public prosecution to create a lawsuit against Kwizda. In this period, the group tried to assemble information and protocols about the issue. Officially, they received only maps and measurements, but over a contact in the BH they received protocols of negotiations with Kwizda. The three read these finding several records, which are legally void. They concluded, “we cannot do anything through the media, the BH does not react to media pressure, so we have to do it over legal steps”. The Statement of the Facts then could only be handed over to the public prosecution of Korneuburg. Korneuburg’s prosecution was also responsible for dropping a former complaint by Kerschbaum (see section 2.1), therefore Schabl said that they didn’t know if the prosecution was “part of the good or the bad guys” but “legally, there was no other choice” but to hand it over to them.

Schabl also described the efforts of the initiative and especially those of Elisabeth Kerschbaum as having created more transparency in the communication procedures. For example, there were several attempts to create a round table where all parties, Kwizda, BH, municipalities of Leobendorf and Korneuburg, and residents meet. However, the “representatives of Kwizda and the BH never came. Even though they were always invited. Even though we always tried to coordinate the date.” And the press conferences by the BH were in a very restricted environment to which the initiative was never invited to come: “We could sneak in once or twice, and also ask questions, but they were quite harshly brushed off.”

Schabl explicitly named two main goals that the activists wanted to achieve. The first one was, in his point of view, already achieved: Not only was “some underling” of Kwizda fined, but the company truly “wants to become a modern enterprise of this millennium”. Schabl believes that this was achieved, in part because the owner of Kwizda finally became personally involved and promised that the company will change their ways. The activists’ second goal

was that the BH, an authority financed by tax money, changes their behaviour. This had however not been reached yet as Schabl and his allies saw “no signs that the authorities want to change their processes or procedures, or change anything at all, in order to become more efficient and preventive”. Schabl believes that in order for the things at the BH to change, the authorities in Lower Austria need to change. Therefore, he believes that the criminal charges pressed against the BH (see above) will help to make a change.

Schabl described several main factors that contributed to the success of the activists. Firstly, he named Robert Gordon and his ORF documentary as well as the involvement of Helmut Burtscher as absolutely crucial. Secondly, he emphasized the important role of the initiative and the people of Korneuburg, with specific regards to legal consequences that might lead the authorities and companies to change their operations. Thirdly, the independence of the media, both nationally with ORF and also locally, was imperative for the positive development of the case. Fourthly, the initiative was very transparent as they gave free access to their information to all actors:

We didn't publish press releases in that sense, but we published all information that we received over our website and later mostly over Facebook, allowing everyone to read it - including the media, Kwizda, and the BH. [...] And from there the media picked out information, and occasionally asked the politicians, or also the initiative, for specifics.

A fifth factor was Mathias Schabl himself. He had previous experience in leading the last citizens' initiative, where he acted as the focal communicator to build the first high school in the town. Schabl used his know-how and network of fellow activists from the former initiative to benefit the outcome of the Korneuburg case.

5.2.6 Robert Gordon – ORF *Am Schauplatz*

Robert Gordon's involvement in the issue of Korneuburg is more or less a blank page, if analysed by media data alone. Only the first of his two documentaries concerning the issue was mentioned in the analysed newspaper articles – in one ORF article and one NÖN article. His name never appears in any newspaper articles. Nonetheless, the appearance of the documentary did have quite the impact in terms of salience, as suddenly around 500.000 Austrians¹⁶ knew about the contaminated groundwater in Korneuburg. After watching the documentary, the importance of it for the development of the case becomes more obvious. It was filmed during a time before exactly what was wrong with the groundwater had been known. It shows how anxious residents truly felt before they found out about the groundwater contamination, and also shows the resentment that people bore against the public officials of the BH – facets of an issue that an outsider finds difficult to comprehend from newspaper articles alone.

¹⁶ The documentary *Am Schauplatz* is watched in average by ca. 500.000 people (Mediaresearch, 2015)

Robert Gordon came upon the issue of Korneuburg when informing himself about Thiamethoxam and Neonicotinoids in an attempt to write about reoccurring bee deaths (see section 2.2). He received this tip from a Green Party politician, who mentioned that pesticide usage in Austria has been increasing in the past but the Ministry of Agriculture would not release any facts. Then, Korneuburg popped up in a Google search and he read older newspaper articles about concerned residents. He then contacted and later met with a few of them (Mr. Rafalzik and Nowag, see ANNEX 3). First he followed the lead of what some people believed, that Thiamethoxam could be responsible for deformed plants. Though many people believed that the pesticide does not affect plant growth. Gordon thought that something else must be in the groundwater. The collaboration started when he called Global 2000 to inform himself about how to screen water. Global 2000 apparently did not follow the topic closely as Burtscher was on paternity leave.

But soon after a personal meeting with Helmut Burtscher, who told him how and where to do the water screening, took place. Global 2000 decided internally that they wanted to be part of the investigation: "And then we basically did it together". They made three water tests, of which one was paid for by *Am Schauplatz*. When the water tests showed heavy contamination, they took more samples and had them tested "just to be safe". Only then did the *Am Schauplatz* team decide to make a story about the issue: "That was not planned this way, because for me it was all still part of the bee and Thiamethoxam story."

He said in the interview that one incident really played in their favour: after Gordon and Burtscher had the water tested, they wanted to hand over the report personally to the BH - on camera. Waltraud Müllner-Toifl, the head of the BH, "signalled clearly that they see Global 2000 primarily as an enemy", did not allow any questions to be asked, and also completely ignored the two residents Rafalzik and Nowag, who also came to the meeting: "And we could illustrate that quite nicely".

According to Gordon, it frequently happened that whistleblowers or insiders got in contact with the *Am Schauplatz* team after they had broadcasted an investigative report. They would "provide additional details, confirm things that you basically already knew [...] but didn't have the last proof of, that something really happened this way or that". Indeed, after the first *Am Schauplatz* had been broadcasted in September 2012, an insider from Kwizda contacted Gordon. They met up and the insider told him about the corporate culture at Kwizda. He also highlighted the "closeness of politics and the firm", which supported the accusations of corruption made in the documentary, that the strategy of the BH was to get rid of the immediate actors so they are unavailable for questioning, namely the BH Korneuburg's commissioner Haselsteiner and his vice Suchanek (see also 2.1 and ANNEX 3). Thus, the new persons in charge did not know anything and therefore could not answer questions. Gordon recalled telephoning the former commissioner Haselsteiner to ask some questions about the issue, but he said "just nothing, in a more or less unfriendly manner". After the broadcast of the *Am Schauplatz* documentary, Leobendorf's fire brigade's captain contacted Gordon concerning the incident in

2010 that led Kwizda to install the first (not working) remediation measures: “They were so discreet about it, that not even the fire brigade, that is usually always consulted and informed in such events, was informed”. The captain was then featured in the second *Am Schauplatz* documentary (Gordon & Zweckmayr, 2013). Furthermore, Gordon explained that he had several informants from the public authorities who leaked information to him. One of these was involved in the soil contamination in Wiener Neustadt (see sections 1.2 and 2.1.1) and said that the BH used standard test methods that could not possibly find the contaminants that were being produced. Gordon then saw the connection between this case and the case of Korneuburg and featured this in the second *Am Schauplatz*.

As a motive, Gordon said that he tells stories in which he wants to bring his standpoint across: “I have always seen myself as an investigative or as an advocacy journalist.” Often, he would choose a victim in an issue, who basically represents the audience, and start telling the story from its standpoint: “You have a victim, someone who can analyse the situation, and tell what’s going on”. Gordon said he aims at shining light upon harmful practices so that the general public forces authorities or firms to take corrective action. Actively, he would always use transparent methods to obtain information: “With the authorities I would talk openly”. It might be investigative journalism, but that does not mean that he and his colleagues would “play private detective”, which he would find ethically questionable.

He could not however confirm transparent and open communication from Kwizda or the BH. He especially criticized, from a journalist’s point of view, the increasingly common strategy of firms to hire external crisis and public relations managers in times of a crisis: “You cannot ask these people anything [...] because they know exactly as much as the briefing contained, and it is also not the responsible person sitting across from you”. He claimed that the communication consultants know that journalists could directly confront company representatives with facts or accusations and therefore block all attempts to have interviews with them. And when accused with telling lies, “it just drips off” them because “it is possible that they did not know it [...] and they are being paid to take a beating”. Also, he described these “experts” at being very good at “giving you the feeling that they give you all the information that you need” but “never giving you a clear answer”. He described another strategy, in which lawyers threaten with lawsuits when certain accusations are disclosed, or even when specific questions were asked: “A colleague of mine was charged just because of a question that she asked”.

One thing that Gordon thought important to disclose in the interview was that he sees the public broadcaster ORF as objective and independent. Even important politicians are not immune from their activities.

Of course there are always efforts to intervene, but you have to also say, that the management or the editorial board don’t give in to these. [...] You can take on a powerful governor [Erwin Pröll] and his realm, or whatever. If it’s bulletproof, you can do it.

However, he believes that this does not apply to the news media, where “hidden forces” yield more power, and negative stories about important advertisers would not be published.

6 DISCUSSION

Prior to conducting a media analysis and interviews, the author took several steps to instigate the case in order to reach an overall understanding of how the case unfolded and the numerous complexities that left unanswered questions. Such preliminary research was essential to setting the stage for the subsequent analyses, as it provided insight into and understanding of what the consequent researcher questions are.

The first two chapters of this thesis introduced the development of the issue of Korneuburg to the reader. This information was not available in a pre-written published form (i.e. book or magazine) but rather through a wide array of publicly available data from online sources, which was collected and assessed by the author.

In order to draw connections between, other environmental cases in the past in Austria for which there was little or no concrete consequences for polluters, were discussed in chapter 1. This provided context for the overall issue that environmental scandals, including the civil rights of protestors, are often dealt with in an irresponsible manner by authorities and thus this area requires further study; the thesis recounts the emotions of environmental activist within Austria who, in this specific case, believe that they can influence positive change leading to stronger accountability for those responsible.

The chronological overview of the groundwater contamination, found in chapter 2, provides the reader with a better understanding of 'what happened and when?'. It also provided the reader with a reference to which they could return to when reading specific examples later on in the thesis. Annex 3 also makes available elaborated detail on specific actors and terms to assist the reader with the complex and extensive information regarding the case of Korneuburg.

The events revealed how the case is closely intertwined with politics and the behaviour of public authorities within the Austrian political system and public administration. Researching and subsequently explaining what parties and individuals were in power and on various levels during the time of the case was beneficial for the author (and likely also beneficial for readers) as it allowed for a greater understanding of the particularities pertaining to Austria, Lower Austria and Korneuburg. For example, understanding the relationships

between the various authorities and their responsibilities is key to understanding the significance of Figure 2 that reveals the borders of the local municipalities.

Chapter 2 includes the environmental impacts of the pesticides found in the ground water. The case of Korneuburg is centered around the presence of two main substances, Thiamethoxam and Clopyralid, found in groundwater, and thus underlining the effects of these pesticides on the environment as well as on human health was necessary for an overall understand of the gravity of the situation, motivation of various actors and the concerns from the public discussed later in the thesis. Results from various studies that were conducted during the case are presented as well.

Although this preliminary research created a platform for further research, it should be noted that a great deal of information was later complemented and built upon by both the media analysis and interviews.

6.1 Revisiting the research task

Several events and phases were pivotal for the development of the issue. These were on one hand detected through the media analysis, though the importance of some specific events was only highlighted through the interview analysis. The follow section is divided between the four research questions.

6.1.1 The evolution of the case

How did the case evolve as a mediatized phenomenon?

The issue had a greater regional media presence than a national one throughout the observed life-cycle. The regional newspaper NÖN published more articles than the national broadcaster ORF in all phases of the issue. Starting with the first articles in August 2011 until September 2012 only NÖN occasionally reported on the issue while it remained a regional phenomenon. However, there were phases observed in the issue during which national interest was indeed observed to be high: from September 2012 until November 2013 and again from October 2014 until April 2015.

For well over a year the issue remained a regional phenomenon and during this time some residents suspected a contamination in the groundwater due to observed plant deformations. While the local media reported on the concerns from citizens, wider spread attention to the issue failed to gain traction because the concerned residents were viewed as irrational and no hard proof could be found to explain the deformities.

Widespread national and regional attention was first triggered by the emergence of facts collected by Global 2000 and ORF *Am Schauplatz* that showed a large-scale contamination of Korneuburg's groundwater. Several other events took place during that time that kept the issue alive both nationally and regionally:

- A demonstration by several hundred residents
- Kwizda admitting their guilt
- Investigation against Kwizda announced
- The BH's remediation plan
- The possibility of contaminated drinking water
- Unfiltered disposal of contaminated groundwater into the Danube
- Global 2000's environmental complaint
- BH's ongoing remediation measures (several instances)
- Investigation against BH announced

Legal measures were on hold due to ongoing investigations, leaving remediation measures the only reportable story, which only sustained regional media interest. Thus, the result was disinterest from the national broadcaster ORF, though NÖN sustained interest, writing articles mostly containing updates on the remediation measures.

Widespread regional and national interest flared up again when the investigations against Kwizda went to court. The attention given by the media to this case remained high until the most recent assessed events, namely when Global 2000's appeal that the case be moved to the Vienna State Court was granted by the Capital Court in Vienna, due to the suspicion of bias of the Korneuburg prosecution and court (March 2015).

The aforementioned description of the issue is as viewed through the lens of the media articles. When this description is applied to issue life-cycle models, especially that of Bigelow et al. (1991), the issue is, as of April 2015, in the final resolution stage. However, what remains unclear is when the issue moved through the various other stages, as the media articles do not always show the importance of events, on the various spheres, that lead to changes in the development of a case. For example, the events of the 13th of September 2012, had evidently been strategically planned for months. The media data neither shows exactly who planned it, nor how or when the planning began. The interviews, however, revealed that it was Robert Gordon's involvement in the case that brought another key actor, Helmut Burtscher, into play, and the two together made the strategy to release the news about the contamination on September 13th. Gordon remained 'invisible' to the public during these stages, though his role was crucial in the unfolding of events; this was when the issue evolved from the emergence stage to the interpretation stage.

Furthermore, the articles published by NÖN before September 2012 do not show the uncertainty and also the anger that residents felt during that time. The first *Am Schauplatz* however showed these feelings very well, and also the interviewees confirmed this. Thus, these sources of information explain the scale and the effect of the demonstration two weeks after the *Am Schauplatz* far better than the media data could; a clear sign that the interpretation stage of these stakeholders began already before September 13th.

Even with interview information, it remained difficult to determine when the issue moved from the interpretation stage to the positioning stage, as there is no clear-cut transition but rather an evolution of the various topics from unresolved to being solved.

Another event did not receive much media attention thus hiding how crucial it was for the resolution of the issue as well as the issue's development from positioning to resolution stage: The Statement of the Facts, which Burtscher, Schabl and Kerschbaum delivered to the public prosecution, was at the time only mentioned in one article by NÖN and by ORF only four months later. The long-term repercussions of this report were however that it helped the public prosecution investigating Kwizda and started the investigations against the BH and also the state of Lower Austria. This was an important move for the future development of the case by the three actors but it did not lead to a large outcry in the media world, despite the report's content. This marks the point when the issue began to move from the positioning stage to the resolution stage for the issue's overall development. However, to the stakeholders this transition happened at different times. For example, the remediation of the groundwater is a topic that was clearly a subject of controversy for most stakeholders for an extended period of time. To some stakeholders, namely Global 2000, *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg*, and the Green Party the remediation remained an issue far from being resolved for months after the second demonstration and the Statement of the Facts being handed to the public prosecution. For others, such as the majority of residents, ÖVP, BH, and Kwizda, this transition to the last stage occurred months earlier, when the remediation was well under way.

The preliminary media analysis was only conducted until June 2014; it appeared as if the issue was dormant as the investigations by the public prosecution were invisible. It was unclear in which direction the issue would evolve: Most residents seemed content with the situation of not being personally harmed and the BH, Kwizda and also the ÖVP seemed content with the public prosecution's delay in the investigation. Would the charges against BH and Kwizda create high salience again? Neither the media data, nor the interviews during the summer of 2014 could answer this, though hopes in the court case were high. Therefore, at this time it was also unclear if the issue had indeed evolved into the last stage for all stakeholders.

The updated media analysis showed that there was indeed an underlying desire for a prosecution of the culprits in the case. When the investigations against Kwizda were brought to court, the media's attention grew quite high, and this time the national media attention was almost as high as that of the regional. In line with Bigelow et al. (1991), the issue created high salience after a period of low salience. As the prosecution of the public officials is still ongoing, it remains unclear how much salience will be created in the future and if the issue will remain in the resolution stage.

6.1.2 Actors and their positions

Who were the main and supporting actors?

What were the main and supporting actors' positions in the issue?

This section will discuss the research questions 1 and 2, as the actors' positions directly correlate to when and why they became key actors in the issue. Both media and interview data are crucial to answering these questions.

Several actors and stakeholders emerged from the media analysis as central for the development of the issue. In the media data most of these have also had the most presence in articles, namely Helmut Burtscher and Global 2000, the BH, Kwizda, residents and the citizens initiative, and politicians. Different aspects come into play in terms of influence. Therefore, quantity is not as important as quality.

The media as an actor in itself was an important actors, and the municipality of Korneuburg was a supporting actors.

Additionally, the interviews revealed Mathias Schabl as the focal actor behind the citizens' initiative, Elisabeth Kerschbaum as the focal actor of the Green Party. They also pointed out specific actors who were crucial for certain phases of the issue. Robert Gorden was extremely important for the emergence of the issue as a mediatized phenomenon, and a whistle blower was important for the final resolution phase of the issue. It is important to also mention here the three residents, Mr. Nowag, Mr. Rafalzik, and Mr. Berger; these men played an important role in shedding light on the groundwater contamination in the first place. Professor Wruss' role as depicted in the media, was that of an objective expert, but the interviews showed a certain non-objective influence. The public prosecution also played an important role in the resolution phase of the issue by bringing the case to the judicial system.

Other actors were represented frequently in the media, though they were not crucial for the development of the case, such as the AGES and EVN, as they exerted little influence on the case.

There are numerous other supporting actors that could be named here, however because they played a subordinate role for the development of this issue, they will not receive further attention.

Burtscher emerged as a very important actor, both regionally and nationally, at the beginning of the issue and remained so until the resolution phase. He was the strategic mind behind the activists' efforts to uncover the contamination and expose it. He showed tremendous personal commitment to the case; when representing Global 2000, Burtscher did the vast majority of the work for the case. He was closely involved in almost all-important events that happened throughout the issue, fighting for environmental and social justice.

Kwizda really defined the public opinion as the polluter and the culprit of the issue. It was not the company or the company's employees on the front line of the issue, but rather the external consultant, Michaela Hebein. From the first articles published on the issue until the most recent events, Hebein was the representative for Kwizda. While the company showed restraint to admit their guilt, Frau Hebein was crucial in changing the company's stance towards opening up admitting guilt and taking responsibility in order to keep the company alive.

The BH was one of the most important actors in the issue. Several persons from the BH were involved in the issue, the most important being Dr. Suchanek, until November 2012, and Mrs. Müllner-Toifl from January 2012. The

BH showed distance to the residents in the area as well as an incredible lack of transparency. They behaved in a way as to protect company, which hints at political involvement from the State level. Suchanek was likely informed about the contamination before September 2012, but his true role and possible negligence will likely be settled in court. Under Müller-Toifl's scrutiny the BH still made the most important calls in the remediation with the help of the Expert Team and Professor Wruss.

Professor Wruss was hired to plan the remediation of the ground water. The interview showed that he was already involved in the controversial remediation measures prior to September 2012. The leaked protocols of the negotiations showed his presence in the negotiations between the BH and Kwizda. This behaviour, including his advice to pump water into the Danube, reveals his role as an opportunistic business man, supporting above all else the economic interests of Kwizda.

The *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg* initiative was integral in the interpretation and positioning phases. Media data reveals that they were no longer a key actors in the resolution phase. What became clear through the interview data however, is how important Mathias Schabl was for the initiative and the overall development of the case, who displayed great personal dedication to creating transparency and resolving the issue. In addition to the initiative, the people of Korneuburg were absolutely influential in the way that they created a lot of pressure on the BH and Kwizda, but also on the local politicians. However, when the issue seemed to be resolved to many after the remediation was well under way, support for the initiative and Global 2000 declined dramatically. This was apparent in the lack of support for the second demonstration that occurred regarding contaminated water being channelled into the Danube River.

The third actor in the triangle with Burtscher and Schabl was Elisabeth Kerschbaum. She showed involvement, dedication and a strong position from the early onset of the issue until the last reported events. Her collaboration with the other two aforementioned actors was imperative. She acted as a representative of the residents of Korneuburg.

Other municipal politicians were active from the two other major parties. While the SPÖ showed mostly opportunistic behaviour, the role of Gepp and his ÖVP party is more controversial. Bound by party loyalties, his possibilities were limited. Nonetheless, he showed will to look after the best interests of the community.

Evidently, discrepancies exist between how the national and regional media perceived the issue. Journalists from regional newspapers, namely NÖN and Bezirksblatt showed sustained interest in the issue, whereas national newspapers, such as the ÖRF, only showed interest in the hot phases after September 2012 and also after Kwizda's appearance in court. Interestingly, the Kurier – a national daily newspaper – also showed sustained interest in the issue. The studied newspapers did not show signs of bias, which was confirmed in the interviews. Facebook need also be mentioned as an important forum for the dissemination of information to activists, residents, and also the media.

Robert Gordon was an integral part of the emergence of the issue, though his role was almost invisible in the media data. The non-appearance in the media does not diminish his importance to the case however, but rather highlights how media data alone does not always show the whole picture of an issue. The interviews revealed that he got in contact with residents to observe effects of the contaminated ground water. Moreover, his documentary *Am Schauplatz* is insofar an important testimony: It shows feelings of anxiety, helplessness, as well as hatred towards the BH a lot more clearly than newspaper articles do. Thus, it leads to a better understanding as to why so many people took part in the demonstration. Gordon also brought Helmut Burtscher into play, and these two worked closely to discover the cause of the plant deformations and to subsequently plan a strategy to generate instant media attention. Gordon's role is closely connected with the three aforementioned residents who remained persistent by not believing that the water was clean (as claimed by Kwizda and the BH). Without these residents, the groundwater contamination might have gone unnoticed.

Sometime after the contamination became known, a whistleblower sent Helmut Burtscher all negotiation protocols that had taken place between when the incident occurred at the Kwizda facilities in 2010 and the summer of 2012. The whistleblower's evidently important role in the issue was also invisible in the media data, but came out in the interviews. These protocols became an integral part of the statement of facts created by Burtscher, Schabl and Kerschbaum, leading the prosecution of BH officials. They also were very influential in motivating these activists for the cause.

One actor whose actions have been seen as very controversial is the public prosecution of Korneuburg. Not only did they dismiss Kerschbaum's first charges against 'unknown' without looking into the case in greater detail, they're investigations against Kwizda and the BH were insufficient. In the law suit, the public prosecutor never challenged the assertion made by the BH that they were not informed about the contamination. Moreover, the court ruling was questionable; it appears as though a great deal of evidence was simply ignored and important questions were not raised. For example, despite ample evidence, the court did not examine the validity of the accounts made by Kwizda on how the events took place, which were dissimilar to the police assessment and the expert's option.

The media data revealed a representation more based on name rather than influence, whereas interview data revealed more on influence than mere representation. The complementary combination of these two sources of information has evidently proven to provide more depth to the research. Gordon, for example, shows how actors that are more or less hidden to the public can have a very strong influence on an issue and its development. Also, the occurrence of a whistle blower helping the activists is another example of a hidden actor with possibly strong influence power.

6.1.3 Confrontation-collaboration strategies

What were the confrontation and collaboration strategies of the actors?

As previously mentioned, there are a number of events that influenced the development of the issue. Both the media and the interview analysis helped create understanding of how actors and stakeholders shaped these events and actions in time. Principal to the key actors and their various positions in the issue are the strategies they used to achieve their objectives. *How*, such as claims making and framing, *with whom*, and *when*, as in what time in the issue different strategies were used, are all central to this discussion. Below is a table of some key event chosen to highlight actor's confrontation and collaboration strategies. The table will be discussed, followed by a discussion on the application of Frooman's (1999) and Hendry's (2005) influence strategy models.

Table 5: A selection of focal events and actions

Focal Event/Action	(Collaborating) actor/s	Goal(s)	Who influenced?	Media Attention	Successful/ Outcome?
Plant watering assessment 03-07.2012	BH Maybe Kwizda	Unclear, possibly to hide groundwater contamination or buy time	Population Municipality	LOW	YES - Full pesticide screening evaded
Kerschbaum presses charges against Unknown 27.11.2011	Kerschbaum	Start legal investigation in order to initiate water testing	Public Prosecution	LOW	NO - Public prosecution dropped it as there was <u>no connection to Kwizda</u>
Press Conference 13.09.2012	Burtscher Gordon	Create instant media attention (and pressure on BH and Kwizda)	Direct: General Public	VERY HIGH	YES
1 st <i>Am Schauplatz</i> 14.09.2012	Partly Kerschbaum and residents		Indirect: BH and Kwizda		
Demonstration against BH and Kwizda 25.09.2012	<i>Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg</i> Residents Kerschbaum	Create pressure on BH and Kwizda and show politicians their concern	BH and Kwizda General Public	HIGH	YES
Quick water tests 24.09.2012	Burtscher and Media as collaborator	Respond to populations' concerns	Population Indirectly: Municipality, BH, and Kwizda	MED	YES - Municipality and Kwizda shared costs
Kwizda announces guilt 01.10.2012	Kwizda (Hebein)	Cooperation	Population Municipality	MED- HIGH	YES - No other choice at this time
Kwizda pays for water tests 10.10.2012	Kwizda	Show transparency and regain trust	Population Municipality	LOW	Unknown
Demonstration against unfiltered water being discharged into Danube 01.12.2012	Global 2000 <i>Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg</i> Green Party (Kerschbaum)	Stop deliberate environmental pollution	BH	LOW-MED Regionally MED Nationally	NO
Environmental Complaint 1.12.2012	Burtscher Schabl	Reach party status in negotiations between Kwizda and BH	BH	VERY LOW	NO
Information Events Starting 12.2012	BH Expert Team	(1) To release information to	Population	MED (decreasing)	NO - Public distrust

	(Possibly Kwizda in background)	public (2) Promote remediation strategy	Municipality	over time)	throughout issue
Burtscher present Statement of the Facts to public prosecution 2 nd Am Schauplatz broadcasted on same evening 21.02.2013	Burtscher Schabl Kerschbaum Whistleblower Gordon	(1) Shine light on BH and State of Lower Austria's protection of Kwizda (2) Achieve successful lawsuit	BH Lower Austria Kwizda	LOW	YES/NO
Kwizda's decision to surround facility with security wall (beyond obligation) 29.04.2013	Kwizda Expert Team	Rebuild trust in community and show change in behaviour	Population	MED	YES
Municipality appeals to BH to be part of negotiations 10/11.2013	Green Party SPÖ Seemingly ÖVP	Be part of negotiations and gain right to be decision maker	BH	LOW	NO – Appeal was denied by BH and sabotaged by ÖVP
Global 2000 appeal to reach party status in lawsuit 10.2014	Global 2000	Influence proceedings of lawsuit	Public prosecution Kwizda and BH	LOW	NO – Appeal was denied
Lawsuit against Kwizda 27.11.2014	Public Prosecution of Korneuburg Possibly State Politicians	Conduct minimum legal duties	Kwizda Population	HIGH	YES But there have been efforts to appeal the court decision
Appeal to have prosecution of BH moved to different court due to suspected bias 03.2015	Global 2000	Achieve higher level of transparency and justice for issue Set precedent	BH Lower Austria	HIGH	YES

Table 5 summarizes a selection of important events and actions that were taken during the issue of Korneuburg. It shows which actors were the drivers and collaborators behind these events and their main goals to achieve their means. Also, the table reveals which stakeholder or actor was targeted in terms of influence, the media attention to the event, as well as its outcome, i.e. was the event successful or not?

This table helps to paint a picture of who the most strategic actors were. The actors Burtscher, Schabl, and Kerschbaum, have shown to be close collaborators throughout the issue. While Burtscher and Schabl tried to influence the general public directly in various events, Kerschbaum focused on both the general public as well as the political actors of the municipality. Their efforts at directly affecting the BH were mostly unsuccessful, except in cases where pressure came from other stakeholders. The public's opinion played a very important role, as were legal actors in the last phases of the issue. What was shown clearly in the interview data is that these three actors used their own networks intensively for support, i.e. work as well as financial support. Therefore, numerous other actors who are not named here helped.

The overall strategy of these activists was complete transparency in all regards to gain trust and credibility, which can be seen as crucial in responding

to the hidden actions and motives of the BH and Kwizda. They instigated such transparency by releasing all their information and knowledge to the public over various mediums, including Facebook and the media.

The legal actors, the prosecution and court, showed questionable ties to politicians, which became very apparent in the issue through the controversial and passive acts of the public prosecution and the court of Korneuburg. Politicians, apart from Kerschbaum and the Green Party, remained as passive actors in the background. Their involvement behind the scenes, however, became especially noticeable when the municipality's appeal to be part of the negotiations was not only denied by the BH, but also sabotaged by the ÖVP, showing the lack of the desire from the governing party to be proactive. Nonetheless, national politics became more involved in the last phases of the issue, as the case was moved to the State court of Vienna. The State is governed by SPÖ, as is the Republic of Austria. While the State of Lower Austria had no interest in implementing transparency as it may have risked uncovering illegal activity of ÖVP politicians and the BH. The SPÖ however had great interest in uncovering negligence on behalf of the ÖVP, namely to benefit their political position. Unfortunately, the issue has not yet been taken to court as of August 2015.

Kwizda drove few of the actions listed in the table and the BH drove virtually none. Before the contamination became known to the population Kwizda made great efforts to add smoke to the mirrors by diverting blame, possibility to kill the issue and/or to buy time. The company made legal threats against municipal politicians. After the contamination became known, however, the company changed their strategy and showed a new face. They tried to show transparency and regain trust in the population, thus changing their stance and promoting a more positive view of the company. Their actions and positions were communicated predominantly through the media, via Frau Hebein. Cooperation with other actors, apart from the BH, could not be found.

The BH tried to install as little transparency as possible, and only responded and cooperated as little as they needed to. The BH's role can be seen as that of a "reactor," as they showed no proactive behaviour throughout the case. They did not want insight into the negotiations, nor did they want outside actors to have an inside view. They took numerous measures to keep other stakeholders at bay. Essentially, the BH went to great lengths to avoid having any other actor views their operations. They also displayed a great deal of distance to the public, although their communication to the media and public did improve slightly.

The wider population in the affected area was an important stakeholder throughout most of the issue. They were very supportive of the activists' efforts, especially due to the fact that the BH ignored their concerns. Most other stakeholders tried to influence them due to their influencing-power. In the beginning, the population showed strong support for uncovering the incident, though their interest (and consequently their influence power) in the issue diminished when their own goals, i.e. protecting their health and home, were mostly achieved. Thus, later in the case only Kwizda and local politicians tried

to influence them for support with goals not aligned with the groundwater issue.

6.1.4 Resource relationships and strategy selection

The resource relationships among the activists, (Burtscher, Schabl, Kerschbaum, Gordon, residents' initiative) as well as their relationships with other actors are stakeholders were easy to assess. The activists' actions, their behaviour, and relations to other actors were transparent to all other actors, and thus could be assessed using media and interview data.

However, the resource relationships between Kwizda, public officials of the BH, the ÖVP, and the public prosecution, were very difficult to assess. A definite assessment was not possible to conduct due to a lack of transparency and in depth knowledge of these actors and their relations with one another. Though the relationships between these actors could be deciphered to a certain degree when looking at their actions. Unfortunately, the direct involvement of specific persons cannot be discussed or evaluated. The following matrix, as seen in Table 6, shows the perceived resource relationships between the major actors as described above – as based on Frooman's influence strategy model.

"UNCLEAR!" signifies the author's perceived resource relationship based on the actions during the issue. Despite the dependence not being clear, the mere fact that it was unclear signifies that interdependence exists, and therefore conclusions have been drawn. Additionally, the evidence that was leaked to the public, as well as hinted at in both media and interview data, reveals that direct usage strategies were used in these cases. The following are examples showing the resource dependency and strategy selection by the BH, Kwizda, ÖVP and the public prosecution/Court of Korneuburg:

- Suchanek was promoted, clearly indicating political involvement by the ÖVP and thus a high interdependence but also direct strategy.
- The BH tried to protect Kwizda from the issue becoming public by handling the situation under a specific law, indicating a direct/usage strategy.
- Kerschbaum's initial charges were dropped by the public prosecution without proper investigation. This indicates an indirect strategy used by Kwizda. However, it remains unclear whether it was a usage or withholding strategy, as it is not clear how (and by whom) the prosecution was influenced. Also the resource relationship remains unclear, though low interdependence is the logical selection.
- The public prosecution showed no signs that they wanted to create more transparency in the lawsuit against Kwizda by not questioning the BH's role in the issue. This indicates some power that BH wielded over the prosecution as well as the Court, however it remains unclear if the BH used a direct or indirect strategy and whether politics were involved.

Table 6: Resource relationships and strategy selection

	Global 2000	BH Korneuburg	Kwizda	Media	Residents and initiative	ÖVP	Green Party / SPÖ	Public Prosecution/ Court of Korneuburg
Global 2000	-	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding?	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	Media power -> indirect / usage	Resident Power -> indirect / usage	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	Prosecution power -> indirect / usage
BH Korneuburg	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	-	High inter-dependence -> direct / usage UNCLEAR!	BH Power -> direct / withholding UNCLEAR!	Residents Power -> indirect / usage	Residents Power -> indirect / usage	BH Power -> indirect / usage	UNCLEAR!
Kwizda	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	High inter-dependence -> direct / usage UNCLEAR!	-	Media power -> indirect / usage	Resident Power -> indirect / usage	High inter-dependence -> direct / usage UNCLEAR!	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	UNCLEAR! -> indirect strategy used
Media	Media power -> direct / withholding	Media power -> direct / withholding	Media power -> direct / withholding	-	Residents Power -> indirect / usage	Media power -> Direct / withholding	Media Power -> direct / withholding	Media power -> Direct / withholding
Residents and initiative	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	-	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	Residents Power -> direct / withholding	Resident Power -> direct / withholding
ÖVP	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	BH Power -> direct / withholding	High inter-dependence -> direct / usage UNCLEAR!	Media power -> indirect / usage	Residents Power -> indirect / usage	-	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	ÖVP power -> direct / withholding
Green Party / SPÖ	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	BH Power -> direct / withholding	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	Media power -> indirect / usage	Residents Power -> indirect / usage	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	-	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding
Public Prosecution/ Court of Korneuburg	Prosecution power -> direct / withholding	UNCLEAR!	UNCLEAR!	Media power -> indirect / usage	Resident Power -> indirect / usage	ÖVP power -> indirect / usage	Low inter-dependence -> indirect / withholding	-

For the activists', the resource relationships are, as mentioned above, clearer. The residents of Korneuburg showed the most power in the issue as most other stakeholders depend more or less directly on them. However, their power is also dependent on their mass, which is why *Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg's* power dwindled in the later phases of the issue. This is an example of how stakeholder power can change dramatically over the course of an issue.

Global 2000's influence was closely related to the residents of the Korneuburg, as they showed no resource power over any other actors. They were however dependent on the residents and the media and have acted accordingly in this issue. An indirect withholding strategy against their main opponent, the BH, was not possible in the short run because they could not influence any other stakeholders to in turn influence the BH for them. This was the case until the issue became interesting for federal politics, when the court case against the BH was moved to the State Court of Vienna.

The media played an important role for many stakeholders and therefore was constantly influenced by them. It cannot be said though that the surveyed newspapers were dependent on anyone but their readers. The only difficult dependency to assess was with the BH as the BH did not show clear signs of giving in to media and public pressure. As the information politics became better with the media, the relationship can be seen as having a slight resource dependency of the BH.

In sum, Frooman's model proved to be quite accurate for the strategy selection of stakeholders based on their resource dependencies. However, Frooman (1999: 202) stated that: "Although determining who is dependent on whom may not be problematic, determining the extent of that dependence may be." Determining the dependency of the various stakeholders proved to be extremely difficult to the point of being impossible. There is a need for transparent information in order to assess these dependencies, which was not available in the case of the accused culprits. Therefore, a prediction of strategies that stakeholders would use is also impossible. Also the assessment of the strategies these stakeholders used, whether withholding or usage, remained largely in the dark for many of the events because crucial information was missing. The only exception occurred with the help of the documents that a whistleblower leaked, and therefore the actions of BH and Kwizda became somewhat transparent.

Hendry's (2005) model, though based on Frooman (1999), proved to be easily applicable to the issue of Korneuburg. First of all, her model is significantly more simplistic than Frooman's. The model sees stakeholders not as highly objective and strategic actors but rather as actors who work according to their experiences and boundaries.

Although the model was designed for ENGO strategy selection, it proved to be quite accurate for all stakeholders' strategy selection in the issue and numerous examples could be identified where stakeholders used her (Hendry, 2005) strategy selection model. In the following list, examples for the four factors as described in section 3.2.3.3, that determine strategy selection will be discussed:

Experience and/or expertise with a particular strategy/tactic

- Schabl started a citizens' initiative because he had already done so before
- Burtscher invited numerous journalists to press conferences because he had experience as a campaigner at Global 2000
- Kwizda did not talk to the public because they never had to in the past
- Hebein only spoke to press and local politicians because she knew they were most important in influencing public opinion

Opportunity to use a particular strategy/tactic

- Burtscher became involved because Gordon needed an expert's opinion on deformed plants and water contaminants
- Gordon depicted the BH as indifferent to the residents in the 1st *Am Schauplatz*, because the commissioner Müllner-Toifl treated them rudely on camera
- Global 2000 tried to reach party status in lawsuit against Kwizda in part because it would have set a precedent in Austria, thus receiving support from other NGOs

- The public was eager for information, therefore the BH reported monthly solely on the amount of pesticides that have been filtered from the groundwater

Resource efficiency of a particular strategy/tactic

- The costs for testing the individual water samples from concerned residents were very high, therefore Global 2000 agreed to Kwizda paying a large proportion (the rest was paid for by municipality of Korneuburg)
- Kwizda's legal threats were sufficient to affect municipal politicians in naming Kwizda as possible culprit (before September 2012) as well as intimidate a Global 2000 lawyer into not creating a statement of facts at all (a different external lawyer agreed to do so, however)

The fourth factor, *potential alliances in support of a particular strategy/tactic*, has been discussed in excess in earlier sections and therefore it is clear that all major actors sought alliances in order to apply strategies that they could not alone.

Hendry's model is good at categorizing past events as well as identifying stakeholders' possibilities in influencing other stakeholders. However, it does not help to make specific predictions in the same accuracy as Frooman's model, as it does not show which strategies will be selected.

Both models share the feature that they highlight the importance of networks. The issue's assessment has proven that networks were the strongest factor in creating collaboration in the issue. The networks, with specific persons from the BH, Kwizda, ÖVP politicians and the public prosecution remain largely hidden. Very strong ties within this network between these actors could nonetheless be identified. Similarly, the activist side benefited greatly from their personal networks, which lead to several focal actors, such as Burtscher.

Although these networks have proven to be important for all stakeholders, the networks in this issue also proved to be far too complex for Frooman's and Hendry's influence strategy models to assess events in which hidden motives were evolved. This was the case for numerous events throughout the issue, especially when politics were involved. As mentioned before, transparency and access to information are crucial for a sophisticated assessment.

7 CONCLUSION

The author of this thesis investigated the issue of the groundwater contamination of Korneuburg using Bigelow's (1991) life-cycle model as a framework for the issue's development. Few studies on environmental issues have been conducted using a life-cycle approach, and those that have been studied were limited to very broad issues, such as global warming. This thesis however is original in that it applied the life-cycle approach to a small-scale issue.

Research was conducted using two principle methods, an in-depth media analysis and in-person interviews. This thesis' approach followed the majority of issue life-cycle studies by using quantitative methods; in this case a media content analysis. Additionally, a complementary qualitative interview analysis was conducted - an approach not yet seen in this field. Thus, a combination of public perception and in-depth stakeholder views was achieved leading to several key findings with regards to the issue's development from a life-cycle perspective. Furthermore, both methods were also applied to analyse the influence strategies of the stakeholders.

A shortcoming of issue life-cycle models is that they have yet to provide answers as to which factors contribute to the increase of issue salience after a period of low salience. This thesis clearly uncovered factors that had a strong influence on a strategy's affectivity and overall success, the most important one being framing the issue as a social issue: There were numerous efforts made by the BH and Kwizda to kill the issue in the early stages of the issue. As a result, even though the contamination became known to the public, the issue remained primarily an environmental one. However, on numerous occasions, activists, including the NGO Global 2000, raised questions regarding possible health hazards to the public; this was a major factor contributing to the issue becoming a social one. After several months, the remediation was well underway and personal negative effects to the residents were no longer a major concern, thus the issue gradually reverted back to that of an environmental one. This was primarily due to the fact that residents' lost interest in the issue, as they no longer personally perceived a risk to their own wellbeing. In the last stages of the issue however, it became framed again as a social issue through the involvement of politics and legal actors.

This development from environmental to social to environmental and back again to a social issue closely resembles the salience that the issue created throughout its lifecycle. A strong connection between the salience an issue can create and the framing of the issue has been identified in this case, thus further supporting the belief that an environmental issue can only create high salience when it is framed as a social one. When an environmental issue is perceived as a social one, it can create enough pressure on public authorities and companies to lead to a change in behaviour and operations.

The combination of analysing influence strategies with issue life-cycle models helped in assessing stakeholder strategy selection. In theory, stakeholders are often perceived as highly strategic actors that plan their actions and strategies in great detail. What was shown in this thesis however is that many stakeholders only acted because the opportunity arose. Numerous events occurred because the actors were simply reacting to previous events. Nonetheless, a few very important events were indeed strategically planned with specific intent; some were successful and others were not. Their success did correlate closely with resource dependency theory, though other factors also played a major role. Firstly, framing an issue as a social one, as described above, played an important role for mass mobilisation. Secondly, low impact actions and events were more successful in reaching their goal during a time of high salience than when framed in times of low salience. A quick sequence of events has proven to sustain high salience. Thirdly, transparency of information proved to be crucial in creating legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Accordingly, a lack of transparency from certain actors led to a long-term loss of trust. Some actors remained unwilling to collaborate or to be affected by other actors withholding information.

This thesis also contributes to and challenges Frooman's and Hendry's influence strategy models. While Frooman's (1999) direct and indirect strategies could be identified easily, withholding or usage strategies were not as easily identified, if at all. Moreover, resource dependence was almost impossible to detect in many instances, which is contrary to Frooman's opinion. Access to information is crucial and therefore the applicability of the model to important stakeholders, in issues with complex stakeholder networks, remains limited to more transparent stakeholders such as civil activists and the general population. Uncovering the hidden inter-relations between other actors, such as political actors, public authorities, and companies, requires information that is very difficult to acquire.

Hendry's (2005) model proved to have greater applicability to the observed issue. It acknowledges that complex networks can be created in issues for which Frooman's model is "too parsimonious to adequately explain the array of influence strategies and related alliances" (Hendry, 2005: 94). Contrary to Frooman's model, this study showed that stakeholders sought collaborators not solely based on their resource power but also based on their networks. While both models are complementary to each other, Hendry's model served better in understanding how stakeholders selected their influence strategies, and Frooman's model proved accurate in predicting the strategy selection when resource dependence was clear.

Finally, this thesis serves as yet another example that stakeholders fighting for environmental sustainability and accountability need to be strategic, persistent and collaborative in order to achieve their goals. Conversely, companies faced with such stakeholders need to vacate their shareholder approach and develop a stakeholder approach in order to achieve their own goals.

One inherent limitation is that the thesis is a case study. Therefore, generalizations are difficult to make. The aforementioned findings of this thesis would need to be tested in future research through comparative case study analyses or quantitative methods.

The methods used in this thesis have boundaries, limiting what they can reveal. A limitation of the media analysis is that it is difficult to access the true impact of the media on the population. While the quantity of articles covering a particular issue affect peoples concern over the issue (Mazur & Lee, 1993), the quantitative method used here is not an indicator of how many people actually read the article, or if they in fact even understood the information or the greater picture. Thus, the analysis of media data could only show what the two newspapers deemed as important for its readers. Also, adding additional newspapers to the analysis would have given this study a more objective analysis of the issue's representation in the media, thus ensuring a higher level of generalisation. Another shortcoming is that Facebook should have been evaluated as part of the media analysis; in the interviews it was revealed that Facebook was one of the activists' most important communication tools. Future research should include social media, both in terms of influence strategies and issue salience.

The interview analysis has two major limitations. Firstly, the analysis can only represent what the interviewees choose to say or not say, including inaccuracies in their statements as well as lies. Thus, statements by the stakeholders cannot be received as a matter of fact, but rather should be evaluated and thus perceived as subjective. The second limitation is that not all of the most important stakeholders could be interviewed, and thus the actions and relations of certain key actors could not be analysed in great depth. Especially the relations between political actors, Kwizda, and legal authorities, their decision making processes and collaboration partners, remained largely unevaluated in this study.

This study uncovered that despite certain information not having been represented in media data but instead having been discussed informally in stakeholder groups, the information nonetheless generated hidden salience of the issue within these groups. The effect could be observed in mass mobilization, though it was unclear how this came to be, and therefore further research on the importance of informal communication and its contribution to issue salience is recommended.

Whilst this thesis showed the importance of framing an environmental issue as a social one, future research will be needed to answer how this can be done. It is the author's hope that societies come to understand that harming the environment is always a social issue as well as an environmental one.

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APPENDICES

ANNEX 1: Judging the quality of the research design (Yin 2014: 45)

Test	Research Strategy	Phase of research in which tactic occurs
Construct Validity	Include multiple sources of evidence	Data collection
	Establish chain of evidence	Data collection
	Have key informants review draft case study report	Composition
Internal Validity	Do pattern matching	Data analysis
	Do explanation building	Data analysis
	Address rival explanations	Data analysis
	Use logic models	Data analysis
External Validity	Use theory and replication logic	Research Design
Reliability	Keep a case study protocol	Data collection
	Develop case study database	Data collection

ANNEX 2: Overview of successful and unsuccessful interview attempts

	Participant	Actor Group/Affiliation	Duration	Pages	Comments
Successful	Burtscher, Helmut	Global 2000	1h 21m	29	
	Gordon, Robert	Am Schauplatz, ORF	0h 40m	11	
	Hebein, Michaela	Kwizda Agro	0h 28m	10/8*	
	Kerschbaum, Elisabeth	Green Party	0h 35m	17	
	Schabl, Mathias	Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg	0h 43m	18	
	Löwenstein, Veronika	NÖN	0h 43m	21	
Unsuccessful	Gepp, Christian	Mayor Korneuburg, ÖVP	-	-	Attempts to interview unsuccessful
	Kwizda Agro	Kwizda Agro	-	-	Referred to Michaela Hebein
	Müllner-Toifl, Waltraud	BH Korneuburg			Did not agree due to "ongoing investigations" against the BH
	ORF.at	ORF	-	-	No response
	Schütz, Sandra	Bezirksblatt Korneuburg	-	-	Attempts to interview unsuccessful
	Wruss, Werner	Expert Team	0h 56m	-	No agreement to use interview in thesis

* M. Hebein decided to take certain quotes out of the original transcript before agreeing that the transcript can be used

ANNEX 3: Actors and terms

Actors and terms	Translation and/or description
AGES	Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety; a public enterprise supporting ministries of a national level
Am Schauptplatz	Am Schauptplatz and Am Schauptplatz Gericht are investigative report series broadcasted by ORF. Two reports were created concerning the issue of Korneuburg; one was broadcasted in September 2012, and the second in February 2013. Robert Gordon was responsible for both productions.
Austrian Federal Environmental Agency	Austrian Federal Environmental Agency, supporting the federal government and offers environmental consulting to other clients
Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW)	The Federal ministry combines the tasks of both an environmental and an agricultural ministry. In Austria it is called "Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft" and abbreviated BMLFUW
Berger, Mr.	One of the three residents, along with Mr. Rafalzik and Mr. Nowag, that relentlessly tried to figure out what was wrong with the water. He was featured in the first Am Schauptplatz documentary.
Bezirkshauptmannschaft Korneuburg (BH)	The District of Korneuburg is one of the 95 districts of Austria. The district commission (Bezirkshauptmannschaft) fulfils the assigned tasks at an intermediate administrative level between the Austrian states and the municipalities. The BH is, among others, responsible for water law and thus for the groundwater and drinking water.
Bundesamt für Korruptionsprävention und Korruptionsbekämpfung (BAK)	The department is a part of the Austrian Federal Ministry for the Interior and its duties are combating and preventing corruption.
Bundesrat	Federal Council
Burtscher, Helmut	Burtscher is a chemist and campaigner of the Austrian NGO, Global 2000. He was the NGO's key actor in the issue of Korneuburg.
District of Korneuburg	One of 21 districts in Lower Austria.
Donaugraben	A small stream flowing through Korneuburg into the Danube
Environmental Complaint	According to the Environmental Liability Act, within EU legislation and part of other nation's laws for decades, the Environmental Complaint is a measure that allows NGOs, or person/s that played an important part in uncovering pollution to receive the status of a party in a lawsuit against the culprit. This would allow the NGO or person/s to receive access to information and thus influence in the lawsuit. It has never been granted in Austria.
Environmental Information Act	Due to EU regulations, the Act allows people to access environmental information produced by a public authority, received by a public authority and held elsewhere on behalf of the authority. In Austria it is called Umweltinformationsgesetz.
Pröll, Erwin	Erwin Pröll is an Austrian politician for the ÖVP, and has been the Governor of Lower Austria since 1992.
EVN	EVN wasser Gesellschaft m.b.H. is a former Austrian state company that operates in water treatment, natural gas supply and

	waste management business areas. They are in charge of the drinking water in the contaminated municipalities.
FPÖ	Liberal Party of Austria
Global 2000	Global 2000 is a Vienna based national Non Governmental Organisation affiliated with Friends of the Earth. Together with the team of Am Schauplatz from ORF they uncovered the extent of the groundwater contamination.
Gordon, Robert	Robert Gordon is a journalist working for the Austrian public broadcast service ORF as part of the Am Schauplatz team. He has been part of Am Schauplatz since it first started broadcasting in 1995. He became part of the issue of Korneuburg in the summer of 2012, when he came upon newspaper articles describing residents who were concerned with the groundwater in Korneuburg.
Grüne	Green Party of Austria, in opposition to ÖVP or SPÖ on all levels of State.
Haselsteiner, Norbert	Norbert Haselsteiner was the Commissioner of BH Korneuburg until November 2011 until he was suddenly transferred to his current position as commissioner of BH Melk.
Hebein, Michaela	Michaela Hebein is worked for RADIX PURE, the company that was hired by Kwizda to handle their PR (and probably their entire crisis management and communication. She later switched jobs to firm Daniel Kapp, where Kwizda continued to employ her.
Kerschbaum, Elisabeth	Elisabeth Kerschbaum is a politician for the Green Party in Korneuburg, Austria. She was a member of the Federal Council of Austria from 2003-2013, and since 2005 a member of the Korneuburg City Council.
Kwizda; Kwizda-Agro	Kwizda Holding GmbH is an Austrian pharmaceutical company with several subsidiaries. Kwizda-Agro is one of these subsidiaries covering the agricultural market with pesticides. They are the Austrian Market leader.
Lower Austria	Lower Austria is one of nine states in Austria and, after Vienna, is the country's most important in terms of population and economy. The conservative ÖVP party is in power, with Erwin Pröll as its leader.
Marktgemeinde Leobendorf	The Marktgemeinde Leobendorf is small city in the district neighbouring the municipality of Korneuburg. The Kwizda-Agro Plant Leobendorf is on the municipality's grounds. Parts of Leobendorf were also affected heavily by the contamination, especially in one area where several residents solely use groundwater in their households.
Müllner-Toifl, Waltraud	Waltraud Müllner-Toifl is the head of the BH Korneuburg since late January 2012, appointed by Erwin Pröll. He was featured in the first Am Schauplatz documentary.
Municipality of Bisamberg	A municipality in the district of Korneuburg. One of the three municipalities affected by the groundwater contamination.
Municipality of Korneuburg	A municipality in the district of Korneuburg. One of the three municipalities affected by the groundwater contamination. Administrative centre of the district of Korneuburg.
Municipality of Leobendorf	A municipality in the district of Korneuburg. One of the three municipalities affected by the groundwater contamination.
Löwenstein, Veronika	Veronika Löwenstein is a journalist for NÖN and has been covering the groundwater contamination.
NÖN	Die Niederösterreichischen Nachrichten is a Lower Austrian regional weekly newspaper published in St. Pölten, Austria.
Nowag, Michael	One of the three residents, along with Mr. Rafalzik and Mr.

	Berger, that relentlessly tried to figure out what was wrong with the water. He was featured in the first Am Schauplatz documentary.
Oboda, Peter	Peter Oboda is an activist and spokesperson of the initiative <i>Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg</i> and resident of Korneuburg.
Ökobüro	An umbrella organisation of the Austrian NGOs Global 2000, Greenpeace, WWF, or Vier Pfoten (Four Paws), whom he supports in legal affairs and legal lobbying.
ORF	Österreichischer Rundfunk (Austrian Broadcast) is the Austrian national public service broadcaster.
ÖVP	Austrian People Party; party in power in Korneuburg (Mayor)
Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg	<i>Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg</i> is a citizens' initiative established in September 2012 just after the extent of the contamination became public around the 13th. Led by Mathias Schabl and Peter Oboda, the initiative aimed at informing the residents and calling for justice. Formerly also using their own webpage www.grundwasserverseuchung.at (which was closed sometime in 2014) they mainly disclosed information on their Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/grundwasserverseuchung/)
Rafalzik, Kurt	One of the three residents, along with Mr. Nowag and Mr. Berger, that relentlessly tried to figure out what was wrong with the water. Featured in the first Am Schauplatz documentary.
Rauecker-Grillitsch, Sandra	Member of SPÖ party and environmental councilwoman of Korneuburg.
Sachverhaltsdarstellung Statement of the Facts	Statement of the Facts (law) Three two created in total. The first one was created by Global 2000 and presented to the public prosecution of Korneuburg in December 2012 in order to prosecute Kwizda as the polluter. Burtscher, Schabl, and Kerschbaum created a third Statement of the Facts in a joint effort. It was presented to the public prosecution of Korneuburg in February 2013 in order for them to become active against the BH and other public officials. A whistleblower leaked the most important documents used for this statement to Burtscher.
Schabl, Mathias	Activist of the initiative <i>Pro Reines Wasser Korneuburg</i> and resident of Korneuburg. Before the groundwater contamination, he led another public campaign that successfully lobbied for building the municipality's first high school (AHS Korneuburg). Works as a freelance IT expert.
SPÖ	Social Democratic Party; opposition in the municipality Korneuburg, but in coalition with ÖVP on national and state level
Staatsanwaltschaft (Korneuburg)	Public prosecution of Korneuburg
Stadtgemeinde Korneuburg	The municipality of Korneuburg is a small city in Niederösterreich and the district capital of the district of Korneuburg. Korneuburg was affected heavily by contamination on the Kwizda facility's grounds as the plant is very close to the city's area, which lies downstream from the plant.
Suchanek, Peter	Vice-commissioner of BH Korneuburg until November 2012 and, until then, responsible for negotiations with Kwizda. Suddenly appointed commissioner of the BH Bruck a. d. Leitha, on the initiative of Erwin Pröll.
Tschinkowitz, Axel	Official clinical expert of Lower Austria for water and soil contamination. He was also the clinical expert in the case of Wiener Neustadt. In both cases, he directed testing methods that

	could not find the relevant substances.
Wruss, Werner	Prof. Werner Wruss is a university professor at Technische Universität Wien and the head of the consultancy company (www.wruss.at) hired by Kwizda in 2012 to plan the remediation actions to clean the groundwater and protect the factory from future spills.

ANNEX 4: List of acronyms

List of Acronyms	
AGES	Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit / Austrian Agency for Nutritional Safety (AGES)
BH	Bezirkshauptmannschaft / District Commission of Korneuburg
BMLFUW	Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft / Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
ENGO	Environmental Non-governmental Organization
EVN	EVN wasser GmbH
FPÖ	Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs / the Liberal Party of Austria
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NÖN	Die Niederösterreichischen Nachrichten / Lower Austria News
ORF	Österreichischer Rundfunk / Austrian Public Broadcast
ÖVP	Österreichische Volkspartei / Austrian People's Party
SPÖ	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreich / Social Democratic Party