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The Legitimacy and Efficiency Claims of Ecological Deliberative Democracy

A Case Study of the Municipality of Malmö

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Abstract

This thesis illuminates the deliberative democratic ideal's claim for efficiency and legitimacy that is brought forward by Robyn Eckersley and John S. Dryzek as being an essential brick in the struggle for a societal development that is ecologically sustainable. The take off lies in the belief that the current liberal democracy is incapable of responding sufficiently to the ecological problems and that democracy must be grounded within a reflexive citizenry that considers all possibly affected (including humans-to-come and nonhuman living) in its decisions if we are to develop an ecologically sustainable society.

Additionally, I perform an empirical case study of the official Environmental Programs that lies as a plan of action across a period of a few years in a Swedish municipality to get an understanding of to what extent the deliberative aspects have been, and are considered today. The target of my study is the municipality of Malmö, more specifically; its environmental documents guiding its different institutions. The documents are screened with some of the features of Eckersley's deliberative model as indicators. This municipality is responsible for the environmental work being brought about in an area that is currently expanding in means of population, buildings and modes of transportation, which leaves opportunities to work in a sustainable direction, alternatively, threats to generations to come.

Following the analysis, using the perspective of ecological deliberative democracy; the municipality lacks important deliberative features if it aims at reaching an ecologically sustainable society.

Key words: deliberative democracy, municipalities, ecological values, social learning, legitimacy

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1 Introduction

In many of the green theories seeking ways to reach a more ecologically sustainable development, a lot of emphasis is put on the local perspectives and the importance of changing the way people think in their everyday life and actions. The ideas about how to make such a change come about are diverse and numerous. Among democratic theories there are as well many different ideas promoting diverse procedures, and substances, depending on what the theorists consider should be the focus of attention. In the backwashes of the Agenda 21, the democratic theories focusing on how to get all the actors in society to participate in the struggle for more ecological outcomes got some further recognition. Explicit ways to increase citizen awareness and enhance participation in order to achieve deepened democracy is often claimed to be an important, if not necessary, element in the strive for ecological sustainability. I am interested in the motives behind these tenets, and which position these thoughts have at the level of a local democratic institution in Sweden today. Therefore, in this thesis I aim to highlight the deliberative democratic ideal extended by Eckersley and, in many ways, supported by Dryzek as the most likely way to reach a sustainable society. Both of these scientists themselves point towards their ideas as ideals (Eckersley 2004:127, Dryzek 2000:155), but nevertheless stress the importance of attaining a more distinct attachment among citizens concerning ecological consciousness and the decisions taken in this matter. Taking off from this ideal, the focus of my empirical study is to analyze the Environmental Program of the municipality of Malmö. With this scrutiny I hope to get an understanding of to what extent this environmental institution considers the deliberative aspects of ecological democracy and what this might implicate for the ecological development of the municipality.

1.1 Empirical Background

Sweden was in the forefront of putting the thoughts behind the Local Agenda 21, aiming at engaging local authorities in a dialogue with the citizenry, into practice. In 1996 all municipalities had initiated a Local Agenda 21 process (Carter 2007:311). When it comes to integration of environmental and economic policy, Eckersley acclaims Sweden to have introduced some of the most far-reaching actions by means of strategic, legal, administrative and tax reforms (2004:74).

Thereby, Sweden is an interesting case when it comes to the implementation of environmental ideas. The municipality of Malmö, which I have chosen as target

for my case study was acclaimed Sweden's first Fair Trade City in 2006 for its efforts to encourage ecological and ethical consumption (Malmö Stad). At the same time the city is experiencing a growth in population, many areas and modes of communication are currently under construction and retail activities are expanding (EP2:a). Even though many greens might call this development counter-ecological, this re-construction also brings about a lot of possibilities to affect which turn the sustainable development takes.

1.2   Purpose and Research Questions

I aim to illuminate and straighten out the reasons for efficiency and legitimacy stating that increased democratic participation, by means of deliberation, is necessary if an ecologically sustainable society is to be reached. Furthermore, a case study of the environmental documents that guide the environmental work of the institutions in Malmö will be performed. This in order to find out how the municipality undertakes these participatory ideas promoted by the green framework yet to be presented.

Why is deliberative democracy considered important in the struggle to reach more ecological outcomes? Is the municipality of Malmö taking this perspective into account in their environmental work?

The theory of the participative democracy ideal I aim to describe and highlight is the one advocated by Robyn Eckersley, an often cited theorist of ecological democracy. Eckersley has applied and extended some of the deliberative thoughts, also promoted by John S. Dryzek among others, in her discussion about how to reach a Green State. With their claims for efficiency and legitimacy behind this green democratic ideal as a framework, I hope to get an understanding of what this implicates for the local politics, the area where political environmental work is brought about. Furthermore, by taking off in these participatory ideals, I aim to analyse how the official Environmental documents ("Miljöprogrammen") of the municipality of Malmö strive to engage different actors. In addition, I aim to get a hint of what this implies for the opportunities and restraints for the municipality's environmental work according to the framework presented.

1.2.1   Disposition

Initially, I demonstrate the extensive methodological considerations this thesis has brought about, which are of great importance for its being. Secondly, the theoretical chapter expresses the relevant concepts and claims that make out the foundation of the framework further on used to analyze the empirical material.

This empirical material is then presented and analyzed in chapter 4, simultaneously in order to facilitate the scrutiny and my references to the empirical findings in the analysis. Finally, the conclusions seek to gather my new insights and findings.

2 Methodology and Material

My approach clearly rests on a socially constructivist epistemology as does the theories I wish to enlighten. With this methodological approach, the world is constituted of interpretations and discourses and the world is seen in a historicized and constructed way. The world is thereby not an objective matter; rather it is the objects around it that creates it with social agency and discourse (Eckersley 2004:34).

The theoretical part of this study aims to reach a generalizable conclusion about the relevance of the participatory aspects within the sustainable development-discourse in society. The empirical research on the other hand, only strives to evaluate how one specific municipality has considered these aspects. Still, the prospects for the municipality of Malmö's success when compared to the theoretical claims might leave some indications for municipalities in general.

2.1 Defining the concepts

2.1.1 Deliberative Democracy

This concept is by Eckersley defined as favouring "*unconstrained egalitarian deliberation over questions of value and common purpose in the public sphere*" (2004:115). Deliberation is in turn by Dryzek expressed as the social process where deliberators are open to changing their "*judgements, preferences and views during the course of their interactions, which involves persuasion rather than coercion, manipulation, or deception*" (2001:1). Further features, particularly those with a green appeal, will be described in the theoretical chapter.

2.1.2 Efficiency

Efficiency is interpreted differently depending on if the essence has a democratical, financial or environmental meaning. Even among these perspectives the interpretations seem to be plentiful. The definition I find suitable for this matter of ecological democracy is efficiency in terms of finding solutions to the

ecological problems. Efficiency is thereby related to which decisions are taken, and whether these decisions really have ecologically risk-adverse results.

2.1.3 The Environmental Program ("Miljöprogrammet")

The City of Malmö ("Malmö Stad"), indicating all the institutions that belongs to the municipality, together formulates this document that is supposed to guide the environmental work of the institutions during a period of years. The Environmental Institution ("Miljöförvaltningen") has the main responsibility for putting it together, but all the institutions are supposed to collaborate in its development and apply it in their goals and plans of action.

2.2 Theoretical Considerations

My focus of attention is referred to as either deliberative or discoursive democracy and emanates from the participatory democracy theories of the critical corner. There is a wide field dealing with democratic ideas, but when adding the demand for a more substantive content, and in particular when this content is to give way for an ecologically more sustainable society, the field diminishes, leaving a few theorists to set their trail towards the most efficient and legitimate way to prevent ecological problems. The theorists that get to represent these ideals are John S. Dryzek and Robyn Eckersley. To give a proper understanding of these perspectives I will first illuminate the background to the perspective which is nurtured in the limits of the liberal state. Eckersley has explicitly developed her theory, where the main target is the greening of the state, while Dryzek has a more specifically discursive democratic focus, but also clearly points to the possible ecological benefits that could be reaped if more weight was given to the deliberative potentials democracy has to offer. Eckersley's theory of the Green State targets several areas whereas I will focus on the deliberative/discursive democratic practices within this green state, the practices raison d'être and how they are to come about. Some of the main features within Eckersley's deliberative model will be described to get an understanding of the claims for efficiency and legitimacy behind it. The focal point of my theoretical part is to straighten out these claims.

My theoretical sources mainly consist of literature authored by the main theorists themselves. Of course, I have also studied literature and articles of their idealist companions as well as a few opponents to get a deeper understanding of the grounds and motives behind the ideal.

Eckerlsey's green democratic theory is explicitly normative, concerned with the functions of states, and the democratic basis of the states legitimacy (2004:7).

In contrast to the real world scenario it faces, it is today hard to consider the theory without a utopian shimmer. Nevertheless, I find this alternative solution to be highly interesting.

2.3   Empirical Material

The representative system is the currently established political system in Sweden. The political sphere is divided into a national, regional and local area whereas the local level consists of 290 municipalities. The local level is suitable for an empirical study since this is the level of government that are in closest contact with the citizens, which makes it an important factor following the participatory focus of my green framework (comp Carter 2007:311). The municipalities in Sweden also have the main responsibilities for the educational system and the local development in general which connects to important features of Eckersley's theory.

Moreover, the reasons for selecting the municipality of Malmö ("Malmö Kommun") for my case study are numerous. One reason follows the fact that the city makes part of the expanding "Öresundsregionen", which is experiencing an increase in population, an increase in companies, and many areas and modes of transportation are currently under construction. In my opinion, this expansion in many ways set the premises for the future development and sustainability of the region. To conduct this scrutiny, an empirical case study of the municipality of Malmö's official discourse considering its democratic ideas is needed. To examine how the municipality seeks to include the citizens in its environmental work, I will evaluate how the participatory thoughts of Eckersley and Dryzek were/are considered in:

1) the previous program reaching from 1998-2002, 2) the one currently guiding the municipality 2003-2008, 3) the one that is under construction aiming at the period 2009-2015.

Access to the documents has been found on official websites and the study has only considered primary material authored by the municipality of Malmö. Since these documents are in Swedish, the parts that have been of importance for my scrutiny have been as accurately translated as possible.

The empirical material will then be compared with the distinguished theoretical perspective and I hope to be able to indicate how the municipality of Malmö is considering the participatory aspects in its environmental politics. The possible consequences of the municipality's approach will also be discussed with my new theoretical glasses.

2.3.1 Empirical Delimitations

Considering the proliferation and different levels within the municipality that is involved in Malmö Kommun's environmental work; my study is limited to what has been officially documented and considered important in the environmental documents. Nonetheless, this should plausibly reflect the aspects considered important by the politicians since the documents are supposed to guide the municipality in its work. Thereby, they ought to give a reasonably fair picture of the municipality's consideration of the participatory aspects in both their environmental plans and actions. I am well aware that different institutions within the municipality have their own environmental considerations about participatory ideas and projects. Still, this environmental document is produced in co-operation with the different bodies of the municipality and is supposed to influence and indicate responsibilities for the environmental work performed by the entire municipality. Limited by time and space, I have not had the opportunity to consider institutional factors that of course are very likely to affect the municipality's efforts.

2.4 Operational Considerations

Eckersley's Green State theory is developed with a macro-perspective that takes both national and international society in consideration, as well as leaving opportunities for more spontaneous communities when this is needed in order to keep the ecological focus. Since my study of the municipality indicates a micro-perspective it is important that I clarify the connection between the theoretical concept and the empirical indicators to validate my application (Esaiasson et al. 2007:64). "*Deliberative democracy*" is one of the subjects Esaiasson et al mentions (2007:66) as developed high up on the level of abstraction which means that it might be difficult to develop accurate operational indicators.

The Green State-theory, which is expected to come about as the consequence of deliberative democracy in the big picture, claims that the current state institutions would work as a starting-point for the transformations suggested as it has the "*capacity and potential legitimacy*" to redirect societies in order to encounter the ecological issues (Eckersley 2004:7).

One important factor to enable the redirection of societies is found within deliberative democracy's focus on the small-scale and individual level. Therefore, I find it greatly relevant to examine to what extent the deliberative features of my framework are considered and applied on this local political level. I thereby aim at finding suitable indicators of the ecological deliberative model that can help me analyze the occurrence of such thoughts in the local environmental programs I will scrutinize. The municipality is the instance situated the closest to the people, and also indicates the area where the environmental work is meant to be brought about which makes it a very important actor in the struggle for ecological sustainability.

3   Theory

3.1   The Democratic Procedures vs. the Outcomes/Ends

Is there any guarantee that deeper democratic procedures will generate environmentally beneficial outcomes? And if our mission is to save the planet, does it matter if the sustainable path is chosen by a democratic decentralised power, or by an authoritarian centralised one? This dilemma Goodin describes as the discrepancy between the **theory of value** and **theory of agency**. Goodin argues that greens emphasis on the theory of agency, indicating *how* things are done, should come second-handed to assuring that *the right things* are done. According to this way of reasoning; green ends justify the means. Despite their common ground in other deliberative ideas (such as the importance of communication and representation), Eckersley disagrees with Goodin's division of concepts in this matter as she claims that a green theory of agency can be grounded in a green theory of value (Carter 2007:52-53, Eckersley 2004:120-121). According to Dryzek it is now consensus among green political theorists that democratic procedures and environmental ends are mutually enforcing (2003:133) .With this approach, the way things are done makes part of what makes it the right thing to do. This chapter is dedicated to the arguments behind that statement.

3.2   The Main Issues for Critical Political Ecologists

3.2.1   The Liberal Deficiencies Alleged from the Critical Corner

According to Dryzek, all liberal democracies face constraints in the making of policies as they are subordinated to the capitalist market system. In case of economic downturns, the tax revenues and popularity among voters that the government relies on for its own existence will be jeopardized. Therefore,

environmental policy is automatically restricted by economical considerations in a capitalist democracy (2000:142).

Even without the current economical conditions liberal democracy is, according to Dryzek, in itself incapable of responding effectively to the complexities and uncertainties generated by collective action problems. This system can not deliver corrective actions properly when natural systems show signs of negative feedback. Neither can it co-ordinate across problems and actors. The liberal democratic system also lacks flexibility and resilience in an ecologically sufficient manner which keeps the solutions to the ecological problems distant. Dryzek notes (Dryzek 2000:147), quoting Freya Mathews that "*'liberalism as it stand is of course anthropocentric: it takes human interest as the measure of all value*'". Nevertheless, Dryzek admits that the current liberal democracy is likely to be the best system tried so far but still argues that it is possible to develop an account of politics derived from the green theory of value (2000:144).

Liberal democracy, despite permitting a certain extent of political democracy, hampers citizen participation in decisions concerning consumption, investment, production and technology. Areas largely responsible for generating ecological problems. The green democratic theory on the contrary, "*seeks the politicization of the private good as well as the repoliticization of the public good*" (Eckersley 2004:96). Even though green consumerism encourages the greening of production and investment to certain degrees, this cannot guarantee that economic activity does not destroy ecosystems or biodiversity. Setting the limits for sustainability is such an important task that primarily should belong to citizens acting publicly and democratically, not as consumers. (Eckersley 2004:95)

Furthermore, Dryzek claims that liberal democracy only runs on the surface of the political economy and fails to recognize dominant discourses and ideologies that often are tangled up in structural economic forces. This restraints both the content of policy-making, and the degree of democracy accepted. Critical theory aims, according to Dryzek, at identifying different streams of influence and transforming individuals to become more "*public-spirited, tolerant, knowledgeable, attentive to the interests of others, and more probing of their own interests*" (2000:21). Liberals believe, on the contrary, that the preferences of individuals are given, both prior to and after political participation (ibid). Despite this discrepancy Dryzek also connotes:

"*The liberal and participatory models can be thought of as two major variations on a theme of democratic possibilities. In moving from the liberal to the participatory possibility, politics becomes more pedagogical, discursive, concerned with public rather than private ends, and demanding in terms of active citizenship.*" (Dryzek 1990:119)

3.2.2 Restricting a Green State

What Eckersley alleges to be the main challenges to the rise of a *green democratic state* are: 1. *"the anarchic character of the system of sovereign states"* 2. *"the promotion of capitalist accumulation"* undermining the states political autonomy and 3. *"the 'democratic deficits' of the liberal democratic state"* which inhibits the protection of public goods (2004:14).

Yet Eckersley refutes these supposed challenges by stating that they do not exclude the possibility of a progressive change reversing the anti-ecological behaviour. To deal with the ecological problems, governance structures must be transformed by deepening the democratic accountability and the states ability to respond to the environmental concerns of their citizens (2004:14-15). From now on it is the third challenge concerning the democratic deficits that is our matter of concern.

Eckersley's claim for ecological democracy also argues that responsible actors must be repositioned so that ecological qualifications are added to *"the exercise of individual human autonomy (including the exercise of property rights)"* (2004:114). By such means, present priorities should be reversed as the state gets more reflexive, guaranteeing that social and ecological norms discipline market activity. The green state would still be a capitalist state since it would nevertheless depend on taxation made possible by private accumulation. However, securing private accumulation would no longer be its main raison d'être (2004:83).

In accordance with Dryzek, Eckersley argues that the liberal normative ideals of a just constitutional arrangement have comprehensive limitations and do not offer real solutions to the ecological problems. Therefore, by proposing a green alternative that enables states to redirect societies and economies towards more ecologically sustainable lines, Eckersley aims to redress the deficiencies in liberal theory (2004:7). From this description of the liberal deficiencies, let's diminish the scope to get an understanding of how the society could readdress these problems.

3.3 The Ecological Appeal of the Deliberative Model

Eckersley states three features that summarize the core ideals of the ecologically motivated deliberative model: 1) unconstrained dialogue, 2) inclusiveness, and 3) social learning. (2004:116-117)

The demand for *unconstrained dialogue* steams from the supposition that claims can be rationally assessed in the quest for mutual understanding. If arguments are evaluated in terms of their *"propositional truth, personal sincerity, and normative rightness"*, mutual understanding can then be achieved on the basis of *"'the unforced force of the better argument'"* (Eckersley 2004:116). Consequently, a free and undistorted dialogue relying on publicity, representation and accurate information, is a necessary requirement for deliberative democracy to gain ground (2004:116).

One of the main purposes with deliberative democracy is to reduce partial and self-interested arguments in support of arguments that may be acceptable to others. This idea aspires to encourage a more inclusive thinking. According to Eckersley, the notion of *inclusiveness* does not signify the aspiration for impartiality, rather it connotes an other-regarding, enlarged way of thinking among the participants (2004:116-117).

The third feature of the deliberative model that Eckersley defines is *social learning*. This dimension partly restates the requirement of unconstrained dialogue as it relies on the appropriateness of the argument being what affects the decisions and not extraneous considerations. To achieve social learning, the participants must be receptive to reflexive thinking and the transformation of preferences when confronted with reasoned arguments of others. (2004:117)

3.4   Efficiency in Participation, Decisions and Result

The argument for a widened inclusion, part from its legitimate appeal, which I will return to in a while, is that this is likely to develop greater individual autonomy as well as adding ecological qualifications to this autonomy. Even though this emphasis on individual autonomy might seem to go against common environmental norms, this reasoning implies that by making participation and democratic structures more accessible in more parts of life (school, work etc.), structural inequalities will be reduced, people will nurture a more democratical spirit and all actors will be capable to participate. They will also be cultivated in having to justify their activities in a manner that is "*literally or notionally acceptable to potential risk recipients*" (Eckersley 2004:114, Carter 2007:56).

Eckersley states this educative potential as one of the great strengths of deliberative democracy. Especially from an ecological perspective since it gives opportunities for adaptation and self-correction when faced with new information, circumstances and arguments. The features unconstrained dialogue, inclusiveness and social learning stated above also privileges generalizable interests over private and sectional ones. This raises the environmental advocacy status above its current position as "*an heroic aberration in a world of self-regarding rational actors*" (2004:117). Eckersley thereby argues these three features as making deliberative democracy especially qualified for dealing with ecological problems (2004:117).

To summarize, if participation and democratic structures were more accessible in more parts of life, this would give a wider spread of information, awareness and social learning. This would in turn encourage participation and a better responsiveness to common concerns which consequently would lead to ecologically concerned decisions.

From this outlook, deliberative democracy is very likely to reach a risk-averse orientation since it brings the capacity to distinguish and evaluate ecological

problems with a socially and ecologically inclusive approach. Furthermore, this approach allows an accommodation of the complexities and uncertainties of ecological problems including both expert and vernacular understandings in the quest for common norms. Hereby, Eckersley argues that the pursuit for an ecologically sustainable society is primarily a normative issue, only secondarily a technical concern (2004:118-119).

3.4.1 Reflexivity and Preference-shaping

The regulative ideal of deliberative democracy can work as not just a critical, but also a *constructive* vantage point renovating the democratic institutions by offering a framework for understanding and dealing with difference and disagreement in political conflicts (Eckersley 2004:130).

Dryzek argues that authentic deliberation, by necessitating communication, is the best way of handling the ecological problems. The communicative good he refers to flows from the reflection upon preferences in a non-coercive way that deliberation encourages (2000:140). The only force that is allowed is "*the unforced force of the better argument*" (Eckersley 2004:116), which itself will convince people to change their beliefs and behaviour.

"*Whichever theoretical approach is adopted, there is consensus over the need for active ecological citizenship because of the recognition that the transition to a sustainable society requires more than institutional restructuring: it also needs a transformation in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of individuals.*" (Carter 2007: 65)

According to Eckersley, the undistorted and other-regarding communication that is essential to deliberative democracy is more likely to uphold a cautious protection of public goods than the strategic bargaining and power trading that is a common feature of liberal democracies. This idea flows from the assumption that in the flexible process of political deliberation we learn of our dependence on others and the environment as well as how to recognize and respect those who are differently situated. Even though this probably will not guarantee a risk–free society, it encourages reflexivity and a recurrent public testing of claims (2004:115-117). By these means, the government would be more responsive and accountable since power would be among the many and not the few and a wider range of interests would be represented. There is no doubt that a participatory democracy might still privilege material well-being above environmental protection for example by the expansion of modes of transportation or by allowing some levels of pollution for the sake of welfare. However, by the increased diffusion of information, knowledge and the wider representation of interests, there is a strong instrumental case stating that participatory democracy is very likely to bring about ecological outcomes (Carter 2007:55-56).

3.5   The Legitimacy Claims of Deliberative Democracy

3.5.1   Interpreting Legitimacy within the Deliberative Stream

When Dryzek is to state the legitimacy claims behind deliberative democracy he refers to the classical definition of democratic legitimacy as stated by Joshua Cohen. By this definition, outcomes are legitimate "'*to the extent they receive reflective assent through participation in authentic deliberation by all those subject to the decision in question*' " (Cohen 1989 cited in Dryzek 2001:651).

Cohen specifies (in Dryzek 2001:651) that the democratic legitimacy steams from the ability, or opportunity to deliberate. It is the universal right that is in centre and not the actual exercise of that right; one can choose not to deliberate. The quintessence of deliberative democracy is thereby that individuals should have a chance to reflect about the collective concerns that might affect them in order for the decisions to be properly justified (Dryzek 2001:651, Dryzek 2000:1).

Attaching some further features to the concept, Seyla Benhabib argues that "'*Legitimacy in complex democratic societies must be thought to result from the free and unconstrained deliberation of all about matters of common concern*' " (Seyla Benhabib in Dryzek 2001:651). Moreover, that the processes of collective deliberation are rationally and fairly conducted among free and equal individuals is another necessary condition for the deliberative model. This implies that the institutions in the polity must be suitably arranged in order to attain this legitimacy (Graham Smith aft. Benhabib 1996:69).

3.5.2   The State as a Starting Point

As described earlier in Eckersley's green alternative, she proposes that the state should be enabled to direct the society among more sustainable lines since it is the most powerful and legitimate social institution to protect "genuinely public goods". This power flows from the state effectiveness which follows on its monopoly as the final judge and guarantor of positive law. Beyond this instrumental appeal, the legitimacy founded by the democratic procedural requirements that regulates the state's coercive power also invoke that the state should be "good" (Eckersley 2004:12).

3.5.3 How Can We Know Nature's Interests?

If Eckersley adheres to a social constructivist epistemology, what expert could possibly reach beyond its disciplinary paradigm to get an understanding of what different elements in nature wants?

If all knowledge is socially and normatively constructed and paradigms are a discursive creation, the only nature left for us to communicate must be the one we ourselves have constituted. This takes us back to the constructivist epistemological starting point. Since Eckersley dismisses what she calls "*the naïve realist claims about the world*" stating that there is a "*direct, unmediated correspondence between human knowledge claims and an objective reality*", the above stated is not a problem (2004:122). For critical political ecologists, knowledge claims are inevitably evaluative, contingent and filtered through social frames and the way to validate knowledge is by means of critical discourse. Thereby, the closest we can get to objectivity is reached by intersubjectivity (2004:122-123).

Similarly, to Dryzek all identities are bound to discourses and the possibilities to deliberate are thereby retained to "*the extent that reflective interchange is possible across the boundaries of different discourses*" (Dryzek 2001:660).

Even though the only shared understanding we have of nature is discursively constructed, this does not indicate that the linguistics efface the physical subject and the agency of non-human beings and entities. Rather, Eckersley's point here is to show that nature should be respected as relatively autonomous, but that our understanding of it is culturally framed and conditional, which ought to leave our proceedings cautious and humble. Moreover, if we accept this communicative arbitrariness from a moral point of view, we ought to prefer an approximate form of representation rather than none at all (Eckersley 2004:124-125). The concept of representation will be further developed below.

3.5.4 The Extended Claim for Legitimacy within Eckersley's Model

According to Eckersley, legitimacy is submitted to different degrees reaching from the self-serving legitimization by hegemonic powers to the legitimacy she argues to be the "*genuinely legitimate social order*" (2004:40).

Similarly to Cohen and Dryzek's understandings of the concept that were stated earlier, by "*genuinely legitimate*" Eckersley refers to arrangements reflectively acceptable to all people. In addition she states that the limits of conduction apply to both powerful and powerless (2004:40). Despite giving

credit to Dryzek for his pithy formulation of deliberation as reflective communication in a noncoercive way, Eckersley remarks on the wide variety of political communication this opens up for.

As Eckersley puts it:

"*The ambit claim for ecological democracy effectively employs and extends deliberative democracy in exactly this way – as a regulative ideal of free communication against which we may impugn the legitimacy of the outcomes of real world communication because such communication is unfairly constrained.*"
(Eckersley 2004:128)

Thereby, the claim Eckersley makes has a deeper focus on the outcomes of the communication and at the same time adds a conception of fairness to these outcomes. As stated earlier with the division of theory of value vs. that of agency, different deliberative theorists have different understandings of this division. Eckersley believes both are important and in particular emphasizes the process and the role of the state in a different way than Dryzek, which soon will be shown.

3.5.5 Representativeness; All Existing Should Have a Say

The way Eckersley's ecological democratic ideal differs from other deliberative ideal is in the way it regards the class of beings that are not able to actually participate even though they are among those potentially affected by the decisions. The ecological ideal necessarily requisites a representative dimension since it essentially includes children, the infirm, yet to be born and nonhuman species (2004:112). Here Eckersley deepens the quest for legitimacy by transcending Habermas' procedural account which only includes affected *insofar* as they participate whereas she includes everyone potentially affected *as if* they participated. Consequently, even if a potentially affected can not participate it must still be represented. Thereby, Eckersley denies the instrumental posture towards both human and nonhuman others that is stated within liberalism when she extends the moral principle to include all inhabitants in the ecological community, both present and future (2004:112-113).

Whether consensus should be seen as the goal of deliberation is often discussed within deliberative democracists, as well as a criticized aspect among its adversaries (Roth & Premfors 2004:280). However, by this deepened democratic representation, Eckersley does not implicate that those potentially affected must reach prior consensus. Rather the point is that if those who do engage proceed as if all potentially affected were attending, well informed and capable of objecting, this would promote a risk adverse orientation. Considering such objections would also steer the decisions away from an unfair displacement of risk (2004:111).

I interpret this as her aim thereby seeks more to steer away from negative effects, than to strive towards a positive "common good". These representative

aspects are the core reasons for having a reciprocal focus on both procedures and substance when making democracy more ecological.

3.5.6 Difficulties in Realizing the Ideals and Differing Solutions

The problem of extending individual perspectives to *all* differently situated others when formulating norms that those others can accept, is associated with all forms of representation. Similarly, much of the criticism targeting deliberative democracy concerns how this ideal is supposed to be implemented, assuring that all voices are actually represented and heard. In order to minimize the epistemological and motivational deficits connected to these problems, Eckersley suggests institutional devices to support the necessary representative element within ecological democracy. The aim of such mechanisms would not be to gather the entire community, rather to create forms of political representation that widen the horizons of those making the decisions (2004:132-133), in line with the earlier stated features of her deliberative model.

When discussing the concept of legitimacy and the problems of realizing deliberation, Dryzek finds another solution as he focuses on *discursive democracy.* The reframed definition of legitimacy is now reached:

"*when a collective decision is consistent with the constellation of discourses present in the public sphere, in the degree to which this constellation is subject to the reflective control of competent actors*"
(Dryzek 2001:660)

By focusing on the public sphere, Dryzek hereby emphasises the role of the civil society. In addition, Drysek expresses a sceptical understanding towards governments and implies that they favour "*state imperatives*" over further democratization. In order to avoid governmental cooptation and neutralization it is thereby sometimes better to make democratic advances outside the state (Eckersley 2004:164). Eckersley on the other hand, notes (2004:163) that "*state imperatives are not autonomous from civil society and there is nothing fixed or inevitable about their functions and goals*". What is important is to challenge these relationships and practices to advance an ecological democracy by changing the settings that are environmentally exclusive. If these settings would change, so would the goals and functions of the state (Eckersley 2004:163).

The features stated as core ideals of deliberative democracy: unconstrained dialogue, inclusive/enlarged thinking and social learning can thereby not be expected to precede deliberation. Rather the citizens and representatives might have to be "*actively cultivated*" or "*schooled in deliberative democracy*" in order to achieve necessary mutual respect (Eckersley 2004:131). The way to, as far as possible, avoid the epistemological and motivational discrepancies associated with political engagement are according to Eckersley, to make sure that

institutional devices aggravate corrupt and self-interested behaviour to ensure diverse representation (2004:131-132). Certain procedures and decision-rules could hereby guarantee inclusive policy-making communities and legislative chambers that are "*obliged to consider the effects of their decisions on social and ecological communities both within **and beyond** the formal demos*" (Eckersley 2004:133).

It is important to acknowledge that Eckersley's main issue is which rules can be defended as "*more desirable and legitimate in the context of highly pluralized societies confronting complex ecological problems*" (Eckersley 2004:140).

I interpret Eckersley's arguments as that it is possible to work from the current state organizations to some extent, but that the condition and challenge is to get a green theory of value to enter the system. Even if another political organization might be hard to imagine from the current situation, there are alternative values and structures that should be considered for the sake of ecological sustainability.

4   Analysing the Empirical Material

This chapter is dedicated to an empirical case study of the environmental documents that are supposed to guide the municipality of Malmö in its environmental efforts. The documents have been developed for the periods 1998-2002, 2003-2008 respectively, and I have also scrutinized the first steps in designing the document that is supposed to replace the former at the turn of the year and guide the period of 2009-2015. I look for some of the features stated as the core characteristic of deliberative democracy according to the framework in order to find indications on whether the deliberative features Eckersley states are considered.

My scrutiny is focusing on: 1) in co-operation with which actors these documents have been developed 2) which participatory aspects and actors that are illuminated and 3) what forms of participation these documents promote. It is within these criteria that I find relevance to the features Eckersley states for her deliberative model and they are thereby useful characteristics for the analysis.

The quest for unconstrained dialogue is rather hard to indicate, what I will look for is simply the efforts to raise dialogue, and the actors the dialogue are addressing. To approximate the inclusive approach, I will seek statements about the representative dimensions to see if the consideration taken exceeds the current qualified voters. The prospects for a social learning-ability to develop will hereby be estimated according to the presence of these features and its criteria.

4.1   The Environmental Program 1998-2002

When developing this program, voluntary organizations could contribute with opinions (EP1:I) and the program was developed in close connection with the Agenda 21 work of the municipality (EP1:2). In the chapter "Education and Information"; the role of the school is emphasized in order to communicate how the society's constituencies, our lifestyles and work could be adapted to make way for a sustainable development (EP1:97-98). This point in the same direction as Eckersley's emphasis on the need to actively cultivate the features of deliberation (2004:131). The possibilities to make use of libraries and museums are enlightened as well as some institutions like the Roadwork's Department ("Gatukontoret") as channels to pass on information to the public. The concept of

democracy is stated as increasingly important but without further specification (EP1:96). A lot of steps are thus specified in an explicit plan of action, saying what should be done and which part of the municipality that is responsible for this. The steps are mainly focusing on how to pass on information about environmental issues and a lot of the steps aim at making environmental considerations part of the educational system. Just a few of the items have dialogue as its goal; one for example aims to establish networks between Swedish and foreign schools (EP1:97-98).

The focus of this educational and informative chapter is clearly aimed at the citizenry, and not organisations and business. There is a lot of emphasis on spreading information, but the focus seems to aim more at one-way communication than reflexive deliberation. Nevertheless, school is one important area for encouraging enlarged thinking and social learning. The effort to spread knowledge and information seems extensive, but I can not find relevant ideas about increasing democratic procedures, or emphasis on a more representative thinking in this chapter. The reason why ways to reach the public are rather specified might be cause the Local Agenda 21 had not yet lost its days of glory.

4.2 The Current EP 2003-2008

Prior to the construction of this program, a booklet written in Swedish, Serbo-Croatian and Arabic was spread in public areas; citizen offices ("Medborgarkontor"), libraries, busses etc. In order to pass on information and give the citizens an opportunity to raise their opinions there were ads in the media, questionnaires were dispensed, a hotline was opened and pamphlets distributed. 2000 opinions were handed in as a result (EP2net1). This I believe, at least partly, shows an inclusive policy making approach similar to the one emphasised by Eckersley. Still, if the citizenry have not been "*schooled in deliberative democracy*" prior to passing on their opinions, these opinions can not be expected to steem from enlarged thinking (Eckersley 2004:131-133).

In the E.P that reaches from 2003 until 2008, one chapter is dedicated to "*Local Participation and Dialogue with the Citizens of Malmö*", besides the one called "*Information and Education*" (my transl.). In the former chapter it is argued that the dialogue between the municipality and the citizens has strengthened since the middle of the 1990's. Agenda 21 is mentioned in the first paragraph stating that democracy, participating and cooperation are necessary elements for the creation of sustainable development (EP2:63). This approach shows some more considerations to the concept of democracy than the previous program.

It is also argued that the holistic view within the different work areas needs to be further developed. The sentence following this statement points at the possibilities to combine an advancement of the local democracy ("närdemokrati") in relation to the development of the environmental work within these areas.

Further on, ingredients to achieve progress with such local work are put forward as being:

- the ability to engage and create local interplay between the different actors; humans, organisations and companies among others.
- the ability to acquire resources.
- the ability to combine the ideas and wishes of the citizens with knowledge and experiences from professional actors.
- the ability to uphold a long term and methodological perspective on the assignments. Experience, patience and "good methods" along with "a stabile and supportive organisation" are mentioned as necessary features to reach these perspectives.

(EP2:63)

Besides these factors, the gathering and development of knowledge in regards to methods and modes of operation as well as gathering the experiences from projects are put forward as important factors to achieve progress. The ECO-city Augustenborg ("EKO-staden Augustenborg") is brought up as an example where the aim has been to engage the citizens as far as possible (EP2:63). The ingredients put forward here are in accordance with some of the deliberative features. Even though they are present, how they are to make such deliberation come about remains rather dim.

In the chapter "Information and Education", it is remarked that "insights" about the physical frames of long-term survival and a "deepened debate" (my transl.) about the possibilities to create a more just world order are necessary if we are to reach a sustainable society. The goal to pass on "*a society were most of the larger environmental issues are solved*" (EP2:70) to the next generation is stated as a continuous and learning matter. It is also emphasised that the school is responsible to make sure that the students knows the prerequisites for a good environment and that they shall have the opportunity to take responsibilities for the environment they can affect (EP2:70). The focus on the school is similar to the once stated in the previous program, but the "*opportunity to take responsibilities*" could, if interpreted as "*the ability and capability*" to take responsibility be seen as a deliberative feature (comp Cohen in Dryzek 2001:651).

It is enlightened that the program is developed for the institutions but that the citizens having the opportunity to contribute is a prerequisite if the municipality is to reach its goals. The over-arching goals are stated to be: spreading of knowledge, changing attitudes, and encouraging to actions. They do not have to be reached in this order though, it is said that sometimes it is when action is urged that people seek for knowledge and then change attitudes. The plan of action is less explicit than for the previous period and have about half as many items, but the word "dialogue" and "create opportunities for a dialogue" (my transl.) is more occurring (EP2:71). Still, it is hard to tell if the deliberative requisites makes part of this "dialogue".

Some of the deliberative ideas are better represented in this document. The efforts to engage the public before framing it were considerable. There appear to be more focus on encouraging an environmentally more inclusive thinking in the

city, in both the society in general and with special attention on the role of the school. The representative dimension, which is one of Eckersley's main issues (2004:112) can be distinguished, to some extent, when proposing a deepened debate about a fairer world and including future generations in the considerations. The enlightened need to create interplay between citizen's ideas and expert knowledge is also in accordance with the goals of deliberative democracy (Eckersley 2004:118-120). Still, democratic procedural thinking seems absent, and the values the document urge are of course environmental, but do not aspire to question as much of the current priorities in the society and political systems as our deliberative frame. Social learning seems to be the goal in the ways the municipality embraces gathering of information and experience. Even if this is not explicitly brought up with the presented framework's focus on changing values, some of the means of getting there are emphasised. However, the procedural importance is not stated, yet maybe approached in small ways by enlightening the need to create opportunities for dialogue.

4.3 Prior to the Up-Coming Period 2009-2015

Prior to the Environmental Program that is due next year, the following were among the presentations at the take off-meeting of the new program. "*Environmental challenges on bloc level*" ("Miljöutmaningar på kvartersnivå") presents a few interesting points under the theme "*Social Sustainability*" ("Social hållbarhet") when noting "*Citizen Participation*" followed by "*New forms*", "*Participation in existing processes*" and "*What are my personal priority*?" (my transl.) (Kick-off EP).

Though this is not specified further, it is however the most precise questioning of the citizen participation-aspect I have encountered in the programs studied. The ideas of rethinking the processes are obviously there, but will they survive the planning process and be further developed from this power point-item in the months of planning that remains?

"*Dialogue and Co-operation*" is now one out of five themes in the introductionary plan "Frames for the New Enivronmental Program" (my transl). The group working with this subject is instructed to focus on schools, museums, libraries, citydistricts ("stadsdelar"), organizations, commerce and industries as well as networks. Under the subtitle "*Responsibility*" the primary target group is stated to be the municipal administrations and enterprises. As interest groups it is the university of Malmö, non-profit groups, commerce and industries as well as "other cooperation partners" that are the non-governmental actors mentioned (FNEP).

The approach for dialogue is hereby more over-arching than before but the citizens are on the other hand not mentioned here which once again shows a disregard of deepened democratical participatory aspects. The planning is, as mentioned, still in its cradle but I will summarize the thoughts expressed so far

according to the memo notes ("minnesanteckningar") of the first meeting of the group "Dialogue and Co-operation" which has a bit of a different approach. The urgency to get opinions from "organizations, networks and if possible the public" before setting the targets, strategies and actions for the period 2009-2015, are mentioned but not further developed (MNEP). The way the public is preceded by a "if possible" makes it seem less prioritized. What might restrain the collecting of opinions from the public is not further developed. Could it be resources, time, national legislation, a lack of channels of communication or maybe a lack of interest? From whom then; the citizens or the politicians?

The program is noted to lie as a plan of action for the municipality but it is also stated that the entire society has to change its lifestyle in order to meet the upcoming environmental goals. Otherwise, the channels for communication are still the same; libraries, citydistricts and schools (MNEP).

The municipality of Malmö do not share the deliberative focus on increasing the democratical procedures and increasing the reflexivity of institutional and individual thinking, even if some participatory aspects aiming at changing attitudes are enlightened. In many ways the attention in this municipality seems to lie more on the civil society in general than on the citizens. The empirical material thereby ends up closer to Dryzek's discoursive model than Eckersley's, but still far from both.

In the framework presented, the state is considered the most powerful actor and therefore it is reasonable that the state, and in this case its local governmental equivalence, is in focus when searching ways to deepen democratic accountability and reach ecological values. Unfortunately, there are no signs of institutional devices assuring deliberative factors in the municipality of Malmö, more than maybe the attempts to increase the ecological awareness in schools. Neither when discussing the schools it is specified how this awareness is supposed to come about and the lack of procedural focus remains.

Nevertheless, some steps towards a more social learning-discourse have in ways been made over the years, replacing the participatory thoughts of the Local Agenda 21. The prospects for social learning and the efficiency and legitimacy claims still do not look as promising as in Eckerlsey's model since words as "reflexivity, preference-shaping and legitimacy" are absent. On the other hand, there seem to be further space for more deliberative considerations today than earlier since some of the thoughts preceding the new program appear to have taken the right turn.

5   Conclusions

Eckersley's normative model can be concluded to claim both democratical legitimacy and ecological efficiency. Both the efficiency and legitimacy claims described are, according to Eckersley, reciprocal necessities for allowing more ecological values to really gain ground.

Many of the stated reasons promoting a deliberative democracy undoubtedly sounds more likely to produce a more reflexive citizenry able to take the ecological factors into more consideration than is encouraged by the present political system. It might be that the inclusive processes would need more time in order to make decisions, but if the efficiency claims of stronger processes leading to better results are accurate, maybe the ecological problems could actually be fewer. After the encounter with the strong reasons for the efficiency and legitimacy claims Eckersley enlightens, it could be expected to find more emphasis on the role of the citizens within the political environmental considerations. If this rather is a question of the over-all democratic approach, the opportunities to affect its status lies with the national legislation and the political representatives. If Dryzek's distrust in the state's capability to incorporate environmentalism in a proper way is well-founded, the civil society is likely to play an important role in pushing the society towards a more ecologically democratic direction as Eckersley's emphasis on the unfixed interplay between this actors suggests.

Either way, the outcomes the municipality is striving for in its environmental work are rather clear as well as the notion that the public has to get involved if they are to reach their goal. The means and processes of getting there are on the other hand more diffuse and the official rhetoric still mainly aims at passing on information to the public sphere and in a lesser extent at changing procedures and questioning values in ecological matters. The importance of democratic procedures able to guarantee inclusion and representation, as enlightened by Eckersley and Dryzek, has thus not reached this local administration. Without these deliberative features, and subsequent lack of reflexive thinking, it will probably be hard to avoid the risk-generating decisions and current norms that are causing the ecological problems according to our framework. The actions so far taken by the municipality improves particular problems, but to me mainly seem to be softening the symptoms and not really changing the risk-generating decisions that in most ways still lie in the hands of politicians and market-actors. As Eckersley says (2004:119):"*the quest to create an ecologically sustainable society is fundamentally a normative concern and only secondarily a technical matter*".

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