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Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

**Faculty of Natural Resources and
Agricultural Sciences**

Conservation for Whom?

– Considering Gender and Ethnicity in Relation to Nature
Conservation in Sweden

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Abstract

In 2001 the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ was launched. It emphasized local participation as a matter of democracy. The program should also give women, men and people with foreign background the possibilities to express their view, knowledge and experiences in relation to nature conservation. The governmental letter initiated the LONA-program, a program with a focus on local nature conservation projects where participation was further emphasized. The aim of this thesis is to understand how gender, ethnicity and nationality are constructed within the documents of LONA and what the consequences of this construction might be on participation. By using an intersectional feminist perspective the interaction of hierarchies and power relations are analyzed to see how inclusion as well as exclusion related to these categories are created. This is done through discourse analysis. The connection between national policy level and local level practice is examined through a case-study of Steningedalen nature reserve. The thesis conclude that the above mentioned categories within the documents are presented as fixed and homogenous, this risks of reproducing stereotypes which affect the participatory process. Further it is highlighted whenever a participatory goal is stated that there is a need to focus on creating forms of consensus that assures as equal conditions as possible for all. There is a need to define participation and inclusion and one has to ask: What is the aim of working with these issues?

Key words: the LONA-program, Steningedalen nature reserve, nature conservation, gender, ethnicity, intersectionality, discourse analysis.

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List of Abbreviations

CAB	County Administrative Board
EU	European Union
LONA/the LONA-program	Lokala naturvårdssatsningen – the initiative on local nature conservation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NMR	Natural Resource Management
SEPA	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
UN	United Nations

Chapter 1. Introduction

“Participation is about getting substance within a reserve; how can we do to make people want to be here?” Municipal official at Sigtuna municipality, 23 Mars 2010

In recent years there has been an international trend of decentralization of environmental politics and initiatives, enhanced and promoted through Agenda 21 (Leach et al 1999, Sandström and Tivell 2005:20). These initiatives could be said to be an attempt to bring politics closer to the people. The importance of inclusion and participation has been emphasized both on the basis of democracy and efficiency (Sandström and Tivell: 2005:21). In Sweden this trend can be exemplified through the governmental letter ‘En samlad naturvårdspolitik’ (A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation) launched in 2001. Within the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ the words local communities, local anchorage, dialogue, responsibility and participation are recurring and used as catchphrases. Local participation is a matter of democracy, the governmental letter states. Women, men and people with foreign background shall be given the possibilities to express their view, knowledge and experiences in relation to nature conservation. The gender equality aspect is emphasized specifically (Regeringskansliet 2001:9). When emphasizing participation and inclusion new areas of concern emerge: Who will participate? How is representation fulfilled? And how are platforms for active participation and engagement created? Important is not only to look into but also to problematize how the policies and projects themselves risks of reproducing stereotypes of the groups targeted. This is what I aim to do with this thesis.

‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ is the foundation of several investments and programmes on nature conservation, amongst them ‘den lokala naturvårdssatsningen’ – the initiative on local nature conservation (the LONA-program). The LONA-program was initiated in 2004 and is a program with a focus on local nature conservation projects¹. My aim for this thesis is to understand how gender and ethnicity is constructed within the documents of LONA and what the consequences of this construction might have on participation. To understand the meaning and consequences of the construction of the above mentioned categories my point of departure is intersectionality. By using a feminist

¹ For a more in dept description see Chapter 5 page 23.

intersectional perspective I aim to obtain a deepened understanding of how hierarchies and power relations interact and create inclusion as well as exclusion related to categories such as gender, ethnicity and nationality within the policy documents related to the LONA-program. The categories in the thesis are being socially constructed through discourses and institutional practice. The use of these categories has a potential effect on the outcome of the policies themselves since they are often used without consideration of the effects of their very construction. I have chosen to specifically look into the categories of women and immigrants since the documents of the LONA-program put emphasis on gender-equality and integration of immigrants. These two categories also merge and construct one another but most important for the analysis in this thesis are that they are constructed in opposition to the masculine norm².

Through the use of discourse analysis I want to examine how the policy documents and recommendations for the fulfilment of the LONA-program portrait women and immigrants. To relate to the overreaching discussion of this thesis and to get a notion of how the categories of women and immigrants might affect in a practical management situation a small case study of the LONA-funded project of Steningedalen nature reserve has been conducted. The case of Steningedalen is interesting because it has an integrational aim. The case also demonstrates how policy and practice are interconnected, this is interesting to study since policy text and legislation can create a management framework of how management is practiced in local situations and within regional and local agencies (County Administrative Boards and municipalities). Furthermore this is a way to explore the connection between policy level and the actual implementation.

To further examine how gender, ethnicity and nationality are constructed within the documents of LONA and what the consequences of these constructions might be on participation I have narrowed down to the following research questions: How are the categories women and immigrants portrayed in the policy documents and legislative work formalizing the LONA-program? How might the construction of the above mentioned categories affect the participatory process? On a practical level have these categories been distinguished when establishing the nature reserve in Steningedalen? My hope is to come

² See Chapter 3 for a further discussion.

closer to mapping if and how the construction of gender relations and the relations between ethnic Swedes and immigrants are affected by the presentation through policy text and legislative work. I aim to problematize the possible effect of such a construction and possible reproduction. These issues are of vital importance when, as the LONA-program does, emphasizing participation, inclusion and politics closer to the people.

The connection between gender, ethnicity and participation is, as I perceive it, an under-researched area within natural resource management research, especially in a Swedish context. Therefore I saw it as an interesting and important research area. Since the LONA-program has received funding for yet another period, this further actualizes how participation in relation to gender and ethnicity are at current being worked with within the program. This thesis can be a way of learning from previous projects within the LONA-program. Further, the construction of categories and stereotypes are issue important to be aware of for all kinds of projects aiming at enhancing participation.

The thesis is structured into eight chapters. In Chapter 1 I introduce the reader to the subject and present my motives and research questions. In the following Chapter 2 my methodological and theoretical approach is discussed and motivated. Chapter 3 elaborates and introduces the concept gender and presents why it is important for this thesis and continues to discuss the field of intersectionality. In Chapter 4 I briefly present my material and the methods used for this thesis. Chapter 5 gives an introduction and a background on nature conservation in Sweden and presents the LONA-program. The LONA-program is further assessed in Chapter 6 where the discourses of ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ and other documents related to the LONA-program. Chapter 7 introduces the case study of Steningedalen nature reserve. In Chapter 8 consist of an integrated discussion of the discourses found in the governmental letter, material from policy documents, the guidelines and the interviews. The case of Steningedalen is also analyzed and discussed. In Chapter 9 the thesis is tied together in a concluding discussion.

Chapter 2. Methodology and Theoretical Approach

In this chapter my methodological and theoretical approaches are presented and discussed. I start out by presenting the social constructivist foundation of my feminist perspective and continue to elaborate around language and power and how discourse analysis is used for the analysis of the LONA-documents. Furthermore, nature conservation is presented as a social field.

Methodology

The standpoint of this thesis is found within the field of social constructivism. The notion is that social relations, situations and contexts are constructed by groups of people. Emphasis is put on the creation of knowledge that groups generate within themselves, influenced by society, with the result of a culture of its own with shared symbols with shared meaning (Delanty 2005). The historical context does also heavily affect how meaning is constructed. According to the theory of social constructivism knowledge is always produced in a historical context framed by the culture and interests of specific groups (Ibid:138). This could be applied on both small groups within a society but also on larger groups as the nation state and the creation of nationalism. This implies that we as humans together with other humans create, both consciously and unconsciously, our own meanings and realities as well as reproduce the structures of society. To understand the gendered relations within a society the construction of meaning and created realities on both macro- and micro level has to be understood and examined. This is also important when aiming at assessing and create and understanding of the gendered implications for local management situations of nature reserves in Sweden. It is also interesting to look at how and by whom this is done (Hacking 2001).

Social constructivism can be said to stand on four pillars; a critical stance to knowledge that is taken-for-granted; the importance of historical and cultural specificity; the correlation between knowledge and social processes and the correlation between knowledge and social action (Whinter Jørgensen and Phillips: 1999, Sharp and Richardson 2001:194). Therefore research that is done on a social constructivism basis is not seeking to find some ultimate 'truth' rather to give possible explanations for events (Sharp and Richardson 2001:194). Social constructivism also constitutes the foundation to almost all research within social-science, and especially feminist research (Brayton 1997) which is the more specifically the basis of this thesis.

It is hard to pin point what a feminist research methodology is, rather it is guided by “the motives, concerns and knowledge brought to the research process” (Brayton 1997). The assumptions guiding me in this thesis work are the feminist notion that gender is seen as an essential part to understand social relations, processes and institutions; gender relations are problematic since they articulate hierarchies, dominance, inequality and conflict; and gender relations are seen as socially constructed, a result of socio-cultural and historical conditions (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2000: 210).

Language and Power

The different regimes of power are seen everywhere in everyday-life and we are often unaware of how we take part in the reproduction of those regimes (Delanty 2005:111). Power and language are intertwined. Language is used to reproduce and create power relations and is therefore essential for the analysis of this thesis. The discourses we use can be said to be co-extensive with power (Ibid:112). It is important to distinguish the different forms of power expressed in documents to understand the outcomes of policy and legislation.

Power is also a central concept in feminist research. I have chosen to look at power from a fluid and dynamic perspective influenced by Foucault and post-structural feminism³. Foucault’s notion of power is fluid and relational, its existence is possible through that different groups of people have different positions. Power occur/appear through institutions, norms, language use, scientific classifications and common conceptions and ideas. Seema Arora-Jonsson (2004:365) point to that this notion of power can be used to define power as something more fragmented and dispersed rather than looking at powerful men and weak, unrepresented women (Arora-Jonsson 2004:356). This is important to underline since neither women nor immigrants in this study are seen as passive recipients of external determination. However, one has to be aware of the, internal and external obstacles⁴ for how identities are shaped and how agency is created (Ibid.) Furthermore post-structural feminism interpret gender as a social and linguistic construction dependent on a specific context limited by time and space (Ibid:213). When trying to narrow down how gender and ethnicity are presented in policy texts and documents, which are the basis for the analysis in this study, this notion of

³Post-structural feminism is a theoretical perspective that focuses primarily on construction of language and knowledge as a means to create power and hierarchies.

⁴Internal obstacles are for example the personal values, previous experiences and doubt. External obstacles are for example the context based norms and values framing a specific situation.

how gender is constructed through language use is useful to analyze this matter. The post-structural notion of gender as a social and linguistic construction is also connected to the use of discourse analysis as an analytical tool to interpret the discourses found in the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'.

Discourse Analysis

The main focus for discourse analysis is how different discourses shape and express how we understand the world. A discourse can be said to be a certain way of talking, writing and singing about and understanding the world (Winter Jørgensen and Philips 1999). Discourse analysis are commonly known for looking at and interpreting texts and how certain issues are talked about to elucidate the foundational assumptions and norms. As for this thesis, when looking at gender and ethnicity there is a need to move beyond this textually oriented approach and also look into practice and action. The importance to look beyond the text is underlined by Sharp and Richardson (2001). Sharp and Richardson are influenced by Foucault and his definition of what discourses are : multiple and competing sets of ideas and metaphors embracing both text and practice (Sharp and Richardson 2001:196). This definition of discourses implies that just as discourses are manifested in the rhetoric of policy papers they are also seen in institutional structures, events and practices (Ibid:199). It has to be emphasized that it is therefore important to study both the discourses and peoples intended and unintended actions. In this study this is taken into consideration and in an attempt to make this explicit the case study of Steningedalen nature reserve is presented and analyzed to track the discourses from the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'.

A discourse is a complex entity that extends into the realms of ideology, strategy, language and practice and is shaped by the relations between power and knowledge (Sharp and Richardson 2001:195). By using discourse analysis one can explain the role of how the use of different discourses construct and reproduce the social world and in the longer run, how some unequal power relations are also reproduced and sustained (Winther Jørgensen and Philips 1999:131). When concluding that discourses are ideological a new area of analysis opens up, it is the reality behind the theory, the distinction between ideology and practice. A suitable, even though simplified, example for how ideology can distort how we view the world and be said to be when people in general express Sweden is a gender-equal country. On some level the gap between women and men might have been reduced. However, by social analysis one

can demonstrate that women earn less than men and that there are more men represented in leading positions as an example. In this case the correspondence between how people perceive the situation and what is actually happening is low.

In this thesis discourse analysis will be used as an analytical tool since it provides vital insights for this study of how the categories women and immigrants are constructed and reproduced within language (written and spoken)(Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000:205). Different discourses could be said to limit what can be said or not, why, by who, how and by what authority (Solan 2006:4). Related to management of natural resources this is seen as well. Earlier research projects related to rural development and Natural Resource Management (NRM) show that male discourses dominates and actively exclude women (Ibid:5). By using discourse analysis I aim to contribute to critical research by focusing on and mapping power relations and also show normative perspectives on how these can be criticized and to point in a direction of possible change. The social constructivist perspective would make it difficult to deny the influence of my partiality or subjectivity on the research process (Sharp and Richardson 2001:207).

The Meaning of Participation

Participation and local anchorage are areas of concern not only for the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' and the LONA-program. The last decades these have been issue areas, highly debated, within the development literature as a means to decrease poverty, with a special focus on low-income countries (Cornwall 2002:14). Agenda 21 emphasize participation to bring politics closer to the people. The importance of inclusion and participation has been emphasized both on the basis of democracy and efficiency (Sandström and Tivell: 2005:21). However, participation could be said to be a fuzzy and turbid term when not specified. Many actors both on policy level and on local level call for further participation, however, what does this really imply? Important for the analysis of this thesis is to distinguished that there are several ways of defining participation, which is to be seen in the analysis of the interviews in later chapters.

I do not aim to define participation rather I am interested in looking into how participation is defined and expressed in policy papers as well as by civil servants and representatives from local organizations. This is interesting to distinguish whether the views align or depart, as

well as to assess the consequences of a vague definition of participation, with a possible result of different ways of interpretation.

Everyday-actions and the Reproduction of Gender

For this thesis it is important to understand if, how and why gender relations and power hierarchies linked to these are continuously constructed and reproduced. Here Bourdieu's concepts social field are used. In summation Bourdieu tries to understand the reproduction of class society where power and influence are unequally distributed which seem to permeate society (Månsson 2007:376). Discourse analysis complement this by revealing how this is carried out through the use of language. Bourdieu also points to how everyday actions reproduce the structure of society (Ibid.). This is valuable to understand gender constellations.

Social Fields

The manifestation of social fields through individual's arrangement into groups demarcated by as an example education, profession or professional status is central to Bourdieu and his explanation on how structures are reproduced (Månsson 2007:390). Nature conservation can be interpreted as one such field. Within the different fields the actors compete with one another through symbolic values related to the real assets that provide power and status within the group (Ibid.). This should be underlined as a specific concern for this thesis. Social fields can as well compete with other surrounding fields. Each field consists of a setting of positions defined by relations of an antagonistic character which means that they exist in constant struggle between the barriers of these positions (Callinicos 2000:410-11). These positions are anchored in specific forms of capital or power (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:16). On an individual level a person will adapt to the rules of the game within that specific field as well as develop the habitus required to stay and advance within that field (Ibid.).

One such social field could be the field of natural resource management and in particular, nature conservation. I argue that the field of nature conservation values in Sweden is guided by the view of nature founded in the tradition of stewardship and the Swedish nature shall take care and manage the environment. The Swedish nature romanticism mirror an ideal picture of the peaceful landscapes, rurality and what can be seen as genuinely Swedish. Torsten Gunnarsson curator at the Swedish National Museum express that nature has been seen as a monument and as a creator of national identity. The austere landscape has

historically also been seen as molding a certain types of strong and viable individuals (Gunnarsson 2010). Cultural and biological values, such as the high biodiversity in the traditional agrarian landscape, become intertwined in today's conservation politics, this is further elaborated in the relation to the expressed joint vision on nature conservation found in the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' (see Chapter 6 page 34).

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) has stated that the motto for the agenda on nature conservation in Sweden is: human and nature. The nature conservation politics of today is about preserving, restoring and managing nature and what nature gives (Naturvårdsverket 2010a). Underlined as one of the foundational issues guiding nature conservation is participation. Even though participation is emphasized, who has an influence in reality might differ. It has been stressed that the traditional style of nature conservation has been centralistic and working within a top-down manner (Sandberg 2001 cited in Sandström 2008:33). It has also been raised that the dominating discourse of nature conservation has a tendency to favor government officials definitions of what is to preserve or not and also how this is to be done. Little attention has been paid to issues outside the stated goal to preserve biodiversity such as cultural and economic values (Ibid). In this way the field of nature conservation could be said to be a sub-field within a bureaucratic field. The norms and values of the bureaucrats/officials are implemented, further their view are guided by their values in relation to nature conservation as discussed above. Issues of participation and inclusion of certain groups does not fall within their role of expertise.

Katarina Saltzman, a researcher at the University of Gothenburg, discuss how nature is perceived, and elaborates around whose interests mirror conservation politics and the view on nature today. Who are the ones to take part in nature conservation? Saltzman underline that it is the values founded in the white inner city, middle class who have strong feelings for and close relation to rural areas and nature, that are guiding. She further expresses that what guides us in how we nourish and look a nature is related to our grandparent's landscapes (Saltzman 2010).

Chapter 3. Gender and Ethnicity - The History of 'the Other'

In this chapter I elaborate how the categories women and immigrants are defined as 'the Other' in relation to the masculine norm. I explain how gender and gender equality is used in this thesis and present the theory of intersectionality. In the last section gender will also be more explicitly connected to management of natural resources, where some of the latest research on the topic is presented.

The Masculine Norm

What is central to all kinds of exercise of power is the existence of norms that can exclude, stigmatize and naturalize subordination (de los Reyes 2005:233). In the case of gender relations the subordination of women in relation to men is most conspicuous in how women are being defied in relation to men and serve as second best. To clarify, men serve as the norm of society, seen in medicine it is the male body that serves as the human body (Hammarström 2005: 14) and in relation to natural resource management (NRM) men are the interested and participating public (Maguire 1996 cited in Arora-Jonsson 2004:356). Society is dominated by a masculine structure, in this thesis I will go on my calling this structure the masculine norm⁵. This masculine norm is not equal to the several norms that guide masculinity, rather it is a guiding principle of how humanity and humans are perceived. The masculine norm serves as the basis to define others and construct surrounding categories.

The masculine norm has gone through Western history passing the Ancient World, the dark Middle Ages, the bright days of the Renaissance, the optimistic Enlightenment in to our times quite unchallenged. However, it is important to clarify that the attributes of the norm has changed but it has been permeated by what have been seen as male superiority (Hirdman 2001). In relation to this the concept gender offers a deepened understanding, where it points to how people are shaped and shape themselves as men and women. The concept also helps to manifest and explain how these constructions of men and women are interwoven within culture, politics and the economy (Hirdman 2001:11). In this thesis gender is seen as an essential part to understand social relations, processes and institutions. The gender relations, mostly manifested between women and men, are problematic since they are an expression of hierarchies, dominance, inequality and conflict, besides co-existence. Gender, as expressed

⁵ The male norm could be further explained as a kind of centre, a basis, in relation to other categories that are defined from as 'the Other'. Other categories as an example women and children emanates as a negation in relation to the masculine norm.

above, therefore suits as a concept to analyze the norms created around men and women as well as challenging which norms that are the basis for society. The concept shall also be seen as a tool to understand and explain female subordination and how both women and men constantly reproduce these relations (Hirdman 2001:12). As a concept gender therefore helps us see things that we have not seen before. To talk about gender is to question the masculine norm and to question the structures created around the masculine norm.

Gender equality is another concept important for this thesis and a concept important to understand policies talking about a gender equality perspective. Expressed in proposition 2005/06:155 'Makt att forma samhället och sitt eget liv – nya mål i jämställdhetspolitiken' (The Power to Shape Society and One's Own Life – New Goals for Gender Equality Politics) gender equality is about women and men having the same power to shape society and their own lives (Prop.2005/06:155:1). Furthermore gender equality thus implies an equal distribution of power and influence, the same opportunities to economic independence, equal access to education and development of personal ambitions and interests, a shared responsibility of home and children and freedom from gender related violence (Ibid). It has to be noted that there are different types of gender equality; quantitative gender equality which is linked to equal salary for the same job done and qualitative gender equality which imply that power relations are gender neutral that is to say that these relations are not characterized by imputed gendered qualifications. Gender equality nowadays often circles more around gender equality in quantitative terms. However, this form of equality does not challenge the underlying structures and norms that the discrimination is based on, the structures that serve the foundation of the discrimination is not ruptured. Several scholars, among them Maud Eduards, also point to the risk of enforcing female participation on the grounds that they are women, since it might to further reinforce gender differences (Eduards 2002:36-37).

'The Other'

The concept intersectionality have been used within feminist theory to analyze how the different categories of sex, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity etc interact (or intra act) and are the bases of discrimination and how socially constructed hierarchies are created. This implies that women are seldom just women (de los Reyes 2005). Women as a homogenous group with shared interest does in this case not exist. The categories of gender, ethnicity, race, class, nationality, sexuality and age are hard, if ever possible, to separate. Instead these categories

merge and through mutual processes construct and transform each other (Lykke 2004:8). It is a dynamic process of interlacement of social categories and separate power relations in constant change and renegotiation (Ibid:10).

What differentiates the intersectional perspective from the traditional feminist perspective is the assault approach where the traditional feminist perspective focuses on one relation of power, the gender-power order, which creates dominance and hierarchies. Intersectionality instead points to the complexity of the exercise of power and the creation of inequalities in separate institutional and historical contexts (de los Reyes 2005:233). The foundation of intersectionality is the post-structural notion that society and culture are shaped by constant negotiations of meaning. This implies that discourses are seen as something immaterial but that discourses are manifested through real life situations seen in institutions with norms, rules and principles (Lykke 2004:12).

Lykke (2004) states that the 20th century has been characterized by a continued battle of the meaning of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and nationality. These categories and their hierarchical relation to one another have been constructed as solid, biological and/or culturally essentially founded through the interaction of different hegemonic discourses dependent on time. This implies that the categories are seen as definite rather than as a human creation. As a part of this these discourses have contributed to a normalization, naturalization and institutionalization of some hierarchies, social inclusions and exclusions. These categories have also been used as a technology of power (Lykke 2004:12). One example of such a hegemonic discourse would be the definition of masculinity and femininity as complementary and exclusive categories, where masculinity has a constructed hierarchical placement over femininity (Ibid). By using an intersectional perspective as a point of departure one can elucidate how structural discrimination seen in practices that discriminate are formed and articulated in social hierarchies based on gender, class and ethnicity and operate within separate fields both discursively, materially and symbolically (de los Reyes 2005:235).

In the report 'Borttom vi och dom' (Beyond We and Them) Paulina de los Reyes discusses and points to that just as femininity have been the subordinate other in relation to the masculine norm, as mentioned in the first sections of this chapter, a ethnified and

subordinated other are created in relation to an ethnical Swedish norm (de los Reyes 2005). The ethnified, subordinated other lies as the foundation for structural discrimination and the division of rights and obligations within all parts of society (Ibid). It must be underlined that it is not enough to note that discrimination exist, this does not automatically mean that it is acknowledged as a problem and must be acted upon (de los Reyes). I would also add that it is not enough to state it as a problem issue, but also to take on measures and act upon it to really question the exclusive privilege system that is sustained by the systematic exclusion of certain groups or individuals. de los Reyes also lift the work of Alain Touraine who points to that the problem itself is not an acknowledgement of the right of 'the Other' to be able to speak up from its different identities. Rather focus should be on creating forms of consensus that assure equal conditions for all. The acknowledgement therefore shows possible institutional changes that enable the subject of discrimination to (re)gain her/his right to shape her/his own life (de los Reyes 2005:49).

The imagined Swedishness

Central for this thesis is to look into the imagined Swedishness. This is because it is an important part for understanding the concept of integration and its meanings. What is it really to be Swedish? It can hardly be seen as an essential state (even though some groups might say so) of phenotypic characteristics, cultural values and historical roots. In many cases to be born in Sweden and a Swedish citizenship is not enough to be seen as a Swede. However, there is an imagined Swedishness and possible divergences from it that is vital for how rights and possibilities within the Swedish society are distributed. One key factor to this Swedishness is that it is something of constant change, it is not a stable category. Rather what is seen as Swedish or to be a Swede is defined by its relation to something else. This is a process of exclusion that has created and are still reproducing and creating what in Swedish is called *invandrarskap*, being an immigrant, as a problem and opposite the idealized Swedishness (de los Reyes 2005:235).

The concept of integration relies on this division between we and them. The term integration is normative in that sense that it expresses a vision on how society should be. Paulina de los Reyes means that the foundation of this vision is a notion of a shared national majority that integrates an alien minority. This created dichotomy is problematic since it relies on that there

are clear boundaries between different groups, that there are essential differences between different ethnicities and nationalities (de los Reyes 2005:235-6).

The Gendered Nature of Resource Management

As mentioned in the earlier section gender is nested and interwoven within all social relations, processes and institutions. This also counts for management institutions of natural resources. The question can be asked who controls and determines rights over/to resources, the quality of environment and defines what a healthy environment is (Rocheleau et al 1996). It can also be asked what norms and assumptions guide and construct institutions for natural resource management. Scholars have also raised the question of women's hidden roles and interests in the management of natural resources (Arora-Jonsson 2004:356). Also when project have a participatory aim gender tends to hide within inclusive terms such as 'the people', 'the community' or 'the oppressed'. Social relations and systems are presented as neutral and not gendered. When projects later have been compared to one another it has shown that 'the community' has been the 'male-community' (Maguire 1996 cited in Arora-Jonsson 2004:356), built on the masculine norm. This can be seen also where women's rights and access to resources are couple to men's rights or allocated by institutions controlled and dominated by men, such as organizations and institutions (Rocheleau et al 1996:12).

Another dimension on the gendered nature of NRM and nature conservation in particular is the issue of who sets the agenda and the targets. Who defines what is to be preserved or not? In the book *Feminist Political Ecology* it is suggested that there is "a gendered division of power to preserve, protect, change, construct, rehabilitate and restore environments and to regulate the action of others" (Rocheleau et al 1996:10). It can therefore be said that management institutions of natural resources are not just mere management activities but also social interactions ruled, not only by legislation but also by formal and informal institutions, values and norms. This has great impact on the outcome of the management as such. Important to stress are also the norms and values that underlie current policy texts and legislation regulating NRM in Sweden. Seema Arora-Jonsson has looked into gendered nature of NRM in a Swedish context. She stresses that gender equality and social justice in Sweden are seen as given. There is an established assumption that everybody should be, and in many cases are, treated equally and that common spaces are gender neutral, which makes it hard for women to claim a space of their own (Arora-Jonsson 2008:338). Furthermore, Arora-Jonsson

underlines that the norms of the formal committees and associations are the ones defining the community and work related to the community. The representatives from these committees and associations are often middle-aged men, but are seen as representatives for the whole community (Ibid:339).

Chapter 4. Material and Methods

In the following chapter the materials used for the analysis is presented along with the methods of collecting information in field. Policy documents and legislative text consist of a big part of the material. The ethical considerations related to the research process are also presented.

Material

The material I have primarily worked with is the policy documents and texts related to the LONA-program; the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’, Regulation (2003:598) on Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects, the Guidelines for Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects and The Evaluation Report – Effects on Participation in Local Nature Conservation Projects⁶ (all presented more thoroughly in Chapter 6). Discourse analysis has been used as an analytical tool to interpret the discourses found in the governmental letter, further these discourses have been analyzed and compared with the material collected from the interviews and reading of the other policy documents. Documents related to the case of Steningedalen such as the application to receive funding and the management plan for the reserve comprise the material related to the case. It is through these documents I have done my delimitation.

To get a comprehensive understanding of how gender, ethnicity and nationality is constructed I have drawn on theory of Bourdieu, de los Reyes, Lykke and Hirdman. To build on my understanding and place these categories within the field of natural resource management I have primarily relied on the work of Arora-Jonsson, but also Rocheleau.

⁶ Regeringens skrivelse En samlad naturvårdspolitik, Naturvårdsverkets föreskrifter om statligt bidrag till lokala naturvårdsprojekt, Vägledning för statsbidrag till lokala naturvårdsprojekt, Lokala effekter på delaktighet.

Interviews

In order to examine and complement the discourse analysis of the above mentioned documents I have conducted nine interviews. Five of these interviews have been of semi-structured character, with both open and closed questions and between 1-1,5 hours long. I have chosen the semi-structured form of interview since it gives me the possibility to post topics and have the respondent to freely elaborate on the topic but also gives me the chance to redirect the interview back to the subject of concern. The semi-structured interviews have been conducted with an official at the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) responsible for the LONA-program, the official responsible for the LONA-program at the Stockholm Länsstyrelse, County Administrative Board (CAB), the municipal official at Sigtuna municipality responsible for the project in Steningedalen, a representative from the local group of Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and an interview with a representative and board member from the allotment association Kaprifolen. Four shorter interviews between 10-20 min have been conducted with respondents at the allotment association Kaprifolen, during one of my visits. The barriers to be aware of are of course many when it comes to interviews. As a researcher I had to take into consideration and be sensitive towards cultural codes and how language is used. Further biases on the base of gender, ethnicity, age and educational level also play its part.

Furthermore I have been in contact with the former Minister of the Environment, Lena Sommestad, who was the Minister of the Environment at the time when 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' was launched. Our correspondence has exclusively been through e-mail.

Ethical Considerations

When conducting field work ethical dilemmas are a natural part of work and something I see as extremely important. What has been of primary concern during this process is that collecting information and research work is a part of producing knowledge. When producing knowledge it is always vital to be aware of that the information and the knowledge produced can affect people both in a positive and negative way. Since the focus of this study is not on a personal level rather on the discourses expressed through policy text and documents related to the LONA-program as such I doubt that the results of this thesis will have any negative affect on a personal level for any of my respondents. However, I have chosen to anonymize the respondents by not using their names throughout the thesis to minimize any such risk.

Chapter 5. The Management and Protection of Natural Resources

Chapter 5 gives a brief history of nature protection in a Swedish context and how the institutional landscapes looks like today. In the later section of the chapter the LONA-program is presented more thoroughly.

A Short Review of Nature Protection in Sweden

Just a little over 100 years ago the first nine Swedish National Parks were founded, the year was 1909. Before that there was little formal protection of the Swedish nature (Naturvårdsverket 2009:5). In 1965 a new legislation came into act which made possible for the County Administrative Board (CAB), to found nature reserves. Not until 1967 the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency was founded (SEPA) (Ibid). Nowadays the management of protected areas such as nature reserves and national parks is regulated by the laws in the Environmental Act but also within international agreements such as the Convention on Biodiversity, the EUs bird and habitat directive and the Ramsar convention (Sandström 2008:30).

Since 1965 and the legislation that made it possible for the CAB to establish nature reserves, the CAB has become one of the central agents in nature conservation in Sweden. The overarching responsibility holds the SEPA, which work under the decisions taken by the government. SEPA promotes guidelines and policies which the regional CAB offices are responsible to implement. The policy for nature protection and conservation are amongst other issues under the so called environmental quality objectives. The environmental quality objectives were adopted by the Swedish Parliament with the ambition to solve the country's environmental problems by 2020 (The Swedish Environmental Objectives Council 2009), they consist of 16 measurable targets such as: Reduced Climate Impact, Clean Air, Flourishing Lakes and Streams, A Balanced Marine Environment, Flourishing Coastal Areas and Archipelagos, Sustainable Forests, A Varied Agricultural Landscape, A Rich Diversity of Plant and Animal Life, A Good Built Environment (Ibid).

The CABs have the primary responsibility for establishing nature reserves, they also lay down the regulations for each specific reserve (Sandström 2008:30). However municipalities and local organizations can suggest areas suitable for reservation establishment. When Sweden

joined the European Union (EU) in 1995 Natura2000 as a protection tool was introduced in a Swedish context. Natura2000 is a network of areas of high conservation value that exist within the whole EU to protect species extinction and habitat loss. Natura2000 came to be applied on many nature reserves that already were established, around 5000 different locations for Natura2000 areas has been selected. Out of these 5000 sites 60 percent were already protected as nature reserves (Ibid:31-32). The responsibility for developing conservation plans for the areas as well as selecting suitable sites lies on the CABs (Naturvårdsverket 2010c). National parks, nature reserves and Natura2000 areas comprise 10 percent of Sweden's total area (Sandström 2008:32).

As mentioned above the launch of the 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' revised the agenda and put new emphasis on local participation and support (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173). This was also seen in programs such as LONA, a program to enhance local nature protection (the LONA-program will be further presented in the next section). Local management and influence was further emphasized by the proposition 'Hållbart skydd av naturområden' (Sustainable Protection of Nature Areas) (Reg. Prop. 2008/09:214:65) where the government states that it is necessary that the work with environmental protection continues to develop methods of working that meet the needs of local participation and anchorage (Reg. prop. 2008/09:214:66).

A New Approach - The LONA-program

The 'Lokala naturvårdssatsningen' (LONA-program) is a wide campaign to increase and support local initiatives on nature conservation. The program has its origin in the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' from 2001 but came into place in the 2004. Between 2004-2006 261 municipalities was granted money for 1525 nature conservation projects. The ambition from the start has been to get all municipalities in Sweden engaged in nature protection and conservation and to underline how nature conservation projects have connection to other areas within politics.

Areas of special importance are: increased dialogue with the citizens; developing sectorial responsibility; nature conservation on municipal level and environments in densely populated areas; physical planning; connections between nature protection and regional development; eco- and cultural tourism and management of cultural environments; outdoor life and the

social dimension in nature conservation; a continued establishment of protected areas; preservation of species; the importance of knowledge dispersion, education and information; safeguarding traditional and local knowledge; market-based tools as a potential in the continued conservation work (Naturvårdsverket 2010b).

The administration of the LONA-program on a national level has been handled by SEPA that has had the responsibility to allocate the funds between the counties based on the number of municipalities in each county. The SEPA coordinates the program and distribute material and guidance, yearly meetings, evaluations to and between the counties (Naturvårdsverket 2010b). The regional CABs have been responsible to allocate the funds to projects within the municipalities. Funding has been allocated to municipalities, local organizations and local representatives of governmental agencies or cooperation between all of the above mentioned. The criteria's to receive funding are stated in a key document produced cooperatively between the SEPA and the CABs (Naturvårdsverket 2010b). One of the premises for funding has been that the projects can only be covered by 50 percent of the governmental funds, the remaining 50 percent has to be covered by local actors.

The first period of the LONA-program extended over the period 2004 to 2010 when the last projects have to be presented. However, evaluations from the SEPA have shown that the LONA-projects have been successful and that the program has contributed to reaching the environmental quality objectives connected to nature conservation and protection (Prop. 2008/09:214). In the governmental proposition 'Sustainable Protection of Nature Areas' the government states that the LONA-program shall get new funding and that new projects shall be able to receive funding from 2010 (Reg. prop. 2008/09:110). The new LONA-program shall cover 50 million Skr.

Chapter 6. Discourses within the LONA-program

In this chapter my main findings and results will be discussed. I have chosen to separate and look at the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' and the other policy documents separately at first to see how the texts as objects stands for itself.

The texts

The documents that I find of relevance for this analysis to answer my research question, 'how are the categories women and immigrants portrayed in the policy documents and legislative work, formalizing the LONA-program', are: the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation', 'Regulation 2003:598 on Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects', 'the Guidelines for Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects' and the evaluation report 'Effects on Participation in Local Nature Conservation Projects'⁷. It seems to me that the textual material around LONA is not that extensive. The program is first brought up in the governmental letter, in 2003 the LONA-program was incorporated as a regulation, in 2004 it was taken in to the statute book of SEPA. The foundation of the LONA-program is the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'. The fundamental idea is that local and municipal nature conservation based on local initiatives and participation shall be stimulated by governmental funding (up to 50 percent of total project costs) (Naturvårdsverket 2004:7).

The Initial Purpose – 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'

To understand the regulation and the guidelines from SEPA I believe that it is important to put them in relation to the initial text of the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'. This is also of interest when trying to understand how the guidelines serve as a separate text. In 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' dialogue and participation are underlined as important and guiding, not only for LONA, but for the whole political field of nature conservation. The governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' presents the basic outlook on nature conservation of the former government (which was to be adopted by the new-elected government in 2006). The government gives its views on nature conservation, its motives and up-coming strategies to improve the issue area as such. The document presents several areas of importance in relation to nature conservation. The first issue area of concern is participation and nature conservation "closer to the citizens" (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:31). The municipal nature conservation is also raised as an issue area of big importance and under this paragraph (3;4) the LONA-program is presented. Within the municipal nature conservation, and LONA in particular, participation and local engagement are emphasized as important.

⁷ Regeringens skrivelse En samlad naturvårdspolitik, Naturvårdsverkets föreskrifter om statligt bidrag till lokala naturvårdsprojekt, Vägledning för statsbidrag till lokala naturvårdsprojekt, Lokala effekter på delaktighet.

The LONA-program is mentioned in the governmental letter, however, not yet named LONA but as a campaign/investment for local nature conservation. The government sees it as important to enhance the responsibility of municipalities to engage more in nature conservation. Therefore this campaign is seen as a carrot to increase municipal engagement in nature conservation with the possibility to seek funding for up to 50 percent of total costs for such projects. The basis for the campaign is that nature and nature conservation shall be seen as a resource for the municipality and its citizens (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:50). The projects funded from this campaign/investment shall aim at achieving long-lasting engagement and measures for nature conservation within the municipalities. The demands to receive funding are that at least 50 percent of the costs are covered by the municipality or other stakeholders, that the project serve to fulfill at least one of the environmental quality objectives/goals and that there is some kind of local engagement in/for projects. It is further underlined that the projects shall relate to both the ecological and social dimension of sustainable development (Ibid:49). The governmental letter suggests that the projects shall be developed in partnership and cooperation between different actors. On municipal level areas such as physical planning, regional development, tourism and cultural environment conservation are examples of other issue areas to be included. The agricultural and forestry sectors, private companies, organizations and different networks shall also be seen as partners.

Further integration of new Swedes is emphasized as an important aspect of the LONA-investment. Issues of importance are “how do the new Swedes look at the nature here in Sweden? What are the wishes, the visions and needs?” (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:50) The governmental letter states that the program shall make room for projects that aim at, besides nature conservation, also take into concern the possibilities for citizens from foreign countries to get to know the Swedish nature, both to receive better knowledge and for out-door experiences. Projects that aim to include children and youths are especially important (Ibid). The governmental letter also emphasize that project with gender equality ambitions and projects that aim to improve possibilities for people with functional disorders to experience and receive knowledge about nature shall be considered within the frames of the program (Ibid).

Besides looking at how the LONA-program is mentioned and elaborated in the governmental letter I have also choose to narrow down on three specific discourses. I have done this both since they are of interest to understand how gender and ethnicity is constructed within the documents of LONA but also because I see them as recurrent in the text and of importance to understand the view on nature conservation politics as such. The discourses I see as recurrent are: participation, agency and responsibility and common values.

In the governmental letter one of the first things to be emphasized is participation. A foundation of nature conservation policy is that the whole people shall have access to ‘our’ rich and beautiful nature (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:30). The strategies for nature conservation initiatives and projects shall be developed together with the citizens. It is also emphasized that the planning and realization shall proceed with as good local anchorage and participation as possible, as close as possible to the local interested parties and citizens (Ibid). The call for increased local participation and engagement is emphasized both in terms of democratic aspirations of local engagement over all in political processes but also because of the issue of anchorage which opens up for a continued progressive nature conservation (Regeringskansliet 2001:9). It is stated that the feeling of responsibility increases as well when political processes are more focused on dialogue. Further it is emphasized that the understanding and joint vision around nature conservation is gained because of a more open process as well (Ibid).

It is stated in the beginning of the governmental letter that there are several reasons why there is a need for a new joint nature conservation policy. Amongst other things emphasis is put on the need to develop a dialogue with citizens and the necessity of participation. Gender equality and integration are also emphasized early in the document. In relation to integration of immigrants it is underlined as important to find out how new Swedes see nature conservation and which vision they might have on our future landscape and conurban nature (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:5). In the same paragraph gender equality is raised and the letter states “in the past being in nature, primarily though hunting and fishing, has mainly been a male occupation. How do women’s preferences for nature and spending time in it look like?” (Ibid). Further it is stated in the summary of the governmental letter that “Ultimately the local ambitions are about democracy. All affected shall be given the opportunity to be involved in processes in which the result affects them, it is of special importance to look at gender

equality. Women and men, as well as people with foreign background, shall be given the opportunity to express their view, knowledge and experiences” (Regeringskansliet 2001:9). The importance of both men and women having the possibility to participate in the processes of local nature conservation is further emphasized on the background that women and men might have different visions and views on how to conserve, protect and use the natural and cultural environments. This is also underlined as important on the aspects of integration (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:30).

The second discourse I can distinguish in the governmental letter is on agency and responsibility. The governmental letter states that the nature conservation policy is addressed to all the different actors that strive towards achieving the environmental quality objectives (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:8). The policy does not limit itself to the public sphere at the County Administrative Boards (CAB) and municipalities but also to commercial and industrial life, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), the science community, associations, users and common people. “The government expects all these actors and their different initiatives to contribute to achieve the environmental quality objectives and its intermediate goals tied to nature conservation” (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:8). Further emphasis is put on the fulfillment of the environmental quality objectives which will not be realized if initiatives are posed by the state and municipalities only. “Nature conservation must be a shared responsibility between the state and municipalities but also for land owner, users, companies and the non-profit nature conservation. Also as consumers we all have a responsibility and a possibility through our choices to try to contribute to nature conservation” (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:10). It is acknowledged that the state cannot force engagement and local investments, however, the state still express expectations on all affected actors to contribute to nature conservation. This is to be done though a joint vision (Ibid:11). The private individual is put forward as a central actor, both as a visitor but also as a consumer.

As just mentioned in the earlier section the governmental letter refers to a joint vision about nature conservation. So what could this joint vision have its origin in? In several sections in the governmental letter one refers back to and discusses the common values of nature. As mentioned earlier the government puts forward its motive on a more active policy for nature conservation in the governmental letter. These motives are founded partly in values. “The

government apprehends that these values are values shared by a large number of the people of the country” (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:22). However, in the next section the governmental letter states that it shall be noted that different individuals of course look at nature and the environment in different ways and that nature conservation may have different meanings to different people and groups. Nature is ascribed a cultural value depending on the cultural context (Ibid).

The governmental letter describes the strong need of nature experiences: “Nature gives opportunities to recover, many people experience to be part of a bigger whole. Human beings appreciate nature because it is experienced as beautiful” (Reg. Skr. 2001/02:173:23). Nature experiences are seen as a part of our well-fare, a good habitat. In relation to this the governmental letter states that it is important that all citizens are given the same opportunities to experience and enjoy nature; “these issues are connected to the work with integration and gender equality”(Ibid). In relation to the experience of nature the governmental letter refer to research that most people despite cultural background and their origin experience a reverence towards nature and feel that they can revive in it (Ibid).

Regulation (2003:598) on Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects and the Guidelines for Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency’s (SEPA) Regulations on Governmental Support to Local Nature Conservation Projects and the Guidelines for Governmental Funding of Local nature Conservation Projects are two documents that interact with one another. The first is a brief legal text on how the LONA-program shall be practically implemented. In the regulation participation, as underlined as very important in the governmental letter, is not mentioned.

The SEPA got the commission from the government to develop guidelines to the County Administrative Boards (CAB), the municipalities and other stakeholders for the LONA-program (Naturvårdsverket, 2008:7). The result was an 18 pages long manual where aim, expected outcomes, distribution of roles, format and content of the application and final reports was briefly explained. It is stated that the basis for the LONA-program is the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’, where an integration of nature

conservation, out-door life and culture environment conservation are important (Ibid). The fundamental idea with the investment is stated to be to stimulate local and municipal nature conservation through governmental funding to projects that is built on local initiatives and participation (Ibid). The guidelines present a broad approach where space is to be given to different kinds of measures. However, the guidelines state that the government has one demand and it is that “the projects shall contribute to the fulfillment of one or several of the environmental quality objectives, that have connection to nature conservation and/or out-door life” (Ibid:9). The municipalities are otherwise free to seek funding for projects within the following six categories: development of knowledge, production of basic data, activities related to the process of area protection, conservation and management, restoration and information, mass-education and knowledge dispersion (Ibid).

When the parties apply for funding, there is a specific application form. Even if the project is ran by another stakeholder than the municipality, the municipality are the one carrying the responsibility for the application. An application shall have the following content: Which municipality/ies that seeks funding, expected results and which methods that will be used, which environmental quality objectives that the project aims at contribute to, a time plan, total costs and how much of the total costs that is covered by the governmental funds, the projects connection to the municipals work with issue areas such as public health, regional development, tourism, forestry and agriculture, culture environment conservation and other issue areas related to nature conservation, how the project consider to work with participation and how the cooperation with local stakeholders shall progress and how the project aims at contribute to the municipality’s long-lasting and sustained work with nature conservation (Naturvårdsverket 2004:13).

The application is handled by the CAB of the county the municipality is situated in. The guidelines underline that of most importance for the CAB when assessing the project applications are the purpose and the expected results of the project. However, the guidelines also stress that the CAB:s shall also assess other criteria that are grounded in the purpose of the LONA-program and the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’. “Examples of such criteria are integration of conservation of natural and cultural values, gender equality, integration, public health, promotion of outdoor life, conurban nature,

participation between several actors and stakeholders and NGO's, participation between different issue areas, disabled and elderly citizens, children and youths. These examples shall not be seen as excluding for the judgment of a proposal but as a support for a consequent assessment of all proposals" (Naturvårdsverket 2004:14).

The Evaluation Report – Effects on Participation in Local Nature Conservation Projects

An evaluation of the LONA-program was conducted by Katrin Dahlgren, Katarina Eckerberg och Eva Mineur all from the Umeå University and the Department for Political Science. The study has its basis in earlier evaluations Report 5605 (2006) and Report 5811 (2008), but focus more specifically on participation. Of interest for the study has been who is participating, how is this participation possible and what does the participation imply (Dahlgren et al Undated:9). The study consists of two parts. The first is three surveys of all 21 County Administrative Boards, a selection of 165 municipalities and a selection of organizations. The second part of the study consists of six different case studies in Norrbotten County, Västra Götalands County and Stockholm County. One of the two case studies in Stockholm County is the Steningedalen nature reserve, which will be presented in the next chapter. The researchers of the evaluation report stress that even though gender equality aspects are not part of the regulations of the LONA-program (however, within the guidelines, my remark), this is an important aspect of participation (Ibid:36). Two of my research questions focus more specifically on participation, 'What kind of participation is supposed to be enhanced?' and 'How might the construction of the categories women and immigrant affect the participatory process?', to answer those to questions of special interests are the parts of the Evaluation Report that look more explicitly into how participation has been handled.

One part of the survey circles more explicitly on how participation has been looked upon on the different levels. The researchers conclude that participation have not been of primary concern to the CAB when assessing the funding (Dahlberg et al Undated:18). On municipal level participation was considered foremost in terms of prioritizing projects initiated by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO:s) and projects that during the planning and realization expected to involve a lot of people or new target groups (Ibid:19). The study shows that the LONA-program has awaken interest for and increased knowledge about nature conservation to new groups within and outside the municipal organization, however, these groups are not

specified. It is underlined that this has stimulated an increased use of nature areas and increased interest for out-door life. The program is said to have reached groups of people that commonly not spend time in nature, these groups are not specified either (Dahlberg et al Undated:66). Further the evaluation report concludes that the ambitions of LONA to increase participation in nature conservation both among interest groups and among other stakeholder and to engage more municipalities in the issues of nature conservation has been achieved (Ibid)

One interesting thing to notice is that the administration of LONA differs between different municipalities but also between the municipalities and the CAB:s. At the municipal offices intersectorial work is much more common, neither are the civil servants working with LONA at the municipality only nature conservationists. At the municipality the width of the LONA-program have included the offices of Environmental and Social Planning, the Industry, Employment and Communication Offices as well as the Technical Offices. At the CAB:s the LONA-program have been handled by nature conservationist alone. However, on both levels different forms of consultations have been taking part, this have helped to engage interests such as fishing, agriculture, culture and recreational values, tourism and regional development (Dahlgren et al Undated:67).

The evaluation study refer to that the way the municipalities and CAB:s have handled LONA has favored increased participation. The external NGO's that have been taking part in different LONA-projects answer that they feel that they have been truly participating. Of the asked representatives from the different organizations 90 percent answer that they have been part taking and been able to affect the ideas and design of the projects. Almost as many say that they feel that the cooperation with the municipalities have been working well and that they have been able to take part in the realization of the projects (Dahlgren et al Undated:67).

The expectations on what increased participation might do for the process has been different on the different levels. From the project leaders side, the report states that there has been a process of continued learning to involve new groups. "Several of the case studies show that these experiences, especially important when it comes to adjust the information to different groups of immigrants but also to involve land owners and other local actors on their own

premises” (Dahlgren et al Undated:67). The cases that the different actors agree upon a successful process from a participation-perspective, the process has been characterized by acceptance and autonomy of the actors within the project (Ibid).

As mentioned in earlier sections the issue of gender is however not prioritized on CAB-level nor on municipal-level, at least not expressed in the report. In the case studies in the second part of the evaluation report, the CAB in the County of Västra Götaland it is expressed that no gender perspective has been emphasized when assessing the projects, neither have any of the projects underlined gender aspects in their applications. However, the administrative official at the CAB got the impression that more men than women take part in nature conservation issues/activities at local level (Dahlgren et al, 2008:46). In the specific case of ‘Vattenbruk och miljövård av Skogsån etapp 1’ (Water practice and nature conservation of Skogsån stage 1) in Norrbyarna 8 villages in the municipality of Boden, the work done by men and women differ and is said to be “very traditional”. The men cleared vegetation and stood for the construction of rest and picnic areas and the women for most of the administration. No specific measurement has been done but the common apprehension of the official interviewed is that more women than men use the possibilities for canoeing (Ibid:40). Further, also in the County of Västra Götaland, and the project ‘Naturvandringar för invandrare’ (Nature walks/hikes for immigrants) in the municipality of Gothenburg all of the interviewed agreed on that women and men engaged in different ways in the project. Of the people that took part in the nature experiences, among them nature walks, the prominent majority where women, however, the experience is that the contact on organizational level have mostly been with men (Ibid:49). This project has an integrational aim and is targeted especially towards immigrants. The overarching aim for the project was to “through information and knowledge dispersion on nature walks/hikes give the inhabitants of the area Biskopsgården, which has a high number of immigrants, the possibility to get out and get to know the Swedish nature” (Ibid:47).

Chapter 7. Steningedalen Nature Reserve

In this chapter the case of Steningedalen is presented. The context and characteristics of the nature reserve is described and the documents related to the LONA-project is summarized and discussed. This chapter aim to relate to the third of my research questions; have the

categories women and immigrants been distinguished when establishing the nature reserve in Steningedalen.

Introducing the Context

“This is pretty much as rural as it can get”. The man who sits at the seat next to me laughs and shakes his head. I am on the train on my way to Märsta, Sigtuna municipality, and we are approaching Rosersberg station the stop before Märsta, the end stop of this train. From Upplands Väsby the view outside the train window changed from multistory buildings and garden suburbs to fields, forests and scattered houses and farms. The man next to me continues “I’m on my way to a conference, I mean the host of the conference have their head office a 3 minute walk from the central station (in Stockholm), but for some reason wanted the conference to be held out in Sigtuna”. I myself am on my way to Märsta to visit the nature reserve Steningedalen.

The incident on the train says quite a lot about Sigtuna municipality. Sigtuna is characterized as a rural municipality in a conurbation, squeezed in between Stockholm and Uppsala, just a few kilometers from Arlanda airport. Even though big parts of Sigtuna are of a rural character, Märsta where the city hall is located, can be seen as a suburb to Stockholm, located at the end station of the commuter train. In Märsta the pressure on condensation is high, the few areas of conurban nature are under high pressure and are at present being nibbled at (Interview with municipal official and representative from SSNC). In 2009 five nature reserves were founded, this could partly be said to be a consequence of the governmental program on local nature conservation, the LONA-program.

Because of its location near the airport of Arlanda many parts of the municipality suffer from sound pollution, where the surrounding highways also play their part. The airport and the high ways also contribute to the high levels of polluted watercourses (Sigtuna kommun 2006). However, just outside Märsta the landscape opens up in a rich natural and cultural environment. Several castles, Steninge and Eriksund to mention a few, share the landscape with cottages and farms. Steningedalen is a graben, located southwest of Märsta and spreads south to lake Mälaren. The area is mosaic of different nature types and is rich in bio-diversity (Ibid:9). The area holds both high natural and cultural values. Steningedalen holds a variety of different activities; agriculture, forestry, allotment gardening and is an area highly used for

recreation because of its location close to the housing area Valsta. Before the idea of the establishment of a nature reserve was founded on political level there was a discussion on building a golf course at the location. When the plan of the golf course came to nothing the new plan of establishing a nature reserve was put on the table. The municipality got the possibility to buy the land from a housing-company and the realization of the plans to protect the area and establishing a nature reserve could begin (Interview with municipal official).

The application

In mars 2005 the municipality of Sigtuna applied for 200 000 Skr for the establishment of Steningedalen nature reserve, the municipality itself will invest 200 000 Skr in the project. In the application to the County Administrative Board of Stockholm County (CAB) the municipality stress that they want to develop Steningedalen to an attractive and accessible area for the public (Sigtuna kommun, 2005:1). The area is stated to be very valuable both in terms of water conservation and nature conservation activities and because of its location close to the housing area Valsta (Ibid). Valsta is described in the application as a ‘miljonprogramsområde’⁸, with 12 000 inhabitants of which 84 percent have immigrant background (Ibid). The project fulfills several of the environmental quality objectives, but the objective on ‘A good built up/developed environment’ is underlined as specifically important for the project of Steningedalen. It is stated in the application that “the project is a part of the ongoing work with the municipals environmental quality objectives that state that the conurban nature shall be preserved and developed so that rich experiences can be offered to the visitors” (Ibid:3).

Regarding the establishment of Steningedalen nature reserve the aim from the beginning was to involve the local group from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Friluftsförbundet (An organization promoting out-door life and activities), Valstasatsningen (a cooperation between the municipality and the municipal housing company to develop the Valsta-area), the allotment association Kaprifolen and several other stakeholders, all to be involved in the work of suggestions. It is stated in the application form “the aim is to enhance

⁸ ‘Miljonprogram’ is a generic term of the housing and construction politics in Sweden during the period 1964-75. The Social Democrats wanted to build one million apartments and small houses. In everyday language miljonprogram nowadays has a slightly negative image. The housing areas and architecture, located in suburbs, themselves have been connected and synonymous with a social problematic of segregation and poverty.

the participation and integration from the housing area Valsta. The area has a very high degree of inhabitants who comes from other countries” (Sigtuna kommun, 2005:4).

The long term goal with the project and the continued management of the reserve is presented as follows: “The work with Steningedalen is one step in the municipal work with developing and safeguard land- and water areas for the public.” (Sigtuna kommun, 2005:4). In the application the pedagogical aim with establishing the reserve and its water treatment and nature conservation activities, is further underlined. There are several schools that are located within walking distance from the reserve. One hope is that, because of the strategic location in Märsta, that the measures taken in Steningedalen will bring attention to nature conservation issues within the municipality, and also show that these issues are an important activity within the municipality, by making the valley accessible for the citizens and safeguard it as a meeting point and area for recreation in the future as well (Ibid:5).

In the application the municipality presents how the investment in Steningedalen aligns with other issue areas of the municipal work. Cross-cutting areas are enhancing public health, regional development, promoting tourism, the forestry and agricultural sector, cultural environments, promoting out-door life and nature conservation values (Sigtuna kommun, 2005:5). In the application it is formulated: “The aim of the project is to make Steningedalen more accessible for the citizens in the municipality. This is to be done both to facilitate everyday exercise but also to create meeting places for the people living in connection to the reserve. The nearness to the ‘miljonprogramsområde’ and housing area with a large number of immigrants, Valsta, makes the area strategically important.” (Ibid)

The final report/account

The final report is short and follows the format of the CAB:s guidelines. The description on how the project has worked with participation the description is as follows: “Anchorage and consultation have been conducted with affected stakeholders and other interested parties such as leaseholders, people living in the area, the allotment association and the local group of the SSNC.” (Sigtuna kommun, 2006:5).

The Evaluation Report – Effects on Participation in Local Nature Conservation Projects

The case study of Steningedalen is chosen for the evaluation report because of the stated integration aspirations and a lot of emphasis on accessibility (Dahlgren et al Undated:61). Further the CAB of Stockholm County recommended the researchers to look at Steningedalen on the basis of a participation-perspective (Ibid). The municipality is positive with the results of the project. There has been an ongoing discussion for several years to make the valley into a reserve, however, there has been a low interest on political level to proceed. When the LONA-program was introduced the civil servant saw an opportunity to push for the reserve. One of the factors behind the positive end result is said to be a very engaged and enthusiastic project leader.

Even though there has been no formal cooperation between stakeholders, informal arrangements have proceeded. The municipality has partly engaged the local group of the SSNC, the allotment association Kaprifolen and Vasltasatsningen. The municipality has held consultations with the public. Kaprifolen express that they were not informed about this, the municipality express they were (Dahlgren et al Undated:63). In the report nothing is said on how these consultations where formed neither how the public where invited.

The local group of SSNC is expressed in the report that they are happy with the process and how they have participated. They express that the issue (of the reserve) is “their issue”. For several years they have been working to put nature conservation on the agenda in the municipality. The local group of the SSNC also works as a formal consultative body on other issue areas, and have well established ways of communication with the local politicians (Dahlgren et al Undated:63).

As mentioned earlier, Kaprifolen on the other hand expressed that they were not happy with how the project was handled in its initial stages. They express an urge to have been included from the beginning. As the project went along the feeling of inclusion increased. For the inauguration of the new reserve their facilities were used, at that stage they felt fully included (Dahlgren et al Undated:63). In the report Kaprifolen describes itself as a local promoter of integration. “The ambition is to work as a entry point to club activities and at the same time promote the positive values that that cultivation and an allotment creates for the individual”

(Ibid). The allotment association cherishes the feeling of solidarity (gemenskap), it is important that everybody feel that they are a part.

The natural values in the valley have increased (more birds and re-colonization of otters in the river etc) and the municipality estimates that the number of visitor has as well (no specific numbers are measured). However, the members of the allotment association note that more people pass the allotments (one of few entries to the reserve), it is especially noted that more immigrants pass by. The pressure to join the allotment association has also increased, and most people on the waiting list are immigrants (Dahlgren et al Undated:64). The municipality has also understood the importance of information in different languages though the cooperation with Valstasatsningen (Ibid).

Chapter 8. Discussion

In this section I aim to answer my research questions related to the above presented material. To answer my first research question: How are the categories women and immigrants portrayed in the policy documents and legislative work formalizing the LONA-program? I analyze and discuss the discourses from the governmental letter together with the results from my interviews and the other policy documents. The analysis continues to circle around the second of my research questions on what the possible effects of a reproduction of stereotypes of the categories women and immigrants might have on the participatory process. Further on I link back to the third of my research questions; have the categories women and immigrants been distinguished when establishing the nature reserve in Steningedalen. In the last section of this chapter the case is connected to the discourses presented in Chapter 6.

Reflections on the Texts and Interviews - The Dynamic Document and Its Implementation

In this section I will start out by discussing the discourses I highlighted in the governmental letter connected to the interviews I made with the civil servants on the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and the County Administrative Board of Stockholm County (CAB). I will continue by discussing the Regulation (2003:598) on Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects and the Guidelines for Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects and the Evaluation report to see if the discourses from the governmental letter constitute a read thread into these documents.

Who Sets the Discourses?

Generally one can discern that the inclusionary and participatory aim is clearly emphasized but not defined in the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’. When documents do not specify what participation in this sense is or how to work with participation and inclusion this can create confusion for implementation. That are one of the concerns with policy text that while they express a vision on how things should be, it is harder to get into practice and real life politics. Throughout the governmental letter the discourses found are; participation, agency and responsibility and common values.

Lena Sommestad the former Minister of the Environment underlines that participation is seen as a key-issue for the new nature conservation politics. She further emphasizes how the governmental letter was developed, through a dialogue on environmental conferences. Kjell Larsson, her predecessor was engaged in that process. In my interview with the official of SEPA the connection nature-human, as underlined in the governmental letter is also the foundation of LONA. This view slightly differs from the view on CAB-level where it was expressed that that the aim from the beginning was to enhance municipalities engagement in nature conservation. The representative from CAB stated in the interview: “It is important to stress that the aim with LONA from the beginning was not to increase participation but to get the municipalities to take their responsibility regarding conservation issues”.

Since participation is not defined in the governmental letter or in the regulation or in the guidelines, I asked during my interviews with the officials at the SEPA and the CAB to define participation: “On the perspective of SEPA and how we work with education to enhance local dialogue, participation is a way to minimize potential conflicts. On a personal level I see participation as a way to awaken the engagement of real enthusiasts and engaged people and give them tools to be able to affect their own situation”. The official at the Stockholm CAB express it like this: “Participation moves on a scale from information, as the lowest form of participation, to at the top of the scale working together for a common cause and benefits.” At CAB-level is emphasized that participation also can be on different levels between and within organizations. The official underlines the dialogue and participation between officials, both within the municipal organization but also between the CAB and the municipalities. However, when assessing the LONA-application, little attention has been paid to participation, it has

been checked that it has been mentioned but have not been looked further into. For example, there has not been any assessment of which groups that will take part but projects that aim at including immigrants and disabled people have been prioritized, these projects have, however, been very few. This correspond to the results presented by the evaluation report where it is stressed that participation have not been of primary concern when assessing funding (Dahlberg et al Undated:18). The official I talked to at the Stockholm CAB expressed that “it feels a bit strained to demand participation”. However, both the officials at SEPA and CAB-level admit that participation is important when it comes to nature conservation.

It is interesting that even though participation is underlined as one important part of the LONA-program little attention has been paid to it while assessing the applications. It is clear that participation seems to be a phrase that is important to incorporate, but also hard to define which makes it even harder to implement. The guidelines from the SEPA seem to put less emphasis on participation and give no guiding on how to look at and assess the participatory aspirations of the local projects. No guiding to the local organizations or municipalities has been distributed on how to work with participation or how to create platforms for active engagement. When working with participation and constructing guidelines for how to work with participation it is important to look into which groups that take part and influence the process. However it seems that this is something that has been forgotten.

The discourse on responsibility and agency that I see clearly in the governmental letter ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ is expressed at SEPA and CAB-level however, with a different focus. In the governmental letter the individual responsibility is emphasized and underlined. In the interviews both the officials of SEPA and the Stockholm CAB expressed the lack of responsibility taken by the municipalities in the past regarding nature conservation. None of them stressed responsibility on an individual level. However, the official at Stockholm CAB expressed, when we talked about participation, that it should involve some kind of activity. This implies that individuals have some sort of responsibility if they are to participate. One can discern a difference in approaches towards individual responsibility. The governmental letter refers to that people shall participate because they have a responsibility to contribute to nature conservation compared to the approach expressed at CAB-level that if

people are to participate they have a responsibility to engage actively and contribute to the projects.

In 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' imposing responsibility is also a way of creating agency, that people have an individual possibility to take part and that they have the responsibility to do so. Here it is important to underline that all people do not have the same means to participate, or the same interest. As discussed in Chapter 5 there is a risk of excluding women if not specific measures are taken to include and involve them, this might be the case with immigrant groups as well. Furthermore the 100 year long tradition of centralization of nature conservation makes it hard to impose participation through constructing responsibility through the governmental letter, further means has to be incorporated. If people are to be and really feel responsible for nature conservation I see a need for active initiatives to create platforms for active participation. I see a need for a discussion on how to create processes that are open and inclusionary to make people want to and take their responsibility to participate. For this discussion to be fruitful I see an opening for the intersectional perspective.

The third discourse within the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' is the discourse on common values. What is interesting to discuss here is if it is even possible to talk about common values and what those values would narrow down to. The governmental letter both calls for a joint vision but also refers to values that are representative for the majority of Sweden's population. This aspect is further problematized in the up-coming section.

The Construction of 'the Other'

In connection to the above mentioned discourses are the construction of gender and ethnicity very interesting. In the governmental letter, and also in the LONA-program, inclusion and participation are of vital importance for nature conservation. In the governmental letter this is underlined as an issues of democracy. When talking about participation it is important to look deeper into not only who participates and how, but how projects aim at making it possible for people to take part. Both gender equality and ethnicity aspects are mentioned in relation to this. It is however also important to see how both gender and ethnicity are expressed and constructed in the texts, to see what the terms imply. This is what I aim to do in this section.

The Female Minority

First out to be scrutinized is the assumed reproduction of gender and the gender equality aspirations. What is interesting to note is that the governmental letter differs from the LONA-documents regarding emphasis put on gender equality. In 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' the democratic ambition of involving gender equality aspects is put forward, both in terms of women giving their view, sharing experiences and knowledge related to nature conservation. It is further emphasized on the basis that women and men's experiences and visions might differ. This could partly be so because how men and women have in different ways used or spent time in nature. According to the governmental letter being and spending time in nature has primarily been a male occupation, through fishing and hunting activities (Reg. Skr.2001/02:5).

In relation to the LONA-program and the documents ruling the investment the importance of gender equality fades away. In the 'Guidelines for Governmental Funding to Local Nature Conservation Projects' gender equality is mentioned when it comes to assessing the projects to be funded at the level of the County Administrative Board (CAB). The CAB:s are primarily to look into what the purpose and expected outcome of the project are. The CAB:s shall also assess if projects aim at any of the other criteria stated in the governmental letter. The examples put forward are; integration of conservation of natural and cultural values, gender equality, integration, public health, promotion of outdoor life, conurban nature, participation between several actors and stakeholders and NGO's, participation between different areas of politics/issue areas, disabled and elderly citizens, children and youths.' (Naturvårdsverket 2004:14). By stating that these issue areas are important to consider in relation to nature conservation, does this imply that these are areas not earlier included in nature conservation politics?

I would like to further problematize how the category of women is lumped together with what can be seen as minority groups. The right of minority groups shall not in any way be put aside in democratic processes, however, it is problematic to mention gender equality as an aspect to be considered together with projects that target immigrants and disabled. Women do comprise 50 percent of the population and shall therefore not be considered as a minority group. Gender equality aspects should instead be incorporated so that projects target the population as a

whole. The masculine norm can be said to be reproduced since projects that aim to target and include gender equality ambitions, immigrant or disabled are projects to be 'special'. Does this imply that most projects do not take these considerations into concern and what would be the effect on participation? As emphasized in Chapter 5 under the section 'The Gendered Nature of Natural Resource Management' social relations and systems are presented as neutral and not gendered. Participatory aims of targeting the community and the people often show to be representative for the 'male-community' where women's participation lack (Maguire 1996 cited in Arora-Jonsson 2004:356). The formulation of considering gender equality as an aspect of important when assessing the project application, however, just as guidance, could be expressed as a way of accepting the masculine norm as ruling for these projects and institutional arrangements.

In my interviews it is expressed both on CAB and SEPA level that there is no need to put harder demands on gender equality in relation to nature conservation projects. This conflate with the established assumption in Sweden that everybody is treated equally and common spaces are gender neutral which is emphasized by Seema Arora-Jonsson (2008:338). This is so even though the evaluation report showed that gendered relations are reproduce within some projects, where women do the more administrative tasks and the men do the construction (Dahlgren et al Undated:40). In another case women took big part in the activities but the communication between the municipality and the CAB with the partaking organizations was mostly directed towards men and male members of the organizations. In both the interviews with the official of SEPA and at Stockholm CAB I raised the demands related to gender equality put on projects funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). Neither of the officials thought that this was suitable for projects in Sweden. This further confirms what is put forward by Arora-Jonsson about how gender equality is perceived in Sweden. Furthermore it is related to the distinction and distance between ideology and practice as mentioned in Chapter 3 and the section on discourse analysis. The ideological discourse of gender equality can be said to distort how the actual situations look like. According to the discourse men and women shall take equal part in democratic processes and that their interests shall be taken into equal consideration. However in 'reality' there are still plenty to do for this to realize gender equality, amongst other things to take on specific measures for it to become reality.

In my interview with the official of SEPA it is expressed that gender as a category have not been specifically assessed or taken into consideration. The official believes that this is because a lot of women are interested in nature conservation and that there therefore is a quite even participation between men and women. This statement is not based on any assessment, rather is it an expression of the SEPA officials conception of the situation. This is an expression of quantitative gender equality, which dominates the gender equality debate in Sweden. The risk when only looking at the quantitative numbers of men and women participating is to forget the underlying structures that risks of reinforcing gendered relations as well as constraining participation. The Evaluation Report touches upon gender-equality aspects, however, both qualitative and quantitative assessments lack in relation to the gender-equality aspect.

The Reproduction of Swedishness

In Chapter 5 I discussed the imagined Swedishness, a construction of what Sweden is and what it is to be a Swede. I argued that, since what is Swedish or who is Swedish is not a stable category, this is almost always defined in relation to something else, in this case immigrants. Therefore one can recall what is Swedish by looking at how immigrants are constructed. This connected to the values and underlying assumption that guide the participatory discourse of the governmental letter 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation'. In the governmental letter the participatory aim is said to be about democracy. Furthermore this is said to play a significant importance when addressing gender equality as well as integration of immigrants. Nature conservation is put forward to serve as an integration tool. In my interviews with officials both at Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and the County Administrative Board (CAB), they express that projects with an aim of involving immigrants have been favored in the process, these projects have been few though. The official at Stockholm CAB express that nature conservation can be a tool for integration since it helps understand the image of nature and nature conservation in media. It is a way to understand why Swedes spend time in nature, as a source of relaxation.

The official at SEPA express that one part of feeling integrated is to feel secure and safe in the environments of a country. The official brings up the underlying assumption on why nature conservation might be a tool for integration: "That we see nature conservation to be part of

integration may have its origin in our conception that we as Swedes are very environmental friendly, however this is not the case anymore. This might be an issue of age, today's youth are not that interested in nature." The notion that Swedes are environmental friendly is particularly interesting when linking this utterance to the governmental letters discussion on a joint vision and to common values held by the majority of the population. A joint vision on nature conservation must have its basis in common values shared by the large majority of people. Where will these values come from and how are they established? 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' expresses ambiguity when it comes to the common values. It is stated that the foundation of the nature conservation politics are based on values that is shared with the majority of the Swedish people (Reg. Skr.2001/02:22). In the next section it is expressed that how people view nature differ between different groups (and expressed both in relation to gender and ethnicity) (Ibid). Nature is ascribed a cultural value that differs depending on the cultural context. Furthermore the governmental letter states that most people despite their cultural background and their origin experience a reverence towards nature and feel that they can recuperate strength in it (Ibid:23).

As the official at SEPA mentions that one underlying cause to why nature conservation serve as a good integration tool is that there is a belief that Swedes are environmental friendly and spend a lot of time in nature. I perceive this notion as well. As highlighted in Chapter 3 the Swedish nature romanticism is still vivid today, it seems deeply rooted within the social field of nature conservation. Nature is something beautiful, a place for recreation and peace. This is expressed in 'A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation' through phrases such as; "our rich and beautiful nature" (Reg. Skr.2001/02:30) and "nature gives power and opportunities to recover..." (Ibid:23). Along with nature romanticism the out-door movement grew strong and the interest to spend time in nature for recreational purposes developed. The promotion of out-door life and activities seems to be an important part of the LONA-program as well, especially when targeting "new groups" that do not spend much time in nature. Nature is not only something to be preserved it is something to be experienced. At both SEPA and CAB-level this is something expressed during the interviews. Furthermore, it might play its part that nature conservation could be seen as a subfield within a bureaucratic field. Where the norms and values of the bureaucrats/officials implement their view and are guided by their values in

relation to nature conservation. When having to work with participation and inclusion, which normally does not fall within their role of expertise, this creates problems.

As discussed in Chapter 5 the foundation of integration lies on a dichotomy between we and them. Integration is also normative in that sense that implies that there is a vision to strive towards, a way a society should be. Does the aim of approaching immigrants through nature conservation projects reproduce this? In a sense yes. The creation of we and them can be seen in the ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ through how the dichotomy Swedes and immigrants is reproduced and constructed in relation to one another. The notion I get is that the image of immigrants that is constructed is that they have a ‘different’ view on nature conservation, they have little knowledge about it and because of this do not want to spend time in nature. It also implies that people coming from our neighboring countries and countries with a similar natural environment are not really immigrants. People with a big knowledge about nature with degrees in ecology or biology or self-taught botanists, ornithologists or farmers, they might both have knowledge and interest in nature, however, as immigrant they are perceived as having the opposite. This shows one of the problems of lumping together a very heterogeneous group. If immigrants are defined as people who have moved to Sweden but with their origin in another country, this implies that there is a possibility of people coming from 243 different countries. Do they all share a view on nature conservation? Probably not.

Expressed during the interview with the official at SEPA is that a lot of the projects that target immigrants have resulted in project for, rather than projects of and for. This is said to be because of the information from SEPA on which organizations and associations that can receive funding. This result is, however, not surprising when looking at the images of immigrants constructed in the governmental letter.

Accessibility for Whom?

“If an area holds natural values everybody should have the possibility to experience it.”

Municipal official at Sigtuna municipality, 23 Mars 2010

In my interview with the municipal official from Sigtuna municipality accessibility is underlined as extremely important for all nature conservation projects within the municipality. This is also confirmed in my interview with a representative from the local group of SSNC and in the Evaluation Report. Accessibility stands out as a prominent discourse for the project in Steningedalen. Hand in hand with the accessibility is the discourse on participation and engagement especially to get people from the neighboring housing-area Valsta involved. The official from the municipality express that participation is about getting substance within a reserve; how can we do to make people want to be here? The official furthermore express: “Real participation involves that I have to handle suggestions that I perceive as stupid in a good way. I’ve done this through giving the suggestions a lot of thoughts and trying to listen to everybody. What I first perceived as stupid have turned out to be really good.” This flexibility seems to me as an outside observer to characterize the process of establishing a nature reserve in Steningedalen.

Valsatsatsningen is emphasized as an important tool to involve people from Valsta. Valsta is mentioned in the LONA-application and described as an area where 84 percent of the people have immigrant background and is therefore seen as strategically important. By a coincidence the first contact the municipal official had with residents from Valsta was with a group of unemployed immigrant women. This possibility is underlined as very fortunate. The municipal official underlines the importance of getting contact with a group that is otherwise quite anonymous. Gender equality has not been something that has been considered specifically within the project. Integration of immigrants is underlined as important. When I asked the municipal official to define what integration of immigrants connected to nature conservation projects is, the municipal official has a hard time pin point it but express that integration is about getting people to meet. This is something that the allotment association has contributed with in this project.

Kaprifolen, the allotment association is put forward as the heart of the reserve. This is expressed both in my interviews with the municipal official, the representative from SSNC and the representative from the allotment association itself. In the evaluation report and through the interview with the municipal official it is put forward that Kaprifolen serve as a promoter of integration. The representative from Kaprifolen express that cultural diversity is a

key-issue for the association. “In the association it is important that there is a mix of people, not only Iraqis, Iranians or Swedes. This is good for integration.” Furthermore the representative from Kaprifolen express: “Many people that come to Sweden might come from a culture of agriculture./.../Then cultivation is a way to feel at home. That is fun because here there is a mix of an old Swedish culture and tradition, the allotments, with the nature reserve. It’s perfect. It’s a meeting between culture, humans, nature and animals.”

My perception is that the view on integration expressed both by the municipal official and the representative from Kaprifolen differs quite a lot from the view on integration expressed within ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ and the views expressed at the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and the County Administrative Board of Stockholm County (CAB). I perceive it as the latter focus more on a joint vision of getting ‘the Other’ to understand ‘us’ and ‘our (the Swedish?) view’ on nature and nature conservation. The view expressed from the representative of Kaprifolen and the municipal official circles more around getting people together and to create meeting places. This is partly expressed in the application for LONA through the formulation: “making the valley accessible for the citizens and safeguard it as a meeting point and area for recreation in the future as well” (Sigtuna kommun 2005:5).

Practically the accessibility has been to work with that the reserve shall be a place to be visited and not frightened. By increasing lightning, putting up signs and fencing the cows the area have become more accessible. Furthermore rest places with benches and picnic tables have been constructed. There is now plans to put up areas for barbeque which have been something asked for from the people involved in the process. The municipal official express that this is a coalition between two views on nature, where we have the untouched nature common in conservation politics with the instrumental view of using nature for barbeques. This could be described as a flexible approach toward nature conservation. In relation to conurban nature where the aim of preserving and conserving is to safeguard natural environments for everyday recreational possibilities this is very suitable. In these cases accessibility and to make possible for people to use, access and experience nature is vital. Maybe it is not desirable to create a joint vision in these cases, rather to get multiple visions and interests to create new flexible forms of conservation and management.

Not mentioned in the documents of Steningedalen but uttered in the interview with both the municipal official and the representative from the local group of SSNC is the issue of age. The municipal official expressed the importance of including schools and day-care centers. As an example the day-care centre Solblomman, located in Valsta, expressed that they needed a new place to be on their specific “out-door days” since their current forest glade had been destroyed due to construction of a new block of apartments. The municipal official could help them find a new spot within the reserve. Expressed by the SEPA official is also the importance to work with day-care centers and schools to in an unconstrained way work with integration of immigrants. In the Evaluation Report concern is expressed from the municipality that youth is a group that has been hard to target. Most of the people that visit the reserve are older people (Dahlgren et al Undated:65). The majority of the members of both the allotment association and the local group of SSNC are retired (Ibid). However expressed during my interview with the municipal official is that youths have been one of the first groups to find the new reserve. The picnic-places have become so called ’tillhåll’, haunts, for young people. This can be seen through minor to more severe vandalism. The municipal official express that instead of being appalled by the vandalism we should look at it as amazing that the youths are among the first to establish a place within the reserve. He concludes: “some picnic tables might have to be sacrificed.”

The integrational aim with the project in Steningedalen, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, can be connected to the analysis in Chapter 6 and the Construction of ‘the Other’. Some of the same thoughts and ideas can be found within the documents of the Steningedalen-project and in the interviews with the municipal official. The municipal official expresses that: “It is important that natural values are available for everybody also for society’s segregated areas and neighborhoods, where people might be afraid of nature”. Furthermore the municipal official utter how his own prejudice have been challenged by in the beginning assuming that the people from Valsta would not be interested in the reserve-plans, but they really were. This could be linked to how the LONA-documents portray immigrants as afraid and uniformed about nature and therefore not want to spend time in it. Interesting to point out is how the municipal official expresses how this view has been challenged by meeting people from Valsta and talked about the matter. In the interview the municipal official underlines that the problem itself is not the lack of integration but the economic segregation. This is interesting

and something that has come across my mind while reading ‘A Joint Policy for Nature Conservation’ and other documents related to the LONA-program. Poverty or exclusion based on class is not highlighted within neither of the texts even though it is a factor of exclusion, instead ethnicity and culture are factors put forward. Social exclusion on class-bases can be connected to whose interests that mirror conservation politics as Saltzman express it. She underline that it is mostly about a white inner city, middle class who have strong feelings for and close relation to rural areas and nature (Saltzman 2010). This is related to the norms that guide the field of nature conservation.

In my interview with the municipal official it was expressed that despite participation and inclusion have been prominent in the process there has been no structured way of working with these issues. My perception is that participation has been on a personal level and dependent on the engaged municipal official. The municipal official expressed in our interview that: “It is important but hard to look at who participates and whose voice is heard, whose interests that actually benefits.” I see this as an issue of vital importance. Not only is it hard to ‘forget’ issues of importance and as seen in previous research to follow the already well know and established paths, which often excludes certain groups. It is also problematic since it is hard to learn from the good examples and the mistakes that come with the process.

In the case of Steningedalen it seems to me that the focus on accessibility and the interest and engagement in really getting people to visit the reserve have resulted in an inclusion of aspects important for participation. To have the allotment association in the reserve and participating in the process have contributed to get a wide distribution among participants. Underlined by the representative from SSNC, in the Evaluation Report, by the Stockholm CAB, the SEPA and by the municipal official is the importance of engaged people. And the municipal official is described by the above mentioned as one truly engaged person. It is however problematic to rely on single persons engagement. The municipal official expresses that it would be good with stronger demands to include gender equality and integration aspects within similar projects. “It would do a lot for the process and these issues could not pass unnoticed.”

Chapter 9. Conclusions

In the final chapter I summarize my research and draw the conclusions of the discourse analysis made and the case-study of Steningedalen.

What is Being Conserved?

The aim of this thesis has been to develop an understanding of how gender and ethnicity is interpreted and constructed within the documents of the LONA-program and what the consequences of this interpretation and construction might be on participation. This is because of the use of categories such as women and immigrants have a potential effect on the outcome of the policies themselves since the categories are often used without a consideration of the effects of their very construction. I have discovered that both women and immigrants in the documents are defined in opposition to the masculine norm, this can be seen in how projects that aim to target and include gender equality ambitions, immigrant or disabled are projects to be 'special'. This relates to my first research question: How the categories women and immigrants are portrayed in the policy documents and legislative work formalizing the LONA-program? Furthermore women and immigrants are portrayed and constructed as homogenous categories.

The categories of gender, ethnicity, race, class, nationality, sexuality and age are hard, if ever possible, to separate. Instead these categories merge and through mutual processes construct and transform each other. Initially I aimed at working with intersectionality as an analytical tool, however this showed hard, instead intersectionality have guided me as a point of departure and a perspective to deepen the analysis of participation and inclusion. In the documents I have analyzed the categories of gender, ethnicity and nationality and how they are presented as fixed. In relation to the establishment of the nature reserve in Steningedalen the issue of age and class are emphasized by the municipal official. In the guidelines for LONA the issue of age is emphasized. However, no further analysis is assessed on how the categories of age, gender, ethnicity, class and so forth interact, neither in the governmental letter nor in the LONA-documents.

These fixed categories mentioned above, not only women and immigrants, risks of reproducing stereotypes which affect the participatory process. This was what I aimed at

targeting with my second research question: How might the construction of the categories women and immigrants affect the participatory process? In Chapter 3 I discussed the risks with working with projects with an integrational aim. In relation to nature conservation projects that have an integrational aim there is a risk of not only conserving natural values but also conserving the dichotomy between we and them. This rigid dichotomy is problematic since it is based on the assumption that there are clear boundaries between different groups, that there are essential differences between different ethnicities and nationalities. Integration projects risk of constructing and reinforcing a stigmatized relation, by constantly comparing immigrants and ethnic Swedes as well as men and women. When working with integration in relation to nature conservation there is therefore a risk of not only conserving natural values but also cultural values and the categories that are constructed in the process, as mentioned above. This becomes especially problematic when integration of specific groups should be raised without any detailed guidance on how to tackle participation and inclusion. As the Evaluation Report shows it is primarily nature conservationists that work with the LONA-projects and they might have a limited experience of working with the issues of participation, inclusion and discrimination. This could be connected to that nature conservation could be interpreted as a sub-field of a bureaucratic field, where the norms and values of the bureaucrats/officials are guiding for implementation. When having to work with participation and inclusion, which normally does not fall within their role of expertise, this creates the problems mentioned above.

It is expressed both on SEPA and CAB level that the projects targeting immigrants are few and the projects emphasizing gender-equality non-existing. Despite this neither the official of SEPA nor CAB expresses any necessity to put more pressure on integrating these groups, interests or aspects. Furthermore the SEPA believe that there is a problem that the projects that has been applied to target immigrants as a specific group have resulted in more projects for, rather than projects by. I argue that it is not enough to state a participatory aim as with the LONA-program, measures have to be taken to make projects participatory. I suggest that this includes questioning the exclusive privilege system that is sustained by the systematic exclusion of certain groups or individuals. Focus should be on creating forms of consensus that assure as equal conditions as possible for all.

Related to my third research question: Have the categories women and immigrants been distinguished when establishing the nature reserve in Steningedalen? The category immigrants have partly been distinguished, but not women. The focus on getting people from Valsta to take part, the focus on accessibility and the interest and engagement in really getting people to visit the reserve have resulted in an inclusion of aspects important for participation. To have the allotment association in the reserve and participating in the process have contributed to get a wide distribution among participants.

Conservation for Whom?

It is vital for nature conservation projects to ask why and for whom an area is being conserved. This is especially important in the case of conurban nature, where the aim in most cases, are to protect and safeguard areas from exploitation because of its recreational value to people living close by. My suggestion is to put further emphasis on accessibility. I furthermore suggest that accessibility and participation in this sense merge, which can be seen in the case of Steningedalen. The LONA-program gives the possibility to demand higher measures on inclusion and participation. In a sense the demand for participation is one way of doing this. However, as seen from previous research and within the Evaluation Report this has shown to be hard. There is a need to define participation and inclusion and one has to ask: What is the aim of working with these issues? Furthermore, it has to be emphasized how aims are formulated and made possible to implement both on policy and local level. Neither participation, inclusion nor the aims of upcoming projects shall not only be words on a paper, but be possible to implement in practical situations. There also has to be a frequent assessment of project outcomes by extended auditors. This might make the processes of nature conservation projects longer and harder but more democratic and hopefully more deeply anchored. Not just nature conservation closer to the people but in the long run maybe nature conservation by the people.

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