Qualitative Methods Appendix for CPS Dataverse

For "Strategic State Capacity: How States Counter Opposition to Climate Policy"

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Sources for this article primarily consist of government documents, newspaper coverage, and industry journals, but they also include 63 long-form interviews conducted. While we used background interviews to inform the overall argument, we rely primarily on print sources for citation. Interviews were conducted between 2016 and 2017 with policymakers (22), representatives from firms and industry associations (24), non-governmental organizations (10), and expert advisors (7) involved in climate policy in Europe and the United States.

We selected interview partners for their role in and first-hand knowledge of the policymaking process and associated interest group battles related to key climate policymaking process in the four cases discussed in the paper. Interviewees were contacted by email and offered different levels of attributability/anonymity: 1) attributable by name and title, 2) attributable by role as defined by interview partner, 3) anonymous. The interview citations in the article reflect the varying degrees of confidentiality requested by the interview partners.

Interviews were conducted in person or by phone over a period of two years. We asked open-ended questions to reconstruct the policymaking process for the key climate legislations considered in this article, asking detailed questions about the nature of interest group opposition, the determinants of different choices in policy tools to overcome interest group opposition, and possible alternative explanations for the policymaking outcomes described here. Detailed notes were taken during the interview. We assembled detailed write-ups of the interview immediately afterwards and stored these writeups on a secure server.

Information obtained through interviews was triangulated and confirmed using print sources wherever possible. With some exceptions, we cite print sources in the article, particularly when interview subjects requested anonymity.

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