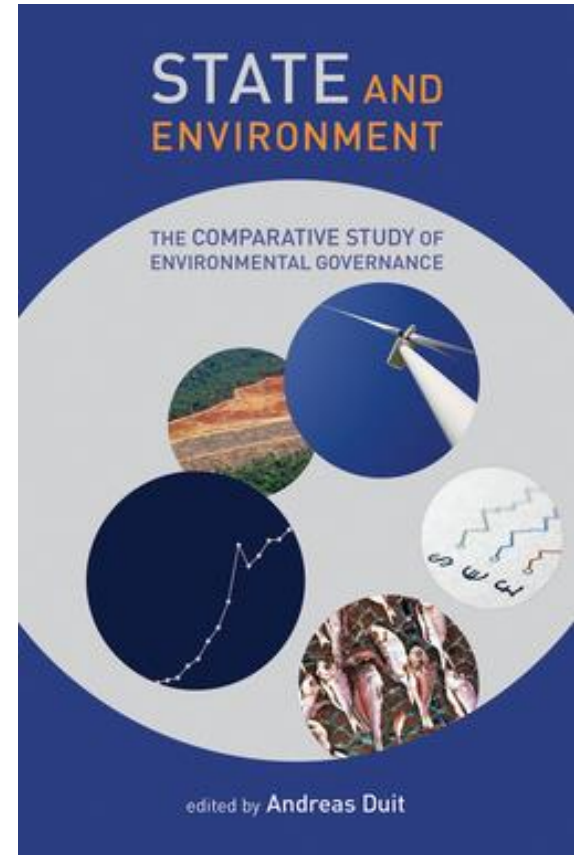
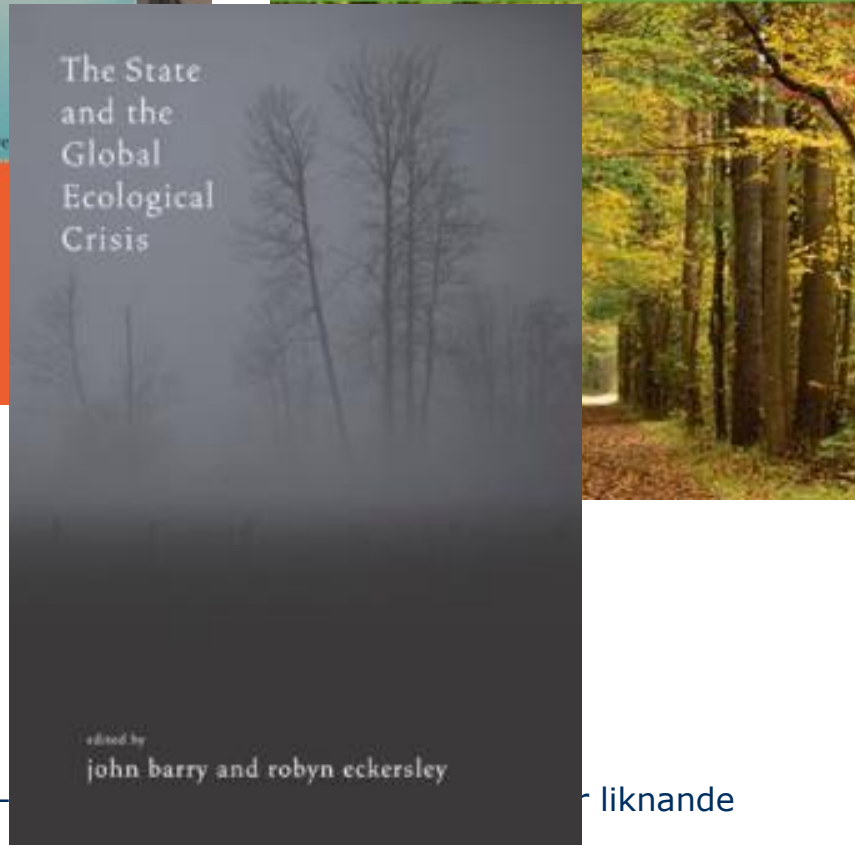
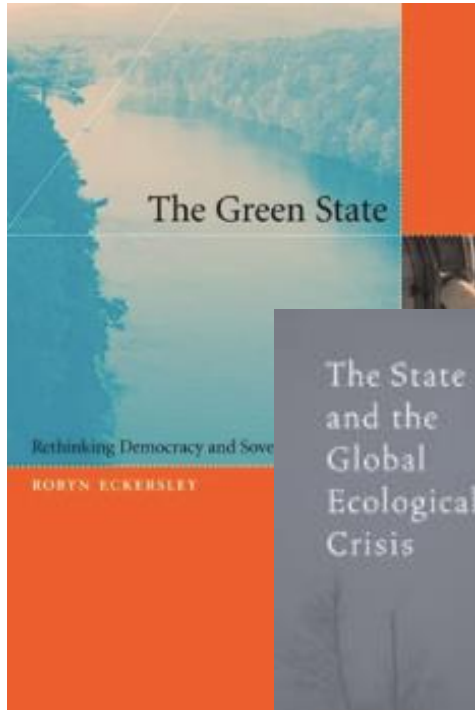


The role of the green state in societal transformations to fossil free society and sustainability transitions

Workshop *Whither the Nation-State? The Changing Role of the State in Climate Change Mitigation Governance* 22-23 May 2019, FNI

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15 years of green state scholarship



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Questions

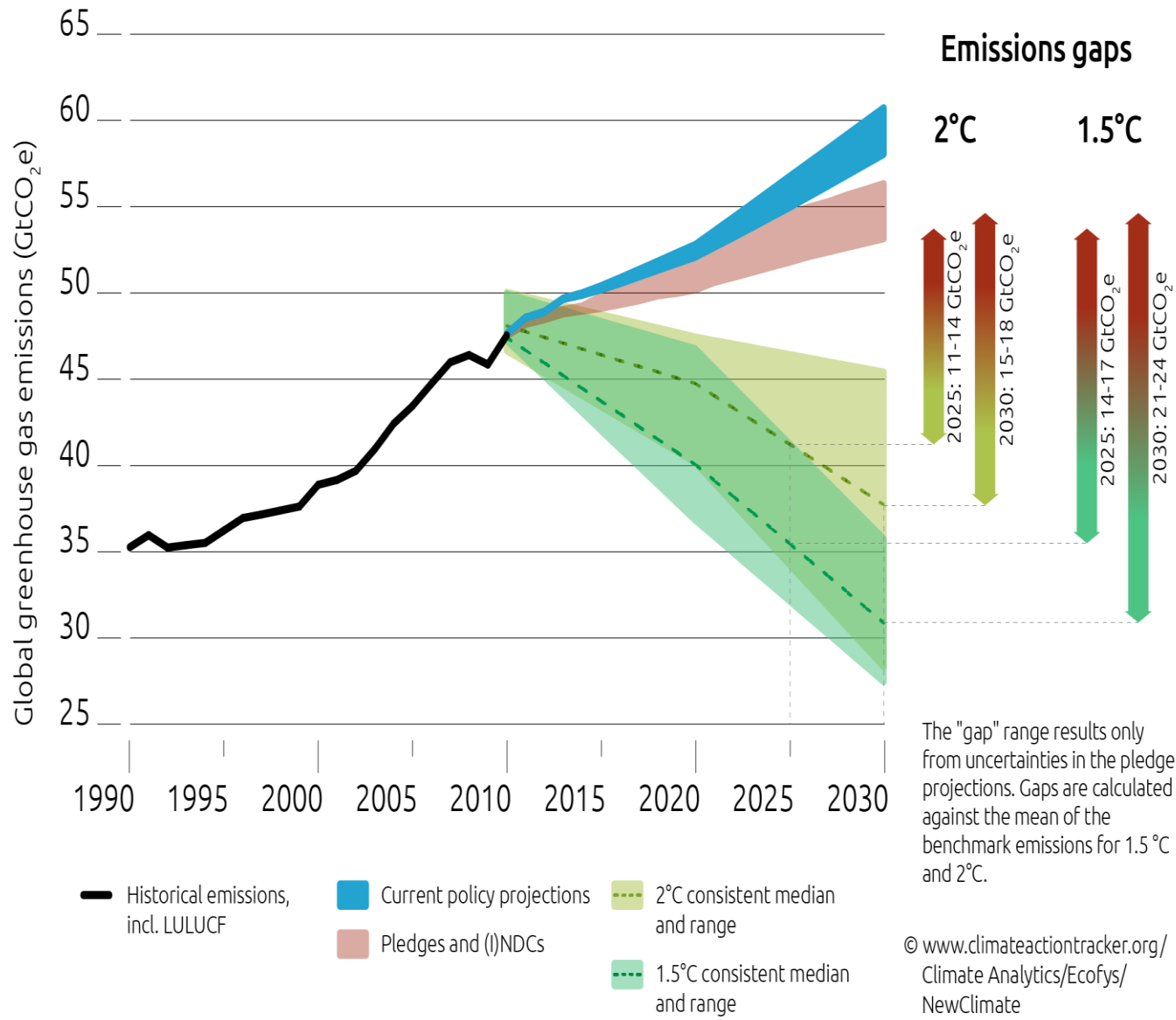
- Given imperatives of economic growth and demands of welfare state, can states manage “wicked” planetary problems such as climate change and promote low carbon societal transformation?
- Is far-reaching state-led transformation toward decarbonization compatible with principles of liberal democracy?
- Sweden – the first fossil free welfare state in the world by 2045 - resolving the tension between democracy and decarbonization?

Points of departure

- Due to scale/gravity of environmental change the state is the most significant actor in the large scale transformation toward low carbon society
- The state is per definition anti-environment, variation among states
- The green welfare state is the most likely candidate for the decarbonized state
- Collaborative/convening state well positioned to manage, steer, orchestrate non-state and sub-state action
- Democracy central in climate transition
- Strong ecological modernization more feasible than post growth society

Challenges

- The challenge for (green) states in post-democratic, populist and nationalist era when transformative change toward carbon-free world in line with the Paris Agreement is urgent.
- Paris paved the way aspirational goal setting for states to be carbon free by 2050 (voluntary pledge and review).
- Disjuncture between a radical goals of large scale transformation toward decarbonizaion and our existing political institutions.



What happens in Sweden?



Outline

- State of the “green state” scholarship: Definitions, theoretical and empirical advancements
- From sociotechnical transition toward a politics of green transformation: Four strategies of green transformation
- Ecological democracy vs eco-authoritarianism
- Resolving the tension between democracy and de-carbonization? Sweden – the first fossil free welfare state in the world by 2045?

What is a Green state?

- Environmental state, eco-state, green state, ecological state

A normative or ecological constructs, as a counterfactual ideal of ecological responsiveness to strive for – or an evolving institutionalization of ecological responsibilities that can be empirically assessed (Hildingsson and Khan 2015)

Green state vs environmental state

- Normative (utopian) ideal
- Bio-centric values
- Ecological citizenship
- Strong ecological modernization
- Green political theory
- Critical theory
- Empirical practice
- Anthropocentric values
- Green consumerism
- Weak ecological modernization
- Comparative studies, large n
- Empirical assessment of variation of environment states

Typologies and variations of state

Green states, were they to exist, would be characterized by the predominance of types of activities of state activity aimed at strong ecological modernization (Christoff 2005)

Environmental state is a state, which possess a significant set of institutions and practices dedicated to the protection of the environment and management of societal-environmental interaction (Duit et al 2016)

- *Environmental welfare states* (Sweden and Norway)
- *Environmental neoliberal states* (Australia, US)
- *Ecofascist state* (?)

Dimensions of state capacity

- regulation, law and polices, program (voluntary, binding)
- institutions (bureaucracies, ministries, agencies from national to local level)
- state-societal interaction (civil society, business)
- state as an arena for collective and authoritative decision making and conflict management related to parliament, courts

From environmental protection to societal transformation to sustainability

- Air and water pollution control
- Natural resources
- Climate change
- Environmental management
- Sustainable development
- Environmental policy integration
- Industrial green policy
- Circular economy
- De-carbonization
- Fossil free welfare state
- Transformative change
- Low carbon pathways
- Sustainability transition

Democracy and transition literature

- Politics, power, democracy are missing in the narratives on transformative shifts dominated by techno-centric and market-oriented strategies of transformation.
- Multiple, multidirectional and contested transformations
- Decarbonization reinforces dilemma of strong environmental outcome vs democratic procedure
- Democratic values of transparency, fairness, inclusion, representation and accountability are needed in large-scale transformative action called for to implement the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030

Eco-democracy vs eco-authoritarianism

- Liberal democracies well positioned to address climate change as they are open for public and popular demands for public good provisions.
- Positive relationship between green values and green democracy
- Deliberative democracy model for connecting democracy with green or sustainable outcomes (Dryzek, Smith 2003; Bäckstrand et al 2010).
- Liberal democracies with free choice generates individualism, profit seeking and overconsumption colliding with sustainability values (Heilbroner 1977).
- Democracy too slow, cumbersome captured by interest groups
- Central authority needed to steer society toward large-scale transformation within planetary boundaries

From transition management to politics of transformation

- Transition management (Kemp and Rothman 2009) need to focus on conflicting interests, asymmetrical power relationships, incumbent power, veto players
- There is an overly focus on *governance* of transitions, transformative pathways and planetary management, rather than the *politics* of transformation.
- Multiple and contested transformation at local, national, multilateral and transnational sites, not one linear transformative pathway.

Strategies for green transformation

- *Techno-scientific transformation*; sustainable, clean and green technologies for renewables revolution to be rolled out
- *Marketized transformation*; green growth, green economy, carbon markets, CDM, payment for ecosystem services
- *Government-led transformation*; top down, green state is the facilitator of transformation to sustainability or carbon neutrality , UNEP global green deal.
- *Citizen-led transformation*; bottom-up, de-growth, citizen science, lifestyle politics, climate justice, just transitions

(Scoones, Leach Newell 2015; Clapp and Daveurgne 2011)

Sweden: Democratic Decarbonization?

The most advanced green state alongside the Nordics (Eckersley 2004; Bäckstrand & Kronsell 2015)?

Goal to be first fossil free welfare state in the world by 2045

Fossil-free Sweden- government-led stakeholder mechanism with 400 municipalities, companies, civil society actors

Since January 1 2018, Sweden has a Climate Law, the Climate Policy Council as part of the Climate Policy framework



SWEDISH CLIMATE POLICY COUNCIL

Klimatpolitiska rådet



Fossil Free Sweden



Stockholms universitet

Politics of Transformation in Sweden

- State-led transformation: collective visions of climate just world building on ideas of Green People's Home.
- Techno-centric transformation as evident in goals to produce fossil-free steel production, bio-CCS and nuclear energy
- Market-oriented transformation: Sweden was a first state with carbon tax and green tax shift with bipartisan support
- Consensus among 7 parliamentary parties (after 2 years parliamentary commission) along left-liberal-green conservative continuum (except the Swedish Democrats) for the Climate Law, Climate Policy Council and the goals of 2030 and 2045

Cont.

- New coalitions between different actors – municipalities, trade unions, companies, investors, as illustrated by government led *Fossil Free Sweden* civil-society led *Climate Sweden* and business-led *Haga Initiative*
- The state as an orchestrator or facilitator of climate action – government-led Fossil Free Sweden gathering almost 300 actors
- Reframing climate change narratives toward justice : *Just Transition* by trade unions.
- Climate change co-benefits; Energy security, health, biodiversity, clean air, sustainable cities
- Environmental democracy rather than ecological democracy ideals: Transformation within capitalism.

Conclusions

- We cannot escape the state, a central analytical category
- Most powerful authority of collective action with capacity to allocate and distribute resources, and respond to public good and free-rider problem
- Polycentrism emphasizes decentralization, local embedding, self-governance experimentation networking, giving up 'big politics' by states and governments.
- The sociotechnical transition literature does not pay enough attention to politics, power, and contestation of transformative shifts

Continued

- The 2015 Paris Agreement has precipitated national target setting with time tables for de-carbonization and low carbon roadmaps by 176 countries
- Low-carbon transformations are currently dominated by technology-scientific and market-oriented strategies
- The Swedish case underlines the importance of state-led transformations
- Democratic legitimacy central to green transformation and de-carbonization
- Sweden on track to be a green decarbonized state with reduced emissions with 26% in combination with continued GDP growth (decoupling).
- Broad public, civil society and parliamentary support for transformation to a fossil free state