



Editors
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Internationalisation of the Environment: The Local Perspective

Papers from the 8.Nordic Environmental
Social Science Research Conference June
18-20 2007. Workshop 4

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Abstract: “Think globally, act locally” is a slogan from the Brundtland-report twenty years ago. Since then several Nordic as well as other European cities and local communities have responded to this call for local action. Local Agenda 21 highlighted local responsibility for sustainable development through decentralisation and participation. Meanwhile ,the internationalisation of environmental policies has resulted in international agreements and regimes influencing and constraining local policies and action on specific topics. International expectations and demands (EU-directives as one example) might constrain the autonomy of local governments in developing a local policy for sustainable development, but they can also represent opportunities for local action. The papers discuss how local and regional governments face these challenges to local governance of combining the demands from above with the expectations from below.

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Foreword

The biannual NESS Research Conferences have become a valued tradition. From a relatively humble beginning in the early 1990's, these conferences have grown to become truly international events. The Nordic region shares democratic and social values and at the same time has, to a large extent, the same environmental challenges.

In 2007, it is twenty years since the Brundtland-commission came with the report "Our common future". They launched the most common definition of sustainable development and, as a consequence, gave the global perspective in environmental policy its absolute breakthrough.

Twenty years later, this perspective has become even more relevant. Nature consists of common-pool resources, and environmental problems are border crossing. The 8th NESS conference in Oslo, Norway June 18-20. looked into how the international community, nations and local communities meet common challenges on the environmental area. Furthermore, we discussed how the internationalisation of environmental politics creates challenges, constraints and opportunities on the local, national and global level.

These themes provided a good starting point for interesting discussions and new acquaintances. The conference gathered approximately 80 researchers from the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Germany. In addition there were four keynote speakers: Arild Underdal, Susan Baker, Terry Marsden and Jan Erling Klausen. In this compendium you will find some of the papers presented at the conference. Of different reasons, some of the participants wanted to abstain from the proceedings.

Oslo, October 2007

Berit Nordahl

Research Director

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Public transportation and sustainable development: A case study

By Peder Rönnbäck

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Paper for the 8th NESS- Conference: Internationalisation of environmental policy:
Challenges, constraints and opportunities

Workshop 4: Internationalisation of the environment: The local perspective.

Oslo, Norway, 18-20 June, 2007

Abstract

Since the local level in the society has been regarded as one of the more important levels where changes towards a more sustainable development must take place, states has used different instruments of control to influence its municipalities to realize these changes. One Swedish example is the *Local Investment Programme (LIP)* which supported many different local investment programmes in Swedish municipalities between 1998—2002. The municipality of Luleå, where changes of the public transportation system were on the political agenda, received in 2000 financial support for a project called *Public transportation in change*. The aim of the project was to create a more competitive public transportation system, i.e. bus system, in order to get more people to choose the bus for their daily travels. Policy processes are however not always as rational as policy makers might think. Instead, they can sometimes be characterized as an incremental process with sudden, almost unpredictable, changes. In order to conceptualize such processes, especially agenda-setting and decision making, John Kingdon has developed the multiple-streams framework (MS). According to this framework the policy process is separated into three streams; problem, policy and politics. When a window of opportunity opens, a policy entrepreneur with appropriate skills, resources and institutional position might couple the streams and thereby enhance the chances for a policy change.

The aim of the paper is to describe and analyze the policy process which aimed to change the public transportation in Luleå municipality. The purpose is thereby to contribute to the understanding of the problems related to local policy making regarding sustainable development.

It is concluded that the 2002 election to the municipality council was the highly institutionalized window of opportunity that finally enabled the introduction of a new bus system, although with less aspiration regarding sustainability than the original plan. The LIP programme mainly affected the local process in a positive way. It might even have been the reason that the new bus system was realized at this point. There were some problems concerning the institutional arrangement around the LIP programme, which caused minor delays in the project. The study also indicates that sustainable development at the local level is associated with many problems. Rhetorically sustainable development is regarded as an important goal, but in reality there are differences regarding how to understand and realize the concept. Sustainable development was described as ecological, economical and social sustainability in cooperation or that they could be ranked. In this case, it is concluded that economical constraints seem to set the conditions in reality.

Keywords: Public transportation, Traffic policy, Sustainable development, Local investment programs

1 Introduction

There has been a change in the global and national agenda during the last decades where *Sustainable development* has become the dominating idea behind projects concerning planning of society. The *Rio declaration* established that all levels of society must be involved and strive in the same direction in order to achieve sustainable development. Especially actions taken at the municipality level was emphasized because this level must be included in order to be successful. In Sweden the national government intention has been that issues regarding sustainable development should be handled at the lowest possible level of society so that local conditions can be taken into consideration. It would also be possible to better include the citizens in different policy processes. This is a change from a national to a local perspective.

Another issue which has received a lot of attention is climate changes and the impact from human activities. This has resulted in the *Kyoto protocol* whose goal is to reduce the discharge of green house gases, among them carbon dioxide (CO₂).

This decentralization of environmental aims sets the local governmental organization and its ability to solve problems before new challenges. The national government has used different instruments of control to influence the local municipalities to take action. An example of a financial instrument of control was the Local Investment Programme (LIP) which was established in 1998. The aim was to increase the ecological sustainability in the society. Swedish municipalities was granted SEK 6,2 billion from LIP between 1998-2002.

The municipality of Luleå in the northernmost part of the country applied for money from LIP for several different projects. Among them was one project called *Public transportation in change (PTC)*. The aim with PTC was to improve the environment in the city centre by creating a more attractive public transportation system to make people more motivated to take the bus instead of their car. PTC consisted of four different but related projects:

- *Bus Lines and stops*: The goal was to create more efficient system of lines which should meet the customers needs better.
- *Terminal*; the new system of lines demanded a terminal in the city centre.
- *Traffic lights/bus lanes*; The goal was to decrease the travelling time by bus by giving buses higher priority at traffic lights and in crossings.
- *Information system*; The goal was to give the customers better information about time tables, prices and so on.

The project *Terminal* caused a heated debate among the political parties, media and the public. Several decisions were taken in the municipal council and appeals to the national government were made about the decisions. The project became an issue in the election to the city council in 2002 and could finally be settled after a referendum in 2003. This case

highlights different types of issues that can occur when national policy should be realized on the local level of society.

The aim of the study is to describe and analyze the policy process regarding public transportation in Luleå. Hereby, it is possible to get a better understanding of the problems concerning that faces a local government in its strive towards sustainable development. Following questions has been dealt with: How has the policy process regarding public transportation in Luleå been organized? How can the organization and the course of events towards a solution be understood? How has the national LIP program been harmonized with the local process? What conclusions can be drawn concerning the conditions for a sustainable development on the local level?

1.1 Methodology

A standard case study approach has been used. Case studies are normally multi-method with a variety of techniques (Hague & Harrop, 2001:72; Yin, 1994:8). For this study documents such as official protocols from the municipality council and executive board, technical reports, memorandums from the project groups and material from local newspapers has been used. Interviews with politicians and public officials, and a survey among the public has also been conducted.

1.2 How to analyze a policy process

There are different theoretical approaches describing policy making: the rational, the incremental and the revised garbage can model i.e. multiple streams framework. They differ in their basic assumptions about individual and organizational rationality, policy change (Hill, 2005:145-155; Kingdon, 1995:77-ff; McLendon, 2003:484) and hence the policy process.

Simplified, the rational approach views policy making as a linear process initiated by a problem formulation followed by selection between alternative solutions and their consequences. Finally, the solution that will give the greatest benefit or be conducive to the organizational objectives will be decided (Hill, 2005:146; McLendon, 2003:485). The approach emphasizes policy making as process characterized by systematic collection and analysis of information (McLendon, 2005:484-485). A weakness with this approach is that it has trouble to explain many decisions as it disregard the fact that policy decision making is a interactive process characterized by actors with different and problematic preferences and views about the problem and suitable solutions (Hill, 2005:147; Sabatier, 1999:4).

As a critical response to the rational perspective, most notably Charles Lindblom (1959), has developed the incremental approach which is inspired by Herbert Simons (1957) work on *bounded rationality* (McLendon, 2003:485). According to this approach policy changes incrementally due to time constraints and incomplete information, this causes policymakers to analyze a limited number of alternatives (Hill, 2005:148). They are also influenced by group demands and institutional arrangements which cause them to focus on alternatives that mean minor deviations from existing policy. It is therefore reasonable to assume that policy change often follows the logic of incrementalism. However, the incremental approach is having difficulties to explain major policy change. In this case the change will be regarded as major, because after nearly thirty years of patching with the traffic situation a large reform took place.

A third conception of policy making, the *Multiple Streams Framework* (MS), is inspired by the garbage can-model by Cohen, March & Olsen (1972). Here, the policy process differ from the stage-like and is instead conceptualized as streams of problems, policy and politics which are rather independent and separate from each other (Kingdon, 1995: Evans Stout & Stevens, 2000:342). Policy change will most likely occur when the streams are coupled together during a window of opportunity (Kingdon, 1995:168-70; Zahariadis, 2007:73).

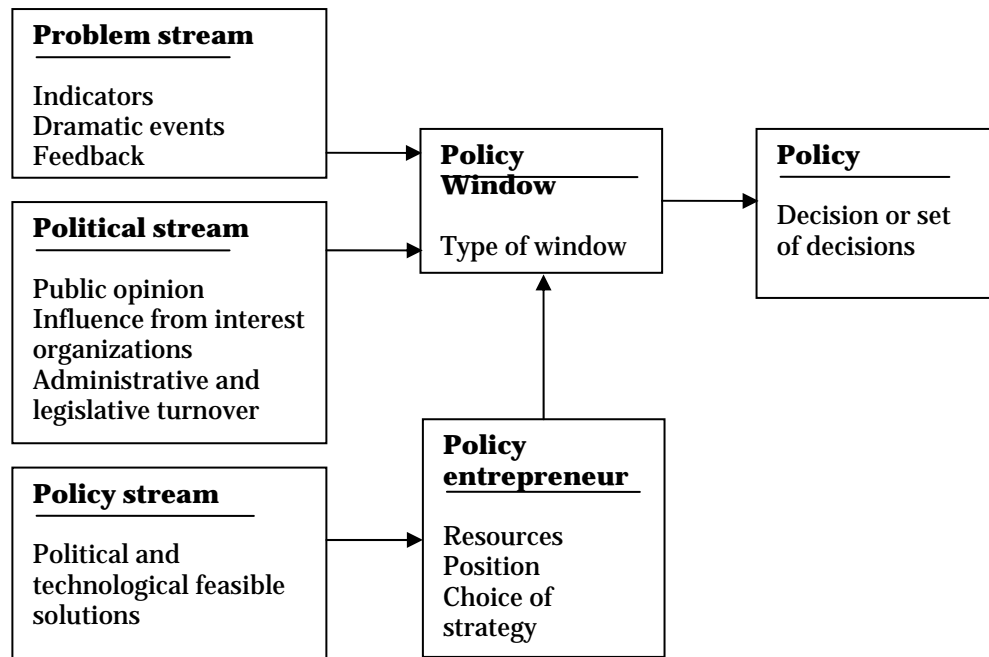
The multiple streams framework share the view of bounded rationality with incrementalism but has a more developed and feasible explanation of policy change. Therefore, for this study the Multiple Streams Framework will be used.

The applicability of the Multiple Streams Framework in a European context has been discussed. One of the arguments against the framework it that it does not pay enough attention to the fact that ideology and political parties have stronger positions in Europe compared with the US, especially in issues where ideology is important, such as taxes or welfare (Hill, 2005:160). However traffic is not an obvious ideological issue, although it has such features. The electoral system in Sweden is since 1998 a combination of party and preference voting, where voters vote for a party and may at the same time vote for a candidate that they would prefer to be elected. This means that candidates can profile themselves by promoting certain issues.

According to the questions municipalities are not seen as merely policy takers although the national levels' instruments of control are important. Instead it is assumed that municipalities usually have many problems on the agenda. A national programme such as LIP will likely lead to that a municipality will try to use the program to try to find better solutions to existing problems. In order to study this it is therefore necessary to start with the target of the program, i.e. the municipality and perform a backward mapping (Elmore; 1979-80:604; Hill, 2005:183). Hereby it is possible to understand the local context and problems which local actors are trying to harmonize with the national programme in order to receive funding.

1.3 Multiple Streams Framework

According to MS, the policy making process can be understood in terms of three separate process or streams; *problem*, *politics* and *policy*. These streams can at certain points be coupled together by policy entrepreneurs. This increases the possibility that a policy change will take place.

Figure 1.1 *The Multiple Streams Framework Adapted from Zahariadis, 2007:71*

The *problem stream* consists of issues and conditions which actors want to be seen as problems which need to be addressed. Awareness of such conditions can be a result of indicators, events which sets a focus on certain issues or feed back. A certain phenomena might not be seen as a problem by all involved and the phenomena can be ambiguous so problem definition can be difficult. Also, actors values and ideological beliefs results in different views about the phenomena. Therefore, it is likely that actors try to influence and manipulate the problem definition and frame it in a way that promotes their interests.

The *policy stream* is a stream of ideas presented by actors. Continuously politicians, public officials, researchers and others presents ides that they want to realize. There is a continual competition among the ideas to survive in the stream. Ideas who has the best probability to survive are those who are economical and political feasible.

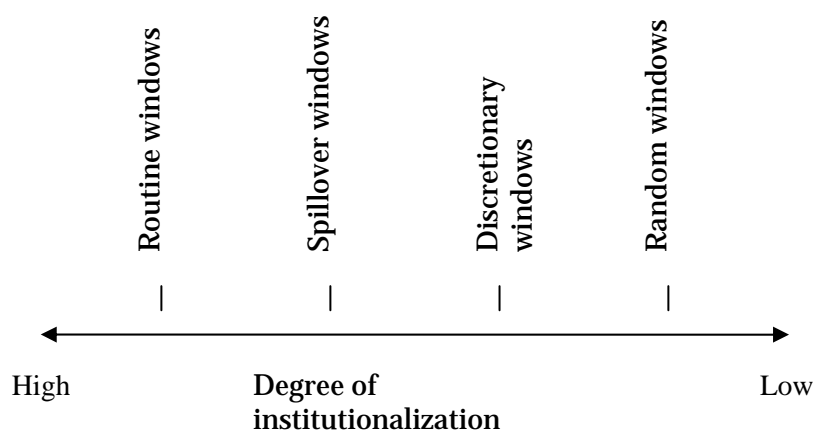
The third stream, the *political stream*, contains the public opinion, influence by organized interests and administrative and legislative turnover. Kingdon defines politics as activities by politicians, political parties and interest organizations with the purpose of influence the policy making (Kingdon, 1995:146).

In the framework policy change most likely occurs when the streams are coupled during a policy window.

There are two types of policy windows – those that open in the problem stream and those who open in the politics stream (Kingdon, 1995:168). A window opened by a problem causes a search for suitable ideas in the policy stream. The definition of the problem might be in progress at the same time. A policy window, opened in the politics stream, implies that ideas searching for problems are presented. Policy windows can be opened with different degrees of predictability (Kingdon, 1995:184-ff; Howlett, 1998:499). If policy windows can be opened in the problem and politics stream with high or low predictability we will have four types of windows. They can be distinguished in terms of

institutionalization. *Routine windows* opens, with high probability, in the politics stream due to events determined by institutional arrangements e.g. elections, budget or program revisions (Kingdon, 1995:186-188; Hendriks, 1999:87–89). *Spillover windows* open in the problem stream when issues are drawn into already open windows. A prerequisite is that actors must make the interpretation that the problems are in the same category (Kingdon, 1995:193). Therefore it is important how the problem is framed. A *discretionary window* opens in the political stream as a result of actors' actions, which are rather difficult to predict. Finally, we have the *random windows* which open in the problem stream as a result of unpredictable events (Howlett, 1998:500). Howlett (1998) has shown that policy windows with a high degree of institutionalization are the most frequent (Howlett, 1998:514-ff). This implies that policy windows often follows a form of regularity and not are as random as it might seem.

Figure 1.2 Types of policy windows (Source: Howlett, 1998:500)



This indicates that some policy windows are easier to predict than others. However, the coupling does not happen automatically and windows are only open for a short moment of time. While a window is open an advocate, called policy entrepreneur, must be ready to push attention to their preferred solutions and problems.

The policy entrepreneurs' success depends upon available resources, position and strategy. If there is consensus about problem and policy among policy makers and the public coupling are rather simple to accomplish. When there are disagreements about the problem and proposed solutions among the policy makers and between them and the public it is likely that coupling will be difficult. In these situations policy entrepreneurs must pay a lot of efforts in order to push their pet solution through.

1.4 The case: Public transportation in Luleå

The case study focuses on traffic and public transportation policy in the municipality of Luleå over the last thirty years. As the city changes so does the policy which need to address new problems that emerge. The traffic causes several problems, for example congestion, noise and emissions of nitrous oxide (NO_x) where the problems are narrowly

concentrated. There are also problems which are widely distributed, for example emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

During the 70' new problems regarding traffic in the city centre was discovered. First, there was a problem with air pollution, especially due to the cold climate in the winter. Second, there was an increasing problem with traffic jams due to the fact that the city centre is located on a peninsula in the Luleå river. A lot of the traffic had to pass through the city centre to cross the bridge over the river to the airport, the southern parts of the municipality and the high way south. The first step to handle these problems was to rebuild the main street *Storgatan* to a pedestrian street. There were additional ideas to control the traffic in the city centre, but they were not fulfilled during this period (Gatukontoret, 1989-09-29). It would take about a decade before the traffic and environmental situation would again emerge on the political agenda. In 1989, the local bus company (LLT) proposed that an investigation concerning the public transportation system and a consequence analysis of suggested traffic restrictions should be conducted (KS, 1989-02-13, § 132). The municipality council accepted the proposal and a project group were appointed. The project group had the assumption that an improved public transportation system would attract more people to take the bus instead of the car and hence contribute to a better environment, especially in the city centre (Luleå kommun, kollektivtrafikgruppen, 1992-09-08). Within the project, several studies were made between 1989 and 1992. The most difficult problem to solve was to agree on a location for the proposed terminal. None of the alternatives received acceptance so the decision became that further alternatives should be analyzed. Some efforts were made but no proposal was to be presented for the municipality council (Interview 13, 2004-05-13).

In June 1997 the municipality executive board considered a proposal from the technical board that a new project organization for public transportation issues should be appointed. The proposal passed and a project group, containing administrative executives from the municipality and politicians from the ruling party and the opposition, was assigned. A report called *Public transportation in change (PIC)* was presented in august 1998. The municipality executive board referred the report back to the project group, with motivations that yet more alternatives concerning terminal and lines should be investigated (KS, 1998-09-14, § 183).

In the autumn of 1998 the project group renamed the project *Public transportation in change II (PIC II)*, both tried to take a wider approach on the project and at the same time focus on two different alternatives for the public transportation system in the city centre. The alternatives were (1) that there should be lines and bus stops all around the city centre or (2) that the buses should be located to just one street and pass through the city centre the shortest way. Alternative 1 was supported by the local bus company (LLT), the labour union at LLT and the regional public transportation company (Länstrafiken). Alternative 2 was supported by property owners, shopkeepers, citizens, tenant-owners' societies thus the project group recommended the alternative. The municipality council decided that alternative 2 should constitute the basis for further planning (KF, 1999-09-27, § 155).

The decision from September 1999 is carried out through the winter 99/00 and in March 2000 is the project granted funding from the national *Local investment programme (LIP)*. One of argument put forward in the application was that LLT would test ethanol buses in cold climate which was seen as a technological challenge. Due to need to coordinate with LIP and delays in installation of the information system the new public transportation system was postponed until 2002 (Styrgruppen, 001215).

In order to build the terminal changes had to be made in the plan concerning planning and building in the city centre. The proposal, which meant that cars no longer would be allowed to traffic a street in the city centre, was displayed to the public in January 2001 and received critic from property owners' and tenant-owners' societies. Their argument was that the municipality hadn't followed the decision-making process established in the Planning and Building Act, and further more that the investigation of the environmental consequences was insufficient. The local media started to pay more attention to the process during the spring and summer of 2001. Their reports concerning the process had been rather objective this far. Now, especially Norrbottens-Kuriren (N-K) criticized the proposal in a number of articles and columns. At the same time the terminal project became more controversial among the politicians. There was an argument that the previous decision should be reconsidered due to new information. New alternatives were also presented and the municipality executive board decided that the alternatives should be analyzed before a final decision (KS, 010910, § 122). The assignment was given to the project group and their conclusion was that new alternatives had more disadvantages compared to the proposal they had presented in January. As a result both the municipality executive board and the municipality council accepted the proposal, although with weaker majority than in 1999 (KS, 011015, § 133; KF, 011029, § 131). Several of the political parties were also divided. A member of the ruling party, the Social Democrats, also chairman of the LLT board said that the decision indicated that the politicians didn't listen to the citizens (N-K, 011030).

The property owners' and tenant-owners' societies who had expressed criticism earlier appealed against the decision to County Administrative Board. However, neither the County Administrative Board nor later the Government agreed with them.

As a result of the appeal the transportation system was postponed another year and a new date was set to September 22 2003. The project and especially the decision-making process became an issue in the election campaign to the municipality council in the autumn of 2002. The idea of an advisory referendum was introduced by one of the candidates to the post as municipal commissioner. As he was successful in the election he was able to redeem his promise that a victory in the election would lead to a referendum. A referendum, with two alternatives to consider, was held in March and April 2003. Critics, among them politicians and media, had the opinion that the alternatives were basically the same. The difference was whether buses and cars or just buses should be allowed to use a particular street called *Smedjegatan*, at the very centre of the city. There was no possibility to show disapproval with the whole project. 47 percent of the citizens participated in the referendum and 68 percent of them voted for the alternative that meant that both buses and cars should be allowed to use the street. The municipality council followed the result from the referendum and changed the decision they had taken in October 2001 (KF, 030428, § 88).

Five months later was the new public transportation system inaugurated. The solution was to some extent a compromise between environmentalists and those who favoured the mobility of the individual using a car.

1.5 Interviews with the policy makers

Many of the interviewed express initial problems regarding the work in the project groups. The problems mainly concerned the purpose of the project. There were many views even within the project group which caused disagreement among them. They also had different images of sustainable development as a goal. The representative of the

Green Party and the city planning officials described sustainable development as an entirety of social, ecological and economical development. Others had a more meagre image of the concept. The most common conception was that economical development was a prerequisite for the others. The definition of the problem took place when PIC II started. A few of the interviewed also criticized the reports that the decisions were based on. They argued that the reports were too weak to base any decision on. There are divergences in their apprehension of what influence the LIP funding had. Confusion arose when they wanted to break off their plans for ethanol buses and waited on a decision whether that would affect the funding. Some believed that the process would have been carried through anyway, although in a smaller scale. Others think that the funding was decisive, otherwise it would most likely have been discontinued as had happened a decade earlier. The situation in the project group improved over time. At the same time the process became controversial among the politicians, which contributed to the referendum in 2003. The interviewed agree that a referendum is a valuable instrument in a democracy and found it interesting as it was the first time in Luleå. There was however opinions that a referendum should concern more important issues such as citizens' opinions about the public transportation system, environment and the future city centre. Now, the referendum was seen as a way to handle a situation when the politicians were unable to complete the process. Many of the interviewed preferred the alternative which lost in the referendum. The reason they preferred it was that they thought that it had environmental advantages. They all believed that the debate got a narrow focus. However, they did not have any objections against the media and the way they had covered the policy process. They were instead rather self-critical to their ability to formulate and communicate positive images of what they wanted to attain. One reason for that might be disagreements they expressed about which roles politicians and public officials should have and whether public officials should criticize decisions by the municipality council.

1.6 Citizens' conceptions of the process

As described above, the media framed the process as an action by politicians and public officials to make it more difficult to use the car in the city centre, without almost any discussion about the expected environmental advantages. In addition they also framed it as a situation where the politicians listened to the public officials rather than the citizens. A survey was conducted in order to study the citizens' conceptions of the process. About 80 percent of the respondents had followed the debate in the media. Almost 50 percent of the respondents thought that been about traffic and mobility. 14 percent thought that the debate had been about the environment. That figure was significant lower among them who never travelled by bus. 18 percent believed that the debate had focused on the democratic aspects. A significant difference was among men over 55 years where 27 percent thought that the democratic aspects had been in focus.

1.7 Concluding analysis

After this brief summary, the empirical material shall now be discussed in the context of multiple streams.

In the *problem stream* there were environmental issues known since the 70s. There was at least one additional problem which concerned the local bus company (LLT) owned by the municipality. The problem was that they had experienced a decreasing number of

passengers over the years. The company's goal from the politicians was to finance 50 percent of their costs from ticket sales and they were down to 35 percent in the mid 90's. This was a problem for the tax payers and also for those employed at LLT, because there was a possibility that public transportation would be out sourced if the trend wouldn't change. Thus, awareness of problems came from indicators i.e. air pollution and traffic monitoring.

The *policy stream* had during the whole time period been dominated by the idea of a new public transportation system. Several ideas and suggestions concerning the design of the system have been presented over the last decades. Although they have been different in scope they all have presented ideas for the city centre. A lot of efforts, analyzing alternative ideas, were made during the period 1988-1992 without any final decisions. The issue vanished from the political agenda without a reasonable explanation. A feasible explanation is that the issue concerning public transportation lacked a policy entrepreneur when the routine windows opened during this period i.e. elections to the municipality council 1991 and 1994. The alternatives presented were also rather widespread, from smaller changes in the public transportation system to build a tunnel under the peninsula in order to lead the traffic to the southern bridge. This indicates that the problem to solve was ambiguous. When the issue re-enters on the political agenda in 1997 it does not seem to be the result of a policy entrepreneur. Instead, the reason seems to be that the municipality had been working on a local environmental program (Agenda 21). During that, it became known that the traffic was an area which the citizens thought was a pressing problem. Another explanation was that the local bus company (LLT), with its strained economy, thought that changes to system were necessary in order to increase the number of passengers.

After the re-entrance on the political agenda and especially after the report *Public transportation in change (PIC)* in 1998 the process focused on changes on the public transportation system. The alternatives contained ideas about lines and routes, location of the terminal in the city centre, linking the urban system in the municipality with the regional public transportation company operating the rural system and connections with other municipalities and which type of buses and fuels to use.

The *political stream* has been the most complex of the streams. Initially it seems to have been "forgotten" because the policy makers saw the policy process as a matter for specialists in city planning, traffic technology, public transportation and politicians. The alternatives had implications in the daily life for the citizens but the policy makers did not pay enough attention to that fact. The municipality council turned down the suggestions presented in the PIC report. A second phase (PIC II) started immediately and now a more comprehensive view was taken on the traffic situation in the city centre. That meant that more issues were drawn into the process. However, that didn't appear in the debate.

The local newspapers started to pay more attention to the process during 2001. Especially N-K early framed the issue as a conflict between buses and cars. According to their columnist the result of the proposals would be a situation where it would be difficult to use cars in the city centre. The newspapers also argued that the process and the proposals lacked support from the citizens. The project group who were responsible for the proposals were criticized by media and had no preparedness to try to frame the proposed changes as a matter of environment and sustainable development.

Analyse of the media and the survey indicates that the understanding of the process coincides between media and the citizens. Still, it is difficult to say whether the media only have reflected the public opinion or if they have acted as a creator of public opinion. However, the framing of the process changed over time. What initially was a debate

about technical solutions more became a debate about how to make public policy decisions. When the routine window opened at the 2002 election to the municipality council a policy entrepreneur, i.e. the municipal commissioner candidate, came forward and pushed for the idea that the citizens should be allowed to express their opinion in an advisory referendum. It could be argued that this led to coupling of the streams which resulted in a changed public transportation system. Another conclusion is that timing is important. Without the idea of a referendum it is reasonable to assume that it would have been difficult to carry the project through, although decisions were made. The solution was however a setback for the environmentalists. There was a final solution, but it was a system which can be seen as a compromise between what the most sustainable solution was and what was political feasible at that point.

There was another critical factor that must be emphasized and that was the granting of the LIP funding. As we have seen, there were different opinions about the importance of the funding. Though, it could be argued that it had importance. Not merely as a financial contribution but as an important event in the series of events that led to the new public transportation system.

In policy processes advocates try to change conditions that they find problematic. However, in this case problem definition and selection among alternative solutions became obstacles in a situation where the policy makers in a sense lost control over the agenda-setting and framing of the issue. Hence, it could be concluded that having a strategy for communication is important where issues concerning sustainable development, which has implications over generations, are debated. The role of the policy entrepreneur should also not be underestimated in policy making, especially in processes characterized by ambiguity.

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Predators in 'agri-environmental' Sweden: Rural heritage and resistance against wolf propagation

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Abstract

The politics and the underlying reasons for the recuperation of a Scandinavian wolf population are increasingly contested. According to the official policy, wolves shall be guaranteed place in the Swedish fauna. The conflict regarding whether Sweden should host a wolf population polarises between on the one hand, views and understandings as regards biodiversity and sustainable development, and on the other hand, perspectives expressing that local traditions and livelihoods are at stake as a result of wolf occurrence in the landscape.

The diverging environmental imaginaries at play in the debate can be seen as constitutive of spatial indifferences. States' and nature conservation organisations' desires to implement measures understood to provide conditions for the survival of the wolf are counterbalanced by local actions groups and community residents who struggle to maintain the conditions for the conservation of summer pasturing agriculture, continued and unchanged opportunities to perform hunting with sporting dogs and other recreational activities such as mushrooming and the picking of berries. Considered not only by themselves as of high natural and cultural value, the European Union like wisely appoint that small-scale ways of farming are important to maintain for the upkeep of the landscape and the promotion of conditions guarding the survival of the values associated with these 'agri-environmental' habitats. The conflict thus tells of struggles over the access to and use of environmental resources. Squeezed between policies promoting the safe-guarding of the predatory populations of wolves, the preventing of cruelty to animals and demanded-for activities by the agricultural program of the European Union, farmers residing in areas with residential wolf populations have come to take part in processes that may bring about a reinforcing of rural identity.

1 Introduction

Politically motivated, regimes for the management of natural resources have been established which have given rise to initiatives, at different levels of society, to protect the biological environment from further deprivation, and with undertakings for ecosystem recoveries. The politics of and the underlying reasons for the recovery of the Scandinavian wolf population have, however, been increasingly contested. While the view that Sweden should take actions to preserve and maintain a wolf population is widely supported by authorities, nature organizations and a large public, others disagree, emphasizing that local traditions, values and meanings are jeopardized as a result of recovery aims and practices of wolf management.

Thus, although the political community has decided democratically that Sweden shall strive to follow international decisions and legislation in species conservation, others argue otherwise, saying that wolves do not really belong in the Swedish landscape. Whether or not we should save the wolves from extermination, is thus a highly debated matter as we see how different world views and diverging interests of various stakeholders and actors meet in the implementation of the Swedish conservation policy for large predators. This incongruence of viewpoints and perspectives tells of struggles over the access to and use of environmental resources. As this paper will try to demonstrate, farmers and in particularly summer pasture farmers, can be said to find themselves in “a configurative complex of things” (Casey 1996, p. 25) as other actor’s endeavours imposing other sets of values (cf. Löfgren 1997; cf. Scott 1998; cf. Sjölander-Lindqvist 2004a). This not only contributes to the shaping of their understandings and experiences of the contemporary world, but also to desires and the rise of struggles to maintain – or enhance new or altered – social and cultural values and practices.

The implementation of policies for the recuperation of the Scandinavian wolf population to meet the demands of biodiversity in a world where industrialisation and expanding service sector and population growth contribute to a continued extraction of natural resources, intervene in an environment that cannot be regarded as not mere biophysical. As landscapes for traditions of hunting, silviculture and farming – and wild animals – the areas of interest for the enhancement of vivid carnivore populations are culturally and socially encoded. Contributing to the issue’s complexity is this mere fact that times and years of ‘dwelling’, to apply the vocabulary of anthropologist Tim Ingold (1993), have given rise to cultural value frames. These tell of how generations have related to the natural and social worlds of the people that resides in, or on the fringe, to the forests that today habits not only game for hunting and in the summer farming pastures but also large carnivores. As such, the ‘landscape’ is produced by local practice and state administrated promotions for either it be the safe-guarding of predator populations or the up-keeping of agricultural traditions and rural heritage. A place and landscape oriented anthropological approach is then employed here to investigate in what ways the adoption and the implementation of a coherent policy for large carnivores in Sweden besides its aim to enhance measures for biodiversity contributes to a renegotiation of the meanings of the

landscape when agreements of different segments of society clashes (e.g. Hornborg 1994; Mairal Buil 1996; Mairal Buil 2004; Nesbitt and Weiner 2001; Sjölander-Lindqvist 2004b).

2 Background

No other predatory animal has attracted as much organized opposition as the wolf. The reaction is due in part to the greediness of the wolves, and also to the fact that nobody ever eats the meat of an animal that has been touched by a wolf (Saxon 1935).

The above quotation illustrates an opinion of wolves that was prevalent in Sweden until 1965 when the preservation act came into force, but this view is not uncommon even today. In earlier times the wolf population in the country was seen as a threat to humans and their activities in forest and farm landscapes.

While the numbers of the wolf population were considerably reduced to as low as 10-35 individuals at the time for the implementation of the preservation act, mainly as a result of hunting and organised battues, they amount today to some two hundred individuals and are still considered to jeopardise the lives and values of people living in the vicinity of wolves. Whereas we today see protective measures governing the wolf population, laws and opinions of the wolf as being detrimental to humans and human activities, led, in the past, to wolf persecution. Provincial laws from the 15th century, for example, stated parish members' obligation to take an active part in wolf battues. The women of the parish, its vicar and the clerk of the parish were the only ones exempted from this duty. The hunt for wolves was successful. Using a variety of methods – traps, nets, weapons, and battues – people throughout the country managed well in their wolf hunts. Additionally, bounties were imposed in 1647 to encourage the hunt for wolves, and these remained in force until the wolf preservation act came into force more than two hundred years later.

Approximately twenty years after the establishment of the protection act, traces and observations point to a growing wolf population in Scandinavia. In the 1980s, it was estimated that there were about ten individuals and during the following years, we see a growing increase in the number of wolves, packs, scent-marking pairs and other residential individuals. Although the majority of the Scandinavian wolf population is to be found in Sweden, some of the packs reside in both Norway and Sweden. In Sweden, the majority of the population is located to the counties of Värmland and Dalarna. While the Scandinavian wolf population of today amounts some 35 territories with wolf packs¹, scent-marking pairs² and single stationary individuals³ (Wabakken and Aronson 2006) representing 109-117 individuals⁴, the population was estimated at 1,500 individuals some 180 years ago.

¹ Estimated amount: 76-79 individuals. A wolf pack consists of a breeding pair and their offspring.

² Estimated amount: 26-28 individuals.

³ Estimated amount: 7-10.

⁴ Besides wolf packs, scent-marking pairs and other residential individuals there are also migratory wolves.

The quotation in the beginning of this section is not only a portrayal of views of and feelings about the wolf as a dangerous and uncertain creature, it also tells of struggles over the access to and use of environmental resources. Disputes over ‘Nature’ are politically charged – issues of power exercise range from the supranational level of negotiations over directives and agreements concerning sustainability and biodiversity, to the local level where the results of discussions on the environment are to be implemented. These politically decided regulations and practices may, however, from a local point of view be perceived as illegitimate, and hence neither receive support nor be complied with. The concerned public’s experience and perceptions of the implementation process as being fair and just has been found to influence acceptance by the public (Grimes 2005).

The politics and the underlying reasons for the recuperation of a Scandinavian wolf population have been, and continue to be, increasingly contested. The conflict regarding whether Sweden should host a wolf population polarises between on the one hand, views and understandings as regards biodiversity and sustainable development, and on the other hand, perspectives expressing that local traditions and livelihoods are at stake as a result of wolf occurrence in the landscape.

Wolf sceptics maintain that the occurrence of wolves in the surrounding local environment will lead to the demise of forests and farm communities. The effects of the presence of wolves – wolf attacks on livestock and hunting dogs, potential attacks on people when growing wolf populations no longer have enough game to prey on, declining game stocks – will, according to the informants, cause increased marginalization of rural people and the depopulation of margin areas (cf. Skogen and Krange 2003).

Although numbers steadily increasing, environmentalists and authorities still consider the Scandinavian wolf population⁵ to be in jeopardy of extinction due to not only a poor pedigree. According to the biological predator research community, the unlawful killings of wolves are another threat of considerable weight (Sand, Wabakken, and Liberg 2004). The view that the Swedish Government should take actions to make it possible for the wolf population to survive is supported by nature conservation organizations⁶, the public at large (Ericsson and Heberlein 2002; Ericsson and Sandström 2005) and individuals⁷. The ‘pro’ wolves groups claim that wolves have the ‘right’ to exist is an argument—grounded in the environmentalist discourse recommending actions to be taken to restore an ecosystem understood as being under threat—that others⁸ confront by emphasizing that the landscape and the local traditions of the rural Sweden are jeopardized as a result of the occurrence of wolves in Swedish countryside, and due to the present wolf policy (cf. Skogen and Krange 2003; cf. Wilson 1997). Thus, while some argues for protective

⁵ The wolf population is generally referred to as ‘Scandinavian’ since some of the wolf territories is to be found to pass the national border between Sweden and Norway.

⁶ Such as *Svenska Rovdjursföreningen* (the Swedish Carnivore Association), *Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen* (the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation), and WWF (the World Wide Foundation).

⁷ Including informants and people who have been expressing their opinions at debate meetings, in radio and TV programs.

⁸ Groups and organizations such as the ‘the Swedish Forum for Predatory Animal Issues’ (authors translation for *Svenskt Samarbetsforum i Rovdjursfrågor*) and ‘the Swedish Hunting & Outdoor Recreation Club’ (authors translation for *Svenska Jakt & Fritidsgruppen*), as well as individuals.

measures to halt high inbreeding⁹ and illegal hunting¹⁰, yet others oppose the practices in question (Sjölander-Lindqvist 2006).

⁹ It has been found that the Scandinavian wolf population was founded by three individuals. By drawing up a pedigree for 24 breeding pairs it was found that the inbreeding coefficient F varied between 0.00 and 0.41 in the period between 1983 and 2002 (Liberg et al. 2005)

¹⁰ See for example the web page of the Swedish Carnivore Association (www.rovdjursforeningen.se).

3 National conservation policy

According to a classification scheme outlined by the World Conservation Union in 1994, building on a system of six categories of reflecting degrees of extinction risks, the wolf is on the Red List and categorized as Critically Endangered. To ensure a long-term survival of the wolf, an integrated predator policy was laid down by the Parliament (the Swedish Riksdag) in 2001. According to the *Coherent Predator Policy*, the implementation of protective measures for the five large carnivores (brown bear, lynx, wolverine, golden eagle and wolf) of Sweden must take place as to fulfil such accomplishments (Prop.2000/01:57).

For example, interim targets have been set since the numbers of wolves are considered low and the government does not consider the long-term survival of the animal to be assured at the present moment. It has therefore been decided that when the target of 20 reproductions, representing approximately 200 individuals, is reached, a re-evaluation and possible change of the interim target will take place. The founding of a Council for Predator Issues in 2002 to assist the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency to implement the predator policy, is another measure taken by the Parliament. As an advisory consultative body, the Council deals with issues concerning overall policy.

Besides striving for the reaching of 20 reproductions of the Swedish wolf population, representing approximately 200 individuals, the Parliament decided in 2001 that regional predatory animal management, as other environment protection, must involve local participation and strong support by those affected by the conservation efforts (Prop.2000/01:57; Skr.2001/02:173).

The need to encourage local participation (Prop.2000/01:57) resulted in the establishment of Regional Predator Groups (RPG) in all counties having residential large predators. Today, we find 17 of these groups across the country, comprising representatives from hunting organizations, voluntary nature conservation groups, farmers' associations, the police and prosecutors, municipalities and county administrative boards. Besides striving for local empowerment on issues of predator management, the RPGs are by the authorities understood to be a means for an increased information exchange between different regional and local groups, and as such, facilitating the dissemination of information to the large public. Cooperation between the central authorities and the concerned NGOs and groups is by the decision-makers considered vital for the accumulation of knowledge – by the authorities assumed necessary to enhance more 'nuanced' perspectives and opinions of what has turned out to be a rather controversial question for the Swedish countryside. The solution on the wolf controversy, the authorities (regional as well as national ones) say, is to raise the level of 'acceptance'. Their work focuses therefore on the process of attaining a local consensus regarding what they refer to as a politically based initiative. Local compliance with a highly debated political decision, regarding wolves' living conditions and their future in the Swedish fauna, is thus sought for at the same time as the regional authorities strive for the realization of a national goal through the implementation of intermediate aims, such as

regional minimum levels for wolf recovery in each county (Sjölander-Lindqvist and Cinque 2006). By incorporating concerned stakeholders and interest organizations into the RPGs, the central authorities assume that consent on the predator policy might be achieved as a dissemination of information will take place when the information given to the group members is passed on to their mother organizations (SOU 1999:146). Understood as nourished by debates and inconsistent opinions on the causes and effects of wolves' occurrence in the countryside, the central authorities appraises an increase of a scientifically based knowledge as central for abating worries regarding the effects of large carnivore presence (Sjölander-Lindqvist and Cinque 2006).

Along with an increase in the wolf population, demands for scientifically founded knowledge on the Scandinavian wolf grew during the 1980s and 1990s. In January 2000 *SKANDULV* (The Scandinavian Wolf Project), an umbrella organisation for Scandinavian research projects on the wolf, was established to coordinate biological research initiatives. Some of the research projects concern the development and spread of the wolf population, its genetics, its social behaviour, effects on large herbivore populations, and where territories are established. The activities of the Wolf Project take place in collaboration with the Wildlife Damage Centre, which was founded in 1996 on the commission of the Swedish EPA. The centre is financed by the Ministry of the Environment and a variety of tasks are carried out. Besides information to the public on wildlife damage and the coordination of the activities to assemble data on the Swedish wolf population, they also develop methods to prevent wildlife damage and run training courses.

Monitoring of the Scandinavian wolf population, based primarily on snow tracking data has been carried out since the late 1970s. Techniques for the collection of data on the wolf population have been developing since the late 1960s when the first tracking collars were introduced to keep track of wolves. In 1998, radio telemetry was introduced to monitor the wolf population. Approximately thirty years later the GPS tracking system was launched. Instead of operating on radio frequencies, detailed location data can be transmitted with the Global Positioning System and downloaded to the researcher's office.¹¹ The data produced using motion tracking devices also have other purposes than just producing data and information for wolf and wildlife research. Where wolves have been provided with tracking collars, a 'wolf telephone' has been set up; location data is transferred to an answering machine and, for the last few years, hunters and other people on their way the forests within wolf territories can call for information on the latest whereabouts of the wolves.

¹¹ In 2002, a female wolf was anaesthetized and provided with a tracking collar using this new way of transmitting data. During a period of four months (January – May), remote data was downloaded and it was revealed that the female wolf and her pack were highly mobile (on the average, the pack travelled 22 kilometres per day) and that the wolf's circadian rhythm was fairly stable with activity peaks during early mornings and late nights (Sand, Ahlqvist, and Liberg 2004).

4 Methodology

Ethnographic methods were chosen as the main strategy for empirical investigation. Data was collected primarily from the conducting of in-depth interviews. Informal observations have also been carried out at various meetings. Readings of newspaper and journal articles and the visiting of different web sites have given additional insight into the ‘wolf issue’ – its structures, actors and the mains of the debate. The informants were asked to discuss the situation surrounding having wolves in the forests. Through conversations, local residents expressed their opinions, values and collectively shared dimensions of everyday experiences of wolves and local practices in farming and forest communities, thus providing glimpses of the social worlds of the people interviewed. The investigation of the concerns of residents living in the wolf territories employed an ethnographic approach. Such methods have found to suit research situations when it is of crucial importance for the outcome of the research carried out to establish trustworthy relationships with the informants (Boholm 1983).

The interview results on which this paper rests were carried out in three separate areas; the county of *Dalarna* and the two wolf territories *Dals-Ed/Halden* and *Hasselfors*—although all to be found in the middle parts of Sweden neither study area are located next to one another.

MAP HERE

The fifty-two interviews that were carried out the summer and autumn of 2004 and 2005 consisted of people holding ‘pro’ as well as ‘anti’ wolf attitudes and through which opinions and values related to the presence of predators in the landscape were collected. Gathered by convenience sampling, particularly the groups of hunters and farmers were interviewed. Besides interviewing residents in wolf territories, members of the research team have been carrying out observations at meetings, generally announced as ‘information meetings’, and the annually held ‘Wolf Symposium’ where interested parties have the opportunity to take part of talks regarding different aspects of wildlife management nationally as well as internationally.

The interviews lasted from two to four hours (one of the interviews lasted however for eight hours) and consisted of a set of general questions as well as follow-ups on issues raised by the respondent. A written list of questions and topics served as a guide throughout the conversation. Detailed notes were taken and later transcribed. A tape recorder was not used during the interview since the wolf is a rather controversial issue and in some cases the parties involved have been under threat of violence. It was therefore considered important to guarantee individual anonymity as far as possible.

5 The wolf issue as a meeting-point

According to the *Common Agricultural Policy* (CAP) of the European Union, the farming sector has a multiple role to play. By their use of rural land, the farmers produce a variety of products for consumption but they do also contribute to the diversity – and the survival – of the countryside. Through their work, the farmers have a role to play in the maintenance of rural area.

Wolf sceptic informants maintain that the occurrence of wolves in the surrounding local environment will be detrimental to the survival of forest and farm communities. According to the informants, the wolf's presence has entailed changed routines and fear and anxiety about the future of traditional work and ways of life locally. Among local residents, the wolf is considered to be an animal with the potential of bringing harm to livestock and humans. The effects of the presence of wolves – wolf attacks on livestock and hunting dogs, potential attacks on people when growing wolf populations no longer have enough game to prey on, declining game stocks – will, according to the informants, cause increased marginalization of rural people and the depopulation of margin areas (cf. Skogen and Krangle 2003). Among local residents, the wolf is considered to be an animal with the potential of bringing harm to livestock and humans. Therefore people feel that they, their families and ways of living are jeopardised as a result of wolves living in the area. Since the wolf is not in jeopardy of being exterminated internationally, informants feel further that there is no reason why the Swedish rural population should be exposed to the risks the presence of wolves brings to people living in the countryside.

Fear and anxiety is not only a matter restricted to the outdoors. Peoples' homes and households are by several of the informants experienced as threatened by wolves' occurrence in the environs. One of the female informants mentioned that she did not dare to go down to the basement since she was afraid that wolves might enter the house meanwhile. Social anthropological research has shown that members of households draw safety and comfort from these entities when they experience that the surrounding world is exposed to threat and change (Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Zúñiga 1999). Local reports that the wolves passes close to dwelling-houses and that women and children cannot feel secure, even close to their homes, show that the meanings people attach to 'home' and 'property' – as fundamental social institutions – are disarranged. Implementation of goals of society may thus bring about that peoples' self-images and ideas about society and life are put under pressure. People may feel violated when 'agents of change' – represented here by the wolf – trespasses what people regards as basic principles upon which human activity is structured (cf. Fitchen 1989).

Network building and mobilization of opinion have taken place, making complaints and protests concerning Swedish wolf politics and management. While wolf sceptical organizations make complaints and protests concerning Swedish wolf politics and management, wolf protectionists join nature conservation organizations to support the protection of threatened species.

We see a division between protectionists and sceptics. From reasons of solidarity with other countries efforts to protect endangered species, Sweden should also take actions for the furthering of biological diversity. That Sweden is obliged to actions since they have signed international treaties is another reason mentioned by the protectionists. But above all, as they argue, the wolf has the right to reside in the countryside since it as all other creatures has the right to exist. By means of information activities (such as visiting schools) and assisting farmers in installing fences to protect livestock from predatory attacks, non-profit organizations such as the Swedish Carnivore Association ('Svenska Rovdjursföreningen') support the protection of threatened species like the five large carnivores to be found in Sweden.

The ways in which people sceptic to wolf presence in the Swedish landscape become involved varies. A most obvious action that has taken place to counteract the implementation of the predator policy is the 'Dala Revolt' (*Dalaupproret*). This rebellion by hunters in the county of Dalarna who during a period of approximately one year (2004-2005) refused to trace animals injured by traffic (otherwise a normal task for them) until their demands – unrestricted access to outdoor recreation for people living in the countryside, a continued preservation of the country's moose stock, and a predator policy that more explicitly takes into consideration local knowledge and rural living conditions – had been met. The boycott was, however, brought to an end in spring 2005 without the movement being able to achieve their demand of a changed legislation concerning the rights of livestock and dog owners to defend their animals against attacks from predatory animals and grant permits for the controlled culling of wolves.

The implementation of policies for the protection of natural resources brings many interests into collision. The wolf issue is thus to be considered as a meeting-point between authorities, 'green' organizations such as the Swedish Carnivore Association, interest organizations as for example the Swedish Association for Wildlife Hunting and Management ('Svenska Jägareförbundet'), and organizations assembling wolf sceptics—the 'Swedish Forum for Predatory Animal Issues' (author's translation for 'Svenskt Samarbetsforum i Rovdjursfrågor'), the 'Swedish Hunting & Outdoor Recreation Club' (author's translation for 'Svenska Jakt & Fritidsgruppen'). 'The Association for Safety in Rural Communities in Sweden' (author's translation for 'Sveriges Glesbygds Trygghet') is another local/regional association, generally referred to by the acronym SGT¹², that similarly to the previous mentioned, demand that Swedish predator policy and management to a much greater extent must consider the living conditions of people residing in rural Sweden. Decision-making concerning wolf occurrence should be made locally instead of nationally and regionally, since, as they argue, such decisions must have their point of departure in local realities and knowledge.

The organization 'Peoples' Campaign for a New Predator Policy (author's translation for 'Folkaktionen Ny Rovdjurspolitik'), organizes today many wolf sceptics and some of the above mentioned wolf sceptic associations have become transformed into this national organization that was founded in 2005. At the core of their demands stands that dialogue between local stakeholders and authorities must be increased since, as they say, without dialogue and real participation in decision-making, predator policy can never become sustainable and reach acceptance.

Generally, the presence of wolves in the landscape is understood to affect not only rural livelihoods and people's customary ways of living – in terms of restricted opportunities for hunting, fishing, berry and fungus picking, horseback-riding and orienteering – but the

¹² In popular parlance among certain groups referred to as 'Shoot, Dig and Shut Up'.

biological diversity is also felt to be endangered. According to the wolf sceptic informants, wolf presence has led and will lead to a depopulation of the countryside since landowners, livestock breeders and mountain pasture farmers will give up their livelihoods when the threats posed by wolves appear to be too heavy a burden.

The moving of livestock to summer residences is a historically rooted tradition. Restricted possibilities to graze in the village have, since agricultural land in the county of Dalarna in the 19th century were not partitioned as in other parts of Sweden, made the way for the use of unfenced summer forest pastures. Farmers who employ agricultural seasonal foraging consider themselves as part of a local heritage. By taking their cattle to summer grazing pastures they carry on the traditions of a historical past. Besides the keeping of old customs, the informants are of the opinion that they continually contributes to the up keeping of an open landscape and that seasonal foraging have developed in correspondence with the ecological environment of the constraints and possibilities of the Swedish rural landscape.

However, the presence of wolves in the landscape threatens summer pasturing agriculture since the farmers have very limited possibilities to defend their cattle from wolf attacks. They say that their way of living and the old customs of cattle grazing in summer pastures are at stake as a result of the risk of their livestock being attacked by wolves when grazing in the woods. Instead of continually contributing to the up keeping of an open landscape and a rich fauna through unfenced cattle grazing they must leave their cattle nearby the chalets on the summer pasture. Since the grazing-grounds next to the chalets are very limited they will be forced to bring fodder from the farm in the village to feed their cattle. If forced this way, the environmental benefits of summer pasturing agriculture will be lost – and the farmers will not be able to fulfil the conditions the European Union asks for when granting economic support.

Besides the environmental benefits such as a rich flora and fauna, the municipality and the region do also benefit from the maintaining of the cultural heritage of agricultural seasonal foraging since it attracts many tourists during the summer months (June-August).

Similarly to results from Norway (Skogen and Krangle 2003), feelings of injustice prevail among farmers regarding their experiences that their activities are improperly acknowledged. As they say, their ways of small scale farming has contributed to an open landscape, a diversified flora and fauna and a cultural heritage, which they see as being under threat due to the wolf residing in the forest. The farmers believe that the traditional ways of sending livestock out to grass – fenced or unfenced – will decrease since they fear attacks by wolves. When no longer the possibility exists to deploy forest pastures, small scale farming and agricultural seasonal foraging will decline, adding to the dying out of rural Sweden. In the same way, it is argued, decreased possibilities to go hunting without exposing hunting dogs to wolves' search of prey will leave the Swedish forests empty of hunters.

6 Discussion

The presence of wolves in the countryside of the middle parts of Sweden – where the majority of the Swedish wolf population is to be found – has caused considerable disquiet among some of the concerned stakeholders. Due to wolves' residing in the local environments, farmers (including farmers who employ a transhumance system of agriculture) and hunters worry that the survival of the rural landscape and rural heritage are at stake. The presence of wolves in the landscape is understood to affect not only rural livelihoods and people's customary ways of living – in terms of restricted opportunities for hunting, fishing, berry and fungus picking, horseback-riding and orienteering – but the biological diversity is also felt to be endangered. According to the movement, wolf presence has led and will lead to a depopulation of the countryside since landowners, livestock breeders and summer pasture farmers will give up their livelihoods when the threats posed by wolves appear to be too heavy a burden. The biological diversity of the countryside is at stake when small scale agricultural producers give up traditional ways of land cultivation, which, as they say, have contributed to the present flora and fauna.

Informants' feelings of uncertainty regarding continued farming and hunting reflect that the landscape is a lived reality, with significant meanings for local people. As suggested by Cantrill and Senecah (2001), "... our conception of the natural environment is framed by our experiences bound to local settings" (Cantrill and Senecah 2001, p. 186). The landscape, then, is experienced through activities. Through practices of performance, representation and action, people socialise the landscape (Appadurai 1995), as for example through hunting – an activity that in Sweden assemble nearly 300,000 people – meanings are created and established. When hunters gather and hunt, they establish and uphold social relationships and networks since the hunt for elks, in particular, is carried out in hunting parties. The landscape and the locality as a dimension for social life (Appadurai 1995) and where feelings of fellowship, solidarity, and relationship building are established, create a sense of belonging (Appadurai 1995; Casey 1996; Lovell 1998; Riley 1992).

Squeezed between policies promoting the safe-guarding of the predatory populations of wolves, the preventing of cruelty to animals and demanded-for activities by the agricultural program of the European Union, farmers residing in areas with residential wolf populations have come to take part in processes that may bring about a reinforcing of rural identity. The presence of wolves in the countryside of the middle parts of Sweden – where the majority of the Swedish wolf population is to be found – has caused considerable disquiet among some of the concerned stakeholders. Farmers' and hunters worry that the survival of the rural landscape and rural heritage are at stake due to wolves residing in the local environment are encoded with symbolic meanings of the landscape and the local traditions carried out in farmed and forested areas. Disputes between different stakeholders regarding what should guide the achieving of biodiversity has besides a policy quandary given rise to discourses on morality and ethics what regards the keeping of livestock and domestic animals. A questioning is taking place

pertaining to space and place – as reproducing dimensions of cultural identity. For the local community, broader policies and concerns impinge upon people's everyday lives in many subtle ways, and social relationships, the understanding and use of the local environment, thoughts about the future, memories of the past are all affected. Wolf protection measures and activities have served to intensify prior notions and values of the afforested landscape.

According to the *Common Agricultural Policy* (CAP) of the European Union, the farming sector has a multiple role to play. By their use of rural land, the farmers produce a variety of products for consumption but they do also contribute to the diversity – and the survival – of the countryside. Through their work, the farmers and their farming activities are thus assigned as essential in the maintenance of rural area. The implementation of policies for the safeguarding of the Scandinavian wolf is giving rise to a policy quandary when farmers are expected to use production methods which are addressed as compatible with environment protection. Dependency upon the European Union's economic grants (CAP Reform 1992) – received if environment protective production methods are employed – and authorities' expectancy that they must adjust to the risks carnivore presence bring to the rural communities have come to cause disquiet and frustration among the informants when they are not given the possibility to safeguard their livestock from wolf attacks. Disputes between different stakeholders regarding what should guide the achieving of biodiversity has besides a policy quandary given rise to discourses on morality and ethics what regards the keeping of livestock and domestic animals but we can also see that a questioning is taking place pertaining to space and place – as reproducing dimensions of cultural identity. These disputes tell of struggles over the access to, and use of environmental resources. As an issue of power exercise, the controversy regarding whether measures should be taken or not and if the survival of the wolf is to be considered as a matter for Sweden to deal with, can be said to highlight dimensions of place and space in rural reconstruction.

6.1 Remarks on spatiality

In a landscape, the history of nature interweaves with the history of culture. The landscape, as the result of people's engagement with the local environment and of their activities and their contributions to the local community (Brinckerhoff Jackson 1984), points to the temporal dimension of landscape. As a record of the lives and the works of earlier generations, which have left something of themselves there (Inglis 1977; Ingold 1993), the landscape has the capacity to reinforce the past in the present.

Place and space imbue, similarly to the concept of landscape, temporal dimensions; the concept of place consists both of essentialist trait as well as it must be treated as a process since it is bound to the outside world (Massey 1994). By focusing on the interactive aspects of place with its surroundings, particular attention can be drawn to the interplay of cultural, social, political and economical spheres and in which different groups as well as levels of society contribute to the creation of place. Congruent with place is space; here understood as the organization of movements (Löfgren 1989). Space can in this vein be explained as the context for social action, where the different segments of society constitute reference points for the activities carried out – an interdependency articulating complexity and contextuality (Tilley 1994).

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EU Support for Cities towards Sustainable
Development – An Empirical Study about
Failure or Success at the Local
Government Level

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Abstract

The European Union is often viewed as a quasi-federal construct characterised by a voluntary pooling of sovereignty by member national governments. However, the integration of Europe also has serious consequences for sub national governance including significant impacts on local authorities and cities. Over the past two decades in particular the relationship between Europe and local/regional government has undergone profound change. What began as an “ever closer union” between nation states fifty years ago is today showing more and more signs of an evolving system of multi-level governance.

There is a growing activism in the relations between the EU and local government. Local and regional authorities are becoming far more insistent and dynamic in the way they demand a voice in the preparation of European plans, programmes and policies. In particular, local authorities stress that the principle of subsidiarity as enshrined in European treaties, gives them legal, moral, and practical credibility as stakeholders in the European policy process. From the EU perspective, it is clear that more and more European initiatives, whether legislative or funding in nature, permeate to the local level. The growing partnership is recognition of a fundamental understanding between the different levels of governance, namely that the European Union needs sub-national bodies to implement policy, and on the other side, that local and regional authorities need European assistance to build the necessary knowledge, human resource, and financial capacity to facilitate improved implementation.

In this paper we are going to illustrate the growing relationship by analyzing the level and importance of EU supporting measures directed towards cities/local governments from a city point of view. We are going to look at one specific policy area, sustainable development, which has in recent years been in focus both within the EU and among local governments in Europe. The data material presented in the paper is collected through 3 surveys directed to member cities in the network organization Union of the Baltic Cities, active in 10 Nordic and Baltic region countries.

1 Introduction – The Analytical Questions in this Paper

The European Union is often viewed as a quasi-federal construct characterised by a voluntary pooling of sovereignty by member national governments. However, the integration of Europe also has serious consequences for sub national governance including significant impacts on local authorities and cities. Over the past two decades in particular the relationship between Europe and local/regional government has undergone profound. What began as an “ever closer union” between nation states fifty years ago is today showing more and more signs of an evolving system of multi-level governance.

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In this paper² we are going to illustrate the growing relationship by analyzing the level and importance of EU supporting measures directed towards cities/local governments from a city point of view. We are going to look at one specific policy area, sustainable development, which has in recent years been in focus both within the EU and among local governments in Europe. The data material presented in the paper is collected through 3 surveys directed to member cities in the network organization Union of the Baltic Cities, active in 10 Nordic and Baltic region countries.

The research task is twofold. Firstly, we will describe existing EU support systems for urban sustainable development. This will encompass policy, financing, and programmes designed to foster mutual learning. Although this section of the paper is predominantly descriptive it nonetheless has a central role for the empirical part of the paper.

The empirical questions in this paper are centred on three questions:

² The paper is a first draft empirical analysis on the topic, based on an existing data material meant and used for other reasons, limiting the possibilities of far reaching interpretations. We would also wish that this paper would not been quoted in its present form until further analysis are made.

1. Is there evidence of European support for sustainable development in our data? If so, how influential is this support?
2. Are cities in non-EU members receiving similar or different support?
3. Has the impact of the support from the EU changed over time in line with the evolution of EU policy and financial instruments?

It is important to note that throughout the paper we are differentiating between two principal types of support – actions aiming to strengthen the knowledge base within local governments, and economic support/investment in the local processes. We are not aiming to explain any variance in the pattern in any analytical way; however, some indications of this will be presented in the discussion at the end of the paper.

The data material presented in the paper has been collected through 3 surveys directed to member cities in the Union of the Baltic Cities (www.ubc.net), a network of more than 100 cities and municipalities in 10 Nordic and Baltic countries. While some Norwegian cities have also joined UBC the vast majority of members are drawn from states bordering the Baltic Sea.

The network works via a number of sectoral commissions, most of which are rather limited in terms of financial and human resources. The organisation is headquartered in Gdansk, Poland. The Commission on Environment, both the largest and most relevant for the purposes of this study, is located in the southern Finnish city of Turku/Åbo. The Commission is partly financed by the host city, but most of the funding is generated through project funding, including a substantial proportion from European Union programmes.

The Network was created in the aftermath of the collapse of the Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1991 and experienced rapid expansion throughout the course of the 1990s. Today, the network consists of more than 100 member cities, many of them leading cities in their own countries. The empirical research area and the UBC members network is shown in map 1.

Figure 1.1 *Map 1. The UBC network 2007 (source: www.ubc.net).*



2 Multi-Level Governance within the EU

The Canadian academic Ann Dale has written that the implementation of sustainable development is the “human imperative of the 21st Century, requiring strong leadership by local, regional and national governments, and that governments must move beyond simply being governments to governance, actively engaging all sectors of society in its implementation”. (Dale, 2001, Preface).

The governance system in the EU has been described by Weale et al as being “multi-level, horizontally complex, evolving and incomplete” (Weale et al, 2003 p.1). It is therefore unsurprising that the EU’s approach to supporting cities implement sustainable development is equally fraught with contradictions and fragmentation.

EU Urban policy is multi-level because no single level of governance in Europe has a monopoly on the capacity – human, financial, or knowledge; political mandate; or necessity to promote sustainable urban development. Local authorities, as the level of governance closest to the citizen, have the most immediate need to promote sustainable development in Europe’s cities. However, local authorities frequently lack the financial resources, human capital, and policy tools to act. The European Union recognises urban sustainability as an “opportunity for the EU to become a more meaningful body for its citizens by bringing tangible benefits to daily lives” (European Commission 1997, p3). The transnational nature of environmental problems, especially those relating to the pollution of air and water means that urban sustainability is as much a challenge for the EU as an opportunity. The challenge is even more acute when one considers the difficulty that the EU faces in implementing and enforcing environmental policy. This leaves the Member State, a level of governance increasingly squeezed between the European and the local.

Over the past two decades in particular the relationship between Europe and local/regional government has undergone profound change. An analysis by Hooghe and Marks in 2001 concluded that while no EU country increased the process of centralization during the 1980s, half of them decentralized authority to regional and local levels (Hooghe and Marks 2001). This squeeze to the sub-national coincided with the expansion of European Union powers first through the Single European Act, and later, as the 1990s progressed with the TEU and the Amsterdam Treaty.

Wallace and Wallace have pointed out that the European Union is the principle arena for environmental policy-making in Europe; indeed they estimate that as much as 80% of all environmental legislation traces its origins back to the EU. However, they also counter the misconception that equates the European Union with dictates from Brussels, stating that the EU is part of, not separate from, the politics and policy processes of the member states and so the institutions that construct European policy are national and subnational, as well as those created by the EU treaties (Wallace and Wallace 2005). We can therefore

argue with confidence that EU urban policy is constructed at the European, national, and local levels.

At the European level the nature and architecture of environmental governance is heavily influenced by the treaties and institutions of the European Union.

Weale et al contend that “a system of environmental governance implies more than simply the existence of internationally agreed environmental measures or policies. It also implies that there are institutional arrangements for formulating, developing, and implementing policy. It also means that rules for making rules (the rules that distribute political authority) have also come into being (Weale et al. 2003. p.1).

While “primary rules” define content of specific items of policy, “secondary rules” define how the primary rules are made, how they may be changed, and how the adoption process in Council (QMV or unanimity) and EP (Co-decision) should progress. As the Treaties have evolved so too have the secondary rules for making environmental policy.

Today environmental policy is one of the most visible and comprehensive competences of the European Union, however environmental issues have not always featured prominently at the European level. The early activities of the European Economic Community (1957 – 1972) contained very little reference to the environment. Between 1972 and 1986 a body of environmental legislation began to emerge, however much of it was initiated in order to further deepen and harmonize the single market. Landmark rulings in the European Court of Justice dealing with mutual recognition (Cassis de Dijon 1979), product standards (Danish Bottles 1981) and process / pollution control (Germany 1983) compelled the Union to develop a coordinated approach to environment to avoid competitive disadvantage.

The Single European Act of 1986 is regarded by many as being a turning point for the environment. The EU responded to growing fears of a degrading environment and the increased public concerns of links between environment and public health by providing a legal framework for environmental issues, elevating them from a subsidiary of single market policy to a front ranking EU policy.

In 1992 Maastricht Treaty called for “sustainable, non-inflationary growth respecting the environment”. (282)The timing of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 coincided with the preparation of the Treaty on European Union (TEU / Maastricht Treaty). The TEU thus captured the spirit of the times by mirroring both the Rio Declaration and the earlier Brundtland Report by calling for sustainable, non-inflationary growth respecting the environment.

In 1997 Amsterdam Treaty called for balanced and sustainable development of economic activities and made sustainable development a specific objective of the EU, thus it is now applicable to the general activities of the Union, not just the activities in the sphere of the environment. This means, according to Baker and McCormick that “there is probably no single government or other association of states with such a strong “constitutional” commitment to sustainable development” (Baker and McCormick 2004, p282).

The emergence of the growth and competitiveness agenda, as evolved the European approach to sustainable development still further, with many EU analysts suggesting that sustainable development has become little more than a small component of the Lisbon Agenda.

Nonetheless, Baker and McCormick have appropriately concluded that “there is probably no single government or other association of states with such a strong “constitutional” commitment to sustainable development” (Baker and McCormick 2004, p282).

According to Wallace and Wallace decision making in the EU is principally the result of interaction between the "institutional triangle" formed by the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission (Wallace and Wallace, 2005).

The *European Parliament's* policy and legislative role varies depending on the policy area and the provisions of the European Union Treaties. Most items relating to sustainable urban development accord the Parliament the right of Co-decision. This means that the Parliament shares supreme legislative authority with the Council of Ministers, the result is that legislation can only be adopted when both institutions reach agreement. The Parliament also shares responsibility for controlling the budget. Whereas the Council of Ministers sets the global budget, through the Financial Perspective, the Parliament plays a significant role in determining how the budget will be allocated within the programmes. In addition, the EP also ensures that the Commission discharges the budget appropriately.

The European Parliament has often been credited for greening European policy. There are many theories on why this has been the case. Some theories point to the success of European Green parties in European elections – indeed many Green Parties have enjoyed European Parliament representation at a level that would be unthinkable in their own national parliaments. Other theories suggest that the Parliament has exploited the environment as an issue in order to increase its political power and to reach into other sectors that would otherwise be off limits. It is certainly true that the Parliament has often strengthened environmental legislation coming from the Commission, and is frequently responsible for defending environmental provisions against the less environmentally minded Council of Ministers.

The *Council of the European Union (Council of Ministers)* is the supreme decision making body of the European Union, as a consequence it is regarded by many as being the most powerful EU institution. The Council is the EU institution that belongs to the Member governments and so the interests of individual member states take precedent over the greater good of the Union during the often lengthy and complex negotiations. Decisions in the Council are taken by simple majority, qualified majority, or unanimity. Votes weighted according to population

The European Council is an extension of the Council of Ministers and is the forum for Heads of Government. It is the final arbiter within the Council and tends to resolve issues that could not be agreed at the technical or ministerial level.

The Council is widely regarded as being the least green, least transparent, and least approachable of the institutional triangle. It has been a graveyard for many embryonic environmental initiatives ranging from the carbon energy tax to the end of life vehicle directive, and more recently for efforts to drastically reduce the emissions from high performance vehicles. The Council has also frequently been an obstacle to a more activist European approach to urban sustainability. A number of Member States, most notably Spain and Germany, have been reluctant to allow the European Commission to work with, or legislate for, sub-national levels, citing the principle of subsidiarity as their main objection.

The *European Commission* is the Union's executive body. It has the sole right of initiative to draft legislation; is responsible for implementing legislation, budget and programmes; and acts as guardian of the Treaties and, together with the Court of Justice, ensuring that Community law is properly applied and enforced.

With the publication of *Green Paper on Urban Environment* in 1990 the Commission launched the EU's attempts to develop an integrated approach to urban issues. The Commission initiates, manages, and evaluates all of the EU's policies and programmes dealing with urban sustainability. Much of the work originates with the Directorate General for Environment (DG ENV), however DG Transport, DG Regio, and to a lesser extent DG Research all have influence and impact.

The *European Court of Justice* ensures that European Union law is uniformly interpreted and effectively applied in all the Member States. It therefore partners the Commission in ensuring the implementation of EU law, including environmental law. Like other "supreme" courts the European Court of Justice is also required to interpret the meaning of the legal framework contained within the EU Treaties. Historically, this has enabled the court to play a role in shaping EU policy, notably by identifying environmental criteria as obstacles to the single market, and consequently compelling the Commission to bring in uniform environmental rules to cover the whole of the Union and so eliminate inconsistencies.

The *Committee of the Regions* (CoR) was established following the ratification of the TEU and is designed to ensure that regional and local concerns are respected in the preparation of European policy. It has to be consulted on matters concerning regional policy, the environment and education. It is composed of representatives of regional and local authorities.

While the CoR provides a quasi-institutional route for local and regional authorities to be actively involved in the European decision making, sceptics point to a number of fundamental flaws. First, the institutional triangle is not obliged to listen to the CoR's views, and so some of its opinions are little more than window dressing. Second, the CoR is frequently criticized for providing its input too late in the policy process at a time when the other institutions have already reached their conclusions and are reluctant to reopen the debate. Finally, the CoR does not have the resources of the other institutions and so it is often difficult for it to match the quality of outputs produced by the Parliament, Council and Commission.

The *European Environment Agency* (EEA) collects data on the state of the environment – principally from national environmental authorities, and prepares regular assessments of European environmental trends. The most well known of these is the *State of the Environment Report*. The data collected by the EEA informs EU policy-making, assisting the various institutions to prepare appropriate interventions in defence of the environment. The *Environment at the Turn of the Century* Report contained a comprehensive assessment of the impact of environmental policy, including urban policy.

There are more than 20 additional institutions, consultative bodies, and agencies are part of the formal governance of the European Union. These include the European Central Bank, the Economic and Social Committee, and the European Investment Bank. Local and regional authorities also use informal channels to participate in European decision making. The most obvious examples are the many European networks that participate in the preparation of policy papers, conduct advocacy work, and provide specialists to participate in European expert groups.

The rules and institutions discussed above provide the backdrop to the European Union's support systems for urban sustainability. We now turn our attention to look at the diverse range of support systems on offer.

3 The EU Support System for Cities: Sustainable Development

EU urban policy is evolving and incomplete as it is relatively new. The bank of European laws known as the *acquis communautaire* consist of more than 80,000 pages of rules and regulations going back 50 years. More than 600 pieces of legislation have been enacted during the past forty years in the environmental field alone and more than 300 are still active today. These cover all manner of environmental protection and pollution control. And yet attempts to develop an integrated approach to promoting sustainable urban development only truly began in 1990 with the publication of the 1990 *Green Paper on the Urban Environment* (European Commission, 1990).

“It can be said that the EU has had several urban policies, as numerous European Commission services have attempted to address urban issues in their individual programmes” (European Environment Agency, 1999, p334). According to the European Environment Agency, the 1990 *Green Paper on the Urban Environment* (European Commission, 1990) marked the start of efforts to establish an urban dimension of EU environmental policy. The Green Paper was the Commission’s first step at launching a wide-ranging debate on the future of Europe’s urban areas. It recognized that European policies had a significant impact on cities and towns, particularly with regard to water, noise, air quality, and transport issues. However, it further noted that there was insufficient coherence between these policies.

The Commission followed the Green Paper by setting up the Expert Group on the Urban Environment in 1991. This group, composed of academics and representatives of local and regional authorities, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the urban environment in Europe and provided recommendations on how EU policy should proceed.

Urban sustainability continued to gain prominence throughout the 1990s. The Aalborg Conference in 1994 and the subsequent establishment of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign (ESCTC) represented a particularly important landmark in rolling out Local Agenda 21 in municipalities across Europe. By the tenth anniversary of the Campaign in 2004 more than 2000 towns and cities had signed the Aalborg Charter, committing them to develop collaborative local approaches to sustainable urban development. The European Commission gave both financial and moral support to the Campaign throughout this period. In addition, the Commission assumed a crucial role in funding the activities and projects of the European Networks that constituted the ESCTC. (European Environment Agency, 1999, p334)

“Policy efforts in Europe already address many of the problems affecting European cities; but these efforts have often been piecemeal, reactive and lacking in vision” (European Commission, 1997 p3). With the Communication *Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union*, the Commission recognized that unemployment, environmental pressures, traffic congestion, poverty, poor housing, crime and drug abuse were chronic

problems in municipalities across Europe. The Commission therefore resolved itself to look at how existing policies could be coordinated in order to improve the effectiveness of EU intervention in urban areas. This initiative drew upon the considerable expertise of the Expert Group on the Urban Environment in first of all assessing the various challenges facing European cities.

The Communication's principal message is integration – of existing EU policy, and of the various levels of governance. The European level is predominantly concerned with facilitating the right conditions for local action to promote urban sustainability. The Commission propose the development of clear targets and indicators for improvement of the urban environment with specified timescale. Increased support for research on transport, energy, environmental technologies, and urban planning, all within the framework of the *City of Tomorrow* budget line (see below) is stressed. Additional financial support through the structural funds is also advocated. Finally, the Commission provides a boost for European networks by highlighting the importance of mutual learning and best practice exchange.

If the 1997 Communication was predominantly an assessment of the state of EU policy on urban sustainability, the 1998 Communication entitled *Sustainable urban development in the European Union: a framework for action* was designed to be a plan of action (European Commission 1998). With this paper the Commission identified the main actions that would be necessary to improve urban sustainability.

As a first step, the Commission wanted to promote economic prosperity by looking at job creation, innovation, expansion of transport infrastructure, and reductions in congestion. In addition, the Commission wanted to promote actions leading to liveable cities by stressing initiatives on equality, social inclusion, anti-discrimination, and urban regeneration. The environmental dimension advocated initiatives on energy conservation, waste management, air quality, water, and noise policy.

Once again the governance dimension is very prominent in the Commission's approach. Integration, empowerment, capacity building, and implementation of existing policies are all emphasized.

The Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) is the European Union's flagship policy designed to deliver environmental, social, and economic renewal. Adopted at the Gothenburg European Council in June 2001, the strategy's principal aim is to engineer a de-coupling of environmental degradation and resource consumption from economic and social development (European Commission, 2001b). Particular attention was given to the need for greater co-ordination and integration. The SDS recognised that "too often, action to achieve objectives in one policy area hinders progress in another" (European Commission, 2001b p.4). This is a theme that aptly describes shortcomings in urban policy. In terms of specific policy recommendations, the SDS concentrated on a small number of issues deemed to be in most urgent need of attention. The issues covered were:

- Limit climate change and increase the use of clean energy.
- Address threats to public health.
- Manage natural resources more responsibly.
- Improve the transport system and land-use planning.

This final priority area is particularly important for cities and towns. De-coupling transport growth from economic development while ensuring more diverse and sustainable mobility options is key in improving air quality, while reducing noise, CO₂

emissions, and congestion. A more balanced approach to regional development is attempted to address the specific problems of Europe's growing urban areas (European Commission, 2001b).

The European Union's 6th Environmental Action Programme (6th EAP) sets out the major environmental priorities of the wider sustainable development strategy up to 2010. Five key priority areas are addressed: climate change; nature and biodiversity; environment and health; sustainable use of natural resources; and the role of the EU in the wider world. Crucially, the 6th EAP proposes a number of strategic actions designed to overcome the shortcomings of previous Action Programmes and ensure effective delivery of the EU's environmental policy. First, the 6th EAP aims to improve the implementation of existing legislation. The second aim involves integrating environmental concerns into the decisions taken under other policies. Third, the Programme focuses on finding new ways to change production and consumption behaviour. Finally, the 6th EAP aims to encourage better land-use planning and management decisions (6th EAP, p13).

The 6th Environmental Action Programme could be viewed as rather vague and vacuous from a city perspective. Urban issues are addressed in an ad-hoc and fragmented way as a subordinate of land use planning and transport. The Commission seem to limit themselves to encouraging and promoting effective policies at the local level, including Local Agenda 21, rather than obligating it through legislation. In terms of instruments, the 6th EAP promotes benchmarking, particularly with regard to transport issues, and exchange of best practice in urban planning and the development of sustainable cities. (6th EAP, 22)

By announcing the Commission's intent to deal with priority issues, including urban sustainability, in horizontal thematic strategies, the 6th EAP set in motion a wide-reaching consultation process on the future of European urban policy. The Commission's own contribution to this debate was contained within the Communication entitled *Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment*, which was issued in 2004 (European Commission, 2004). In this document the Commission stressed the growing need to improve the environmental performance of Europe's cities, while also facilitating the conditions for economic growth and social cohesion. Four priority themes were presented in this Communication:

- The first theme – sustainable urban management – sought an improvement in governance and capacity in European municipalities. The Commission continued to espouse Local Agenda 21 as a strategy for mobilizing municipal stakeholders towards the goal of integrated urban management. The Commission also campaigned for a specific and binding action, namely that all cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants should be required to adopt an environmental management plan.
- The second theme also involved a mandatory plan. Once again cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants would be obliged to implement an integrated action plan, this time concerning sustainable urban transport. In addition, the Commission advocated the extension of the CIVITAS programme (see below); the expansion of the number of low emission vehicles in use; the development of transport indicators; and an increase in the number of awareness raising programmes such as the European Car Free Day.
- Two other priority themes, dealing with sustainable construction and urban design were also promoted by the Commission, the former dealing primarily with the environmental performance of buildings, and the latter dealing with land use planning including the extended use of brownfield sites.

Supporting the mainstreaming of good practice at local level – Commission to propose changes to the Community Framework; explore ways of improving dissemination of urban research results to towns and cities; and examine ways in which it can support the development of an Aalborg +10 initiative.

As with the SDS and the 6th EAP, the Commission stressed the need for improvements to the policy making process particularly with regard to integration. The need to promote integration across the full range of EU policies that impact on the urban area was coupled with the need to ensure coherence between work undertaken at the EU, national and regional/local levels.

The Thematic Strategy on the urban environment was released on 11 January 2006 (European Commission) The aim of the strategy is ‘to improve the quality of the urban environment, making cities more attractive and healthier places to live, work and invest in, and reduce the adverse environmental impact of cities on the wider environment’.

The published strategy seems to be a collection of suggestions to, and encouragement for, the local and regional level. The Commission provide guidance on how to prepare environmental management systems and urban transport plans and urge local authorities to prepare both. The Commission further advocates a Europe-wide system for exchanging best practice. This final Strategy seems like an underwhelming successor to the preparatory paper. In a study commissioned by the IEEP, Pallemmaerts et al have criticised the Thematic Strategy for lacking the ambition of the preparatory communication and for failing to include (Pallemmaerts, M, et al 2006, 57). The binding implementing measures have been omitted as the Commission claimed that it would be pointless to set arbitrary targets. Moreover, networks of local and regional authorities successfully argued that large numbers of cities would lack the necessary capacity and resources to meet the standards.

The European Union’s policy framework to support sustainable urban development is supported by a vast array of funding instruments. As with the policy it should be stressed that this is neither an exhaustive nor definitive list of EU financial programmes, it is rather an overview of those budget lines providing the most direct support for cities.

LIFE+, a successor to the LIFE programme, is the principal financial instrument of European environmental policy. It will consolidate various funding, including those dealing with urban issues, into one single framework. LIFE+ will provide almost €2bn in financial support for environmental initiatives between 2007 and 2013 and is designed to promote the environmental priorities contained within the 6th EAP. This also includes financing the seven Thematic Strategies including the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. LIFE+ is divided into three components. The first, entitled “Nature and Biodiversity, focuses on implementing EU Directives on conservation, as well as developing suitable data for the preparation of new legislation. The second component, dealing with environmental policy and governance seeks to strengthen capacity to develop, implement, and enforce European environmental policy. The third component provides financial support for information and communication initiatives. At least 50% of the budgetary resources for LIFE+ dedicated to project action grants shall be allocated to support the conservation of nature and biodiversity. (Council of the European Union, 2007)

The European institutions agreed that 78% of the overall budget will be spent on project grants and allocated via regular calls for proposals. The remaining money will be used by the European Commission to fund NGOs, prepare communication materials, and conduct

impact assessments of environmental policy and on policies related to climate change. (Council of the European Union, 2007)

Among its advantages, LIFE+ foresees more involvement of Member States in the definition of priorities as they may express national priorities to enable the proposed projects to respond to their various national and regional environmental needs. Another novelty is that the programme includes a provision to ensure a proportionate distribution of projects by establishing indicative national allocations based on a set of criteria, essentially population size and nature and biodiversity. Finally the Commission shall endeavour to ensure that at least 15% of the budget dedicated to project action grants is allocated to transnational projects. (Council of the European Union, 2007)

The final adoption of the LIFE+ initiative was delayed following a dispute between the European Parliament and the Council concerning who should manage the programme's funds. Some Member States had argued that the funds should be decentralized to national agencies, whereas the Parliament wanted the European Commission the allocation of funds (Council of the European Union, 2007). The LIFE+ regulation is expected to enter into force by September 2007 with the first call for proposals expected to follow in the early autumn. (Council of the European Union, 2007)

The URBAN initiative (URBAN I between 1994 and 1999 and URBAN II between 2000 and 2006) is a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme that focuses on disadvantaged communities and is designed to fund physical and environmental regeneration, social inclusion, training, entrepreneurship and employment. URBAN II consisted of €728m of funding spread across more than 70 programmes. Funding is typically targeted at districts that are characterized by unemployment, crime, and immigration levels running at twice the EU average according to the European Commission criteria), and very low proportion of green spaces. The bulk of the project financing goes towards physical and environmental regeneration, social inclusion, training, entrepreneurship and employment. According to the IEEP, one of URBAN's greatest strengths is the high degree of involvement of the local level. "In most cases the local authority is responsible for day to day implementation, advised by local community groups and in partnership with the national / regional authorities and the European Commission" (IEEP, 2005 p97). This provides greater scope to target funds at specific local needs.

The URBAN initiative also finances a European Network called URBACT that aims to facilitate mutual learning and exchange of experience across the projects funded by URBAN I and II.

In addition to URBAN, the Structural Funds also support sustainable urban development through the INTEREG III programme. More than €4.8bn was provided between 2000 and 2006 to projects addressing cross border urban development, social inclusion, protection of the environment, promoting renewable energy, co-operation among cities, spatial development strategies, efficient and sustainable transport systems, and capacity building. The Programme has three strands: Cross Border cooperation designed to promote joint spatial development approaches; transnational cooperation with a view to promoting wider European integration and sustainable development, and interregional cooperation to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through large scale information exchange.

The City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage Programme was a component of the 5th Framework Programme for Research. Although this budget line was subsequently dropped from both the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes it has nonetheless made a

significant contribution to initiating research on urban sustainability. The Programme covered the period 1998-2002. It provided support to research in four main areas: city planning and management; cultural heritage; built environment; and urban transport. Although some of the funds were allocated to improving urban governance, the bulk of monies were spent on identifying innovative and technological solutions to the challenges facing cities. The aim is to pilot new technologies in the hope that they can be rolled out and mainstreamed in other European cities.

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7) is designed to fund research into technology and innovation. It comprises a Cooperation Programme to promote collaborative research, a Capacities Programme, to develop research infrastructure, and an Ideas Programme to facilitate a shift from the research lab to the market place. It also includes a People Programme to fund young researchers. The overall budget for FP7 is more than €50bn over seven years; however the Programme has been criticized for failing to provide sufficient access to local and regional authorities, and for omitting any direct approach to urban sustainability.

The CIVITAS programme, which began in 2000, is the principle funding mechanism designed to promote sustainable urban transport. It is designed to initiate demonstration projects in a number of cities across Europe. Although CIVITAS covers urban transport issues the types of projects it funds tend to be those which entail new infrastructure or the testing of new pilot projects.

In 2001, in the face of stern opposition from a number of influential Member State governments, the European Commission launched the Community Framework to promote sustainable urban development. The Community Framework was directed at European local authority networks with the aim of encouraging the conception, exchange and implementation of LA21. It provided €14m in funding between 2001 and 2003 to projects led by networks of local authorities / municipalities. Projects focused on exchange of information, cooperation and accompanying measures. The European Commission sparked a great deal of controversy with their local authority partners when they decided not to renew in the Community Framework in 2004. Instead, it is one of the funding streams that have been merged into the LIFE+ funding mechanism.

The IEEP described the decision to close the Cooperation Framework after 2004, combined with the lower level of ambition of the final Thematic Strategy, as “a step backwards in achieving the goals of the 6EAP”. (Pallemaerts, M, et al 2006, 34)

In addition to the policy and funding initiatives, there are a growing number of innovative support mechanisms at the European level to support urban areas.

The **Urban Audit** was initially launched in 1997 and completed its first full funding period in 2005. Financed by European Commission DG Regio and EUROSTAT, the Urban Audit collects data on urban sustainability in 258 medium and large cities across the European Union. In theory this should contribute to the EU’s new policy of name, fame and shame, allowing local elected officials to compare the state of the urban environment, rewarding the leaders would positive publicity and shaming the laggards into greater efforts.

The Aarhus Convention provides access to environmental information, decision making and justice. From the city perspective, it obliges local authorities to improve reporting on urban environmental issues and participation in the development of urban environmental policy and initiatives (European Environment Agency, 1999, p333).

According to the European Environment Agency many of the problems faced by Europe's urban centres "can be solved if countries learn from others that have pioneered solutions" (Jacobsen and Kristoffersen, 2003). The practice of exchanging experience and promoting mutual learning is promoted and encouraged in a number of ways. For many years the European Commission provided funding to the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign. This enabled the Campaign to maintain a secretariat in Brussels that actively encouraged take up of the Aalborg Charter and provided a facility for dissemination of across Europe. Moreover, the Commission remains a major, and in some cases the main, source of funding for many European networks of local and regional authorities whose principal objective is to facilitate best practice exchange.

4 The Empirical Analysis

There is a lack of systematic quantitative data on the impact of EU initiatives designed to support the advancement of sustainable development at the local level. There are a handful of studies that analyze the development within local government regarding sustainable development (see for example Joas and Grönholm 2004, as well as Evans, Joas, Sundback and Theobald 2006). There are also tools that collect on-line data on cities performance in this policy area, including questions about the importance and level of outside support for the local process (see for example Joas, Evans and Theobald 2005).

In addition to these quantitative approaches several qualitative case studies have been made in order to analyze this impact.

There is one problematic feature, however, in all studies about the local level processes towards sustainability in Europe – the lack of time-series data. This is particularly true with regard to the focus of this study where the type and focus of EU policy tools varies over time. Therefore we selected data-sets that could, despite other limitations, highlight this change over time.

4.1 The Data - UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004

The basic data for the empirical analysis in this paper comes from a series of surveys, from 1998 until 2006, conducted by the Commission on Environment of the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC EnvCom) in cooperation with Åbo Akademi University (all of them) and also other partners such as WZB–Berlin (2001 and 2004), Turku Polytechnic (2004) and financed by the network and the Ministry of the Environment in Finland. The surveys were and are basically used in to evaluate and analyze present and further needs of the cooperation between the network organization UBC and it's by now almost 100 member cities in the Baltic Sea region.

The surveys are not planned as such to be seen as time series, they are rather focused on different items and questions different years, following the general development within the issue area – environmental policies, local Agenda 21 and sustainable development.

Despite the character of non-contingency surveys there are items and series of questions in them that can be, in some cases be modified, and thus followed over time. These questions are based on a follow-up of the standard structures and procedures within the local government environmental policy units.

The basic setting to use this material in a comparative setting over time is very good regarding this question. As the collected answers are all members of the same network, and also basically the same cities over the whole research period, the possibilities to analyze their behaviour and the opinions of the respondents are rather good.

The responses to the surveys are collected from a senior or expert level official within the local environmental authority – the named contact person for the network within the environmental administration. He or she has been given the opportunity to seek further knowledge and respondents on issue areas he has not been familiar with. These questions have been normally more technical, however, than the general questions we use in this analysis.

The setting for a well balanced comparison is further enhanced by the fact that with this material we are able to follow-up, to some extent, the effects of the EU and other supporting organizations effect in cities within the policy sector in different set of countries as the region has been in the focus of two of the major enlargement waves, 1995 and 2004. Therefore, the research area during the survey years displays a selection of countries with different relations to the EU: Old member countries, rather recent member countries and countries within but also outside the accession process. Even if the total number of responses is at lowest 59, the distribution can in some cases be rather narrow to be presented country by country. We thus use the categorization above to highlight different kinds of countries in relation to the EU.

A data description, including an analysis of drop-outs

We are using material from the 3 earlier surveys, dating back to 1998, 2001 and 2004 respectively. The latest survey from 2006 did not include anymore the type of question that we are mostly interested in this analysis – evaluations of different supporting systems for the development of local environmental and sustainability policies.

Table 4.1 *Frequencies – Cities from Different Type of Countries (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004).*

Present EU Status:	1998	2001	2004
EU member before 1995	11 18,6 %	15 17,6 %	6 9,4 %
EU member since 1995	24 40,7 %	29 34,1 %	22 34,4 %
EU member since 2004	20 33,9 %	35 41,2 %	33 51,6 %
Non EU-member	4 6,8 %	6 7,1 %	3 4,7 %
<i>Total N</i>	59	85	64
<i>Missing</i>	22	15	34
<i>Response Rate</i>	73 %	85 %	65 %

UBC experienced rapid growth as a network organization throughout the mid 1990s. In 1998 the network had 81 member cities at the time of the survey. The survey was sent to all UBC EnvCom contact persons, and was returned by 59 of them. This gives a response rate of 73% (the survey and analytical results from it are presented in Grönholm and Joas 1999). The number of UBC member cities reached 100 by 2001. This survey was answered by 85 cities, with a response rate of 85%. This survey is reported in Lindström and Grönholm 2001. The major focus in the first two UBC surveys was existing governance structures for sustainable development within the local communities.

The final survey used in this analysis was conducted in December 2004 and January 2005. This survey, reported partly in Lempa *et al.* 2005, was part of a new evaluation system by the UBC EnvCom, and was directed more than earlier on environmental and

sustainability indicators. It consisted of two separate parts, one basic part (partly including earlier questions) and one entirely indicator part. The basic knowledge part was answered by 64 cities out of at that time 98 member cities, the indicator part by 72 cities. The response rates are thus 65% and 73%.

The gaps in the survey are not systematic in any significant way; however, regarding results discussing the group of cities coming from non-member countries is rather small and heterogeneous. The two exceptions are Norway that has traditionally decided to opt out of joining the EU, and Russia an unlikely candidate for future membership.

Another limitation for our analysis is the fact that the data is not collected for a time-series analysis. This means, for example, that while analyzing survey answers we must make many short-cuts and interpretations that can even harm our results. For example, the exact wording and type of answering options vary between the surveys, forcing us to interpret and manipulate the basic data to some extent in order to make it comparable. Therefore we want in advance note the reader of these limitations and see the paper as a first draft, a testing of a possible empirical setting³.

4.2 Where Do Cities Get Support From?

The European Union is by no means the only actor promoting and supporting sustainable development and active local environmental policies in cooperation with local authorities in Europe. This is particularly true in the Baltic Sea Region where other organisations such as the Nordic Council are active. The collapse of the iron curtain did not only herald economic and political reforms in the early 1990's, it also brought new awareness of the significant environmental threats and near collapse of environmental resources in parts of the former Soviet Union. Some of the most immediate threats were and are bordering on the Baltic Sea.

There was thus a need and a market for environmental and sustainable development reforms in the area. This can be seen as needs in addition to the overall need for all industrial societies to change lifestyles in order to secure a more sustainable future. The need for reforms were and are evident thus in all countries in the research region.

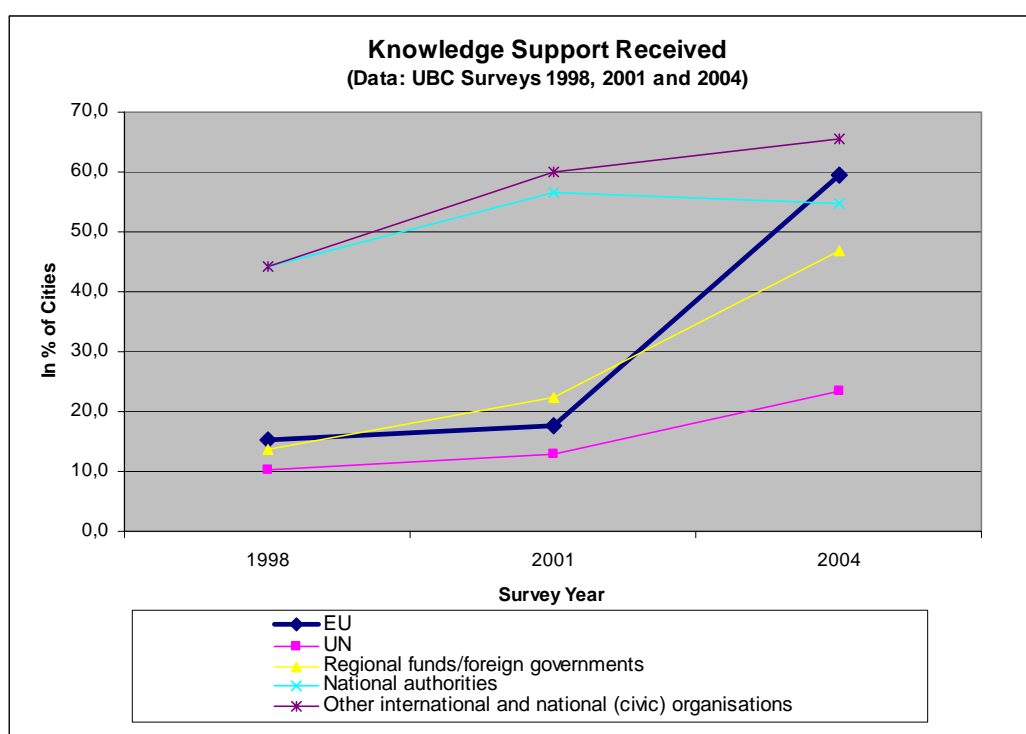
We have analyzed, based on our research questions, two forms of support to cities in the region – knowledge to make better use of cities internal resources and raise the problem identification level in general, and economic support to implement actual reforms and investments.

³ The set of questions used in this analysis was following: **1998: Q 25.** *Has your city had international or national support to create the LA21 project? If so, what kind of support (several answers possible)?* + Categorization and open options. **2001: Q 22.** *What kind of support has your city received from the following institutions to create the LA21 process? And what is the importance of their support?* + Categorization and open options. **2004: Q B3/4.** *What is the importance of the economic/knowledge support your city has received from the following institutions to initiate UBC related activities?* + Categorization and open options. This last year did not have an opportunity to answer if the city had got support, the question was phrased as to state the importance of the support for the city – two least important categories were in our analysis interpreted as non-support. In all surveys the main focus has been on the environmental and sustainability sectors within the city, therefore despite the varying wording in the questions some general conclusions can be drawn on the level of overall support.

The empirical material included, as can be seen above, questions of whether the cities has received knowledge and/or economic support (1998 and 2001) and about the importance of this support (2001 and 2004) for local processes towards sustainable development (phrase was unfortunately somewhat different each year).

Despite the differences we have created two variables for each of the years, one stating if the city has received knowledge support, the other if the city has received economic support.

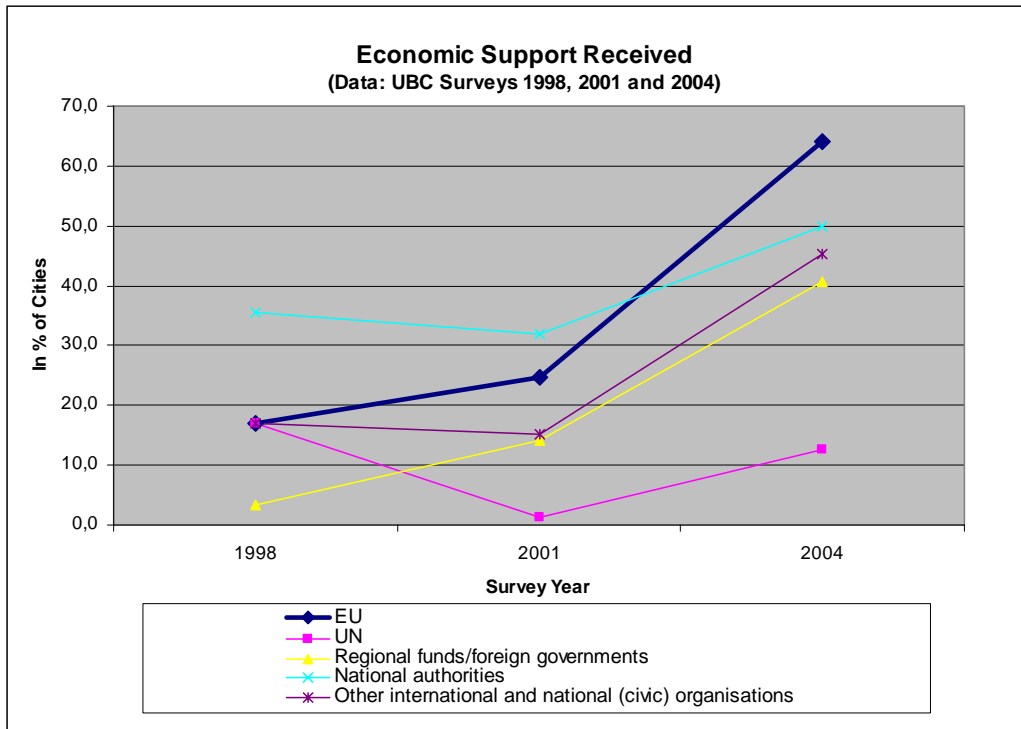
Figure 4.1 *Received Knowledge Support from Different Sources (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004, N = 43-73, missing = 10-21)*



The level of knowledge support received from different sources shows a similar pattern for the first two surveys. Almost 50% of the UBC member cities received some degree of knowledge support in 1998 from either national authorities or international or national civic organizations, often working as single issue organizations in this policy area. This pattern, on a slightly higher level, however, is also visible in the 2001 data material. The level of EU knowledge support for cities is considered rather low at the time if the first two surveys as just below 20% said that they had received EU support for tasks within this policy area.

This pattern clearly changed in the last survey as close to 60% of the cities considered the importance of EU knowledge support for their cities environmental and sustainability work to be at least rather important, in our interpretation meaning that they are receiving support. The pattern of more knowledge support overall is also visible in the material in 2004, but the internal order of the other sources remain the same as in the previous surveys. It can, however, be noted that the importance of regional know-how in the Baltic Sea region seems also to be growing.

Figure 4.2 *Received Economic Support from Different Sources (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004, N = 43-73, missing = 10-21)*



The overall importance of funding seems to follow in general the same pattern as regarding knowledge support. The data material, logically, shows that the importance of funding from civic organizations is clearly lower than regarding knowledge. But, they still support also economically, as many local governments as regional funds (in 2001) and UN funding schemes (in 1998). An interpretation of this funding is that some part of institutional funding (governments, Nordic council, EU and UN) is directed through various civic organizations, not the least larger networks such as EUROCITIES, WHO, UBC and ICLEI, all active in the policy area of sustainable development.

As regarding knowledge it also seems that the level of economic support has been growing through the research period.

What is also striking is the importance of the EU as the main funding institution seems to be rising. In 2004 almost 65% of our case cities stated that they consider the EU funding for their city as at least rather important, in our interpretation meaning that at least that many cities are economically supported in their activities for sustainable development or the environmental sector by EU.

4.3 EU Support over Time in Different Type of Countries in the Region

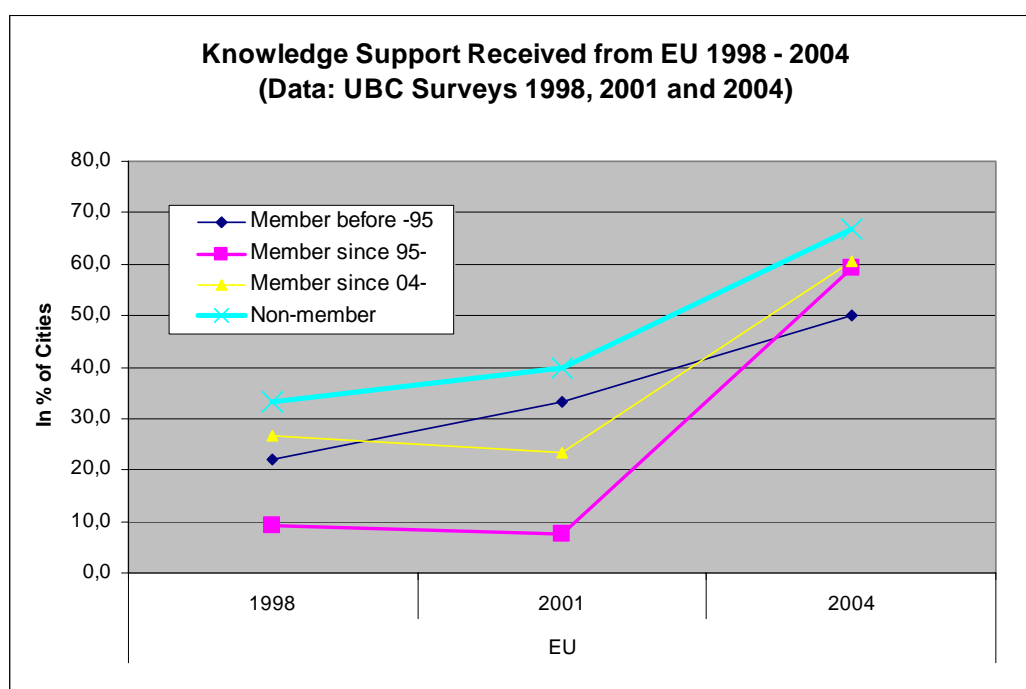
The analysis above shows that the number of UBC member cities that receive knowledge and/or economic support from EU has been increasing over time. This might be

considered to be an effect of the enlargement of EU, even if there are funding schemes that are also available for non-members and especially accession countries.

If we look at the level of support that cities have received from the EU within the 4 groups of countries an interesting pattern is emerging. Knowledge and know-how based support seems to be directed from the EU to non-members and accession countries/new members since 2004. The Nordic countries that became members in 1995 seem to be clearly under a lower level than the other groups in 1998 and 2001, but even in this group the importance of the EU as a source of knowledge has been growing. It seems as if the new members from 1995 and the accession countries/members 2004 have learned how to work with EU mechanisms during the past five years.

The basic knowledge support level changed slightly before 2001 but more significantly after that. However, even in this case we have to make a reservation due to differences in the surveys (both charts 4.3 and 4.4).

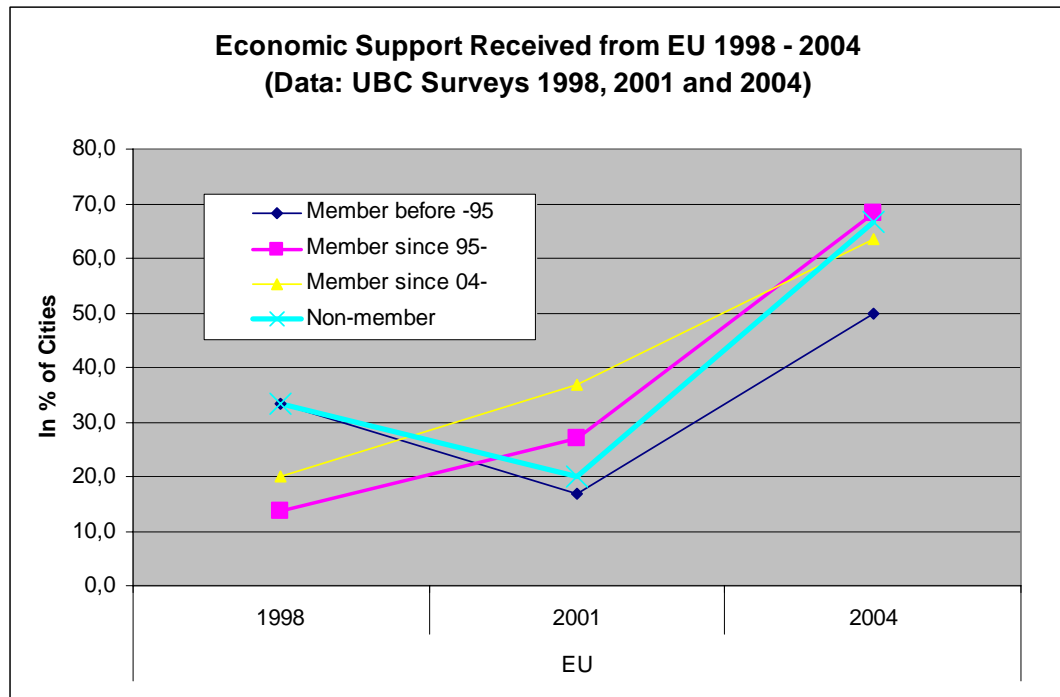
Figure 4.3 *Received Knowledge Support from EU (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004, N = 43-73, missing = 10-21)*



In 1998 about one third of cities from both old EU member countries and non-member countries received economic support for the local work in sustainability sector. The level of support to new 1995 members and accession country cities was clearly lower at the time of the survey. This relationship was turned around in 2001; about 36% of the UBC member cities from the candidate countries and 28% of the cities from 1995 member countries received support in some form, clearly at a higher level than the two previous groups of cities.

Regardless of region, almost all UBC member cities seemed to get more economic support in 2004 (see chart 4.4, with above mentioned restrictions).

Figure 4.4 *Received Economic Support from EU (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, 2001 and 2004, N = 43-73, missing = 10-21)*



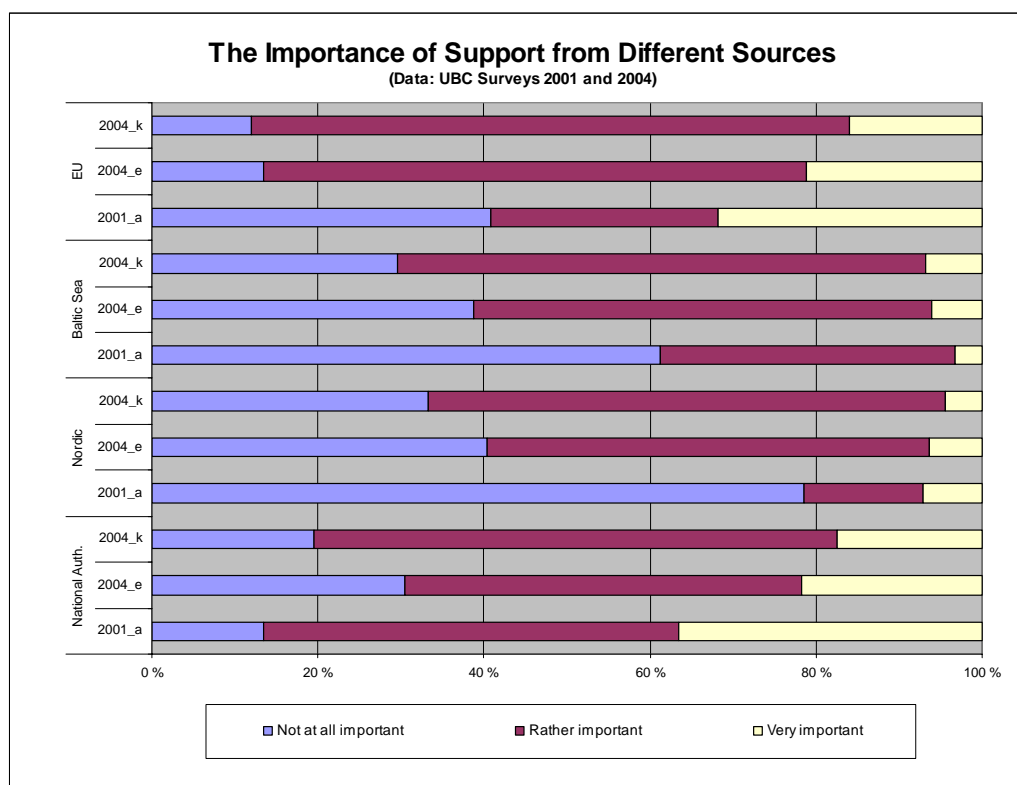
Even considering the possible measurement problems it looks as if support from the EU is reaching more cities independent of their membership status. This might indicate that more recently introduced support systems seem to reach the end-users in a more successful way (i.e. cities in this case). However, we are limited in this study by the fact that the different programmes and systems are as such not analyzed on a detailed level, rather with a general question about support, and the importance of this support.

4.4 The Impact of EU Support: Importance of Support 2001 and 2004

The 2001 and 2004 surveys had an additional question about the importance of the support received by the city. In 2001 this was a general question, in 2004 separate questions were included for economic as well as knowledge support, and on a 5-grade scale.

We converted the 2004 scale into a 3-grade scale: *Not at all important* (2 least important levels), *rather important* (mid-option) and *very important* (highest options).

Figure 4.5 *The Importance of Support from EU, Baltic sea and Nordic Funds and National Authorities, Changes 2001 - 2004 (Source: UBC Surveys 1998, Legend: 2001_a =all types of support, 2004_k = knowledge, 2004_e = economic, N = 26-55)*



It seems obvious that the cities are considering the national government and/or authority knowledge and funding as most central for their work within the policy sectors of sustainability and the environment. The importance of national sources seems to be slightly lower, however, in 2004 than in 2001.

The importance of the EU support seems, on the contrary, to increase somewhat between the two measurement spots. In 2001 just less than 60% considered the EU support to be of at least rather importance for their cities; in 2004 this percentage is already above 80%. Regional and Nordic funding schemes are considered less important than national and EU in both 2001 and 2004, but also their importance is considered to be increasing rather than decreasing.

In general this would indicate that cities, despite membership status in the EU, are to even higher degree using and perhaps also relying on outside support, both funding and knowledge, in order to work with sustainability and environmental issues. This might be an effect of better opportunities, higher levels of need or a general way to work within networks that include other cities, outside funding institutions and other supporting organizations.

5 A Discussion: Success or Failure

Returning to Dale's quotation earlier in the paper it is important to note that governance rather than government is not something that comes natural to most institutions or centres of authority. The European Union has made various rhetorical commitments to improving key governance concepts. The Lisbon Agenda from 2000, the Sustainable Development Strategy of 2001 and most notably the European Commission White Paper on Governance from 2001 all stressed the need to improve stakeholder participation and consultation; transparency and accountability of decision making; integration and coherence of policy; enhanced communication and co-operation; and improved implementation and enforcement of policy. While the words have been encouraging, the evidence on the ground still suggests that the European system has not yet made the transition from government to governance.

The European Environment Agency has stated that "policies to address urban environmental issues show serious weaknesses", in particular the EEA criticizes the lack of sectoral integration, the absence of a specific EU mandate to work on urban sustainability, and the inability of the governance system to ensure vertical coordination across levels of governance (European Environment Agency, 1999, p332)".

John Pinder has argued that while the Commission's role in preparing policy is extensive, its inability to ensure that Member States actually properly implement policies and programmes is a significant problem. He further contends that the governance of the EU, with the Commission's own silo mentality complementing the Council of Minister's habit of interfering with policy preparation, constitute "serious weaknesses" that limit the effectiveness of EU policy.(Pinder 2001, p163)

In addition, the integration process, launched by the European Council in Cardiff in 1998 and an essential component of the Sustainable Development Strategy, also draws heavy criticism. Most observers agree that little is happening to establish comprehensive and cross sectoral strategies that take account of environmental and sustainable development concerns. In its 2003 Environment Policy Review, the European Commission noted that a large number of the environmentally unsustainable trends result from a failure to deal with inter-linkages between sectors. This lack of integration and coherence leads to policies in different areas working against each one another rather than being mutually supportive. This makes policies both more costly and less effective and thus hinders progress towards sustainable development (European Commission 2003).

Perhaps the greatest failing of the EU system of environmental governance is the lack of adequate implementation. Weale et al argue that the current regulatory system adopted by the Commission focuses too much attention on constructing directives and not enough time dealing with effectiveness or enforcement. Regulatory measures tend to operate in a top-down fashion, focusing attention on the policy formulation and legislative process with little regard for outcomes. This stress on the enactment of a piece of legislation rather than on the capacity for enforcement or its potential as an effective reaction to environmental problems is common (Weale et al. 2003. pp. 117-118).

Baker and McCormick have written that “in reading the literature on sustainable development, and in studying the policies of the European Union and its member states, it is difficult not to come to the conclusion that while there have been many words written and spoken in support of the general principle of sustainable development, and a strong legal, moral and political commitment on the part of the EU, significant policy results are hard to find”. (Baker and McCormick 2004, p294)

Serious problems also exist at the local level. European cities are heterogeneous in terms of governance, population make-up and capacity. Some have considerable scope to govern their own territory with powers to tax/spend and to initiate a range of policy measures. Others have little role beyond waste collection. As a result virtually every aspect of European policy has an impact in Europe’s cities. Cities have a legitimate interest in participating in the preparation of European policies and programmes. Moreover, given the presence of cities at the front line of the monitoring, implementation and enforcement of EU policy, there should be a stronger recognition on the part of the European institutions to include them as full partners.

However, cities often lack the essential resources and capacity to engage with the European Union. They lack the human and financial resources that are necessary to implement policy and apply for financial support.

Despite these shortcomings our analysis indicates that the overall scope and penetration of EU support is improving over time. This could be a result of the measuring difficulties described above or it could be a result of the increasing number of target cities falling within the scope of the EU in 2006 as opposed to 1998. It is more likely, however, that improved interaction between the EU and local levels on urban sustainability is a consequence of the slow evolution of EU urban policy from 1990 onwards; the EU’s efforts to overcome problems in the way its policies and programmes are conceived and delivered; and a stronger understanding of European issues, and willingness to work with the European level, on the part of Europe’s cities and towns.

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Implementing Swedish climate policy
through local government
- Learning from municipal climate policy
forerunners –
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1 Introduction

The Swedish municipalities are not anymore the forerunner they used to be in the context of sustainable development. The LA21 movement of the 1990s has lost its steam, and most local governments are not particularly concerned about sustainable development these days. Still, there are quite a number of municipalities where the commitment to sustainability has strengthened in recent years. We can also see the emerging of a new movement of municipalities dedicated to the climate issue. Of particular importance in this context is the network *Klimatkommunerna* (The Climate Municipalities) a group of fore-runner municipalities in climate policy.

My paper deal with these "climate pioneers" among Swedish municipalities. The paper is based on a recent study of eight municipalities with a high profile in climate policy (titled *Med sikte på klimatmålet lokalt? - en studie av framkantskommuner i klimatpolitiken* Forsberg 2007a). This particular report explore the relationship between national climate policy and local action. I also make use of empirical results from another recent study by Bretzer, Forsberg & Bartholdsson (2006).¹

The aim of the paper is to discuss the importance of the central level in terms of supporting local climate policies.

1.1 A background: the local environmental policy context

The Swedish political system guarantee the municipal level a certain degree of autonomy versus the central level. The municipalities are also considered as important implementing actors in numerous policy areas. Still, policy-making is for most part considered an exclusive affair for national political bodies and central authorities.

Within environmental policy and sustainable development the municipalities are often described as key actors in mobilising various actors (citizens, industry, NGOs) as well as in implementing policies. Over the last decade the Swedish Government has launched a number of high profiled programme aiming at supporting local sustainable development. The most important by far (and also the most evaluated) is the *Local Investment Programme* (LIP), a programme mainly directed to investments in physical infrastructures. Over a period of six years (1998-2004), the Swedish Government allocated 7,2 billions SEK in supporting sustainable investments at the municipal level. In total, however, the investments corresponds to 27 billions SEK, since the municipalities themselves have contributed the lion part.

¹ *Lokal översättning av nationella miljömål*, Naturvårdsverket förlag. From this report I use empirical results from two municipalities with a particularly high profile in climate policy (the towns of Lund and Kristianstad in Southern Sweden).

Swedish national policy initiatives for local sustainability, is strongly characterised by one-way communication. As a general observation the interest on part of the national Government and central authorities for *dialogue and feedback* from local authorities has not been very active. One can argue that this present state of things has a number of important implications. The un-developed policy dialogue between national and local authorities, however, is not a subject that has raised particular interest within the environmental policy research.

There are at least two important reasons why we should pay more attention to the communication between the national and local level, in evaluating national policies for local sustainable development. First, the national programmes for supporting local sustainability has been huge in economic terms, covering billions of SEK. From that point of view, the feedback from the municipal level should be considered crucial in optimizing programme outcome.

Secondly, up to the late 1990s the municipalities themselves had a strong momentum in mobilising for sustainable development, whereas the central Government kept a rather low profile. In those days the policy dialogue on sustainable development were very much a municipal affair. This was the era of the local Agenda 21 movement, and local actors were involved in an often inspired dialogue on ideas, concepts and visions for a sustainable society. The last decade has seen a fundamental shift in this respect, where the policy initiative gradually has been transferred to the central Government and national authorities. This change has had a number of important implications. Most important, the broadly defined local strategies of the 90s, where the social dimension of sustainable development used to be prominent, has gradually been exchanged for a more exclusive focus on the ecological dimension of sustainable development (Dahlgren & Eckerberg 2004; Forsberg 2005, 2007b). Whereas the municipalities of the local Agenda 21 movement of the 90s often dealt with sustainability as a strategic development goal related to all policy areas, the ways the municipalities work with sustainable development nowadays bear more similarities to traditional environmental policy (*ibid*). Local policies are very much defined by technological investments and certain aspects of physical planning, whereas the involvement of the citizens is not considered particularly important anymore. The gradual shift to a more centralised, top down approach to local sustainable development have made the municipalities much less important in policy-making. Still, one can argue that municipal experiences should play an important role in strengthening and optimizing policies for local sustainable development. Therefore, we should also pay more attention to the relationship between the local and central level in terms of dialogue and feedback.

1.2 Local climate pioneers and the role of national policy

There are 16 environmental quality goals guiding the work for ecological sustainable development in Sweden. The policy structure with general environmental policy goals were introduced in 1999, and the hope is that within one generation every major environmental problem of the Swedish society should belong to the history. One of these 16 environmental goals are the climate policy goal "Limited impact from climate change" (*Begränsad klimatpåverkan*). For obvious reasons, the success or failure of this goal is not just depending on domestic strategies.

The local level is considered a major actor in implementing national climate policy goal (Prop. 2001/02:130). For most Swedish municipalities climate policy is a new topic that has not gained any particular attention until recent years. Still, there are also local

governments which have been promoted municipal climate initiatives for a long time (since early or mid 1990s). During the fall of 2006 I carried out a case study focusing some of the municipal climate policy pioneers in Sweden (Forsberg 2007a). In total, I interviewed and surveyed representatives (local climate or environmental policy coordinators) for eight municipalities with a status as *local forerunners* in climate policy. The group consisted of (population within brackets):

Eskilstuna (91.000)	Mölnadal (58.000)
Götene (13.000)	Södertälje (80.000)
Kalmar (60.000)	Uppsala (182.000)
Lidköping (37.000)	Östersund (58.000)

Out of these eight towns, six belongs to the network Klimatkommunerna (The Climate municipalities). This network was established in 2002 as a spin-off from a project ran by the Swedish Association for Nature Conservation (*Svenska naturskyddsföreningen*). Presently, the network has 19 members and an office located in Lund (which is one of the municipal founding members of the network). The network is financed through different sources, though the Swedish Authority for Nature Protection (*Naturvårdsverket*) is the most important financial contributor.

Worth of mentioning is the fact that the transnational municipal climate network *The Climate Alliance* never has developed a stronghold in Sweden. This network of 1.360 member municipalities (2007) actually has got only one Swedish member (Eskilstuna). Given the existence of the domestic network Klimatkommunerna, it remains to see whether or not the Climate Alliance will attract Swedish municipalities in the years to come.

Most of the eight municipalities included in the study are characterised by their broad climate policy approaches, with numerous activities aiming at reducing local emission of climate gases (within local administration, industry and the civil society). Still, the scope of action among these climate policy pioneers are quite similar. Most activities are related to physical planning (building, infrastructures) and transport, whereas initiatives related to individual lifestyles and consumption are not particularly present. Some of these climate policy pioneers have also made heavy investments in "frontier" technology, most commonly related to *biogas system*.

There is a common view among the local climate pioneers that national climate policy as well as national supporting initiatives have not been an important factor in the local work with climate-related topics. None of the municipalities included in the study consider the governing through national climate policy goal, as an important factor that are giving incentive to local climate action (or at least, contributes by inspiring local climate initiatives). From one point of view, this might not be surprising. After all, most of the eight municipalities have had climate initiatives on the local agenda way before the national climate policy goal was decided in 1999.² Still, following the national rhetoric the Swedish environmental policy goals shall be a platform and something that inspire environmental action at all levels of the Swedish society.

At best, one can observe an *indirect* influence from the national climate policy goal. The general process of adapting the 16 environmental quality goals to the local context is

² Actually, the first Swedish national climate goal was decided back in 1988. But the predecessor to the present climate policy goal were not widely communicated in the Swedish society.

described by some local actors as a positive factor, in terms of improving the structure and organisation of local environmental policy and administration. From that point of view, this is also something that local climate policy initiatives have gained from.

The only aspect of national climate policy that is said to have had an important role among some of these local pioneers is the so called *Klimp* programme (The Climate Investment Programme), a programme that give financial support to local climate investments. This programme (as well as its predecessor LIP, see above) builds on a competition model, where investment proposals by Swedish municipalities are judged and selected by national authorities. Accordingly, it produces both winners and losers. Typically, the "winner" municipalities are usually more positive towards LIP and Klimp than the "losers" (Berglund & Hanberger 2003; Forsberg 2005). This also holds true within this group of climate policy pioneers. Five out of eight municipalities have been financially supported by the Klimp programme (the other three have applied but failed to get financial support). This group of favoured municipalities are also expressing much more positive opinions towards the Klimp programme, than the rest of the group.

In spite of existing national climate policy initiatives, there is a wide-spread opinion among local climate pioneer municipalities that the national Government is lacking in its effort to push local climate action.³ Some of the local representatives were asking for a more *supporting* "policy climate", facilitating for municipalities committed to climate policy.

Among local climate actors there is also a common view that the central Government is not enough committed in terms of listening and adapting to local experiences. According to some local climate coordinators, the central Government is paying lip service in acknowledging the municipalities as major actors for the successful implementation of national climate policy. Following their opinion the municipalities are given a minor role at best in the national climate policy discussion, whereas industry, science and certain strong interest groups are actively invited to contribute with their views and opinions. The following is an example given by one of the local climate coordinator interviewed (in my translation):

"I went to a seminar. *Energimyndigheten* and *Naturvårdsverket* (two central authorities) where evaluating the climate work in Swedish society. They where talking about what industry had done, what central authorities had done, about policy instruments, they where mentioning LIP and Klimp. But I don't think they where mentioning the word *municipality* during this day-long session. We where two local representatives present at the seminar, that screamed 'The Municipalities!'...But the national level does not regard our [existence]."⁴

Notwithstanding the general importance of the municipalities in terms of implementing the national climate policy goal, there is also a particular need for dialogue and feedback regarding the national policy initiatives that specifically addresses the local level. Evaluations of the LIP programme indicates a frustration among Swedish municipalities, related to the problems to get central authorities attention regarding local input on what is problematic and how things can get improved (Forsberg 2005; Berglund & Hanberger 2003). Similar opinions are reported in this recent study of local climate pioneers. Though

³ The empirical study was accomplished soon after the parliamentary election in September 2006, and the views among local representatives generally refer to the situation during the former Social Democratic Government.

⁴ Local climate coordinator February 28 2006.

this is not something that is mentioned as a problem by all local climate actors interviewed, it is considered a crucial problem by certain local representatives. Through a more active dialogue between the local and the central level, it is commonly believed, a number of problems related to the LIP and Klimp programmes could have been avoided, or at least could have become less harmful. This opinion is related to the common critic that these investment programmes have been lacking in terms of: their cost-effectiveness; time and energy consuming procedures in developing applications; contra-productive results (Forsberg 2005; Sköllerhorn & Hanberger 2004).

Accordingly, local actors are asking for a more active dialogue where the views of the municipalities are acknowledged by the Swedish state. Or put in other words, that the central level open up the national policy arena for the municipalities to take active part. From the point of view of local representatives, this is not just about raising national awareness on problems with existing policies, but also giving feedback on what is considered as working well (Forsberg 2007a; 2005).

1.3 Outlining some principles for national support of local climate action

In designing supporting climate policy initiatives for the local level, it is of vital importance that national authorities take in consideration the huge differences between Swedish municipalities, both in terms of general socioeconomic characteristics and regarding their policies for sustainable development. Whereas some municipalities have developed strong policies for sustainability, this is not the general case. Numerous municipalities are in lack of ambitions when it comes to sustainable development and climate policy. As indicated by earlier research, this can not be attributed to certain social, economic or geographical conditions (Eckerberg & Forsberg 1998; Brundin & Eckerberg 1999; Forsberg 2002). The forerunners as well as the towns without any apparent progress for sustainable development, seems to belong to every major category of municipalities (urban, rural, economically progressive, backwater, etc.). This points towards the importance of local actors, and in particular the presence or absence of dedicated civil servants and politicians.

Thus, national policies aiming at supporting local climate initiatives in the most effective way, can not start from the assumption that one size fits all. Rather they have to give proper attention to the huge differences that characterise municipal ambitions and incentives. In short, the central level has to strive for a balance between different considerations. Ideally, national policy should be both allowing and persuading: It should be allowing towards the pioneers, the municipalities which are used to walking ahead and finding their own paths, and usually are in no particular need of guidance from the central level. At the same time, it should send a strong message to the municipalities with weak or non existing policies for sustainable development. Whether this takes the form of regulatory means or positive incentives, it should aim at getting every single municipality engaged in climate policy.

A top down approach where the central Government does not give proper attention to the views and incentives of the municipalities themselves, runs the risk of ruining existing local self-organising for sustainable development. In fact, this has been one of the main problem with the supporting national initiatives for local sustainability over the last decade (Forsberg 2005). Particularly the already mentioned Local Investment Programme has been a forceful instrument in terms of governing the ways local authorities works and

thinks when it comes to sustainable development (regarding their focus, methods, views on concerned actors, etc.). The Climate Investment Programme, Klimp, is based on similar principles. In the wake of these programmes, voluntary local self-organised initiatives has to a large extent been exchanged for centralised policies where the municipalities adapt to the national policy paradigm of ecological modernisation (Forsberg 2005; Bretzer, Forsberg & Bartholdsson 2006).

In terms of cost-effectiveness this shift to an increasingly top down approach towards sustainable development raises a number of questions. From a national point of view local *self-organised initiatives* should be considered a cost-effective way to implement local strategies for sustainable development. If Swedish municipalities become accustomed to a centralised policy culture where economic carrots plays an important role, there is a risk that local governments will not take any action as long as they do not get any economic compensation.

1.3.1 The strengthening of local climate initiatives - some strategic considerations

To sum up, there is an obvious lack of strategic dialogue on how national policy in the most effective way can support local climate initiatives. A such dialogue should also bring into attention the scopes and limitations of local responsibility when it comes to climate initiatives. In this context we can principally distinguish between four categories of climate initiatives:

1. Climate initiatives where local governments are in no need of national support
2. Climate initiatives which has to be actively promoted by the national level, as a condition for local implementation
3. Climate initiatives where national law and policies presently present an obstacle, and therefore has to be reformed so that they are supporting rather than obstructing local action
4. Climate initiatives which ideally should not be a local responsibility

I will comment upon each and one of these categories, which could functioning as a principle guideline in a dialogue between local and central governments aimed at improving the conditions for local climate policies.

1) *Climate initiatives where local governments are in no need of national support.* There are numerous local climate initiatives that can be implemented without a direct support or direct instructions from central authorities. If national subsidies (s.a. the Klimp programme) are directed to such areas, it might result in two negative outcomes. First, there is the problem with cost-effectiveness if local authorities get paid to do what they elsewhere could have done voluntarily and without economic support from the central Government. The atmosphere for cross-municipal co-operation and exchange of knowledge can also be influenced in a negative way, if some municipalities get financial support for measures that other have to finance themselves (the LIP programme has actually had this outcome, see Forsberg 2005). Secondly, and even more important, top down governing of measures that local authorities are in a strong position to self-organise, risks to undermine the political climate for independent local initiatives. We have already referred to the shift from the dynamic bottom up movement for sustainable development of the 1990s, to a more centralised policy context in the early 2000s.

As a baseline condition for local governments to self-organise and take voluntary initiatives within climate policy, however, they have to be motivated to climate policy in the first place. From that point of view, national policy has an important role in terms of making climate policy a shared commitment for each and every Swedish municipality. This shall not be confused, however, with an authoritarian top down policy where the local level is instructed exactly how to work and organise.

2) *Climate initiatives which has to be actively promoted by the national level.* Certain local climate initiatives are more difficult to implement without an active support on part of the national Government or the EU. Most obviously this is the case when it comes to investments which put an heavy economic burden on the single municipality. (That is, as long as these investments are not giving an *economic return*. A common incentive for municipalities to make more costly green investments, is the opportunity to save money in the long term; this incentive has been particularly present regarding the huge investments in distance heating system among Swedish municipalities in recent years.) For example, the implementation of sustainable local transport systems, which is a critical issue from a climate policy point of view, can hardly be afforded without a certain involvement by central authorities (Bretzer, Forsberg & Bartholdsson 2006). First, the financial magnitude of this challenge is more large-scale than what most municipalities can manage (of course, it is important to bear in mind the huge differences between municipalities in terms of their capacity to make costly investments without external support). Secondly, it can be hard for individual municipalities to justify tough, far-reaching and maybe widely unpopular measures (in terms of restricting opportunities for motorism or the like). From that point of view, the role of national authorities is to offer a supporting climate. A political atmosphere where municipalities does not have to legitimise radical initiatives on their own, but where such initiatives find support in the national climate policy discourse.

3) *Climate initiatives where national law and policies presently present an obstacle.* Follow-ing interviewed local climate actors, a critical problem when it comes to implementing local climate policies concerns certain aspects of national and EU policy (including existing laws and economic policy instruments). A typical often mentioned example, concerns the restrictions regarding municipal public purchasing of locally produced food (the purchasing from local deliverers is usually motivated as a strategy to reduce transports). The EU legislation for public purchase is designed to promote trade within the EU. From that point of view it has been hard for local authorities to justify the purchase of provisions from local producers and deliverers (Forsberg 2007; 2002).

National transport policy, however, is by far the most crucial problem in this respect. Still, national policy favour investments that results in the increase of motorism (as well as domestic air traffic). Among municipalities with a more radical climate policy agenda this is usually considered a huge problem. A national policy agenda that support motoring by numerous means, makes it substantially harder to legitimise tough local policy measures for reducing motoring in relationship to the local public opinion. The problem become even more critical when national infrastructure investments concerns the climate policy pioneer municipalities themselves.

One example concerns the university town of Lund in southern Sweden. Lund is probably the most successful Swedish municipality in terms of planning for a sustainable transport system. What makes Lund unique is its success in stopping the increase of motoring at the municipal road network. In sharp contrast to the general national trend of a strong increase in motor traffic, Lund has reached a steady state where traffic has not increased over the last number of years. Still, there is a strong annual increase at the *state highways*

passing through the municipality (a particular concern is the strong traffic growth at the E22). National road authorities are also planning investments in increasing the capacity on these national roads. Local officials in Lund consider this a tremendous problem, since it will obstruct the opportunities to implement local climate policy goals (Interviews Feb 27-28 2006).

These and other examples indicates the need for reforming certain aspects of national as well as EU policy, so that they support rather than obstruct the local implementation of climate goals. Obviously, this is a challenge that can not be trivialised. Therefore, it is hard to over-emphasise the need for fundamental reforms in national and EU transport policies, as well as other policy areas, as a critical condition for the successful implementation of local and national climate policy goals.

4) *Climate initiatives which ideally should not be a local responsibility.* Given the crucial importance of the local level in implementing national climate strategies there are good reasons to discuss the scope and limitations for local climate action. In other words, the national Government should not just acknowledge the potentials of the municipalities, but also give proper attention to which aspects of climate policy that the municipalities are in a less fortunate position to deal with. Obviously, for financial or socio-economic reasons, some municipalities are in a better position to deal with certain aspects of climate policy than are other (I will not develop on this subject here; for an elaborated discussion see Forsberg 2002 Ch.5). Notwithstanding this fact, it is not always in the rationality of local governments to support at tough climate policy agenda. There are numerous examples on issues, where local governments usually rather are part of the problem than the solution in this respect. This also holds true for the local climate policy pioneers.

A typical example concerns local commercial planning, which strongly has favoured the dramatic growth of supermarkets for motorised customers during the last 15 years. Most of the climate policy forerunner municipalities referred to in this paper, have actually supported such a development in recent years, resulting in citizens becoming more dependent on their cars for everyday shopping. This is also a development that is rarely discussed as a problem in connection to local climate policy goals, though it indisputably contributes to increasing transports.

The municipal monopoly in local physical planning has been instrumental to the present trend for developing commercial activities in areas only reached by cars. Here, the rationality of local governments are rather to support the growth of local commercial activities than some "abstract" climate policy goals (Forsberg 2007a). From a national climate policy perspective, a tougher regulation of local commercial planning - similar to the existing system in other European countries - is a reform that potentially could have an important role in promoting the implementation of the national climate policy goal.

In short, there are reasons to open up a policy discussion on opportunities and limitations with the existing municipal planning monopoly, in relationship to the implementation of national climate policy. This could be a first step in defining what should be the responsibility of the local level in governing climate policy.

1.4 Concluding remarks

The Swedish Government has supported local climate initiatives by different means (governing through goals, economic policy instruments, etc.). For most part this has been in a centralised, top down manner where national authorities have paid minimal attention to the views and experiences of the municipalities. As have been argued in this paper,

there are strong reasons as to why the dialogue and feedback mechanisms between the local and the central level should be more active. The developing of a two-way communication between local and national authorities is a condition for optimising subsidising programmes for local climate initiatives, and also of crucial importance in avoiding the kind of contra-productive results which have characterised programmes such as LIP and Klimp.

More fundamentally, such a dialogue is instrumental in the designing of national policy initiatives which focus on supporting the aspects of local climate policy where local governments are in need of national assistance, and leave to the municipalities themselves to self-organise on elements which they are in a position to manage on their own.

IN THE PROCESS. TO BE DEVELOPED!!

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Local government and nature conservation
in Norway: Decentralisation as a strategy
for rural sustainable development

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Internationalisation of the environment: The local perspective.

Abstract

In Norway, increased local participation in nature conservation is secured by transferring authority to local elected, representative government. The aim is to integrate the municipalities in the state nature conservation policy, copying the successful strategy of integrating local government in state welfare policy. Local government does however play a dual function, both as instruments in the implementation of state policy and as local political institutions promoting the goals and interests of the local communities. The nature conservation policy area has some specific characteristics differing from the welfare policy area: it is marked by conflicts of goals and interests between levels of government and is weakly institutionalized at local level. It also affects private land ownership. Due to these policy characteristics, we assume that local government will utilize its expanded power to develop a local nature conservation policy, partly in opposition to state policy. This paper report from a study of two out of four administrative trials, where the responsibilities for managing large protected areas are delegated to local government, which is Setesdal Vesthei - Ryfylkeheiane landscape protected area and Blåfjella – Skjækerfjella National Park. The study shows that local government redefines the goals and content of the national policy, resulting in – compared to state nature conservation – changing the balance between conservation and use in favour of local user interests. Thus, the study indicates that the role of local government in implementing national policy depends on political and institutional characteristics of the policy area.

The paper is based on a study in process.

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1 Introduction

In Norway, local government (municipalities) play an important role in environmental policy, including nature conservation. In many other countries, the appeal from Agenda 21 of local participation in nature conservation has been met by introducing solutions of co-management between state and local private stakeholders. Norway has chosen a different solution, of transferring authority to local elected, representative government. This also includes decentralisation of responsibilities in matters of importance for Norway's fulfilment of her international obligations. This integration of municipalities in the state environmental policy is parallel to the development within welfare policy (Hovik and Reitan 2004). The aim is the implementation of state policy in an effective and legitimate manner.

Local government does play a dual function, both as instruments in the implementation of state policy and as local political institutions promoting the goals and interests of the local communities (Amnå and Montin 2000; Kjellberg 1991). Important political and institutional characteristics of nature conservation policy give reasons to expect that local government will utilize their role in nature conservation to achieve local political goals, rather than to implement a national or international policy. First, inherent in this policy area, there are conflicts of goals and interests between the two levels of government. Traditional nature conservation implies to transform power from local actors (land owners and municipalities) to state government. Restrictions are put on local activities for the benefit of the global and national community. In addition, at central level, the policy of nature conservation is highly professionalized and founded in scientific knowledge. At local level, the situation is quite opposite. The policy field is weakly professionalized and institutionalized, and to a great extent an arena for the local politicians. The strong political involvement might reinforce the goal conflicts, as it is the local and immediate interests that will expand the chances of re-election for the local councillors.

In this paper we study an administrative trial where the responsibilities for administrating large protected areas are delegated to local government. The experiment consists of four national parks / protected landscapes, we concentrate on two: Setesdal Vesthei Ryfylkeheiane and Blåfjella - Skjækerfjella. We expect that the local actors will try to transform and redefine the goals and content for the administrative trial, and – dependent of their success – this will affect the results, both regarding the balance between conservation and use, and regarding the local legitimacy of nature conservation policy and management. The trial involves matters affected by international agreements. The international policy defends interests and values represented at local level, as the interests of the Sámi reindeer husbandry and the wild reindeers. Thus, it affects the possibilities for ecotourism and other economic nature based activities at local level. We will also study if and how the linkages to international level foster or hinder the development of a coordinated policy at local level, balancing different interests.

As a highly conflicting and locally weakly institutionalized policy field, nature conservation is an interesting case which might contribute to our understanding of central

– local relations, and of important political and institutional conditions for multi level governance. More reciprocal relations between the levels of government (NOU 2005:6) must take into consideration both roles of local government, which is the role of implementing state policy and the role of local political government. Norway is an interesting case in this regard because of the strong municipal sector, long tradition for local governmental responsibilities within environmental policy and deep conflicts over nature conservation.

2 Nature conservation and local management

Nature conservation is in Norway, as in many other countries (Brandon et al. 1998; Carlson in prep), a central government policy domain. State environmental administration does prepare, recommend and propose new national parks and other protected areas, based on scientific studies and international agreements. The final decision is left to the Cabinet, which also decide the formal rules regulating human activities in the protected areas. The management of these rules, as well as information, monitoring and management is normally conducted by state bodies (the County Governor and the Norwegian Nature Inspectorate). Local actors, - municipalities, communities and stakeholders - are left with the possibility to express their opinion regarding the borders, protection category and rules in advance of the Cabinet decision, and to participate in advisory group for the administration of the protected areas.

Nature conservation has been an area of deep conflicts between central and local level for several years (Daugstad et al 2006; Reitan and Hovik 2004; Glosvik 1997). Local stakeholders, their organisations at national level (farmers unions, forest owners association, etc.) and local politicians and governments, communicate the local opposition. This opposition from them most affected is a political and managerial problem, challenging the legitimacy and effectiveness of the conservation policy. In direct response to the local opposition, the Norwegian Parliament initiated an administrative trial. State government was asked to delegate the responsibilities for the management of the conservation rules in three national parks / large protected areas to local government (Inns.S.nr.92 1996-97; Falleth 2006). The aim was to prevent or reduce the conflicts regarding nature conservation and to increase local support for national nature conservation policy. Later the Directorate for Nature Management (DN) did expand the trial to a fourth protected area. The trial started in 2001 in Setesdal Vesthei - Ryfylkeheiane protected landscape area. In 2002-2004 the other areas was included, among them Blåfjella Skjækerfjella National Park (Blåfjella). The trial will run through 2007, and an evaluation report will be presented to the Parliament in 2008.

Meanwhile, there has been a growing focus on how rural communities can utilize national parks and nature qualities for economical purposes. This trend towards combining social, economical and ecological sustainable development is promoted both by actors representing nature conservation and actors representing local stakeholders. At international level, and following the recommendations from Agenda 21 and the Biodiversity Convention, there has been a growing concern for combining social, economic and ecological perspectives in nature conservation, by advocating co-management solutions (Carlson in prep; Zachrisson 2004). In addition, one has become aware that many nature qualities are products of human activities, and impossible to secure without in co-operation with the local users and right-holders. At local level, the concern for the welfare of the local people and the lasting of rural settlements is vital.

While the importance of traditional farming in local economy is reduced, there are good possibilities to create job opportunities within nature based tourism, recreation and second-home industry and niche-productions. In this perspective, the national parks and their nature qualities are important preconditions for economic activities, not barriers. A new policy for rural sustainable development, combining nature conservation and economic development (mainly tourism), focusing on local pay offs and a win-win situation was introduced in 2002 (St. prp. no 65, 2002-2003). This policy, called the Mountain Text, is trying to bridge the gap between conservation interests and local communities. Twenty-two environmental and agriculture organisations have declared the importance to implement the Mountain Text.

The delegation trials were introduced before this shift in policy. However, delegating responsibility to local government is seen as a means to reach the goal of sustainable development. The trials increase the local political leverage for an environmental friendly economic development (St.prp.no. 65 2002-2003: 152), and thus the possibilities for combining conservation and use of nature resources at local level. One main argument behind decentralisation is the municipalities' ability to develop a locally adapted policy coordinating different interests and values (Naustdalslid 1994; Kjellberg 1991). The international trends of promoting local participation through advocating the combination of conservation and use, of promoting the interests of indigenous people, and of protecting vulnerable species, is not easy to combine. Norway has ratified the ILO-convention no. 169 (from 1989) on the rights of indigenous people in sovereign countries. Based on the Bern Convention on the conservation of European wild life and natural habitats (from 1982), Norway has strong international obligations to protect the wild reindeer. As reindeers, either wild or tame, is highly vulnerable for disturbance from human activities, to combine of this obligations with the development of ecotourism and other industries demanding increased activities in the areas is a great challenge. These international obligations do not only represent institutional and political constraints upon local government. In addition, they give strength to the local actors representing the values and interests these international agreements are set up to protect. Therefore, we are interested in how this combination of decentralisation and internationalisation is affecting local coordination and policy-making. Will it contribute to the solution of local conflicts of interest, or on the contrary, to deepening the conflicts?

The administrative trial implies that the municipalities are given the authority to administrate the legislative provisions in the protected areas. Generally, the provisions defines forbidden human activities as new constructions (cabins, houses, roads, etc.) and motorable traffic (snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles and helicopter). Local government also administrate the provisions that define exemption from these prohibitions. Local government is therefore in the position to give exemptions from forbidden human activities in the protected areas. Furthermore, the municipalities are required to, in cooperation, to make a management plan, which later must be approved by the Directorate for Nature Management. The management plan consists of a spatial zoning, where the zones varies in a scale from protection zones, where little human activities is allowed, to zones where some human activities are accepted. Further, the plan will contain measures for management and restoration, information and monitoring. Such plan might also contain the possibilities for economic activities in the area. Anyhow, they will define important conditions for such activities.

3 Central – local relations and nature conservation

In Norway, as in the rest of Scandinavia, the local (municipal) government is deeply integrated in the national welfare policy. The municipalities have shown a strong ability to deliver locally adapted public services in an effective manner (Kjellberg 1991). From the late 1980s the Norwegian government chose a parallel strategy regarding environmental policy: Reforms were introduced to integrate the municipalities in the national environmental policy and to improve their capacity to become effective instruments for the state. The large responsibilities given to local government within land use planning was an important reason behind this strategy. By this responsibility, the municipalities control instruments important to achieve national environmental goals (Hovik 2001; MoE 1993). The administrative trials in nature conservation management are late examples of this trend. When we expect that the municipalities will utilize their new responsibilities to achieve local political goals rather than implementing national policy, this is due to two important characteristics of the policy area: conflicting goals and interests between the levels of government and weak institutional linkages. These political and institutional aspects have influenced the central – local relations within this field the last twenty years.

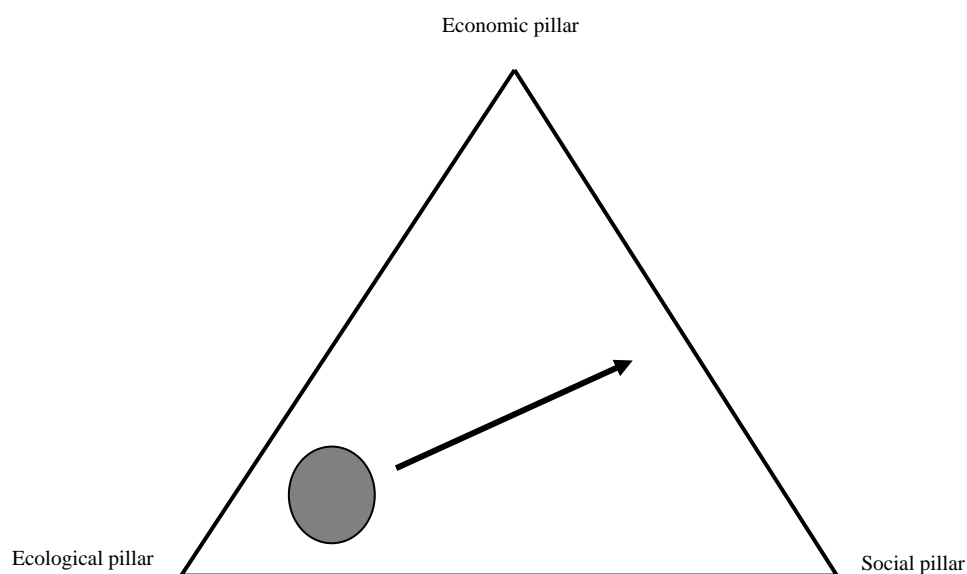
The municipalities are local political bodies, lead by a democratic elected council. They are held accountable by their local constituency, and are expected to develop strategies to meet local challenges and to promote local interests and values, in addition to being instruments for state government (Amnå and Montin 2000; Kjellberg 1991). According to Naustdalslid (1994) the distribution of responsibilities between levels of government should take into account the policy effects regarding distribution of costs and benefits between the local and global communities. When a policy puts great costs on local actors, for the benefit of the national or global community, decentralised responsibilities can be expected to be ineffective. Local authorities can be expected to utilize their leverage to promote their own goals and values, contradicting the state policy goals and the international obligations.

Nature conservation is a policy area with such characteristics. The idea of the value of pristine nature is fundament to this policy. Valuable nature areas are to be protected from human activities, for the benefit of global goals as the preservation of biodiversity. For the local people on the other hand, the areas are cultural landscapes, their plants and animals are resources, which the local communities have benefited from for centuries (Daugstad et al 2006). These resources should be managed in a sustainable manner, but still for the welfare of the local communities. In addition, the protection of an area in accordance with the Nature Conservation Act implies that power is transformed for the local level (the land owners and right holders and the municipalities) to the state level (the Parliament and the central government).

The conflicts of goals and interests between the levels of government are probably reinforced by the fact that nature conservation is professionally and administratively weakly institutionalised at local level (Hovik 2001). The “Environment in the municipalities”-reform, introduced in 1988, aimed to strengthen local competence in environment and institutionalise the environment as a policy area within the municipalities (Hovik and Johnsen 1994). A withdrawal of earmarked incentives to build local environmental capacity, did rather immediate lead to a drastic reduction in the number of municipalities with such capacity (Hovik and Reitan 2004; Bjørnæss 2002). The result is that the environmental (or nature) policy area still is an area weakly professionalized and institutionalized at local government level. As such, it is a policy dominated by the politicians, which probably is strengthened by the deep conflicts between levels of government. There are good reasons to expect that strong politicisation will reinforce a tendency of giving priority to the immediate and local interests, in favour of common and future interests (Hovik and Harsheim 1995), since it is that which probably count at the day of election. Weak environmental institutions at local level and strong policy controversy create a critical frame for local trial in nature conservation.

Glosvik (1997) demonstrates how the municipalities did utilize their increased responsibility in the management of Hardangervidda National Park to develop their own local policy in opposition to state environmental policy. We expect to find a similar tendency in the ongoing trials. The actors representing different levels of government will have different perspectives on the administrative trial. There will be disagreements about its goals, content and division of power (organisational solutions). We expect that the municipalities will develop their own policy, giving strong priority to the economic and social pillars of sustainable development, in particular those who are supposed to boost local economy. They will define their own goal of sustainable use, potentially in conflict with the state goal of nature conservation of pristine nature. Furthermore, we expect that the local government will interpret the trials as something more than pure delegation of responsibilities for administering the protection rules. This responsibility will be perceived as means to reach local political goals regarding an alternative policy for nature resources. And, we expect the municipalities will try to maximize their own influence on the administrative trial, through organizational solutions.

Figure 3.1 *The pillars of sustainable development and assumptions regarding the shift of balance as a result of decentralization*



Furthermore, we will consider to what extent the results of the trial can be understood and explained by the policy transformation. First we will focus on how the administrative responsibilities are exercised regarding the balance between conservation values and user interests. Which interests, values and experiences are favoured? Secondly, we will study the effects on conflict reduction and local legitimacy: Is the trial resulting in increased local support for nature conservation and/ or for the local management regime? To what extent are the strong linkages to international policy affecting the local capacity to solve conflicts and promote a coordinated strategy for rural sustainable development?

4 Research design

The presentation is based on case studies of the administrative trials in two protected mountain regions. Setesdal Vesthei – Ryfylkeheiane (*Setesdal*) was in 2000 designated as a landscape area (IUCN category V). The protected area, 2343 km², affects eight municipalities. One important reason to protect the area is to protect the wild reindeer habitat. The eight affected municipalities administrate the legal provisions in the area. In addition, an inter municipal enterprise is set up as a formal framework for inter municipal cooperation. The municipalities have together worked out a management plan. The eight mayors form a steering committee, which advises and co-ordinates the municipal management of the area. An advisory group, with representation from diverse private stakeholders, is established.

Blåfjella – Skjækerfjella National Park (*Blåfjella*) was designated in 2004. The Park (IUCN category II) is 1924 km² and affects five municipalities. The area is regarded as one of the last wilderness area in Norway (NOU 1986). There is Sámi reindeer husbandry within the park. The administrative power is shared between the municipalities, the County Governor (state representative at county level) and the state reindeer administration at regional level. A National Park Council is established as an advisory group with representation from diverse stakeholders. This council worked out the management plan for the area.

The empirical data is based on document studies, interviews and surveys conducted as a part of a research based evaluation of the trial (Falleth and Hovik 2006; Falleth 2005). A postal survey was sent to local politicians (approximately 200) and leaders of local organizations (approximately 250). Every member of committees with responsibilities for the management of the mountain area was included among the politicians. Leaders of local organizations with interests in the mountain area were included among the organizations, following the municipalities' lists for public hearing. In Setesdal, the survey was carried out in 2003 and 2005. The respond rates were from 49 percent to 55 per cent (Falleth and Hovik 2006). In Blåfjella, the data collection (including a survey) is carried out in 2007, and still not completed.

5 The administrative trial: From delegation to local governance?

The initial proposals to designate these two areas as national parks (NOU 1986) were met by local opposition. The municipalities, county municipalities and farmers organisations in both areas initiated regional planning processes, aiming as alternatives to conservation through the Nature Conservation Act. They did not succeed in this effort, but in Setesdal the area was not protected as a national park, but as a less restricted protected landscape area. In Blåfjella, local actors gained accept for a smaller park than first proposed. However, they have succeeded in their effort to improve local participation. The fact that these two areas is involved in the administrative trial, is certainly a result of the local constructive opposition and expressed will to protect the areas by local land regulations in accordance with the Planning and Building Act.

5.1 The two levels of government want to achieve different goals

Local support for the national nature conservation policy is an important goal for the Norwegian state. This administrative trial is an important means to achieve this goal.

Delegation of responsibility in nature conservation is supposed to contribute to the legitimization of national goals and means. Central government want the municipalities to become collaborators, not opponents, in nature conservation (St.meld.no.21 2004-2005; MoE/KS 2001). Local government is supposed to be integrated in national nature conservation policy.

The state environmental administration does consider the trial as a delegation of administrative responsibility in accordance with the Nature Conservation Act, state regulations and conservation policy. The trial is considered to be about the delegation of professional judgements. Increased local responsibility for managing protected areas is also considered by the state environmental administration as a way to improve the conditions for local economical development based on the protected areas and other nature qualities (St. prp. no. 65 2002-2003). This is, however, clearly a subordinated goal. Development of tourism and other local industries is regarded as something positive, only as long as it does not contradict state nature conservation policy.

Local politicians in both areas got a rather different view, they regard the trial as a means of developing a local policy for nature resource and land use management and rural sustainable development, as an alternative to central government nature conservation policy. A mayor from Setesdal stated that he “regarded the trial as an experiment to implement the Mountain Text”. Several local politicians say they had not participated if it was supposed to be a “blueprint” of state conservation policy. The locally developed

management plans do reflect this priority. They focus on conservation and use, particularly on developing local industries based on the nature resources in and around the protected area, but also on traditional use related to farming. According to the Directorate of Nature conservation (DN), who has approved these plans, this represent an innovation regarding the content and aim of management plans for protected areas. As the trial is moving from central to local government, the immediate goal is revised, from concerning the legitimacy of state conservation policy and the protected landscape area, to the legitimacy of the operational management of the area through political judgements (Falleth and Hovik 2006). The local politicians are not prepared to promote state policy goals they in fact disagree with. They interpret the goal of conflict resolution as concerning the operational management of the area, not as concerning the state defined collective rules governing this operational management.

In addition, the local politicians focus on local autonomy per se. The trial is considered as a continuation of the traditional self management of the areas. In both Setesdal and Blåfjella, this resulted in local political involvement in efforts to restrict the scope of the protected areas and to weaken the restrictions upon human activities in the areas. In Setesdal, this view was strongly opposed by the local wild reindeer committee. In Blåfjella, this strategy was contradicting the stated interests of the Sámi reindeer husbandry. The two reindeer districts in the area did argue for a larger national park with strong restrictions on other interests. According to them, a compromise was negotiated between them and the County Governors environmental agency. When local politicians and other representatives for the agrarian communities surrounding the park did succeed in their effort to force the County Governor to propose a smaller park, the representatives of the Sámi reindeer husbandry considered this a betrayal. The reindeer herders have refused to participate in the advisory National Park Council, due to the result of this process. Additionally, they feel that they are not getting sufficient influence in the management regime, compared to the agrarian communities. Even though they have four seats in the National Park Council, they are far outnumbered by the municipalities and representatives from the agrarian interests. The relation between the local government and the reindeer districts is a lasting problem for the trial in this Park.

5.2 An ongoing conflict over the distribution of power and responsibilities

As a consequence of interpreting the trial as a workshop for rural development, the municipalities in *Setesdal* tried to expand the scope of the trial. They wanted to subordinate the activities of the hydroelectric power plants, the Air Force and the wild reindeer councils under their nature conservation regime. Different strategies were in use, as negotiations and discussions with the Air Force regarding their use of the area for manoeuvres, appeals to the Directorate for Nature Management (DN) to include the management of the wild rein herd in the trial, and appeals to DN to subordinate the hydroelectric power plants concession under their management regime. This approach illustrates the clash between state administration and local government. DN argues that these issues were debated and settled during the designation process, while local politicians regard them as lasting policy challenges. Furthermore, these initiatives are in accordance with a territorial perspective of combining different management regimes in the development of a comprehensive strategy for local sustainable development.

The municipalities did, however, refuse to include the buffer zone in the trial, and by that to adjust the activities around the protected area to the conservation interests. The

management of the buffer zone is a local government responsibility through the land use planning system. To integrate this area with the protected area would mean to give state environmental government some influence over local matters. Thus, in SVR we find clear evidence of a local strategy of maximising the municipalities influence over the activity and domain of other stakeholders, but refuse to open up for others to influence their decisions and domains.

The local politicians did, in addition, restrict the state environmental government's potential influence over local decisions, by strongly restricting the contact between member of their administrative staff and the County Governor's environmental agency. The County Governor was neither to be invited to the meetings in the inter-municipal group of administrators. All contact between the municipalities and the County Governor's office should go through local politicians. The impression that the municipalities are following a strategy trying to limit the influence of external actors is underscored by their resistance towards the expanding the participation of private stakeholders in the advisory group beyond the local land owners. Only after strong pressure from the Directorate for Nature Management, they accepted to include members of organisations representing environmental and recreational interests, wild reindeer interests and the hydroelectric power production.

In *Blåfjella*, the municipalities have neither tried to expand the scope of the trials towards the responsibilities of other actors, nor opposed broad participation of private stakeholders. There has been no dispute regarding the participation from actors representing the interests of the Sàmi people, nature conservation, recreation, and hunting and fishing, or regarding participation from local right holders as the reindeer districts and land owners. The municipalities has chosen a strategy of including representatives of diverse interests in the National Park Council.

The trial in Blåfjella, as was implemented four years later than the in Setesdal, is still marked with a lasting dispute regarding the division of responsibilities between the County Governor and the municipalities. The dispute has been concerning who should be authorized to give exemptions to irreversible human activities. Furthermore, there was a lasting dispute on who should hold the position as secretary for the National Park Council. The designation proposed a solution placing the secretary at the County Governor's office. The municipalities wanted it to be placed by the county municipality (elected government at county level), which also holds the position of leader of the National Park Council. This position was given to the County Governor. The Directorate for Nature Management had also decided on the division of formal responsibility. This did not hinder the municipalities to try to lobby central government to change the decisions. This resulted in local government being given some expanded responsibility, but the secretary was placed at the County Governor's office.

6 The priority of conservation versus use

What are the results of the trial? First we study how local responsibilities for the management of the protected areas affect the balance between conservation and use. We examine to what extent the trials result in other decisions regarding exemptions and allowances of activities in the protected areas, than what would have been the case under state responsibility. We use the exemptions given from the ban on traffic and constructions in the protected area as an indication of effects on the balance between conservation and use. In general, such activities are forbidden in both national parks and protected landscape areas, (as well as in outlying fields managed by local government in accordance with the Planning and Building Act). The regulations of the protected areas leave, however, the possibility for the management authorities to give exemptions if the application meets some requirements.

The municipalities in *Setesdal* are definitively more liberal when giving exemptions for motorized traffic and new constructions, than what would have been the case under state responsibility. The practice regarding allowing transport by snowmobiles is the most liberal in protected areas in Norway, according to the Directorate for Nature Management. DN further claims that the conditions for giving these exemptions are extending the legal frames for the protected areas. From the season 2005/2006 the inter-municipal board decided on a maximum of eight trips per season for each exemption for snowmobiles, then introducing such limits for the first time. Two municipalities refuse to implement these new regulations. The last six municipalities now apply a practice of allowing eight trips, not maximum eight trips, each season. The municipalities do, in addition, set few conditions for the purposes of the use of snowmobiles.

In *Blåfjella*, the management plan states maximum five trips per season for snowmobiling. This recommendation is highly controversial within the local communities (as indicated by a debate in the local newspaper during the winter 2005-2006), but is still implemented by the municipalities.

Only few exemptions are given to the ban on building cabins and other constructions in both areas. The designation of *Setesdal Vesthei – Ryfylkeheiane* does give the municipalities the possibility to give such exemptions in exceptional cases. Such exceptional cases do not include constructions for tourism, or cabins, shacks and sheds for fishing and hunting. There are, however, few such cases. There are given exemptions for 28 constructions during the trial period, nine of these are new cabins or shacks. The regulations in *Blåfjella – Skjækerfjella* do not open up for such exemptions. It is however, an ongoing debate on whether to allow small boathouse in the national park or not.

7 Local support of nature conservation and local management

The administrative trial implies delegation to municipal government of responsibilities for defining what Ostrom (1990) will name the operational rules, while state authorities still define the collective rules. Inspired by this scheme, we can distinguish between support for the collective level institutions (the decisions to protect the actual area and the conservation rules defined for this area) and the operational level institutions or municipal management regime, deciding on the daily use of the area. So far, the data only covers Setesdal.

7.1 The legitimacy of nature conservation

According to our respondents in Setesdal, there was no unison opposition against the proposition to protect the mountain area. Even though the number of local party groups and organizations opposing the plan was higher than the number supporting it, a substantial minority did support the proposition (Falleth and Hovik 2006: 68). In 2005, approximately 50 per cent among both the politicians and the leaders of local organizations agreed with the statement that “conservation was necessary in order to save the wild reindeer of the area”, and likewise that “conservation was necessary to protect a beautiful and rare landscape”. The support for local alternatives, however, was stronger. A large majority agreed with a statement that “conservation was unnecessary, since the local community had proven able to secure the nature values in the area”. We do however not find any tendency of growing support for the state conservation policy throughout the trial period (Falleth and Hovik 2006: 72-74). Neither answers on direct questions of changing opinion (see Table 7.1) or comparing the answers from 2003 and 2005, indicate any such effect of the trial in Setesdal.

Table 7.1 *Changes in local politicians and leaders of local organisations opinion on protecting the Setesdal Vesthei - Ryfylkeheiane landscape area. Percent, 2005*

	Local politicians	Leaders of organisations
More in favour of protection	27	33
Same opinion as before the trial	45	30
More against the protection	29	38
N	55	40

As could be expected, it is the politicians from the most negatively affected municipalities, and them representing the parties to the right that tend to develop a more negative attitude throughout the trial, the same groups that were most negative at the beginning (Falleth and Hovik 2006). Furthermore, it is among leaders of organizations within the farming and traditional agriculture we find them being increasingly sceptical towards conservation, while leaders of environmental and recreational organisations are becoming increasingly in favour of conservation. Rather than reduced conflicts, we find signs of increased polarization of attitudes as the trial goes on.

As mentioned in the introductory part of this paper, state nature conservation policy is based on an assumption that several types of human activities constitute a threat towards the nature values. Thus, the solution is protecting the values from such activities. The opinion of local actors regarding the extent of such threats as well as regarding the levels of restrictions put on these activities by the conservation regulation, will draw some additional light on the question of local support for the state conservation policy, i.e. the collective level rules. The results from our survey might seem rather contradictory, as a large majority agree that several types of human activities constitute a large or some threat towards the nature values, and a similarly large majority agree that the decision to protect the area often or some times implies unnecessary restrictions on the same activities (see Table 7.2). This is particularly true for motorised traffic and cabins.

Table 7.2 *Percent local politicians and leaders of local organisations agreeing on the actual activities constituting a treat towards the conservation purpose and similarly agreeing that the protection often or some times do restrict the activity more than necessary, in 2005.*

	Local politicians		Leaders of local organisations	
	Threatening the nature values	Restricted to much	Threatening the nature values	Restricted to much
Motorised traffic	76	67	77	49
Tracking	28	26	32	17
Farming	19	59	28	61
Hunting and fishing	13	38	21	20
Tourism	61	43	71	40
Cabins	76	78	88	61
N	56-58	40-56	47-48	38-48

However, first and foremost these results indicate a rather limited local support for the collective choice rules regulating the activities in the protected area.

7.2 The legitimacy of the local management regime

Almost every local politician is in favour of municipal responsibilities for managing the conservation regulations, i.e. the trial. Only 7 pct did in 2005 agree with a statement that it was wrong to let the municipalities manage the protected area (see Falleth and Hovik 2005: 78). Among the leaders of local organisations, approximately 1/3 agreed with that statement. This is mainly leaders of regional environmental and recreational organisations, and of local and regional wild reindeer interests.

Most local politicians have either become more in favour of local management, or not changed their opinions, throughout the trial (see Table 7.3). This is also true for the leaders of local organisations, with the exception of a small minority. Mainly leaders of environmental and recreational NGOs state they have become more negative, due to the experiences from the trial. There is a trend of growing support to local management, which however is not shared by the strongest opponents.

Table 7.3 *Changes in local politicians and leaders of local organisations opinion on the delegation of responsibilities to the municipalities. Percent, 2005*

	Local politicians	Leaders of organisations
More in favour of municipal responsibility	59	49
Same opinion as before the trial	34	34
More against municipal responsibility	7	17
N	56	41

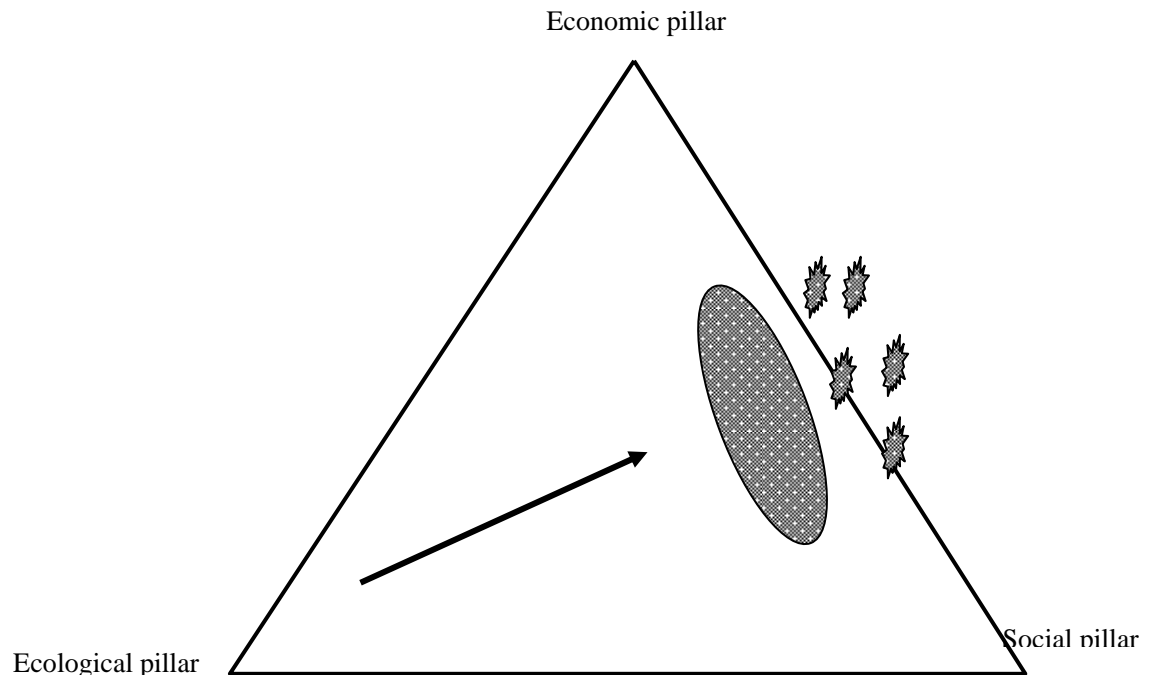
8 (A preliminary) discussion

We are interested in *whether central and local government have different goals and aims for the administrative trial*. The study clearly supports our assumption that the municipalities interpret the trial as something more than simple delegation of responsibilities for administering the protection rules. Rather than limiting themselves to strictly implement state policy, the municipalities develop their own local policy for nature management. Several implementation studies have demonstrated that the initial goals and content of a trial (or reform) is not final (see Kjellberg and Reitan 1995). Rationale and purpose for trials are continuously discussed and redefined by local actors involved in the implementation phase. This is also true for the trials in Setesdal and Blåfjella. The outcome of delegated responsibilities to local government is not a blueprint of state policy. The main difference is a more comprehensive and territorial perspective on nature conservation, focusing on economic development and the interests of local stakeholders in addition to the conservation values. This is as expected, since the municipalities are multipurpose authorities with a wide range of responsibilities, and state environmental government is a single purpose administration.

Furthermore, in both Setesdal and Blåfjella, there have been ongoing struggle about the division of responsibilities, tasks and position between local and central government. As expected, the municipalities have tried to maximize their own influence on the trial, through organizational solutions. The central – local relations is not characterized by partnership or cooperation on the solution of common problems. The ongoing discussion, both regarding the goals and content of the trials, and regarding division of responsibilities, does indicate that this administrative trial has activated the municipal role of developing local policies, rather than the role of implementing state policy and becoming an integrated part of state nature conservation.

With regard to *the results of the trial*, we find that the local management praxis mainly is within the legal frames given by the designations. However, there are clear indications that the municipalities push the praxis away from the ecological pillar towards the social – economical axis of the triangle illustrating the scope of sustainable development (see Figure 8.1). Such result is expected, as the municipalities are giving high priority to economic development and strong local user interests. This praxis also reflects the values and priorities of local politicians and most leaders of local organizations. The number of cases where the local decision clearly contradicts the conservation rules and the goals of conservation are few. However, the Directorate for Nature Management and the local wild reindeer interests are worried by this praxis in Setesdal of allowing new constructions in and close to the borders of the protected landscape area, as well as by the amount of motorized traffic in the area.

Figure 8.1 *The result of the trial regarding the balance between the three pillars of sustainable development.*



We find no evidence that the trial in Setesdal has resulted in increased local support for the state nature conservation policy. The collective rules which forbid motor traffic and new constructions in the protected area has little support among the majority of local politicians and most leaders of local organizations. Thus, the central government has not achieved one of its most important goals for the trial. The support for the local level operational decisions (the delegation trial) is, however, overwhelming among local politicians and a large majority of leaders of local organizations. A probable explanation is that the municipal praxis is limiting the effects of conservation on local activities.

The municipalities have developed a more comprehensive and territorial strategy for nature conservation, taking the economical and social aspects of the local communities under consideration, and which mainly is within the limits of ecological sustainability. Thus, they have succeeded to some degree to balance the goals of central government nature conservation policy and the interests of important local stakeholders. On the other hand, the trial has lead to more intense local conflicts, and to less trust in local government responsibility from some affected local stakeholders. In Setesdal, the local wild reindeer council and other advocates for the wild reindeers are highly sceptical to the local management praxis as well as the trial itself. In Blåfjella, the Sámi reindeer husbandry does not want to participate in the trial. Their criticism is mainly founded on the process of defining the borders and regulations of the national park, but they are also highly sceptical to the local government praxis of promoting activities in accordance with the Mountain Text. General expert knowledge argue that it is difficult to combine tourism and other human activities in an area with the reindeers, either they are wild or tame. Reindeers are very vulnerable for disturbance from human activities. Thus, to combine the development of tourist industry with the conservation interests or interests of important right holders in these areas are challenging. The municipal praxis of giving

priority to tourism and other activities implying traffic in the protected areas is strongly opposed by these interests.

This is examples of the difficulties of coordinating different national and international policy guidelines and local participation. The Norwegian state has, with support in international policies as Agenda 21 and the biodiversity convention, recently promoted the combination of conservation and use, and implemented a policy of developing ecotourism based on the qualities of the protected national parks and landscape areas. In addition, Norway has committed herself to protect the wild reindeer habitats and to secure the rights of the Sámi minority. Setesdal and Blåfjella are two examples where the Norwegian state has delegated responsibilities to local government in policy fields marked by conflicting and contradicting state goals. Delegation of responsibilities to local government is, as expected, promoting the interests of local economic and social development. The contradicting interests of reindeer husbandry and wild reindeers find support in Norway's international obligations, as well as in national policy, but not in local policy. The international obligation to defend the Sámi interests has not been manifested at local level in the trial. Rather the opposite is true, since the agrarian communities did succeed in their arguments for a smaller national park. The fact that both the Sámi reindeer herders and the local wild reindeer interests appeal for state intervention instead of accepting municipal authority is both understandable and as expected. Norway's international obligations are not reflected in the local trials. The state is held accountable for its own obligations towards the international community and national interests.

It is, as already mentioned, no surprise that the municipalities redefine the trials and develop strategies for local development. We will argue that it is a state responsibility to secure the fulfilment of its own obligations and goals. One part of this responsibility is to secure that the actors representing nationally and internationally important values and interests are given a decisive influence on the local praxis, especially if they are weakly represented at local level. In this matter, the trial of delegating responsibilities to local government so far appears like repudiation of liability by the state.

9 (A preliminary) conclusion

The local implementation of the trial is affected by the characteristics of the policy field. The municipalities play a role of promoting local interests, rather than to become instruments of the state. The local praxis is reflecting the interests of the local communities, particularly economic interests, which potentially are contradicting national policy goals. The local praxis is however only exceptionally contradicting state policy guidelines and norms. This fact indicates that there might be a potential for win-win situation, to reach common goals of ecological and economical sustainable development. Then cooperation between state environmental administration and the municipalities is needed, and not struggle for power and responsibilities. When this is not the case, a history of conflicts and mutual mistrust between local politicians and the state environmental administration is probably one important explanation. This situation is probably reinforced by the lack of a local professional nature management administration.

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The Designation of Fulufjället National Park: Empowering or Co-opting Local Users?

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1 Introduction

Protected areas have for a long time been the answer on how biodiversity is to be sustained (Moeliono, 2006), and this idea has since the beginning been linked to beliefs that government jurisdiction is necessary coupled with restrictions in human uses (Hayes and Ostrom, 2005). When this approach turned out not to be efficient, the state-based narrative was replaced with community-based conservation (Murphree, 2002). Today, it is being recognised that there are no panaceas; neither in the form of the state or local communities (Ostrom, forthcoming). Neither the state nor local communities are isolated from each other, neither from processes at intermediate levels such as municipalities and regions nor at the supra-national level. Principles such as increased participation and co-management are now included in, for instance, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (article 8 (j)) and by its concretization into the so-called Ecosystem Approach Principles (CBD, 2007).

To understand issues of conservation and development it is therefore necessary to consider actors from all levels; local, sub-national, national and global, as well as from all sectors; civil society, the state, and business (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2006; Berkes, 2006b). This challenge has also been pointed out as a “key understudied issue” within common pool resource research (Stern et al., 2002). Co-management is thus increasingly seen as “*an approach to governance*” and as “*networks of relationships*” (Carlsson and Berkes, 2005) in order to account for the complexity and dynamics of contemporary natural resource management. It seems as if biodiversity conservation today is characterized by *multi-level governance*. Two key challenges for theorists analyzing multi-level governance are to study how accountability may be achieved in such systems and how its consequences for power relations among actors (Peters and Pierre, 2004).

The designation of Fulufjället national park is an example of how questions of biodiversity conservation increasingly become dependent on multi-level and multi-sector interactions. In the Swedish context, it is being used as an inspiring example of successful implementation of protected areas in the new approach to nature conservation that the government has announced. The Government Communication on “A cohesive nature conservation policy” (Skr, 2001/02:173) emphasizes the importance of protected areas not only as ‘wilderness’ or biodiversity preservation, but also for recreation and economic development. Further it stresses the need for dialogues with local populations and stakeholders to make the nature conservation policy more legitimate. The case of Fulufjället could thus potentially provide empirical evidence on the consequences of multi-level governance approaches.

The objective of this paper is to analyze a case of multi-level governance in biodiversity conservation, in order to cast some light on how accountability and power play out in this kind of structure. Does such a policy shift imply any real changes on the ground – positive or negative? Which factors induce/counteract change?

The empirical material in this paper comes from a case study undertaken during the summer 2006. It involved the collection of official documentation (reports, meeting minutes, correspondence, decisions etc.) and newspaper articles, as well as interviews with key informants. Fourteen semi-structured interviews have been conducted; eleven during a field trip to Stockholm and the region of Dalarna and three over telephone. Interviewees were selected so as to ensure representation of all important actor groups, which were primarily identified by the Fulufjället project reports and newspaper articles. The suggestions derived from the formal documentation were double checked by asking all interviewees who they believe are important to interview in order to understand the process.

1.1 Co-management as multi-level governance

Co-management has traditionally been defined as “the sharing of power and responsibility between government and local resource users” (Berkes et al., 1991), but this definition does not capture the complexity and dynamics of contemporary society according to Carlsson and Berkes (2005). They argue that co-management systems should be understood as *governance structures* or *networks*, which may or may not include the state. The state is not *one unitary actor*, but fragmented into numerous authorities and agencies that regulate different aspects of society. A natural resource system will be affected of the actions of many different state agencies: vertically from central government to local municipalities and horizontally through different policy sectors. Also the local resource user component in the traditional bipolar definition is much more complex than often anticipated as there are different user groups, ethnicities, non-governmental organizations, companies etc. In addition, there is increasingly an emphasis on the multi-level and cross-scale character of co-management (Berkes, 2006a; Cash et al., 2006; Ostrom et al., 2002; Wilson et al., 2006). Environmental systems do not match the boundaries of the social systems that manage them, and it is therefore necessary to link institutions both horizontally and vertically. Also, “[l]ocal actions are shaped by local, regional, national, and global institutions” (Stern et al., 2002:466). Both these perspectives of co-management as governance and multi-level are synthesized by the term *multi-level governance*.

Multi-level governance refers to a situation where decision-making at various territorial levels is characterized by the increased participation of non-state actors, at the same time as discrete or nested territorial levels are increasingly difficult to identify in the context of complex overlapping networks. As a response, state actors develop new strategies of coordination, steering and networking to protect and enhance state autonomy. These changes challenge the nature of democratic accountability that therefore needs to be rethought or at least reviewed (Bache and Flinders, 2004:197). Peters and Pierre (2004) argue that multi-level governance is often characterized by informality and absence of structural constraints, and as a consequence core democratic values of government are being traded for accommodation, consensus and the supposed increased efficiency in governance.

Increasingly it is recognized that states have an important role in shaping and regulating governance (Bache and Flinders, 2004:201) – what Rosenau (2004) call ‘metagovernance’ and that Ostrom would refer to as decision-making at the constitutional choice level. Metagovernance includes aspects such as organizing the conditions for self-organization, acting as the primary organizer of dialogues among policy communities etc. This development thus seems to reshape the territorial organization of power – power is

moved upwards, downwards and sideways at the same time as the state seek to control what powers or competencies goes where and to retain the competence to revoke such power transfers (Jessop, 2004:64). The distribution of power is therefore paramount to take into account when discussing multi-level governance.

The issues of accountability and power are apparently crucial challenges for governance theories. These issues are, however, already focal points in research on natural resource management and good governance in developing countries. This literature provides the framework that will be used in this paper.

1.2 Actors, powers and accountability

To analyze decentralization of natural resource management, Agrawal and Ribot (1999) suggest that three distinct dimensions are central: actors, powers and accountability. Co-management may constitute decentralization when it transfers powers from government to local actors, and thus the framework seems applicable.

Actors

The first dimension regards the actors and the question: to whom should powers be transferred? An important distinction can be made according to the public-private spectrum. *Deconcentration* occurs when powers are transferred to local branches of the central state, which is in contrast to *political decentralization* where powers are devolved to elected institutions that are accountable to the population in their jurisdiction (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). When moving towards the private side of the spectrum, there is *devolution* which implies that powers are transferred to local organizations with no direct government affiliation and *privatization* or *delegation* when powers are given to individuals or corporations (Agrawal and Ostrom). Each of these actors has certain types of powers and is embedded in particular relations of accountability, and therefore it is likely that the same powers devolved to different actors will lead to variable outcomes (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

When looking at the actors, it is also important to take into account their objectives for pursuing or opposing decentralization as well as their relationships (see Brinkerhoff, 2002). Ribot et al. (2006) show that in practice it is political-economic calculations and pressures that actually prompt decentralization reforms. Decentralization is thus likely when some central political actor(s) find(s) that it may be beneficial in terms of cost reductions, revenue improvements, blame deflections or increased state reach into social processes. Local mobilization is perceived as a precondition for continued and deepened decentralization (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001). In the local context it is important to separate between place-based and interest-based communities, since the first ones due to their higher dependence on the resource may have more incentives for sustainability (Pinkerton, 2003).

Powers

The second dimension regards the scope of powers decentralized and addresses the question: what powers should be devolved? According to Ribot (2004) mainly *fiscal and allocative powers* should be devolved to the local level. Adequate fiscal resources are important to achieve effectiveness. Allocative decisions regarding *who* can benefit from a resource are of a political character and can therefore be decentralized. Agrawal and Ostrom (2001), as well as Pinkerton (2003), go a step further and suggest that decentralization implies that the local level should at least have withdrawal (access and

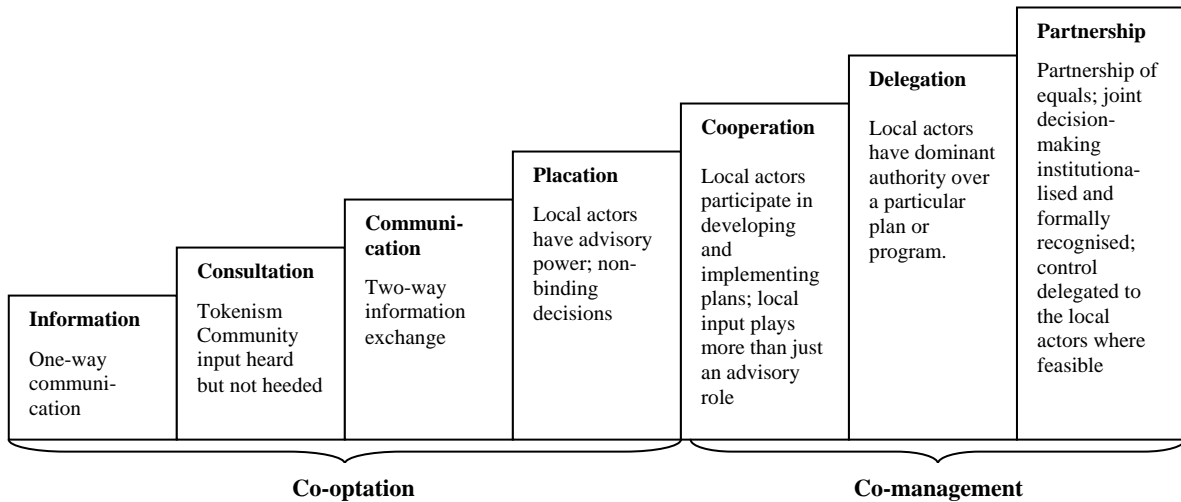
harvesting), management (regulation of use patterns and improvements), and exclusion (allocative rights) rights. Alienation rights (to sell or lease withdrawal, management, and exclusion rights) might also be devolved to local actors. Thus, as a minimum decentralization seems to require that some amount of withdrawal, management, and exclusion rights are devolved as this will establish strong local incentives for sustainable management.

All these theorists agree that the state has an important role to play. Agrawal and Ostrom (2001) for instance, argues that constitutional-level recognition is necessary to give users sufficient confidence that the rights devolved to them will not be taken away. Ribot means that the state needs to guarantee the boundaries by setting minimum environmental standards instead of over-specified management plans. Standards imply that anything not specified in the law is permitted, while in management planning only activities specified are allowed (2004:47-57). Pinkerton (2003) thinks that the state should play a mediating and levelling role among interest groups, assist with marketing, provide technical support, credits and protective legislation. She also emphasizes that the state is a stakeholder among others; it has relationships with many affected actors and is itself affected by outcomes. Jentoft (2005) adds that the role of the state is to be the safeguard of the general public interest as well as of basic principles such as equity, justice and transparency.

For Krishna (2003), the question of which powers should be located where is primarily about when collective action is needed to achieve the wanted results. Central authority serves well activities where technocratic merits are more important than public mobilization, such as for instance electricity generation and national highway construction. Local actors are better at fostering collective action, thus activities that require a high degree of collective action, such as management of common-pool resources, are therefore better to devolve to the local level. Protected areas such as national parks (which is the topic in this paper) can be considered common-pool resources (Hardin, 1968; Murphree, 2002).

All these theorists discuss the *scope* of powers (which tasks to devolve) rather than the *nature* of powers that is captured by *the ladder of co-management* (Arnstein, 1969; Berkes, 1994) ranging from tokenism to cooperation. This ladder is a help in analyzing *how the state interacts with the local level*. The five first rungs of the ladder can hardly be characterized as anything else than perhaps deconcentration – the real power is kept by central government. This form of interaction can also be called *cooptation*, which is a term used for “attempts to change the preferences that others have about particular ends and means” (Najam, 2000:388). It is a strategy to win consent by bringing influential local actors into the process who can lend respectability or legitimacy to government actions (Selznick, 1948).

Figure 1.1 *The Co-management Ladder (Adapted from Arnstein 1969, Berkes 1994, Jentoft 2000)*



Accountability

The third dimension of the framework is accountability and the basic question to be answered is - who can be held responsible? According to Agrawal and Ribot (1999), this factor decides the effectiveness of decentralization. *Downward accountability* – when public actors are accountable downwardly to their constituencies – is crucial to achieve effective decentralization and broadened participation. The responsiveness of actors empowered through decentralization is enhanced. It can be exercised for example through electoral processes, procedures for recall, referenda, legal recourse through courts, third-party monitoring, auditing and evaluation, political pressures and lobbying by associations etc. Ribot (2004:26-27) believes that *local elected authorities* are most downwardly accountable and therefore most responsive to local needs. Such assemblies are formally institutionalized which makes them sustainable over time and also scaleable over national territories. Issues such as how candidates are elected, suffrage, term lengths, and means of recall are important to scrutinize, however, to decide whether the elected assembly actually is downwardly accountable. He dismisses NGOs and community groups as not downwardly accountable as they do not necessarily reflect the concerns of the community as a whole. They primarily represent their particular interests and their representatives or leaders are accountable to their particular assemblies. Co-management is accordingly considered as privatization, since it removes decisions from the public domain.

Though Meadowcroft (2006) shows that there actually are four forms of accountability that operate in well-defined partnerships (that co-management could be): a) individual representatives are accountable to the groups they came from (for example company boards, NGO steering committees, and public agencies), b) these groups must account to the wider constituencies supporting them, c) each participant is accountable to the partnership as a whole for their role in the process, and d) the partnership is in some sense accountable to the public opinion. He also denounces that partnerships promote privatization of governance by emphasizing that elected authorities lack capacity to deal directly with the detailed management of a vast array of complex tasks. As partnerships gather actors from more than one societal sphere, none of the actors can act entirely as

private actors and they are obliged to act publicly and frame their arguments in terms of the public interest.

The different forms of decentralization discussed here could be described as ideal types along two of the dimensions; accountability and actors. In reality most arrangements will be a mix of several of the ideal types, not least because both upwards and downwards accountability is necessary (as the discussion on the role of the state shows). Co-management defined as “a collaborative and participatory process of regulatory decision-making between representatives of user-groups, government agencies, research institutions, and other stakeholders” (Jentoft, 2003:3) is an example of a ‘mixed approach’; it includes an element of devolution as well as elements of either delegation, deconcentration or political decentralization.

		ACCOUNTABILITY	
		Upwards	Downwards
ACTORS	Private	Delegation or privatization	Devolution
	Public	Deconcentration	Political decentralization

1.3 The Designation of Fulufjället National Park

Fulufjället National Park was inaugurated in 2002, as the first national park to be designated in the Swedish mountain region since 1962. Earlier attempts in southern Jämtland and Kiruna to establish national parks in this region had failed due to fierce local opposition and successful mobilisation. The mountain region houses 90% of the national park surface, since it fulfils traditional criteria of magnificent ‘pristine nature’ or wilderness as expressed by one of Sweden’s 16 environmental objectives: *The pristine character of the mountain environment must be largely preserved, in terms of biological diversity, recreational value, and natural and cultural assets* (Naturvårdsverket, 2006). This means that 24.4% of the total land area in the region is protected (Zachrisson et al., 2006). The region is also sparsely populated and much of the land is state owned¹.

Fulufjället is situated in the southernmost part of this region, in the municipality of Älvdalen, bordering Norway and the municipality of Malung. Not far away are two of the most exploited areas in the mountain region, namely the ski resort destinations of Sälen and Idre. Fulufjället covers 385 km² and is the fifth largest national park in Sweden. Fulufjället means Mount Fulu and is a sandstone mountain with unique geomorphology. Small rivers cut deep valleys and canyons in the steep sides of the plateau mountain covered by old-growth forests. One of them forms Sweden’s highest waterfall (93 m high) called Njupeskar. Unlike the rest of the region, Fulufjället has not been used for

¹ The ownership is debated, in particular by the Sami, the indigenous people of Scandinavia, but also by Swedes whose ancestors have lived in the region for a long time.

reindeer herding by the indigenous people, the Sami, since the end of the 19th century and therefore it has unparalleled thick lichen heaths.

Fulufjället was first declared a nature reserve in 1976 and then became a national park in 2002². In 1989, it was included in the National Park Plan that the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) adopted (Löfgren, 1989). In the mid-nineties actual preparations started by the SEPA and the County Administrative Board of Dalarna (CAB), and information meetings were held in close-by villages. Opposition was immediately voiced (Interviewee1, 2006; Interviewee4, 2006; Interviewee9, 2006) and supported by the both municipalities (Naturvårdsverket, 2002a), which forced the CAB and the SEPA to realise that they had to try another strategy (Interviewee1, 2006; Interviewee6, 2006). A 'dialogue project' was initiated to involve locals in the process. A project leader was employed with the main task to interview locals about their ideas on how the area could be developed, in particular related to an eventual national park, and what hindrances they saw. Slowly some locals started to be more positive towards the park. At the same time, the immediate preparations for the national park and its management plan continued. In a second and third phase of this 'dialogue project' the focus was on developing the tourism industry. Finally, Älvdalen decided in favour of the park and despite continued resistance from Malung, the SEPA decided to move on with the proposal and in 2002 the decision to designate Fulufjället National Park was adopted. Public authorities (including the EU structural funds) had then put 41.5 million SEK (approximately \$ 6 million) into the realization of the park. Fulufjället National Park also became a PAN Park in 2004. To become a PAN Park, certain criteria have to be fulfilled, for instance that the protected area is large (at least 20 000 ha) and internationally important, that some use is allowed through zoning, that visits are facilitated, encouraged and monitored, and that local interest groups participate in the development of a tourism strategy.

1.3.1 Actors in the Designation Process

Some 400 local residents are settled in the sparsely populated area surrounding Fulufjället. About a third of them belong to Älvdalen and the villages north of the mountain, and the rest to Malung and the southern villages. Initially their main concern was continued use of Fulufjället for hunting, fishing, wild berry picking and snowmobiling. Subsistence fishing has taken place in the lakes since several hundred years ago. These activities are very important reasons to why people choose to live there and strong parts of the local identity. Game meat and fish are also economically important; 81% of the households in Älvdalen regularly consume game meat and 50% fish. In Malung it is 73 and 38% respectively (Ericsson et al., 2005). Fulufjället has been used by other people than those living in the surrounding villages as well, primarily other inhabitants of Älvdalen and Malung with family ties to the area. Yet, when the SEPA and the CAB initiated the dialogue project to invite local people, almost only those living in the villages surrounding the mountain were included. An exception was made for an influential business leader originally from the area around Fulufjället and an editor of one of the local newspapers, who happen to have a summer house close to Fulufjället. They were invited after having published a call for change. According to them, a national park

² Most Swedish nature reserves are categorized according to the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) category Ib (wilderness area) and all large national parks (more than 38.5 ha) correspond to category II Naturvårdsverket, 2002b. Redovisning av svenska naturskyddade områden med tillämpning av Internationella Naturvårdsunionens (IUCN:s) skyddskategorier.

could pose a chance of development for Fulufjället if the attitude of the authorities changed to allow a real dialogue with local people (Interviewee9, 2006).

The national park was perceived as a threat against hunting, fishing and snowmobiling and therefore resistance was the dominant strategy for the local population (Interviewee1, 2006; Interviewee4, 2006; Interviewee9, 2006). Some locals had a more open attitude towards the national park, but they did not dare to speak out as the opposition was so strong (Interviewee8, 2006; Interviewee11, 2006). The whole population seemed united against the park, much due to the distrust towards the CAB that was created when in 1976 Fulufjället was declared as a nature reserve without any consultation.

“It came down from the sky, I hadn’t heard a word about it. One day when I was on my way to the mountain to pick berries, I met a sign there, about a kilometer from home there was a sign saying that it was forbidden to..”
(Interviewee3, 2006)

To organize the opposition, an association was formed with members from all the villages around the mountain. The association wrote a protest petition that was signed by several hundred people (Interviewee4, 2006). The capacity to mobilize was rather high, probably due to the high degree of existing organization. There were already a number of active associations; fishery conservation associations, ‘hunting teams’, snowmobiling clubs, village and sport associations.

Another local concern that became increasingly important was the negative development in the area. The rate of unemployment was high, about 12%, and 60% of the population was older than 50 years. The population has steadily decreased as young people move out and the average age has as a consequence increased. Most employment is related to tourism, while forestry and construction services employ some people as well. No commercial agriculture is present. Commuting to neighbouring bigger villages/towns exists to some extent (Arnesson-Westerdahl, 1998).

The Sami were not really considered part of the process, as the Idre Sami community has signed an agreement with the SEPA, the municipality of Älvdalen and Domän AB in 1993 that only gives them the right to use Fulufjället for reindeer herding³ under exceptional circumstances (SEPA, 2002a). However, they seem to think that the management plan does not fully respect the agreement and that they have not been treated on equal basis compared to other interests during the process (Miljö- och Jordbruksutskottet, 2001/2002).

From the CAB and the SEPA, mainly male, middle-class, and middle-age officers participated. Their goal was to implement the nature conservation policy, which for them meant strict conservation of ‘natural’ environments largely ‘undisturbed’ by human action and managed hierarchically by the state. In other words, they embraced the traditional nature conservation idea (Zachrisson, 2004a) in line with the criteria of the IUCN, as illustrated by this CAB Officer quote:

[That] the mountain was ungrazed we thought was important because a discussion also developed with the Sami on why we should carry on with a ban, there is a ban [on reindeer herding] since long. But we claimed that it is important with a reference mountain that is not grazed. It is amazing to see the lichens there... It was more those general.. important nature

³ Reindeer herding is the principal economic activity of the Sami, the indigenous people of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. At Fulufjället reindeer herding has not taken place since the end of the 19th century.

conservation principles that we tried to apply... If you now sit and wonder what you can do on the mountain, I imagine that it should be something that is about experiencing nature, that it is on nature's conditions... (Interviewee6, 2006)

Indeed, the objective of Fulufjället national park also expresses this view: "The purpose of Fulufjället national park is to preserve, in untouched (unspoiled) condition, a southern mountain area with distinctive vegetation and great natural values" (Prop, 2001/02:116). Nevertheless, there are also other aims such as to preserve cultural historic values, provide visitors with experiences of tranquility and purity, and facilitate for the public to discover the park's values. The objective fully fulfils the intentions of Swedish environmental law that a national park should "preserve a large continuous area of a certain landscape type in its natural state or in a largely unchanged state" (Miljöbalken 7 kap 2§).

The 'dialogue process' was initiated as a means to overcome the overwhelming local resistance against the national park to avoid another failure. Thus the objective of this process was to:

"investigate the possibilities that are embedded in a sustainable development of nature and cultural tourism in the surroundings of Fulufjället... lead to higher acceptance of the national park idea in the area, through clarifying the positive consequences of a national park in Fulufjället for local people" (Arnesson-Westerdahl, 1998)

Indirectly, other government units, such as the public telephone company Telia and the Swedish Road Administration, also participated as the CAB and SEPA officials initiated successful cooperation with them to find solutions for providing requested physical infrastructure (Interviewee1, 2006; Interviewee8, 2006). Since the money for these investments came from projects within the EU structural funds, these agencies had everything to win if cooperating.

At the international level, the PAN (Protected Area Network) Park Foundation was involved due to an initiative taken by the first CAB project leader who had a contact at the WWF working with PAN Parks. The PAN Parks concept is founded by the WWF together with the Dutch travel company Molecaten with the purpose to increase the interest for national parks in Europe by developing the concept towards an emphasis on involvement of local communities and tourism development.

Kommunerna..

1.3.2 Type of Powers: Rights

Before the national park designation, the local population had some degree of withdrawal, management, exclusion and alienation rights. Small-game hunting was leased to locals and people with roots in the area, while management, exclusion and alienation rights were in the hands of the CAB. Regarding moose hunting, local hunting teams had the right to withdraw and also to decide who could participate in the hunt (?), thus to some degree exclusion rights. Again the CAB had the overall management responsibility and alienation rights (Zachrisson, 2004b). Forestry was banned since the establishment of the nature reserve, and no changes were made when it became a national park. Snowmobiling was open-access, but restricted to trails. The locals thus only had withdrawal rights.

When the national park was designated, all activities considered as counteracting the park objectives were either entirely forbidden or significantly restricted. Thus the withdrawal rights to hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling were restrained to certain parts of the park through zoning. In the 'wilderness zone', which constitutes 60% of the park, all 'disturbing' activities are banned. The 'low activity zone' (14% of the park) permits moose hunting, but not fishing or snowmobiling. In the 'high activity zone' (25%) all of these activities are allowed and there is a substantial trail network with camping huts and wind shields. Withdrawal rights for commercial arrangements have to be granted by the CAB, and such activities are in principle banned in the wilderness zone. No changes were made regarding reindeer herding, as the agreement mentioned above was recognized in the management plan (Naturvårdsverket, 2002a). According to the management plan, the local population were to be granted some say in management issues by the creation of an advisory management board with representatives from the local population. This board has not yet been realized though. However, the PAN Park criteria demanded that a local PAN Park group be set up with representatives from the national park management and interest groups. Fulufjället Local PAN Parks group (FLPP) was thus established where the CAB, the municipalities, local entrepreneurs and the WWF are represented. The tasks of the group is to write, implement and follow up on a strategy for sustainable tourism development, and to recommend which local enterprises should be verified as local PAN Park partners (PANParks, 2007). Thus, issues of tourism development also had to be part of the park management.

The CAB could keep exclusion and some alienation rights (to lease certain withdrawal and management rights as defined in the management plan), while the SEPA took over management, exclusion and overall alienation rights. The designation decision does, however, set up the overall objectives of the park which constrain the management plan and consequently the exercise of all kinds of rights. These objectives are in their turn restrained by the Environmental Code, which ultimately defines what should be the aim of national parks and sets the constitutional rules on the designation of protected areas, property rights issues etc. The code also states that nature reserves are designated by CABs and municipalities, while the parliament designate national parks. The SEPA is responsible for preparing designations in cooperation with the affected CAB. The decisions on a management plan and later its revisions are taken by the SEPA, while the CAB actually manages the park. The CAB may thus allow exemptions from the regulations.

1.3.3 Nature of Powers: Interactions

Already from the very beginning, representatives from the two concerned municipalities participated in a reference group discussing the national park. Local residents were directly involved first through information meetings where a detailed time plan was presented and almost everything seemed decided beforehand (Interviewee4, 2006; Interviewee10, 2006). This (in combination with the distrust described above) led to organized opposition and stalemate in the process. At that point, an initiative for change came from two influential people with connections to Fulufjället. When they had spoken out, others followed suite, and the picture of the local population as firmly united against the park began to fall apart (Interviewee9, 2006; Interviewee11, 2006). The officials in charge realized that they had to change their approach and involved the two leaders in this work. The result was the already mentioned 'dialogue project' where about 10% of the local population was interviewed. Tourist entrepreneurs were over-represented, as they were both purposely targeted and saw the obvious economic advantages of working in, or close by, a national park. Slowly more local residents started to change their opinion and

be more positive to the park out of a wish to see development of the area. Among them were certain local leaders such as the president of the hunting association. The reference group was also extended to include not only representatives from the CAB, the SEPA, and the two relevant municipalities, but also from the local population and the two influential initiative takers.

The project showed that locals had many ideas on how to develop the area, many of which would actually be facilitated by the establishment of a national park. The hindrances they pointed to were mainly in terms of infrastructure, such as insufficient mobile phone coverage and bad roads. The entrepreneurs in the area primarily emphasised that they need help with marketing. A common vision of a 'ring' of attraction and accommodation providers around Fulufjället was developed in cooperation with the village associations, the entrepreneurs and other local people. Agreement was reached among them about actually saying yes to the national park (Arnesson-Westerdahl, 1998; 1999). However, the opponents felt excluded, even though they seem to have received the same information and invitations as the 'advocates':

Well, everybody was informed about how it was going to be.. I was in a group of opponents then, against this [the national park], so we were of course undesirable, I mean to get a result out of it. (Interviewee3, 2006)

We wrote a petition, and everybody signed it. But then, after a while.. The SEPA worked at some people, apparently, and then we received a list that about twenty were for the national park and these names weighed more than.. We were more than hundred names at that petition we had. I mean, it is difficult to process against authorities... It is like that, if you want to realize something, then it is those who are in favor that you will hold up. (Interviewee4, 2006)

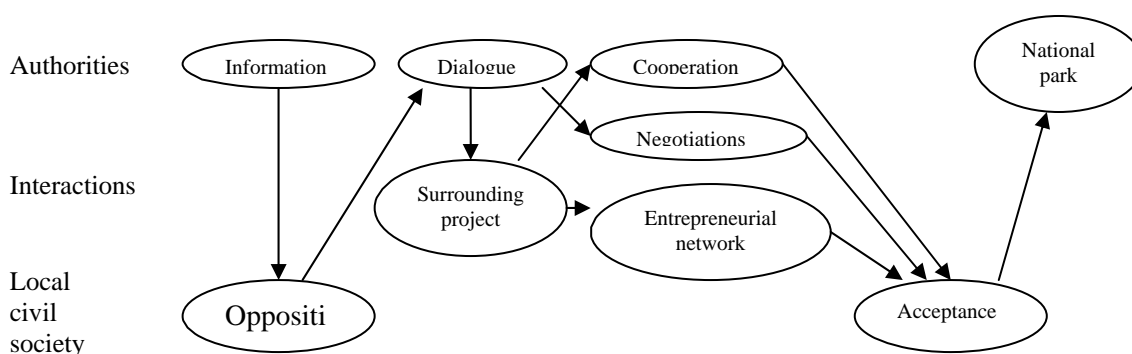
The discussions on regulations were deliberately kept out of the dialogue project, and were instead dealt with in a negotiation process with representatives for the vested interests in the area; hunting and fishing associations, and the snowmobile clubs. The SEPA started to accept certain compromises, such as the zoning proposal that paved the way for the decision that fishing, moose hunting and snowmobiling could continue in some zones (Interviewee1, 2006; Interviewee6, 2006; Interviewee9, 2006; Interviewee10, 2006). Moose hunting was the most important for the local population and is consequently still allowed in the low activity zone and in parts of the high activity zone. Small game hunting was to be allowed for another ten years, during which efforts were to be made to find alternative areas for hunters who would lose their hunting grounds (SEPA, 2002b).

To realise the ideas voiced in the dialogue project, a new project leader was recruited to work with employment creation through networking, a common marketing strategy, education efforts, the national park management, and participation in PAN Parks. Earlier village-based working groups were now re-structured into thematic working groups, where one group discussed accommodation, another activities etc. This developed into a cooperative, Fulufjällsringen, where mainly entrepreneurs took part, but which was open to anyone interested (Pettersson, 2002). No great efforts were made, however, to integrate opponents of the national park into this work. If they showed up, they were welcome and they received the information material that was distributed locally (Interviewee12, 2006). The president of Fulufjällsringen also participated in the FLLP. The role of this group developed into a consultative discussion forum for issues regarding tourism. Decisions are actually made by the CAB (that has a veto right in the FLLP), for instance about the PAN Parks partner recommendations. The criteria for being recommended as a PAN Park

partner has, however, been discussed by the FLPP. The PAN Park Foundation then make the final decision to verify partners (Interviewee14, 2006; Länsstyrelsen i Dalarna, 2003-2006).

Having come this far, the SEPA and the CAB gave the municipalities an ultimatum to decide whether they were in favour of establishing the national park or not. Älvdalen said yes, after formally having asked the village development associations (Interviewee1, 2006). Malung said no as it perceived that the demands of their residents in the southern part of Fulufjället had not been accommodated (Interviewee5, 2006), even though the village development association was in favour (Arnesson-Westerdahl, 1999). However, as Älvdalen said yes and the park would mainly be situated within their borders, the SEPA decided to pass on the proposal to the government.

Figure 1.2 *Illustration of the Fulufjället designation process. The figure shows how cooperation between authorities and the local population developed over time. The phases found at the Interactions level are characterised by some degree of decentralization or co-management*



1.3.4 Accountability

Informally, the elected assemblies of the municipalities of Älvdalen and Malung were said to have a veto right to decide whether the national park would be designated or not. In practice, it did not matter that Malung said no when Älvdalen said yes. To judge from newspaper articles from that time, it does not seem to have been an issue that engaged the citizens to any high degree. If it would have done so, they would have had the possibility to hold the parties in office responsible in the next elections – Swedish municipalities are primarily downwardly accountable within their mandated tasks. In the further management of the park the municipalities only participates in discussions on tourism in the FLLP.

The formal decision to establish the park was taken by the parliament, which is downwardly accountable to the citizens. The SEPA is responsible for the overall management plan and upwardly accountable to the government. For day-to-day

management, the CAB answers to the SEPA as long as the management board is not in place. In tourism matters, the FLLP has an advisory function to the CAB, and to the extent that the CAB respects the decisions achieved in consensus, it is somewhat downwardly accountable to the representatives of the municipalities, entrepreneurs and the WWF. The individual representatives are in their turn accountable to their respective constituencies. For instance, the representative of Fulufjällsringen thus answers to the board and members of this association.

1.3.5 Outcomes

Most of the informants now seem to have accepted the national park and rule compliance is generally considered as good, even though the number of monitors has actually decreased. There are still critique against how well the promise of job creation has been fulfilled (Interviewee3, 2006; Interviewee4, 2006; Interviewee9, 2006; Interviewee10, 2006; Interviewee11, 2006). Also the moose hunting rules are being criticised on the ground that they differs from those outside the park, and no biological reasons have been given to explain the difference (Interviewee4, 2006; Interviewee10, 2006). South of Fulufjället, in Malung, the population is still against the snowmobiling regulations as they think that they have been harder hit than the northern parts (Interviewee5, 2006). There has been some conflicts around Fulufjällsringen the last year (Interviewee2, 2006), and the CAB is discussing to require that there should be representatives of the PAN Park-partners as well (Interviewee14, 2006). Articles in the local newspaper further indicate that the CAB favourizes PAN Parks partners among the local tourist entrepreneurs (Schmidt, 2006).

1.4 Concluding discussion

The designation process of Fulufjället National Park may be considered a case of a mix of political decentralization, devolution and delegation - thus co-management - but the end result was rather centralization than decentralization. The central level represented by the SEPA actually acquired more powers over the area than it used to have, which was not really unexpected as the legal framework does not allow anything else for national parks. Thus, the only available option for the SEPA was to use 'decentralization elements' in the process as a pure means to implement the national policy and overcome the local resistance. Swedish law does not yet recognize Krishna's suggestion that common-pool resources often benefit from a higher degree of user power in order to evoke popular mobilization that can improve management results. It does not either allow an environmental standards approach instead of establishing detailed management plans.

In terms of the nature of powers, the strategy changed from the very lowest rungs of the co-management ladder, information or consultation, to placation or cooperation and then back to the lower rungs again. The veto of Älvdalen to accept the park can be considered as a low form of co-management, while the dialogue process rather ended up at the placation rung and as co-optation. The co-optation strategy worked as planned, a good portion of the local population saw benefits in terms of development that the park could bring. It was very much a result of the initial successful mobilization of local resistance that forced the authorities to change their approach and make compromises. Even if the locals almost only achieved to get withdrawal rights to the resources such as fish and wildlife and a focus on tourism development, this is the only national park in Sweden where hunting and fishing is allowed at all (?) and where there is an explicit tourism focus. Some of the energy of this movement seemed to quieten when it was a fact that

there would be a national park with some concessions to the locals, and that might be the reason why the cooperative approach still has not been institutionalised into an advisory management board. The theoretical assumption was that local mobilization is a precondition for continued and deepened decentralization.

Downward accountability is very restricted in the case of Fulufjället, which suggests that the management will be less sustainable in the longer run. There are certain indications pointing in this direction as there seems to be mounting critique; against hunting rules, unfulfilled promises about employment opportunities, and how the CAB handles the FLLP. Maybe this dissatisfaction will lead to renewed mobilization to press for the advisory management board. According to Agrawal and Ribot, local elected assemblies are the most downwardly accountable, but the decision about the national park designation in the municipality assemblies did not create much debate in media (and then probably not among people in general either). Instead the FLLP seems to be more closely followed, both by local entrepreneurs and media, and this is a partnership organ that deal directly with complex issues related to development in the area. This supports Meadowcroft's argument that partnerships not necessarily imply privatization of governance as they deal with the detailed management of tasks that the elected assemblies cannot do and that there are other forms of accountability active in partnership arrangements.

Finally, international linkages are missing in the Agrawal and Ribot framework, but they played a role in deciding what was possible and not in Fulufjället. The connection to PAN Parks participated in clarifying the potential embedded in integrating tourism development issues into nature conservation efforts, as well as in having local actors participating in that work. The overall trend toward decentralization and co-management is also probably influencing both PAN Parks and Swedish actors. Another important international linkage is the international perception of nature conservation as expressed by the IUCN and that the officials refer to as "general nature conservation principles".

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Attachment

Workshop 1: Authority, Responsibility and Justice in Environmental Politics

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Many of today's most pressing environmental problems share one important characteristic: they are cross-boundary, i.e., they disregard political and geographical borders. Obviously, this is challenging for several reasons. One is that present legal and political institutions have no effective reach beyond the nation-state. The same is the case with most political authority. Furthermore, the border crossing character of many environmental problems is also ethically challenging. What is a fair distribution of the burdens required to mitigate and adapt to e.g., climate change, chemical pollution and over use of marine resources and/or to make society less vulnerable to its' consequences? And perhaps even more difficult: Who has the responsibility to take action - those causing the problems or those in risk to suffer from the devastating effects? The papers in this section are discussing environmental problems from such points of view as authority, responsibility and distributive justice.

Workshop 2: Urban Sustainability

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Workshop 3: Sustainable Mobility

- Societal Trends and Planning Challenges

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Sustainable development is a concept few would disagree with at a general level, but is contested when put into actual practice. How is sustainable urban development discussed, defended and even coopted by actors in urban development? What is the actual urban development compared with the ideal? How useful are models and ideals in environmental policy-making? Urban governance in the Nordic countries has been marked by deregulation, privatisation and market solution. At the same time ecosystem management and the need for cross-sectoral and cross-boundary institutions have been underlined. What are the challenges, constraints and opportunities following from these trends in urban regions? New technology and urbanisation (both in terms of land-use and life-style) represent transport changing drivers with possibly environmentally friendly consequences. A new societal and political preoccupation with climate, energy and health issues might promote a more sustainable mobility pattern. However, the 'sustainable mobility' conceptualisation demands integrative policy measures and analytical planning tools to grasp – and communicate - the relationships and reduce the sustainable mobility complexity - across its causes, changes and consequences. The papers discuss the challenges, constraints and opportunities following from trends in urban regions and various societal (economic, political, social and cultural) drivers as important "policy and planning" challenges for a more sustainable mobility.

Workshop 4: Internationalisation of the Environment:

The local perspective

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“Think globally, act locally” is a slogan from the Brundtland-report twenty years ago. Since then several Nordic as well as other European cities and local communities have responded to this call for local action. Local Agenda 21 highlighted local responsibility for sustainable development through decentralisation and participation. Meanwhile, the internationalisation of environmental policies has resulted in international agreements and regimes influencing and constraining local policies and action on specific topics. International expectations and demands (EU-directives as one example) might constrain the autonomy of local governments in developing a local policy for sustainable development, but they can also represent opportunities for local action. The papers discuss how local and regional governments face these challenges to local governance of combining the demands from above with the expectations from below.

Workshop 5: Environmental Governance and Policy Implementation

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Throughout the Nordic countries both the debate about, and the practice, of institutional arrangements and processes can be characterised by decentralisation, deregulation, privatisation and marked. Consequently the relationship between public authorities and private actors (business, NGOs etc) are being reshaped: Processes of *government* have been seen as transformed into *governance* which mean that a wider range of actors may be participating and simplistic hierarchical models are being abandoned. The papers address how these changes effect the implementation of environmental policy: Which actors are involved? Whose interests are served? Whose knowledge is included and whose is excluded? Why do particular perspectives on environmental change become so entrenched in policy?

Workshop 6 The Legitimacy and Effectiveness of Global Environmental

Governance

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Debates about sustainable development are increasingly dominated by questions of how to secure values such as participation, representation, accountability and legitimacy in global environmental governance. The participation of non-state actors, such as business and civil society, is regarded as critical for the effective implementation of sustainable development policies in the EU, UN and various multi-level governance arrangements. The transformation of political authority through the emergence of new forms of post-sovereign power (such as private governance and public-private partnerships), makes an assessment of the effectiveness and accountability of these networked governance structures important. How can democratic legitimacy, participation and accountability be secured without compromising effective environmental governance and well-functioning policies? The workshop includes papers on the creation of more effective and legitimate multi-governance arrangements in various policy domains.