

A Swedish meat tax

How come it is such a controversy?

Abstract

The aim of this study is to use frame analysis to identify different narratives surrounding the Swedish debate on a so called meat tax. The Swedish ministry of agriculture released a report in January 2013 with the message that the meat consumption needs to decrease to reach more sustainable levels. One way that it could be accomplished is through the implementation of a carbon based tax on meat.

The scientific base of the thesis is frame theory provided by Martin Rein and Donald A Schön. The research question is “What frameworks influence the discourse in the debate of a Swedish meat tax?” and my hypothesis is that there are different conflicting frames surrounding the issue of a meat tax. The four worldviews of environmental political economy by Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne are used as indicators in the analysis.

The findings imply that there are conflicting frameworks to the issue of a meat tax and in the analytical chapter of the thesis the frames are categorized in a frame table.

Key words: frame analysis, carbon tax, meat, worldviews, discourse theory, policy controversy

Words:

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1 Introduction

In this introductory chapter I will argue for the relevance of my research. I will shortly state the limitations of my study and the previous research that I am basing my thesis on. Finishing this chapter I will present the hypothesis of my thesis in addition to the disposition.

1.1 Aim

The aim of my bachelor's thesis is to examine how the Swedish debate about implementing an environmental tax on meat can be understood through the frames and ideas surrounding it. I am interested in examining how different framings of an issue can influence the debate and later also the policy implementation. The subject interests me since I noticed the rise of the debate on a carbon tax on meat in the media, which was something that I had heard about several times before but never noticed in a real proposal by a political party. When I started thinking about the debate as a research subject, I initially thought of the similarities of the carbon tax that exist today on fuel. It seemed like a puzzle to me that Sweden has not implemented a tax on meat even though it is no surprising fact that consuming and producing meat it is harmful for the environment in the same way that petrol-consuming transportation is (Pelling, 2007). Could something be different in how people see the issue of a carbon tax on meat compared to other carbon taxes? Is meat seen in a certain way? To examine this issue the aim of my thesis is to use a form of discourse analysis called frame- or framing analysis that allows for the researcher to look closely into the frames surrounding the issue of a tax on meat. (Rein and Schön, 1996). The focus of my research will be to identify and analyze the different frames that are present in the recent debate about a Swedish meat tax.

1.1.1 The contrasting example of fuel taxes

In Sweden today the only tax that consumers pay on meat is the VAT, or value added tax. As an example, on petrol, a VAT was not added until 1990. In addition to the VAT, a carbon tax and a so called energy tax is added to the price on petrol and other fuels (Ekonomifakta, 2013). The level of the carbon tax depends on the level of emissions with the aim to decrease the effects on the environment (Energimyndigheten, 2006, p.180). The parties in the Swedish government are united in the notion of not decreasing the carbon tax on petrol (Centerpartiet,

2013). The debate may be that the level of the taxes on fuel is too high, but everybody seems to accept that the taxes exist. Taxing is said to be an effective steering method to decrease Swedish carbon emissions, a notion which stems from economic theory (Hammar and Löfgren, p.1, 2008). The social democrats motivate a carbon tax on petrol to steer towards more sustainable uses of fuel (Socialdemokraterna, 2013). The thought of the meat issue as different from the fuel issue is what inspired my research. The aim is not to compare the frames surrounding meat with the ones surrounding fuel, but my hypothesis springs from the impression that even though the idea of a carbon tax is the same, something is different with how the issue of a carbon tax on meat is discussed.

1.2 Research question

The underlying question in my thesis is why we do not have a meat tax in Sweden, but since I do not aim to use a variable-based method, a why question is not what my research will take off from (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.27). My research question is:

What frameworks influence the discourse in the debate of a Swedish meat tax?

The question is relevant outside of the academia since the policy affects people throughout Sweden, and because I see it as important to think about the issue and why it is controversial. The study also builds on research regarding frame analysis and my research can hopefully also inspire to future research within the field of discourse or frame analysis.

1.2.1 Limitations

Sweden is one of the countries in the world that has the highest meat consumption per capita; in the European Union only people in Denmark and Luxemburg eat more meat (Jordbruksverket, 2013, p.10). That the high levels of meat consumption has been brought up as an issue in a report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture is one reason why I focus on the Swedish debate of a meat tax (Jordbruksverket, 2013).

The tax that I will focus on is as follows a carbon tax on meat, which depends on the emissions produced. My research will focus on the recent debate in Sweden that started in January 2013 with the report from the ministry of agriculture. I will analyze the report and also debate articles that were written in response to the report. This will hopefully give my thesis the possibility to identify different frameworks that surrounds the issue of meat tax in the current debate in Sweden today.

1.3 Previous research

The scientific base will rest upon the thoughts about policy disputes or controversies by Martin Rein and Donald A Schön that they present in the book “Frame reflection – toward the resolution of intractable policy controversies”. They present the idea that some debates that could be settled by looking at mere facts stay unsolved due to the existence of different frameworks to interpret the facts. One of their ideas builds upon the notion that political controversies rest on different frames, understandings and interpretations rather than on different facts or information. Rein and Schön mean that these controversies are often unresolvable issues because of the different frames (Rein and Schön, 1994, p.4). This thought leads me to my hypothesis and will be the takeoff for my study. I will also base my research on the four worldviews connected to political economy and environmental issues presented by Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne in “Paths to a green world – the political economy of the global environment” (2011).

1.4 Hypothesis

My starting point or hypothesis is that there are conflicting frames to how people in Sweden perceive the issue of an environmental tax on meat, versus on fuel. I see meat and fuel as similar issues when it comes to the effects on the environment. That is why to me it is a puzzle that a carbon tax has not yet been added to meat products, when in Sweden we have one on fuels. From what we have been taught in the course of methodology of political science, the puzzle is one of the factors that characterize a good question (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.17). The puzzle leads me to think that there may be ideas among people that make them not think about the issues of meat and fuel as similar. This may be something that affects the outcome of the policy. A debate about a tax on meat rises every now and then, but no real proposal gets through to the Swedish parliament. That the main discourse, narrative or framework could prevent the suggestion of a meat tax is something that I will look into in my paper.

My hypothesis is that the frameworks and the discourse surrounding a tax on meat hold back a proposal for a carbon tax on meat to reach the political institutions in Sweden.

1.5 Disposition

My paper will start with a chapter that introduces the methodological and theoretical approach. I will introduce discourse theory and framing analysis as the

theoretical base of my study. The next chapter will provide a brief background to the issue, with information about the current debate in Sweden. Following the background is a chapter that introduces the broad frameworks that I will use in my analysis, leading to my analytical chapter. The framework indicators or categories consist of the four worldviews presented by Clapp and Dauvergne (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011). The final chapter of my thesis will consist of a discussion of the result and research process. In my study I will refer to the idea of implementing a carbon tax on meat products, to include the costs of the pollution, as *the issue* or *the problem* and this is also as introduced previously referred to as *a policy controversy*.

2 Theory and Method

My scientific base will be that society depends on ideas and how actors and people interpret the world. This leads me to use the method of discourse analysis, and more specifically framing analysis. A challenge that the researcher meets when using a qualitative method is to openly and systematically clarify the steps and results to give the study as high intersubjectivity as possible. Another factor that is important to think about is of course the validity of the study which I will try to reach through a motivated use of the Clapp and Dauvergne worldviews as clear indicators in my analysis. Every good scientific research should have put a lot of effort on the attempt to maximize the intersubjectivity by clearly motivating and stating for the choices and results that are drawn throughout the text (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.55). In the following chapter I will motivate and explain my methodological approach as well as my strategy when searching for material.

2.1 Science theory

The theoretical base of my study builds on discourse theory. Bas Arts and Marleen Buizer mean that discourse analysis is a collection of theories that all presupposes that reality can be understood through analyzing the social meanings of concepts and figurative structures and orders. The object of research is often different types of texts, which represent and create the social meanings and systems. According to the authors, people are neither rational and interest-driven nor sociologically norm-driven; instead people are driven by the search for meaning. Human action is said to be explained through shared understandings of how the world is interpreted (Arts and Buizer, 2008, p.2). The methodological and theoretical base of my thesis stems from hermeneutic and interpretative methods where the aim is to interpret texts or actions to get an increased understanding of a phenomenon (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.99).

2.2 Discourse analysis

The use of a discourse analysis leads my study to focus on what limitations and possibilities that comes with the current discourse. Arts and Buizer places frame analysis within the category of discourse analysis. This approach focuses on discourse as interpretations of texts and language and enhances the meaning of discourse as the notion of a shared understanding. A framing analysis could focus

on how the framing of a problem is constructed and what this may lead to when it comes to how people act. This discourse approach also includes the theory of framing problems differently to give legitimacy to an issue (Arts and Buizer, 2008, p.3.).

Apart from the discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe where the method focuses on how words in a text are linked together and creates meaningful chains, the frame theory that I will use in my thesis focuses less on single words and symbols and more on the gathered meaning and narrative of a text. The basic understanding of discourse as a structure of language that is often adapted to different social situations that gives different understandings is however still present in my paper (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.1). Maarten Hajer presents discourse analysis as a methodological design that is suitable when researching so called policy conflicts. One of the elements that Hajer presents to such a discourse analysis is to study the storylines and terms of the discourse (Hajer, 2003, p.103). The field of discourse analysis builds upon the scientific base of post structuralism and social constructivism in the sense that there is no absolute truth or objective reality, what is important is how people interpret reality (Friman, 2009). This is also the base of my research and will influence the implications that the findings in my research can give.

2.2.1 Searching for frames

The aim of my analysis is to identify the framework and constructions of reality that are related to the issue of taxing meat.

Rein and Schön presents a theoretical background of framing analysis and how it can explain policy controversies when conflicting frames meet. They bring up the example of the market equilibrium as a frame of economics, and a storyline that explains the world and action, until it is conflicted with other frames and explanations (Rein and Schön, 1996). The key of framing analysis is to find the stories that people tell themselves which their decisions and opinions stem from. These frameworks can in short be explained as how people structure their thoughts and see things (Rein and Schön, 1996). As an example issues within the social sciences that develop when different frameworks collide can according to Rein and Schön be understood through a framing analysis:

“Taken together, the problems of multiple equilibria, theoretical pluralism, and incommensurability help to make understandable why social science is limited in its ability to engage a politically and normatively charged controversy and contribute to its resolution.” (Rein and Schön, 1996)

This quote also presents the limitations that are connected with the social sciences and why explaining controversies can be complicated. The use of a framing analysis can therefore be well motivated since it offers a method to study and show these theoretical and narrative collisions. What I aim to look for in my analysis is the storylines relating to meat and the possible taxation of meat. Is the

thought of meat more closely connected to a sense of free will than for example fuel? Can this in some way explain why a tax on meat is not a reality in Sweden, when a tax on fuel is? Do we even think of the meat industry as something that affects the environment and something that is our responsibility? Questions like these will guide me through my analysis in the search for the frameworks surrounding the issue of a meat tax.

2.2.2 Frame analysis

A frame can be described as a *foundation of assumptions*, which is underlying to language and behavior. Rein and Schön identifies four different understandings of frames, one of the images presents frames as an *underlying structure*, which allows other ideas, actions and opinions to build upon. Another presents frames as a form of *boundary*, which can give limits to how things are understood as. The other views of frames are such as frames as a form of *categorization* to allow people to label problems, and frames as a narrative. In addition to these four understandings of frames, there are two parts of the process of framing an issue. First the frames allow people to think of an issue in a certain way, it can also be the reason that people initially see something as a problem. Secondly the frames lead people to think about the actions that might be necessary, or how to handle the issue onwards. To use a frame analysis in research, reconstructing frames to identify them is in focus (Rein and Schön, 1996). Rein and Schön also mean that the way that people frame issues differently affect how arguments are created and put together (Rein and Schön, 1994, p.5). To look through arguments in a debate article can therefore be important in searching the frame, and understanding how an issue is constructed.

The method is suitable for my thesis since the theory of framing analysis can help answer my research question and comprehend why a proposal for a meat tax is not present. The part of frame theory that relates to understanding policy controversies makes this approach more suitable for my research than other discourse theories. The method of framing analysis can help me understand why meat may not be seen as a climate issue to the extent that a carbon tax is needed and why no proposal has been released. A frame analysis can guide me toward an understanding of the existing frameworks and their consequences for the debate and policy creation.

To study and construct the frames in my analysis I will use four worldviews. They are institutionalist, social green, market liberal and bio environmental approaches and will be used as indicators and base when constructing the different frames. These worldviews are presented as broad approaches to environmental issues and all relate to handling such issues in relation the political economy (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.3).

In my paper and in my analysis I will use the words: frame/s, frameworks, narratives, worldviews and approaches interchangeably.

2.2.3 Delimitations of scope

Using a form of discourse analysis comes with some limitations. To search for a discourse that you most likely take part of yourself gives some challenges and of course no researcher stands without its own narrative or framing. A discourse and framing analysis means not only identifying the storylines that are told, but also to look for what is not said in texts and what is chosen not to be expressed through language. The choice of a qualitative method also limits the possibility to generalize the findings of the paper. Adding to this, a study using discourse analysis does not naturally come with a result or a clear explanation. The aim is however not to explain by displaying causal mechanisms or variables, but to highlight the interpretations that can lead to an increased understanding of how issues are dependent on how we interpret the world. This comes with the qualitative design of my research (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.98).

To keep the intersubjectivity throughout the thesis it is important for the researcher to realize that their own framing of the issue influences the study. An important challenge in a framing analysis is to step out from the own narrative, put it into perspective and be open to find other frames (Rein and Schön, 1994, p.44). In the end of my analysis I will construct a frame table, since Rein and Schön states that to research frames it is necessary to construct frames. This implies a method of interpretation that can lead to another scientific challenge due to the vagueness or multiple understandings that can be applied to frames with different solutions and perceptions (Rein and Schön, 1996). This is something to bear in mind in the analytical chapter.

2.3 Material

One of the things that provides a challenge for the researcher of a qualitative method to stay perfectly objective is when it comes to the choice of material. Of course everyone has different pre-conceptions which lead them to searching at different platforms and look for different things. In my study I have tried to look widely into the debate to pick up different views on the issue, which is also the purpose of my study.

Discourse theory provides the idea that actors are not rational independent and interest-driven but rather act depending on their different understanding of the world and situations. Martin Hollis present the contrasting actor-based theory as John Stuart Mills' thoughts on political change through critical thinking and rational influence (Hollis, 1994, p.9). The actors in my analysis will be seen as representatives or bearers of their frame.

The theory and method of framing analysis allows for a use of material that comes from the media. The University of Vermont presents a guide on their website of how to use a framing analysis to analyze news media. The goal of the analysis is to find patterns. The main points of the method is described as reading a lot of news material to find themes, to look for what is highlighted in the stories

as well as evaluating language choices and structure of the texts (The University of Vermont, 2013). Therefore I will use this guide when looking at material found in the media to analyze how the debate is described, and which frames can be discovered in the articles. I have found the issue both on Sweden's public radio website as well as in other big magazines online. The focus on material from the news media is motivated by an assumption that the public media can be seen as representative, as well as a possible creator, of the narratives surrounding issues in the public debate. I will also look at reports issued by different ministries, to find arguments and information.

The debate articles are found on the website Newsmill that is owned by tv4, a Swedish commercial TV-channel. Newsmill is a self-stated political and religiously unbiased forum for debate online (Newsmill, 2008). I have chosen the articles depending on if the author clearly responds to the report of the ministry of agriculture. That the debate articles all respond to the same report is an important factor. Since the authors have accessed the same information in the debate, the different opinions that the authors may have can more convincingly be argued to originate from their different frameworks than on different information. I have chosen authors who are politicians from the government as well as the opposition, and also actors from the academia. The report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture in addition to the debate articles from newsmill will be the objectives of my analysis, while other articles and literature will be used in other chapters of my thesis.

2.3.1 Delimitations of research design and choice of material

The method and theory of discourse analysis can be useful to describe and understand how something happens. However, the result does not give a clear explanation of why things happen, or which variables have an effect on an outcome. The theoretical background however focuses on a world that is not easily explained, but that is put together by social agreements and understandings.

When it comes to data collection some factors to bear in mind is the authenticity, independence, concurrency and tendency of the material (Esaiasson et al, 2007, p. 314). When using media articles, the independence can be questioned, as well as the authenticity of the information. This is something I will think of when presenting my material. On the other hand, my analysis does not build entirely on the information or facts presented, but how the storyline is constructed in the articles. The authenticity-factor is thereby not extremely relevant. The independency-factor will lead me to contemplate which actors are behind the texts I will analyze.

3 Background

In this chapter a brief background to the recent debate about a meat tax will be presented. I will argue that the issue of a carbon tax resembles a policy controversy. As presented by Schön and Rein policy controversies can spring from different and contesting frames (Schön and Rein, 1996). Therefore I will in this chapter also present four contesting frameworks on how environmental problems can be seen and handled. Finally the approaches towards a meat tax will be displayed in a table of the four worldviews.

3.1 The debate on taxing meat

The proposal on implementing a carbon tax on meat springs from the notion that the meat industry and meat production is a big part of the environmental degradation of today. Eating one kilogram of red meat has in the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet been compared to driving a car for three hours and leaving the lights on at home in the meantime. This would have the same level of negative impact on the environment which could be one reason that a carbon tax is reasonable for meat as it is for fuel (Pelling, 2007). The Swedish nature protection agency also states that meat consumption creates high levels of greenhouse gas emissions (Naturskyddsföreningen, 2013).

The debate blossomed in the beginning of 2013 since the Swedish ministry of agriculture released a report called “Sustainable meat consumption” on the 22 of January that had the message that people in the west need to consume less meat. The primary reason is that meat consumption leads to pollution and release of greenhouse gas emissions, and they suggested that a tax on the consumers in addition to information could push the consumption in a more sustainable direction (Jordbruksverket, 2013). Representatives from the Swedish government as well as members of the Swedish parliament quickly responded on twitter that a carbon tax on meat was not a good idea (Alliansfritt Sverige, 2013). A few days after the release from the ministry of agriculture, Helena Kättström who is in charge of animal protection on the ministry clarified that the report did not officially promote a proposition to implement a carbon tax on meat (Kättström, 2013). The attention of the media together with the fast response on the report from the government parties add to the image of a meat tax as a policy controversy. The fact that Kättström felt the need to clarify that the ministry did not stand behind a proposition of a meat tax also adds to this conclusion.

One of the few political parties in Sweden that is pushing for a tax on meat is a party called Feminist initiative; they are however not represented in the Swedish

parliament (Feministiskt initiativ, 2013). The political parties to the left, Vänsterpartiet (the left party) and Socialdemokraterna (the social democrats) together with Miljöpartiet (the environmental party) all think that the Swedish meat consumption should decrease, as presented in an article in the magazine Dagens Arena in late January 2013, but are not openly stating that a Swedish tax on meat is a real option today (Rosén, 2013). Before the previous parliamentary election, in 2010, the Swedish environmental party was questioned about the proposition of a meat tax, which they dismissed (Olsson, SvD, 2010). This raised some debate, and adds to the concept of the issue and the suggestion of a carbon tax on meat as a controversy that neither the government nor the opposing parties support.

To argue further for the relevance and controversy of the issue I will show some similarities with a carbon tax on fuel. The idea is assumedly the same that consumers should pay a tax that compensates for the pollution and the negative impacts of the environment that the production of the consumed good comes with. However, a carbon tax on fuel is not really seen as a controversy. When it comes to the political parties in the Swedish government they all agree that such a tax is a good idea. The red-green parties in opposition proposed a rise of the fuel tax before the election in 2010 and also wanted to increase other environmental taxes but no suggestion for a tax on meat was laid out (Thurfjell, 2010). The alliance that later won the election answered and promised that they would not raise the tax on fuel. In the same time they stated that Sweden had the most ambitious environmental policies in Europe. Neither did the alliance parties discuss putting a carbon tax on meat (Sundman, 2010).

3.2 Frameworks

In this chapter I will identify and describe different frameworks provided by Clapp and Dauvergne. These broad pictures will function as a template in my analysis and guide me through my framing analysis. The approaches will help me to systemize my analysis and to have a base to attach the frames that I am looking for in my material. The approaches presented by Clapp and Dauvergne are relevant since they include broad schemes and categories of ideas when it comes to environmental issues. Their ideas will function as indicators throughout my analysis. However my intention is to be open for other understandings and frames, and look for where the texts do not fit with or go beyond the frameworks. The worldviews presented in the book are stated to be ideas categorized depending on how they relate to global environmental change and global political economy and the categories are called bio environmentalists, market liberals, institutionalists and social greens. The authors present the worldviews as interdisciplinary. The frameworks are offered as ideal types and should therefore not be taken too exact but can still function as suitable models of narratives (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.3). Even though a tax on meat in Sweden may not be seen as an apparent

issue of global environmental change, the meat industry is indeed seen as a significant environmental issue by several actors (Rosén, 2013).

These worldviews are relevant to my study as they present broad understandings of how actors can approach issues that relates to the climate threat. In the literature they are also well related to each other and complement each other well, which makes it unnecessary to find additional worldviews. The worldviews handle the relation between the environment and the economy, which basically is what my research question boils down to. The suggestion of a carbon tax on meat is a way of tackling an environmental problem through a national economic system.

3.2.1 Bio environmentalist framework

The way that the bio environmentalist framework is stated in the book “Paths to a Green World – the political economy of the global environment” is that this approach includes the notion that the resources of the earth are ending. The concern of the ending resources and the limits of the earth carrying capacity is a crucial point within this framework. The ecosystems are seen as valuable and environmental issues are seen as acute. Globalization and markets are a part of the problem, and placing a value on ecosystems is critical to solve the climate crisis. The bio environmentalist point of view is that to strive for constant economic growth and consumption is causing great damage to the world (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.9-10). That the level of meat consumption is too high and is a big part of the climate problem would fit this narrative well. The idea that something has to be done soon to save the earth from environmental degradation does also fit. Preventing environmental harm by government action such as putting a carbon tax on the harmful meat consumption would be a solution supported by the bio environmental frame (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.140).

3.2.2 Market liberal framework

In a market liberal approach the issue of the climate is not as critical. The market will solve the problem, if the price of the pollution and other impacts are included in the market. Economic growth is not seen as a problem, but as a part of the solution to a sustainable development. Increasing the wealth of people through economic growth will, according to the logic presented by market liberals, create a political will and funds to improve the environment (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.4). Introducing a tax on meat as an economical steering method would probably be seen as a way of distorting the market, which according to market liberals lead to an ineffective use of resources and a negative outcome for the climate. However one problem that the market liberals see is prices that are too low due to subsidies from the government, which give skewed signals to the consumers and is a risk of inspiring to wasteful consuming. If the price on agricultural goods such as meat is seen as too low due to government's

unwillingness to let them pay for their climate cost and pollution through a tax, the market liberal approach can be open to a meat tax. Clapp and Dauvergne however relate the world views' approach toward subsidies and economic steering methods such as the market liberals are the most negative due to the notion of an ineffective market. Institutionalists, social greens and bio environmentalists are more negatively put toward subsidies and taxes that encourage unsustainable consumption. The market liberal framework as well as the institutionalist framework has both recently opened up to the importance of a sustainable consumption, which is crucial for the other worldviews. A well-designed tax could subsequent be a solution to promote sustainable consumption (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.104). To increase the wealth of people so that they could afford and be more willing to buy ecological meat could also be a possible part of the market liberal framework.

3.2.3 Social green framework

The social greens have a narrative that agrees with the bioenvironmental view that the earth's carrying capacity is at a great risk, and that the market and globalization is a reason for the climate crisis. They mean that economic, social and environmental problems go hand in hand. The social green framework have a negative stance to big-scale mass industries, which would mean that through a social green narrative the mass industry of meat production would be seen as a big problem. The main problem and cause of environmental issues that the social greens see is the capitalist system (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p. 12). The opportunity for companies and industries to exploit the environment to get economic growth should be hindered by the government through sanctions. Adding a carbon tax on meat to pay for the harm towards the environment is therefore something that is accepted in a social green framing, as long as the carbon tax is aimed fairly (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.140).

3.2.4 Institutional framework

The institutionalist narrative is that economic growth and globalization is something positive, which place it close to the frame of market liberals. They believe in the notion of sustainable development, trade and international institutions (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.7). The standpoint of building and developing more regulations on a regional level such as within the EU instead of creating a Swedish meat tax is a notion that could be derived from an institutionalist approach. Different forms of international standards or guidelines in addition to global collaboration are key solutions to environmental problems. An institutionalist framing would be that information and guiding principles are needed to create a demand by consumers of sustainable alternatives (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p. 106).

3.2.5 Table

I will clarify the standpoint of the four worldviews in the following table where the approaches of each worldview concerning meat consumption and carbon taxing will be inserted.

Table 1.1

	Social green	Institutionalist
Perception of meat consumption	Harmful	Needs to reach a sustainable level
Approach to carbon tax	Positive, if aimed toward the ones truly responsible	Polluters should pay and a tax is ok if coordinated by international standards, but increased information is better.

Table 1.2

	Market liberal	Bio environmental
Perception of meat consumption	A more sustainable consumption could be desirable, and this is expected when people's income rise.	Excessive meat consumption poses a danger to the earth's carrying capacity.
Approach to carbon tax	To include the true costs of meat consumption in the price through a tax could be accepted. However, labeling and information should be tried first, due to the risk of market distortion and inefficiency.	A good alternative of government action to prevent environmental threats.

3.2.6 Other frameworks

Apart from the four worldviews, other narratives possibly surround the issue of a tax on meat. I have chosen not to include a certain, so called "vegetarian" approach since such a narrative is not always coherent and is nothing I have noticed while reading about the debate and searching for material. One can choose to be a vegetarian and remove meat entirely from the diet based on health, ethics or climate (Svenska Vegetariska Föreningen, 2013). Also, the issue that my thesis focuses on is a tax on meat to decrease the meat consumption and pay for the

costs of the emissions, not to entirely remove meat consumption which relates more to a vegetarian approach.

4 Analysis

In the analysis I will search for different frameworks in the debate of the meat tax. As a base for my research I will use the approaches by Clapp and Dauvergne discussed in the previous chapter, along with the theory of frame analysis by Rein and Schön.

My material is connected to the recent debate in Sweden, which started with a report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture. I will briefly cover the disposition and content of the texts to catch the narrative and then connect the text to the worldviews presented in the previous chapter. In the end of my analysis I will place the different framings found in my material in a framing table. This will help me identify the different frameworks, to see if contesting frames exist surrounding the issue.

4.1 To identify frameworks

The diverse frames of the various actors involved in the debate concerning the environmental impact of the meat industry can be seen when comparing for example an article in the Swedish leftist newspaper “Arbetaren” where the author refers to a report from the European Parliament where the meat industry is presented as globally worse for the environment than the transport sector (Färnbo, 2007). On the website of the Swedish national farmer’s association the author answers the question of “Is the meat industry worse for the environment than the car industry” with a negative response. They highlight the fact that in Sweden domestic transportation stands for 32 % of pollution while agriculture is responsible for 13% (LRF, 2013). From the theoretical standpoint of Rein and Schön this can be understood as a symptom of different narratives and frames.

“By focusing our attention on different facts and by interpreting the same facts in different ways, we have a remarkable ability, when we are embroiled in controversy, to dismiss the evidence adduced by our antagonists.” (Rein and Schön, 2004, p.5)

The previous example shows different actors with different framings, as understood by the quote of Rein and Schön. The focus of my analysis will however be on texts written after the report of the Swedish ministry of agriculture was issued.

The analysis will take off from searching for the existing framework in the report issued by the ministry of agriculture which then created a lot of attention in

the media and led to the posting of a lot of debate articles. Some of these debate articles will then be analyzed to find possible alternative frames that underlie different understandings of the issue, suggestions for a solution. The frames will be categorized and separated through how the actors interpret the problem, lift different information and use different arguments and they will all be related to the frameworks in the previous chapter. Since most of my material consist of debate articles where the authors are invited to write about a given subject, the part of framing analysis that includes if actors even catch up or perceive something as a problem will be scaled less since the issue is given and therefore identifying how the problem is interpreted is of main importance to the analysis.

4.1.1 The report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture

A notion that is found in a report issued by the Swedish ministry of agriculture in January 2013 is that the level of meat consumption is too high and that this may be a problem. The report is posted on the ministry's website, where the slogan "We're strengthening the green sector towards a sustainable society" [my translation] is visible (Jordbruksverket, 2013b). On the first page of the report called "Sustainable meat consumption – What is it? How do we get there?" it is stated that we in the western world should eat less meat in concern to the GHG emissions that comes with meat consumption. They also state that we should pick the meat we eat with care, which implies that we do not have to adapt to a so called vegetarian frame and exclude meat completely. The narrative therefore includes "we in the western world" as subjects and the ones who should take action. They argue that a carbon tax on the consumer side in addition to information and proper labeling of meat would push the consumption in a more sustainable development. The final paragraph on the first page of the document put the Swedish consumption in perspective to the rest of the world by stating that it is relatively acceptable in some aspects of sustainability. It is stated in the background chapter of the report that the fact that we need to shift our food consumption in regard to the large pollution created by meat production toward a more sustainable level is something that has reached us during the last couple of years. This implies a development factor which allows for a narrative of future technology or research to come up with new information or solutions to the problem. What can be read in the background chapter point to the logic that something needs to be done due to new facts and new information that we did not have before. The introduction presents the importance of informing about the environmental effects so that the consumer is able to make informed decisions. A problem that is underlying in the frame of the authors seems to be that meat-consumption is careless and that the level needs to be decreased. Different solutions are presented, but information and taxing are seen as significant. The consumption of meat is compared to consumption of other agricultural goods and the category is presented to have a negative impact on the environment, for example other goods such as milk could be included in the suggested policy repercussions. In the summary of the report the authors state that red meat is the

most negative when it comes to GHG emissions, and that another reason that people need to decrease their consumption is due to resource scarcity. For the resources to reach the needs of everybody on earth, all meat consumption needs to decrease (Jordbruksverket, 2013, p.1-6). This corresponds with a social green notion of global solidarity and the responsibility of the west towards the rest of the world (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17). The authors however lift what they present as a conflict, that holding grazing animals also comes with some benefits such as the conserving of biological diversity and landscapes. Meat production is also a source for job opportunities in Sweden (Jordbruksverket, 2013, p.1-6).

That meat consumption is seen as a problem due to a lack of resources is compatible with the bio environmentalist world view. A carbon tax on meat is presented as an option that could bring the consumption towards a more sustainable level, but no clear proposition is presented and critique toward the option of taxing is also brought up. This lead toward an understanding of the frame of the report to not hold the same level of severity to this climate issue as the bio environmental worldview presented by Clapp and Dauvergne includes. They however also mention this narrative in the introductory chapter of the report by saying that some scientists argue that the limit of the earth's resources is close and that huge changes are necessary to reach a sustainable development. Nevertheless no big solutions or suggestions are presented in the report which places the authors and the ministry of agriculture outside the bio environmentalist worldview. The report places Swedish meat consumption in relation to other countries level, which would indicate that the desirable level of meat consumption in some way depends on how much other countries consume. This also leads the narrative away from a bio environmental worldview where more focus is on the earth's static carrying capacity instead of relative levels of consumption (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17). The main notion of the report is the importance of a sustainable level of consumption and a sustainable development. This is something that weighs heavily within the discourse of the institutionalist and market liberal worldviews (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.7). Several interpretations with contesting frames can be found within the report, which is something that Rein and Schön alerts in their frame theory.

4.1.2 A debate article by a representative of the ruling political party in Sweden

Åsa Coenraads is a member of Moderaterna which is the conservative party in Sweden. She is also a member of the environmental- and agricultural committee of the Swedish government. Coenraads responds to the report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture in a debate article. The title of her article is "Meat tax hits the weakest" [my translation], and in the opening lines she states that Sweden has a sustainability-thinking in a very high level and that a proposition to create a tax on meat is thoughtless and would damage people in so called social vulnerability. She also means that a tax would be a bad idea in regard to the animals and for companies. She does not deny the environmental effects of meat consumption, but

stands against judicial solutions. Presumably since the author is representing the government she promotes the efforts that have already been done in form of information campaigns among other things. Informing so that consumers can make responsible decisions is the solution she provides, in comparison with taxing as an economical steering method.

In the narrative that is visible throughout the article, socially vulnerable persons are seen as possible victims of a tax and are at risk of changing their food consumption towards poorer nutrition (Coenraads, 2013). The conclusion seems to be drawn through a narrative of meat as the ultimate source of protein and a decreased consumption of meat is how Coenraads present that a meat tax would harm people. Buying cheaper vegetarian protein-sources instead of meat is apparently not seen as an option or a possible consequence of a meat tax. The notion that Sweden already have an ambitious environmental policy and raising the risk that an environmental tax would hit the economically weak people in society has been raised before by the government parties, as I mentioned in the background chapter (Sundman, 2010). The debate article can therefore be seen as representing the same framing of the issue as the governing party. Which of the four worldviews or frameworks is then most coherent with the view of the governing party? The framing that economically strong and informed consumers would decide to consume more environmentally friendly which would lead to a sustainable development relates to the market liberal approach. Additionally corresponding with the market liberal approach is the notion that with increased income or wealth consumers would afford to buy ecological meat which is a step towards a more sustainable consumption. That economic growth and wealth leads to increased societal will and for people to afford to think and act more environmentally friendly as illustrated by the so called Kuznet curve often referred to by institutionalists and market liberals (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.97). Even though Coenraads raises a concern for economically weak consumers, the narrative does not resemble the social green approach, but mostly agrees with the market liberal framing of the issue.

4.1.3 Frameworks from researchers of environment and economics

Fredrik Hedenus, Stefan Wirsenius and Kristina Mohlin also responded to the report. They are all researchers studying food climate and steering methods and together they posted a debate article with the title “Climate tax on meat build upon sensible science” [my translation]. Their frame relates to the bioenvironmental worldview in the sense that they lift the issue of the negative consequences that food production have on the environment as serious. They state that an environmental tax on meat and other agricultural products would simply allow the industry to pay for its pollution and they believe that a tax would decrease the meat consumption in the necessary way. They however also write that more than implementing a carbon tax needs to be done. The perception of the seriousness of the issue and the willingness for action is shared with the bio environmentalist worldview (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17).

The authors mean that a carbon tax would be one part of the solution to stop the environmental degradation and pollution. The authors mean that the issue can be simplified as the thought of that the ones who pollute also should pay for that pollution. Hedenus et al see it as a problem that the energy and transport-sector today pay the costs of pollution and GHG emissions, while the agricultural sector does not. They bring up the increased meat consumption in Sweden as an issue and a problem when it comes to reaching the goal of a maximum limit of a 2 degrees global rise in temperature. This is a sign that the authors accept and claim the social justice notion of the social green framework through the responsibility of Sweden as a country to act toward this goal, while the representative from the government in the section above foremost lift Sweden's relatively developed action on the climate level. Hedenus et al also lift the option of consuming leguminous plants instead of meat, as a consequence of the tax. In Coenraads narrative, the assumed effect is decreased consumption of meat and eating less nutritious food instead. Hedenus et al also present the proposition of having different levels of tax on different types of meat, depending on the level of pollution to signal to the consumers to eat more environmentally thoughtful. They condemn the notion that people would lack nutrition and mean that the level of meat consumption would rather go back to the level that existed in year 2000. They highlight the need for other steering methods such as subsidies and regulations to tackle the negative effects of such industries on the environment (Hedenus et al, 2013). Including the costs of the pollution in the price is an idea that can be related to the market liberal thought of including the environment in the market. However, the way that the authors present the issue as acute and that the meat consumption needs to decrease allows the including of the costs to be interpreted as the bio environmental way to recognize the value of the environment. What Hedenus et al point out as the main problem is that the industry does not pay for the pollution (Hedenus et al, 2013). What the social green or bio environmental worldview mean is the root problem is the economic system of mass industries and mass consumption (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17). This separates these narratives from the one of Hedenus et al. However the bio environmental worldview is the one that is closest to the framework of the authors due to the perception of the problem as serious and the promotion of alternatives for preventive action.

4.1.4 A debate article from the Christian democrats

Ester Hedin from the youth association of the Christian democrat party in Sweden claims that a tax on meat is a bad idea due to three reasons. The first reason relates to a market liberal thought that consumers should be free to decide what they should consume without economic pressures such as a tax. This notion includes the value of an efficient and undistorted market (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.104). Hedin means that putting a tax on meat is a form of exaggerated steering of people's consuming habits. The author also highlights the risk of putting economical pressure on families with a weak economy and she is skeptic to if the

meat consumption would decrease with a meat tax. This narrative coheres with the one from Coenraads article and is something that is related to the market liberal framework. Onward Hedin means that a widespread international agreement is needed to get a result on the meat consumption (Hedin, 2013). This notion is coherent with the institutionalist worldview where the main solution to environmental issues is global cooperation (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.16). The author claims there to be a Swedish trend to be conscious in choice of food which she is positive to. The main part of the frame surrounding how Hedin interprets the issue is that adding a tax on meat would be an infringement to the freedom of the consumers. The author also give the consumers the name “everyday heroes” and she means that the important thing is to motivate these people to make smart and environmentally friendly choices instead of putting economic pressure to them through a tax (Hedin, 2013). This conspires with the market liberal and institutionalist narrative that informed and economically strong consumers will make environmentally friendly decisions even in the supermarkets (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.142).

4.1.5 The frame of the environmental party in Sweden

Next I will analyze a debate article written by a representative from the environmental party in Sweden in response to the report by the Swedish ministry of agriculture. The author Etelka Huber is clearly positive to implementing a tax on meat in Sweden. In the text she relates to numbers by the UN that states that the meat industry is one of the most dire climate threats today, but even earlier in the text she raises numbers from the world cancer foundation that relates to the negative health effects of meat consumption. She presupposes that the meat consumption needs to decrease in regard to the environment, to people’s health and for the resources of the earth to be enough for everyone (Huber 2013). The question of overconsumption of resources be a problem of the solidarity toward people in other parts of the world is important in the social green worldview (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17). To reach the climate goals regarding GHG-emissions more needs to be done about meat production that in the article is said to have a bigger effect on the climate than the transport sector. The author follows with information about the steady increase in meat consumption that exist in Sweden and in the end of the article the negative effects that meat consumption has on health is lifted (Huber, 2013). Health aspects to meat consumption are not specifically lifted in the worldviews by Clapp and Dauvergne but according to the generally positive attitude that Huber has toward a meat tax and the problems she raises with meat consumption, her narrative can be placed somewhere around the social green framework. Huber states that a meat tax is the right way to go in the aim of a sustainable development. A bio environmental framing would probably be that a lot more needs to be done to accomplish a sustainable development or even the future existence of the world’s ecosystems. Huber can therefore not be categorized as a hard-core participant of a bio environmental worldview. Her framework lies closer to the social green narrative since she raises the issue of

resource scarcity in other parts of the world. To include the connection of social justice to environmental problems corresponds with the social green narrative (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.17).

4.2 Frame table

To identify and categorize the thoughts of the authors in different frames, I use indicators from the Clapp and Dauvergne worldviews. Rein and Schön also lift the disposition, the highlighting of different information and the general perception of the issue as important parts of framing (Rein and Schön, 1994, p.175).

The frames of the authors seem to differ on two things: should meat consumption be decreased and would a meat tax work?

The idea of increased information to consumers and green labeling instead of simply adding a carbon tax to environmentally harmful goods go well with the notion of liberalizing the market to get consumers themselves to choose to pay more for greener goods. This notion is included in the market liberal and institutional frame provided by Clapp and Dauvergne. The institutionalist narrative often includes an idea of a so called “polluters pay”-system. A carbon tax on goods that create pollution is something that fits that frame (Clapp and Dauvergne, 2011, p.142).

It is complicated to create clear categorizations of the authors in relation to the worldviews since the worldviews, like the debate, are complex and offers no clear answer to the case of a meat tax. The table presented below will however be my attempt to suggest a categorization of the frameworks carried by the authors of the debate articles. The table will also be a final attempt to answer my research question of what different frameworks can be found in the debate of a Swedish meat tax.

Table 2.1

	Hedenus et al	Coenraads
Corresponding worldview	Bio environmental	Market Liberal
Perception of problem	Acute	Not so acute
Assumptions	Meat consumption is too high and needs to decrease	Sweden has already got an ambitious environmental policy
Solution	Regulations, taxing	Information, green labeling
Framing of meat	Replaceable	Best source of nutrition

Framing of tax	Solves the root problem to include the costs of pollution to the agricultural industry	Economically weak persons and companies would be damaged by a meat tax
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Table 2.2

	Huber	Hedin
Corresponding worldview	Social green	Institutionalist/market liberal
Perception of problem	Acute in regard to environment and health.	Solvable. Swedish consumers are already environmentally conscious
Assumptions	Western world have a responsibility	Bilateral, regional and international regulations
Solution	Implementing a carbon tax on meat	Information, international regulations rather than tax
Framing of meat	Replaceable. Meat consumption harmful for health.	Best source of nutrition
Framing of tax	Necessary to achieve a sustainable development	A meat tax would harm and constrict the free will of consumers

5 Discussion

In this final chapter of my thesis I will discuss and contemplate the findings of my research in the light of discourse and frame theory.

5.1 Closing thoughts

Do I reach my scientific aim and respond to my research question? *What frameworks influence the discourse in the debate of a Swedish meat tax?* The findings of my research actually do show a disparity in the framing of the issue of a meat tax. With indicators from the four worldviews by Clapp and Dauvergne and by categorizing the narratives of the authors to the debate articles in a frame table I show that there certainly are differences to how actors perceive the given issue of a meat tax. As comes with the method of frame and discourse analysis, the aim is not to show causality, and the findings cannot answer to why we do not have a meat tax in Sweden. My research can however help to increase the understanding through an interpretative analysis.

My study shows that there are contesting frames when it comes to the issue of a meat tax in Sweden. The frame theory of Donald Schön and Martin Rein mean that so called political controversies originate from the different understandings and narratives that people have. These narratives influence how an issue is perceived. In my research which applies to the case of a meat tax some actors see it as a relevant solution to a serious environmental problem, where others see it as a pointless infringement to the free will of consumers. That the government representatives did not frame a meat tax as a plausible solution to climate threats increases the understanding that the government does not stand behind a meat tax and will most likely not propose for such a tax in the Swedish parliament.

As Schön and Rein puts it “it is plausible that when scientists or policy makers are caught up in frame conflict, their ability to reach agreement depends on their learning to understand one another’s point of view.” (Schön and Rein, 1994, p.45).

The choice of framing analysis as method and theory also comes with certain implications regarding to the result. The method is mainly interpretative and qualitative which brings limitations when it comes to generalizability of the findings. Applying my research to other cases or issues is probably not very feasible, but hopefully my thesis can present an example to how frame theory can be used to analyze environmental issues. I also hope to inspire future research within the field.

5.2 Future research

My thesis could hopefully motivate to other similar studies. Other categories of framing could be used in additional framing analysis, as well as a different research design with a more actor-focused study. I have chosen not to include factors of influence such as lobbying, but to focus simply on frame theory to identify the frames surrounding the issue. Other indicators than the worldviews I have used can also be included in future research.

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