Approaches to participative planning: Potential applications in municipal energy planning

Stina Ljung

Master’s programme
Science for Sustainable Development

Master’s Thesis, 30 ECTS credits
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2010
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1. Abstract

This thesis explores potential participatory approaches suitable for a municipal energy planning context. It also analyses the possibility of using those approaches in energy planning processes in ten Swedish municipalities. Swedish municipal energy plans display differences in terms of quality, comprehensiveness and implementation. According to participation literature, planning processes can be improved by stakeholder participation. This study was carried out in four steps: creation of a theoretical framework, survey investigating the municipal energy planners’ views on participation, relating the planners’ views with the theoretical framework and creating suggestions for which participatory approaches to use in the municipalities. Participatory approaches found in literature were categorised into: democracy based, social learning and policy driven participation. Literature states that stakeholder participation should be done as early as possible in a process, but findings from the survey show that those municipalities that have come furthest in their planning process are the ones most interested in stakeholder participation. Indicating that energy planning processes need to gain a sense of maturity before it is even possible to think about involving other stakeholders. Another result shows differences in objectives, central values and targeted stakeholders between the different municipalities. One conclusion from this thesis is the importance for municipalities to understand their objectives for stakeholder participation, since objectives partly determines what kind of participatory approach that will be suitable to use in a given situation.

Keywords: municipal energy planning, stakeholder participation, participation theories, practical application

2. Introduction

Greenhouse gas emissions and anthropogenic climate change occur on a global scale, but effects are often felt on a local scale. The hesitation in the global arena to commit to ambitious reductions of greenhouse gases has lead to responsibilities being taken by individual nations due to a genuine concern for the environment. This national awakening has lead to action being taken on a local scale (Sperling, 2008). Municipalities¹ in Sweden are required by law to produce an energy plan for their supply, distribution and use of energy within their borders including environmental assessments of energy activities. The main objectives of Swedish energy policy today is to secure cost-efficient energy supply as well as efficient and sustainable energy use with minimal impact on the environment. In addition to this the Swedish government has stated that emissions of greenhouse gases in Sweden should, by year 2020, be reduced by 40% from the levels of 1990 (Gov. Bill 2008/09:162).

There are several challenges and barriers to municipal energy planning and recent studies have shown tendencies of municipalities to focus too narrowly on carbon dioxide emissions and reductions instead of taking a broader environmental view on energy issues. A narrow focus on technical solutions for climate change mitigation and carbon dioxide emissions reduction increases the risk of problem shifting (Ivner, 2009). Energy planning often takes a

¹ The word municipality in Swedish is used for both a geographical area and the local authority over that area. In this thesis municipality is used when the geographical area is meant and local authority is used when the authority is meant. Swedish local authorities have many roles, for example as planners, service providers, employers etc. As this thesis was written in a planning context the local authorities were foremost seen in their capacity as planners.
technical turn where stakeholders\textsuperscript{2} are seldom involved through participation (Kowalski et al., 2009). Both the Swedish energy policy and the Swedish climate strategy emphasise local authorities as an important agent for adapting environmental and sustainable energy systems. However, both Ivner (2009) and Wibeck et al. (2006) argue that local authorities sometimes feel overruled and without influence because many of the environmental and energy related objectives are already decided upon by national agencies (Ivner, 2009; Wibeck et al 2006).

### 2.1. Municipal planning context

There are laws in Sweden that governs how municipalities work with planning issues and what responsibilities they have, e.g. the Planning and Building Law (PBL) from 1997 (Khakee, 1999a) and the law on municipal Energy Planning (EP) from 1977 with later revisions (SFS 1977:439). According to the PBL stakeholder participation is required as a method to improve decision basis, create transparency in the decision process and to provide an opportunity to influence decisions. The ambitions with stakeholder participation as stated in the PBL is to give rise to better plans, increase efficiency and create legitimacy for plans by raising the confidence citizens have for planners and the planning process (Khakee, 1999a). The EP urges for cooperation between the municipalities and large stakeholders such as, industries that requires large amount of energy and companies producing energy (SFS 1977:439). Mårtensson et al. (2006) indicate that there are large differences between municipal energy plans in terms of quality, comprehensiveness, age, environmental impact and implementation. The authors suggest that the planning process could be improved by involving local stakeholders such as industry, energy companies, citizens and other local agencies (Mårtensson et al., 2006).

### 2.2. Research problem

Swedish municipal planning acknowledges that stakeholder participation is important for both the planning and implementation phases (Khakee, 1999b). The basic idea behind stakeholder participation in planning is to make stakeholders’ knowledge, opinions and aspirations matter in decision making. This is especially important where policies and decisions affect different stakeholders’ behaviours, lifestyles etc. Stakeholder participation has the possibility to ensure that decisions get closer to their objectives and that communities get more control over decisions and policies that affect their lives (Few et al., 2007).

Stakeholder participation in Sweden has changed over time and there is a long-term growing interest for political issues among Swedish citizens. However, there is also a trend that citizens engage more in activities that are easy, does not take much time or much commitment, such as signing name-lists or boycotting of certain goods, rather than activities that takes a deeper commitment, such as sitting in committees or contacting local politicians or bureaucrats about an issue (SOU 2000:1).

One of the greatest challenges to stakeholder participation in municipal energy planning is to actually get a participatory process going. Local authorities are generally positive to

\textsuperscript{2} Stakeholders are defined in this thesis as anyone who has stake in the issue at hand and are either affected by the issue or affect it, (Collins & Ison, 2006, Polk & Knutsson , 2008). Stakeholder is a broad term that includes citizens, NGOs or other interest groups, companies, and public service agencies etc. In the studied literature many phrases conveying a sometimes similar and sometimes disparate meaning as stakeholder is used, such as citizens, public, lay people, ordinary people, interest groups and communities etc. Stakeholder is the broadest term, so a use of another phrase by other authors, such as citizen or public is a limitation of who they view as participants. Throughout this thesis phrases like citizens and public are left as the authors wrote them to show differences between the participatory approaches in who is viewed as a participant.
stakeholder participation and think it sound good in theory, but they admit at the same time that it is difficult to get it to work in practice and to involve stakeholders without losing effectiveness (Khakee, 1999a, SOU 2000:1). The inability to get it to work indicates the gap existing between authority rhetoric and practise when it comes to stakeholder participation (Khakee, 1999a). Different forms of stakeholder participation in municipal plan and policy work have been tried out in Sweden. The main problem for the municipalities engaging in these activities have been to get a stakeholder process going, mostly because of lacking interest from stakeholders, such as citizens and interest groups (SOU 2000:1). Another barrier to overcome is the gap between theories and practices (Button & Ryfe, 2005, Danestig, 2009, Sperling, 2008, Viklund & Wiklund, 2006). Other challenges to stakeholder participation are to avoid the illusion of inclusion, and provide a broad-based active and meaningful participation (Few et al., 2007).

Danestig (2009) brings up the importance of inviting the right stakeholders to a participatory process. If local industries and companies could be incorporated in municipal energy planning, for instance in being connected to the local district heating system, greater incentives for district heating could be found and greater energy efficiency gains could be had (Danestig, 2009).

2.3. Aim and research questions
The aim of this thesis is to begin to close the gap between theory and practise by compiling different participatory approaches that can be used in municipal energy planning. A second aim is to create a framework of participatory approaches that can be used as support for practitioners deciding how to involve stakeholders. A third aim is to test if the framework could be used to suggest participatory approaches to be used in municipal energy planning.

The main research questions were:
  a) What participatory approaches can be used in a municipal planning context?
  b) How can they be structured into something that is understandable and easy to grasp?
  c) What are the municipal energy planners’ views on participation and how does their views on participation relate to different participatory approaches?

2.3.1. Limitations
The aim with the literature study was not to do a fully comprehensive study but to find central references on participatory theory and methods suitable for an energy planning context. The study is written in a regional context, with a focus on small and medium sized municipalities. The thesis is written in a Swedish planning context and the suggested approaches for participation are based on the individual municipalities. The survey targeted public officials who work with energy planning and the answers reflect the energy planners’ views on stakeholder participation and their views may or may not be shared by other stakeholders in the municipality.

3. Methods
The thesis was carried out in Östergötland County in Sweden by analysing ten municipalities’ opportunities for stakeholder participation in energy planning. The methodological approach adopted for this thesis was carried out in four steps. The first step was to create a theoretical framework for stakeholder participation, by conducting a literature study, which can be used as a support in municipal energy planning. The second included an investigation of the municipal energy planners’ views on stakeholder participation through a survey. The third
step was to relate the practitioners’ views on participation with the theoretical framework, which was done through an analysis of survey results in relation to literature from step 1. The last step was to create suggestions for participatory approaches for the energy planners to use in their municipality based on the analysis of survey results and theoretical framework.

3.1. Literature study
The first part of the literature study was a screening of participation theories, which form the basis for the theoretical framework created in this thesis. The second part of the literature study focused on participatory methods and tools. The literature study started with a search for books and scientific articles that provide a general picture on participation theory and methods. The literature search was done as broad as possible, with the aim of not excluding any participation approaches from the beginning. To make some sense out of the many different types of participation theories being described in the literature and to make a structure to work around, a categorisation of the theories was made. The participation theories were categorised by the author of this thesis into: social learning, policy driven and democracy based participation. After the categorisation the continuing literature search were limited to participation theories, methods and tools related to these categories.

Because the aim with the literature study was to find a broader spectrum of theories and methods that could be used in energy planning, participatory theories related to planning were excluded to begin with. However, some planning literature found their way in by falling under the three classified categories. Participatory theories related to development issues, which are often based on the assumption that civil society needs to step in where the state is weak, were excluded because of irrelevance in a Swedish planning context. Research and science oriented participatory theories were first included in the categorisation but were later excluded because of too large differences in objectives between research and science participation and a municipal planning context. Kangas et al. (2010) classification of participants as: reformers, pragmatic consensus seekers, expert oriented actors and participation sceptics (Kangas et al., 2010) were used to provide a point for discussion and describe how social learning, democracy based and policy driven participation approaches view participants.

3.2. Study area
The survey focused on small municipalities in the region of Östergötland, Sweden. The ten municipalities in the survey were chosen because they are all part of an energy planning network. The municipalities have all started to work with energy planning, but they have reached different stages in the energy planning process which make them relevant to study. Even though the municipalities are in different phases of the energy planning process, they have similarities that make them comparable; they are all relatively small and they are geographically close. A short presentation of the ten municipalities and the status of their energy planning work is summarised in Table 1.

3.3. Survey
A preliminary survey on the municipal energy planners’ ideas on participation was conducted as an activity at an energy planning workshop after a brief presentation of the theoretical framework used in this thesis. The survey consisted of the following open-ended questions:

a) Would you like to work with stakeholder participation in your municipality?

b) Why would you like to work with participation and what do you hope to achieve with a participation process?

c) Which stakeholder groups would it be interesting for you to work with?
d) Give an estimation of how much time and resources you can afford for participation processes?

The workshop participants were given 10 minutes to consider the questions and were asked to write down their answers, which were then collected for analysis. Written responses were received from 17 participants. The analysis of the workshop survey data was carried out by organizing the answers into categories and themes by using an approach similar to grounded theory (Mikkelsen, 2005, Nylén, 2005, Svensson & Starrin, 1996). Grounded theory is an approach first developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 to analyse and create theories from empirical data by continually comparing the empirical materials smallest parts with each other. This is done by pattern seeking and categorisation (Nylén, 2005). In this thesis grounded theory is used as a model for analysis, actual theories is not created from the empirical material, instead the data is analysed by pattern seeking and categorisation. However, the results from the workshop survey were of very different lengths and quality, and half of the participants had not stated their names or municipality. This material could have given some hints on how the energy planners in Östergötland as a group view stakeholder participation, but as the material had such varying quality it was decided that a new survey was needed to give reliable input.

A second non-anonymous survey with basically the same questions, except for a few changes (see Appendix 1), were sent by e-mail to the ten municipalities taking part in the energy planning network. The aim was to give the energy planners more time to think through their answers and to discuss the questions with their colleagues and also to receive responses from the ones that did not participate in the workshop. After one week all ten respondents were contacted by phone as a reminder to answer the survey and all except one promised to send in their answers before a set date, giving them one additional week to answer. After the set deadline the respondents received an e-mail reminding them again to send in their answers before a new last deadline. The analysis approach for the e-mail survey also used grounded theory approach (Mikkelsen, 2005, Nylén, 2005, Svensson & Starrin, 1996), focusing on coding, condensing and pattern seeking where the empirical data is embedded in the analysis. Key-phrases and key-words from each municipality, regarding objectives, central values and respondents were underlined and singled out. Each key word statement was represented by a colour-coded geometric shape specific for each municipality, together with the municipality’s name and was then sorted into the theory matrix, thus creating a pattern. The statements and the reasons for associating a statement with a particular participation type were described in proximity to the plotted theory matrix. The statements were analysed by putting them in relation to the studied participation literature. The theoretical framework together with the pattern formed by the plotted statements in the theory matrix indicated which participatory approach that would be suitable for each municipality to work with. After the analysis the respondents were given opportunity to make comments and amendments to the representations of their statements.

In hindsight it might have been more appropriate to use another survey method as the response rate was quite low (four out of ten). A telephone interview might have been a better method that could have generated a higher response rate. But a telephone interview is more time consuming for both parts and it does not allow time for discussion with colleagues. One reason for why an e-mail survey was chosen in the first place was to give the respondents time to think about the questions and to discuss them with colleagues.
Table 1. Presentation of case study municipalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Categorisation of municipality and business structure (SALAR, 2005)</th>
<th>Energy plan status for municipalities at the time of survey</th>
<th>Working with energy plan</th>
<th>No. of inhabitants (SALAR, 2005)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinda</td>
<td>Less than 12,500 inhabitants Small &amp; medium sized enterprises Largest employer is the municipality</td>
<td>Working on energy plan. Early in the process, has done a present-state analysis</td>
<td>Team, lead by a municipal energy planner</td>
<td>9,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mjölby</td>
<td>More than 25,000 inhabitants Entrepreneurs; majority of businesses are one-man businesses</td>
<td>Has a finished energy plan Late in the planning process, not yet an approved plan</td>
<td>External consultant</td>
<td>25,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motala</td>
<td>More than 25,000 inhabitants Largest sectors: manufacturing, health care</td>
<td>Has an approved energy plan, are working with measures and evaluations</td>
<td>External consultant</td>
<td>42,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Söderköping</td>
<td>Commuter municipality; &gt; 40% work in another municipality Mostly small businesses. Large agriculture sector</td>
<td>Working on energy plan, working on visions, goals and measures</td>
<td>Team, lead by department manager</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranås</td>
<td>Manufacturing municipality; &gt; 40% employed in manufacturing and industry Entrepreneurs, manufacturing</td>
<td>Has energy plan, working on evaluations</td>
<td>Team, lead by spatial planner (local authority top management)</td>
<td>18,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadstena</td>
<td>Less than 12,500 inhabitants Mostly small &amp; medium sized enterprises, some larger industries</td>
<td>Working on energy plan and other ongoing planning projects, working on visions, goals and measures</td>
<td>Team, lead by department manager</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valdemarsvik</td>
<td>Less than 12,500 inhabitants Entrepreneurs, small &amp; medium sized enterprises</td>
<td>Working on energy plan, working on visions, goals and measures</td>
<td>Team, lead by municipal energy planner</td>
<td>7,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ydre</td>
<td>Sparsely populated municipality Small &amp; medium sized enterprises, largest sectors: manufacturing, health care, agriculture</td>
<td>Working on energy plan Early in the process; present-state analysis not ready yet</td>
<td>Energy planner</td>
<td>3,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Åtvidaberg</td>
<td>Less than 12,500 inhabitants Small &amp; medium sized enterprises, largest sector: manufacturing businesses</td>
<td>Working on energy plan Early in the process; not started with visions, goals and measures</td>
<td>Team, lead by municipal energy planner</td>
<td>11,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ödeshög</td>
<td>Less than 12,500 inhabitants Small &amp; medium sized enterprises, largest sectors: manufacturing, health care</td>
<td>Has not started with energy plan, working to get an energy planning process going</td>
<td>Public official</td>
<td>5,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Findings from literature study and survey

This chapter presents the findings from the literature study and the survey, starting with a classification of different kinds of participants. The participatory approaches used in this thesis, democracy based participation, social learning and policy driven participation are presented thereafter. Lastly the results from the survey are presented, by plotting the survey answers into the theory matrix.

4.1. Classification of stakeholders

A study made by Kangas et al. (2010) in a Finnish regional forest programme context show that stakeholder perspectives of participatory processes can be classified into four categories: reformers, pragmatic consensus seekers, expertise oriented actors and participation sceptics. There can be inherent challenges in having these people in the same groups, as their reasons for participation often differ and they may have different perspectives on what constitute a proper participation process (Kangas et al., 2010).

Participant characteristics according to the categorisation done by Kangas et al. (2010):

a) The pragmatic consensus seekers are characterized by supporting a consensual process that seeks to develop cooperation and balance different views and opinions. Another characteristic is that they are opposed to bringing in highly controversial topics into participation processes and that they want conflicting opinions to be left out in any statements from the process.

b) The reformers emphasize that stakeholder participation gives the opportunity to open up a decision or planning process and introduce new ideas and opinions to it. Reformers are sensitive to equality issues and power imbalances, such as equal access to relevant information for all participants and an unwillingness to commit themselves to majority decisions.

c) Expertise oriented actors main characteristics are that facts and scientific information are more important than discussions about different issues and approaches. Another concern is to let all stakeholders have an equal say in the matter. However, their focus on facts also shows in their unwillingness to partake in group work and frequent meetings to discuss issues with other stakeholder groups. Commitment to implementation of developed plans and policies are important for this group.

d) The participation sceptics have a negative view on stakeholder involvement and this group often consist of industry representatives. Industry representatives have traditionally had a direct access to decision making and most are therefore concerned with retaining their power as stakeholders. They are opposed to the opportunity to let all stakeholders have their say and are mostly negative to involve the public in participation processes. Participation sceptics are also concerned over the cost effectiveness of participation processes and it is very important for them that participation efforts do not slow down decision and planning processes. As the expertise oriented actors, participation sceptics are opposed to frequent meetings and lengthy discussions.

One point of concern raised by Kangas et al. (2010) is the importance of participation initiators and process leaders knowing their stakeholders; who wants a broad consensus-seeking process and who wants it to above all be efficient (Kangas et al., 2010).
4.2. Participatory approaches

The theoretical findings from the literature search on participatory approaches are presented in this section, starting with democracy based participation continuing with social learning and then presenting policy driven participation. Each section contains a description of the approach, a description of situations the approach is developed for, objectives and rationale for participation and central values for each approach. Each section then continues by giving a brief presentation of initiators, stakeholders and methods and tools used in each approach. A summary of the participatory approaches with categories chosen to provide a quick overview of what each theory stands for is presented in the last section.

4.2.1. Democracy based participation

**Description:** One way to describe democracy based participation is when active citizens, using dialogue, take part in a consensus seeking decision making process (Bishop & Davis, 2002, Few et al., 2007, Hendriks, 2002, Henecke & Khan, 2002). Democracy based participation often take the form of either a deliberation or a dialogue (Levine et al., 2005, Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006). A definition of public deliberation is as a problem-solving form of communication that involves problem analysis, creation of evaluative criteria, and identifying and weighing of alternative solutions. By making the deliberative process equal, respectful and conscientious, a reasoned consensus is aimed for (Levine et al., 2005).

A dialogue on the other hand can be defined as being more focused on sense-making, by acknowledging differences and similarities, recognizing the struggle between multiple perspectives where knowledge and new meaning emerge through negotiation and discussion in which participants influence each other (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006). Dialogues also aim at bridging linguistic, social and epistemological gaps between different stakeholders (Levine et al., 2005). Dialogues attempt to bring accommodation, reconciliation, mutual understanding or at least tolerance between participants (Levine et al., 2005) by pointing out similarities and differences among relative perspectives. It is essential for the democratic process that both forms are used and alternated between, depending on the objectives for interaction (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006).

**Situation:** Democracy based participation approaches are mostly used for policy choices and decision making (Bishop & Davis, 2002, Few et al., 2007, Hendriks, 2002, Henecke & Khan, 2002). Problem-solving deliberative approaches are appropriate for the decision making stage of a process, while dialogues are appropriate for the problem-definition and solution-definition stages. A dialogue is a sometimes necessary step before deliberation, but it is also needed for its own sake (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006).

**Objective and rationale:** The reasons for engaging in a democracy based participation process is to aim for a combination of influence, inclusion and deliberation of all participants. A democracy based participatory process must:

a) have the ability to influence policy and decision making

b) be representative of the population and inclusive of diverse viewpoints and values, providing equal opportunity for all to participate

c) provide deliberation: meaning an open dialogue, access to information, respect, space to understand and reframe issues and a movement towards consensus

Without a sufficient combination of or a failure to meet one of the three main objectives for democracy participation, the process is likely to fail and can undermine trust for both participatory processes and decision makers (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005).
Central values: Democracy based participation has originated from ideas of democratic values and deliberative democracy ideals. Democratic values include citizens’ right to information, justice and participation. The Aarhus convention, signed by European ministers, states the publics’ right to receive information about environmental issues, address environmental injustices and the right to participate in decisions concerning the environment. Available information is a prerequisite for meaningful and effective participation. The right to justice give the public right of appeal against bad environmental decisions, environmental law failures and illegal activities that goes against the country’s environmental law (DETR, 2000).

Deliberative democracy ideals take their main ideas from Habermas’s theories about communicative action and the ideal discussion scenario. Habermas’s theories state that joint decisions should be made, not by majority votes and power struggles, but in a deliberative process where the best argument is the decisive factor (Henecke & Khan, 2002). A willingness of participants to shift preferences on the strengths of other stakeholders’ arguments is required in a deliberative process (Hendriks, 2002). For a deliberative process to work all who are affected by a decision must have equal right and possibility to participate and all participants have the right to state their own argument and criticise others. The ultimate goal for participation is to reach a decision that is acceptable to all involved stakeholders with an assumption that consensus is theoretically possible (Henecke & Khan, 2002).

There is resistance towards deliberative democracy participation approaches such as citizens’ forums from bureaucrats, elected representatives, industries and interest groups that traditionally engage in participation based on representative democracy theory. This resistance originates because deliberative approaches challenge these groups by introducing a broader range of stakeholders to the debates, assigning new roles and conditions for participation (Hendriks, 2002).

Most forms of participation include some power sharing between the governed and the government (Bishop & Davis, 2002). According to Arnstein, (1969) and Few et al., (2007) power imbalances and struggles determines all participation efforts (Arnstein, 1969, Few et al., 2007). Democracy based participation have an activist or grass-root origin, taking a bottom-up view on participation where the ultimate goal is to redistribute the power over decisions from governments and officials to the citizens. This activist view is what influenced Arnstein to classify public participation into her widely influential ladder; the citizen participation continuum (Arnstein, 1969).

Initiators: For democracy based participation to count as “real”, the process must be initiated, owned and controlled by the citizens, which is only true in Arnstein’s top rungs: partnership, delegated power, citizen control (Arnstein, 1969).

Stakeholders: The participants in democracy based participations are perceived as active citizens. Citizens willingly take part in participation efforts, working for the public good (Arnstein, 1969, Bishop & Davis, 2002, Few et al., 2007, Henecke & Khan, 2002). The way participants are perceived in democracy based participation and the focus on power struggles closely resembles the participants Kangas et al. (2010) have classified as reformers and pragmatic consensus seekers.

Methods and tools: Common tools for public engagement from a democratic perspective are public dialogues, which comes in many forms such as citizens’ juries (Jefferson Center, 2004,
Viklund & Wiklund, 2006), consensus conferences (Rowe & Frewer, 2000, Zurita, 2006) and deferred consensus (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006). Public dialogues usually consist of 10-24 participants who are randomly chosen and selected to be a good cross-section of the wider population in terms of age, gender, education, profession and geography (Jefferson Center, 2004, Rowe & Frewer, 2000, Zurita, 2006). The participants often convene from four up to ten days, during which time they get the possibility to get informed by interest groups and experts on all sides of the problem and ask difficult questions and enough time to discuss the problem (Jefferson Center, 2004, Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

In a citizens’ jury process the meetings are generally not open to the public (Rowe & Frewer, 2000) and the meetings are a carefully moderated process working towards consensus (Jefferson Center, 2004). The main idea behind citizens’ juries is that ordinary people, if given time, information and opportunity to deliberate, are able to give qualified recommendations on complex problems to decision makers (Viklund & Wiklund, 2006). The citizens’ jury gives decision makers insight about the public’s values, concerns and ideas about specific issues and provides common ground solutions to complex problems (Jefferson Center, 2004).

A consensus conference is conducted as a dialogue between experts and lay people and are open to a wider public, which is a main difference compared to citizens’ juries (Rowe & Frewer, 2000, Zurita, 2006). The consensus conference participants give their conclusions and recommendations in the form of a report or press conference to the decision makers (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

The aim of a deferred consensus process is for participants to understand each others’ perspectives, create a sense of community while keeping a sense of diversity. It is only after the participants have gained a sense of community and multi-perspectiveness, that they can move on to address specific issues. A difference to normal consensus making in this method is that differences are acknowledged as being an essential part of dialogue and decision making (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006).

4.2.2. Social learning

Description: Social learning (Collins & Ison, 2006) has many names conveying the same ideas, e.g. collaborative learning (Andersson, 2009, Cheng & Fiero, 2005), collective learning (Schiller, 2009), and mutual learning (Polk & Knutsson, 2008). Social learning can be defined as a collective process that creates relations, insight, coordinated action and social change through learning (Armitage et al., 2009, Collins & Ison, 2006, Cundill & Fabricius, 2009, Measham, 2009, Pahl-Wostl & Hare, 2004, Polk & Knutsson, 2008, Stagl, 2006). Learning occurs through collective engagement with others and has cognitive and normative dimensions (Stagl, 2006). Social learning gives insight about roles, relationships and rationale of other stakeholders while actually doing the process (Collins & Ison, 2006, Pahl-Wostl & Hare, 2004, Polk & Knutsson, 2008). Collins & Ison, (2010) have found three characteristics that together or by themselves defines social learning:

a) Convergence of goals (agreement about purpose): attempt at approaching (understanding) each others’ goals, criteria and knowledge, leading to more accurate mutual expectations and building of relational capital.

b) Process of co-creation: collective knowledge creation that provides insight into the causes of and the means required to change a situation.

c) Change of behaviours and actions: resulting from understanding something through action (“knowing”).
Situation: Participation as social learning is developed for dealing with situations that Collins and Ison, (2006) term as messy issues that has no pre-existing agreements on the nature of the problem or its solution (Collins & Ison, 2006, Measham, 2009). Messy issues are complex, inherently difficult to understand, predict and manage (Measham, 2009). They can be defined as a combination of interdependencies, complexity, uncertainty, controversy (Collins & Ison, 2006), surprise and non-linearity (Cundill & Fabricius, 2009). Issues dealing with climate change (Collins & Ison, 2006), sustainability (Stagl, 2006) and natural resource management (Cundill & Fabricius, 2009, Pahl-Wostl & Hare, 2004) are perfect examples of messy issues. All of these examples have ingredients that create a perfect ground for controversies where stakeholders have multiple perceptions about the nature of the issue, the underlying causes and how they should be addressed and whose responsibility it is to take action (Collins & Ison, 2006, Collins et al., 2007). Social learning was also developed as an answer to the growing critique against Arnstein’s and others view of participation as a power struggle and a continuum moving from manipulation, information towards an ending with full citizen control over policy issues. Their main critique against participation as a continuum is that participation efforts cannot be defined as driven by power struggles alone, because there are many other reasons for participatory processes. A participatory process aimed at sharing information is seen as something incomplete by a continuum view. In Collins and Ison’s view it is the degree to which the objectives for participation is met that defines if a participatory process is a failure or success (Collins & Ison, 2006).

Polk and Knutsson (2008) are adding that social learning is appropriate for situations dealing with value rationalities underlying how society try to deal with complex, uncertain environmental problems such as climate change. Value rationalities are defined by Polk and Knutsson (2008) as the rationalities that are used to support normative standpoints. Decisions made through involved stakeholders need to take into account and respect different normative standpoints in order to find solutions to complex issues (Polk & Knutsson, 2008). According to Flyvbjerg (2004) social science can matter in solving environmental problems in their social context if it is driven by values that take reference from praxis instead of a choice between universal truths (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Neglect of different worldviews, originating from different normative standpoints, in a participatory process often leads to conflict, silenced individuals and withdrawal by actors (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006).

Objective and rationale: The aim in social learning is to create relationships, understanding (Polk & Knutsson, 2008), behaviour changes and action (Collins & Ison, 2006, Cundill & Fabricius, 2009). Social learning allows for a creation of relationships between participants (Polk & Knutsson, 2008) and fosters three ways of understanding: an understanding of other stakeholders views and perspectives (Polk & Knutsson, 2008), an understanding of complex issues and an understanding of the driving force required to improve problems and initiate change. It is the understanding as a learning experience coupled with a focus on learning by doing that enables behaviour changes and leads to concerted action being taken by stakeholders (Collins & Ison, 2006, Cundill & Fabricius, 2009).

Central values: Participation as social learning share some roots with democracy based participation. Equality, quest for legitimacy, reciprocity and reflexivity are central values in social learning, which are also central in Habermas’s theories on communication and discussion. The main difference is that in democracy based participation the focus is on reaching a consensus and coming to a joint decision, while in social learning the focus lies in the process. The quest for legitimacy aims at reaching social accountability in social learning by uncovering why certain value rationalities are considered more legitimate and viable than
others (Polk & Knutsson, 2008). For social learning to be legitimate, different normative standpoints have to be respected and all participants are perceived as having equal legitimate voices. Experiences based on reciprocity and reflexivity forms an essential basis for social learning (Cundill & Fabricius, 2009, Polk & Knutsson, 2008).

Social learning has a strong connection to pragmatic theory (Flyvbjerg, 2004, Healy, 2009, Schiller, 2009). The major contribution of pragmatic theory is to create an understanding of governance as being a social world by its focus on acting in the world, working with what you have got in forming of conceptions and making judgements. There is a capacity for practical judgment and discovery through experience and association with others in social learning. Collective thinking, engagement and association with others are cornerstones in social learning. Another lesson from pragmatic thought is that the full range of human capacities, be it material, moral and aesthetic has the potential to contribute to public policy contexts and that the art of judgement should be encouraged in policy and planning contexts (Healy, 2009).

This relates to what Flyvbjerg, (2004) terms as phronesis which is simply dealing with ethics (Flyvbjerg, 2004), and what Schiller, (2009) conclude about norms, which is that they prevail even if they are not embraced by society as a whole (Schiller, 2009). Phronesis is taking a reflexive and pragmatic approach towards values and normative standpoints. Values are variable and dependent on both praxis and context. Phronesis is a judgemental intellectual activity based on practical value-rationality that is oriented towards action (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Social learning should aim at developing exploration, experimentation and probing inquiry and dialogical, plural and multi-vocal communication. This resembles what is being sought after in deliberative democracy practices but the main difference here is that social learning also focuses on the role of ambiguity, divergence and conflict and their potentials for fostering creativity rather than focusing merely on working towards consensus (Healy, 2009).

Social learning is firmly rooted within a double loop learning context since it allows for a questioning of starting assumptions, norms, objectives and an exploration of contexts (Collins & Ison, 2006). Single-loop and double loop learning are necessary ingredients for social change. In social learning single-loop learning refers to what the stakeholders learn about an issue by participating and second-loop learning refers to what they learn about other participants’ views and perspectives (Whitmarsh et al., 2009). Knowing in social learning takes place by doing, engaging in the process, of uncovering of an issue and by seeking improvements (Collins & Ison, 2006). It is the collective process between stakeholders of co-production/co-construction of knowledge that give social learning the possibility for improving the governance of complex issues (Andersson, 2009, Whitmarsh et al., 2009).

**Initiators:** The initiative to start a social learning process is open for all stakeholders, in some cases it will be initiated by public officials or researchers, in some cases it will be initiated by the stakeholders (Polk & Knutsson, 2008).

**Stakeholders:** The participants in social learning are stakeholders and may include anyone who has a stake in the issue at hand. Stakeholders are either affected by the issue or are affecting the issue (Polk & Knutsson, 2008, Collins & Ison, 2006). Stakeholders are individuals that actively construct, promote and defend their stake. A stakeholder’s stake in an issue is not a fixed truth and the stake can change through negotiation and learning between multiple stakeholders as the causes and remedies of a situation is understood (Collins et al, 2007). Collins and Ison (2006) sum up how stakeholders are viewed in social learning, a view that is shared by Polk and Knutsson (2008):
“Stakeholders are considered intelligent, responsible agents who are willing to act in the collective interest, when enabled to learn through building their stakeholding in an issue, and when they are assisted to create institutional conditions in which they can rely on reciprocal arrangements.” (Collins and Ison, 2006)

This view of stakeholders as responsible agents who are working for the common good fits the description of two groups of participants that Kangas et al. (2010), have classified: pragmatic consensus seekers and reformers.

**Methods and tools:** Methods and tools used in social learning are: situation mapping (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006), integrated assessment (IA) focus groups (Kasemir et al., 2003), participatory multi-criteria analysis (PMCA) scenario building (Kowalski et al., 2009).

Situation mapping is a method that encourages learning, analysis and emphasises different values and normative standpoints, instead of seeking consensus. A situation mapping exercise is done in a group format, were the participants construct visual representations of the actors, issues and activities involved in problem situation. All comments are noted and acknowledged even if they are controversial or only vaguely related to the topic, which gives the participants possibility to raise differing perspectives or conflicting views. Participants in a situation mapping process learn to see their values and norms in a relative rather than absolute way, which opens up for changing power relations. By acknowledging power differences conflicts might be avoided. Strategies for change that represent the different normative standpoints can be developed from the situation mapping (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006).

Integrated assessment focus group is a participation tool that meets many of the requirements for a social learning process. Integrated assessment focus group fosters reflexivity, understanding, learning experiences and it is well suited for complex issues such as climate change, energy issues and sustainability. The integrated assessment focus group consists of three phases (Kasemir et al., 2003):

*Phase I* focuses on the participants’ spontaneous feelings on the focal issue by e.g. working with collage techniques.

*Phase II* exposes the participants to current research findings and gives the participants opportunity to interact with scientific opinions.

*Phase III* consists of the participants synthesizing their views in a written citizens’ report

Kowalski et al., (2009) have developed a decision making tool for sustainable energy futures that combines participatory multi-criteria analysis with scenario development. The stakeholders assess energy options in a comprehensive, structured and focused way through the use of scenarios and the multi-criteria framework. The combination of scenario development and participatory multi-criteria analysis enables learning in three forms in the participants: cognitive learning, learning from others and learning about decision process methods. The participatory multi-criteria analysis for alternative energy scenarios consists of five steps (Kowalski et al., 2009):

a) Developing a limited number of scenarios for energy futures

b) Producing a detailed list of criteria for the assessment of the social, economic, environmental and technical impacts of renewable energy technologies

c) Assessing impacts with life-cycle-analyses

d) Obtaining individual stakeholders’ preferences and group preferences

e) Applying a multi-criteria aggregation method to obtain rankings of the considered scenarios
4.2.3. Policy driven participation

**Description:** Policy driven participation can be defined as a strategy for expanding voices, that are affected by decision making, to be heard in the decision making process. Policy driven participation is about including citizens in a decision making process and seeking the views of those affected by the policy. But it is to an equal extent about a partial transfer of power from decision makers to participants and creation of a transparent process that opens up how decisions and policies are made (Bishop & Davis, 2002, Rowe & Frewer, 2000). Policy driven participation takes a more organisational approach towards stakeholder participation than social learning and democracy based participation and literature on policy driven participation are written from the viewpoint of public officials and other decision makers.

**Situation:** Citizens’ participation in policy and planning is meant to be a decision support tool. Benefits of citizen participation include: decisions that follow public preferences, better policies and implementation, legitimacy for decisions and trust between governed and government (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). Policy driven participation is to some extent problem specific, where the form of the problem decide whether to and what kind of participation that is possible. The purpose with participation, as well as the strategy chosen, may differ with different kinds of policy problems. In order to choose the appropriate participation technique policy makers must identify the problem. There are however other things that influences participation, such as political intent (officials find participation important to solve an issue), time and financial resources available (Bishop & Davis, 2002).

**Objective and rationale:** The reasons for engaging in policy driven participation can be found in a wish for better decisions (Bayley & French, 2008), information sharing (Bayley & French, 2008, Bishop & Davis, 2002) and management (Bishop & Davis, 2002). Another rationale for engaging in policy driven participation stems from believes in citizens’ rights and public benefits (Bishop & Davis, 2002, Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). The reason that politicians and public officials want to engage in public involvement is to achieve greater acceptance for their decisions, but also better decisions. The quality of the decision can be increased by having more minds going over an issue. Stakeholder involvement provides opportunities to frame an issue in a broader perspective by bringing in more views, which can lead to a more innovative decision process (Bayley & French, 2008).

A central objective for policy driven participation is sharing of information, with an aim to educate the participants and provide a basis for understanding a problem. Information sharing is not only about facts on policies and plans but also include understanding of citizens’ and stakeholder groups’ values and objectives (Bayley & French, 2008, Bishop & Davis, 2002).

The management origin for participation primarily takes two forms, organisational benefits and political benefits. Participation can be a form organisational management strategy where participation leads to increased efficiency when stakeholders are informed and participates in decision making leading to government actions and plans (Bishop & Davis, 2002). There can also be political reasons for policy participation such as breaking political gridlocks or where there is insufficient agreement over an issue (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004, Bishop & Davis, 2002), preventing criticism and validating policies already made or as a way to constrain policy options (Bishop & Davis, 2002).

**Central values:** Citizens have a right to be informed about and take part in decisions that affect them and to inform and enlighten government representatives (Bishop & Davis, 2002,
Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). Policy participation creates public benefits in the form of some sort of citizen control over the policy process, better implementation of policies and skills for an active citizenship (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004).

**Initiators:** Initiative and control over a policy driven participation process is in the hands of public officials and depending on the tools used the participants will have different degrees of influence over the process and its results (Bishop & Davis, 2002).

**Stakeholders:** Depending on situation or objective policy driven participation focus on reaching either citizens, interest groups, communities or other stakeholders (Bishop and Davis, 2002). The view of the participants resembles what Kangas et al., (2010) have classified as pragmatic consensus seekers.

**Methods and tools:** Common methods and tools in policy driven participation approaches are surveys (Rowe & Frewer, 2000), public hearings (Rowe & Frewer, 2000), advisory boards (Rowe & Frewer, 2000) and ESTEEM (Raven et al. 2009). Surveys are a method for information gathering, which decision makers use to find the general public’s or a specific group’s values, preferences and other information that will provide a guide for decisions (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

The main difference between a public hearing and a citizens’ jury or consensus conference is that in a public hearing the public have less influence over the process. In a public hearing, agencies give presentations of plans and policies to groups of interested citizens in open forums. A series of public hearings can last many weeks, even months, but each hearing normally takes only a day or two. The public have the possibility to voice their opinions on the policies and plans, but they have no direct influence over the results (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

An advisory board is a small group of people that represent various views of groups or communities, but are seldom a true representation of the general public. An advisory groups’ work can be extended over quite some time. The role of the advisory board is to examine an issue and give the decision makers their recommendation (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

ESTEEM is a six-step management tool for creating societal acceptance in new energy projects. ESTEEM is an abbreviation of Engage STakeholdErs through a systEmatic toolbox to Manage new energy projects. ESTEEM has two major aims, which is to create communication between project manager and relevant stakeholders such as NGOs, policy actors, local citizens and to develop several action plans that will improve societal acceptance (Raven et al., 2009). The six steps are:

- **project past and present** (present-state analysis of the project)
- **vision building** (together with key-stakeholders)
- **identifying conflicting issues between project manager and stakeholders** (agreements/disagreements that can lead to support or opposition)
- **portfolio of options** (adaptations to the project or context for each conflicting issue identified)
- **getting to shake hands** (workshop with a larger group of stakeholders, which are given a chance to react, discuss and vote on the different issues and solutions and bring up new issues and solutions)
f) **recommendations for action** (solutions identified by project manager and stakeholders are taken into account and action plans are formed: short-term action plan, collaboration plan, monitoring plan and communication plan)

### 4.2.4. Participatory theory matrix

The findings from the literature study are summarized in the participatory theory matrix (Table 2), with categories chosen to provide a quick overview of what each theory stands for. The participatory theory framework will later be used as an aid to analyse the survey answers and as a support to find out which participatory approach/approaches that could be suitable for the municipalities to work with during their energy planning process.

Table 2. The participatory theory matrix summarising what democracy based, social learning and policy driven participation stands for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation approaches</th>
<th>Democracy based</th>
<th>Social learning</th>
<th>Policy driven</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Active citizens, using dialogue, taking part in consensus seeking decision making processes</td>
<td>Collective process that creates relations, insight, action and social change through learning</td>
<td>Expansion of voices to be heard in decision making processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective &amp; rationale</strong></td>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Better decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deliberation</td>
<td>Behaviour changes</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation</strong></td>
<td>Policy and decision making</td>
<td>Messy issues</td>
<td>Decision support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consensus needed</td>
<td>Value rationalities</td>
<td>Policy problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central values</strong></td>
<td>Democratic values and citizens’ rights</td>
<td>Pragmatism</td>
<td>Citizens’ rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deliberative ideals</td>
<td>Deliberative ideals</td>
<td>Public benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power sharing</td>
<td>Knowing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiators</strong></td>
<td>Process must be owned and controlled by the participants to count as “real”</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>Public officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public officials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholders</strong></td>
<td>Active citizens</td>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods &amp; tools</strong></td>
<td>-Citizens’ juries</td>
<td>-Situation Mapping</td>
<td>-Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Consensus conferences</td>
<td>-IA Focus groups</td>
<td>-Public hearings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Deferred consensus</td>
<td>-PMCA Scenario building</td>
<td>-Advisory boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-ESTEEM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a) Integrated Assessment (IA) Focus groups (Kasemir et al., 2003)

b) Participatory Multi-Criteria Analysis (PMCA) Scenario building (Kowalski et al., 2009)

c) Engage STakeholdEters through a systEmatic toolbox to Manage new energy projects (ESTEEM) (Raven et al., 2009)

### 4.3. Results from survey

Responses to the e-mail survey were received from four out of ten municipalities (Table 3). Two of the non-responding municipalities, Ydre and Ödeshög, have given reasons for not responding (Table 3). A short summary of the responses, regarding objectives, central values and participants, from each of the four responding municipalities is presented in Table 3.
The answering municipalities (Mjölby, Motala, Söderköping and Tranås) have in common that they have come rather far in their energy planning processes (Table 1). Motala and Tranås have an approved energy plan that they are working with. Mjölby have a finished plan, that have not been accepted yet by the politicians and Söderköping’s plans are in the stage of goal, vision and measure creation. In Mjölby and Motala the energy plan work have been carried out by external consultants. In Söderköping the planning work is carried out by a team lead by a department manager and in Tranås the energy planning work is done by team lead by a spatial planner who is part of the local authority top management.

Four of the municipalities that have not responded to the survey, Kinda, Ydre, Åtvidaberg and Ödeshög are in early stages of the planning process. They have in common that the planning process is lead by a lower public official (Table 1). In Kinda, Ydre and Åtvidaberg, the process is lead by the municipal energy planner. In Ödeshög the process is lead by a public official who usually do not work with energy issues. Two of the non-responding municipalities Vadstena and Valdemarsvik, have come further in their planning process, they are in the stage of creating goals, vision and measures. In Vadstena the energy planning work is lead by a department manager and in Valdemarsvik the work is lead by an energy planner.

Table 3. Received survey responses and summary of responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Received responses</th>
<th>Summary of survey responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kinda</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mjölby</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>Objectives:</em> engagement, commitment and action, behaviour changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Central values:</em> sharing of knowledges between stakeholders and municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participants:</em> public, industry, small &amp; medium sized enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motala</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>Objectives:</em> dialogue, communication, increase knowledge of energy issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participants:</em> public, municipal employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Söderköping</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>Objectives:</em> better visions and goals, information spreading, create citizen support for energy plans and measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Central values:</em> plans that are “useful for all” (public benefits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participants:</em> commuters, groups of energy interested citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tranås</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><em>Objectives:</em> knowledge spreading, create citizen support for plans and measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Central values:</em> sharing of experiences between stakeholders and municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Participants:</em> interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vadstena</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valdermarsvik</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ydre</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Lack of time for survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Åtvidaberg</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ödeshög</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Not started yet with energy planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from the four responding municipalities are shown in Table 4. The plotting of key-phrases and key-words from the survey into the theory matrix show that the municipalities have different objectives for engaging in participation activities. The plotting also illustrates that the municipalities target different stakeholder groups. The initiative for stakeholder
participation will be taken by the local authority, in the form of energy planners and other public officials in all municipalities.

The statements from Mjölby all relate to the category of social learning (Table 4). Their main objectives for participation is to involve stakeholders, create commitment and action and through gained knowledge change behaviours, which are all key-phrases in social learning. Mjölby especially wants to target smaller groups of citizens, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and industry as important stakeholders. A goal for Mjölby municipality is the sharing of knowledges between the municipality and the other stakeholders. Knowing, understanding of knowledge and sharing of knowledges are central concepts for social learning. The municipality want to share knowledge and give support to SMEs and industry about issues relating to energy and energy efficiency in production. Smaller groups of citizens, SMEs and local industry can give the municipality ideas from a local context. In following with literature recommendations, Mjölby could work with social learning methods and tools such as integrated assessment focus groups (Kasemir et al, 2003), participatory multi-criteria scenario building (Kowalski et al., 2009) etc.

Motala has more statements in the category of democracy based participation, than in any other category (Table 4). Motala’s objectives for participation are communication and dialogue. Communication and dialogue about climate change and energy together with citizens that goes beyond mere information and a deepened dialogue connects to the rationale for deliberative participation. Motala has one objective that relate more to a social learning approach and that is to increase knowledge about climate change, how consumption affects climate and how the municipality work with climate issues. Targeted stakeholders are citizens and municipal employees. Consensus conferences (Rowe & Frewer, 2000, Zurita, 2006) and citizens’ juries (Jefferson Center, 2004) could be suitable participation strategies according to literature findings for Motala since their main objectives are communication and dialogue.

The statements from Söderköping fall almost exclusively under the category of policy driven participation (Table 4). Their main objectives for participation is to create better goals, create an understandable and implementable energy plan, spread information about the energy plan and gain support from the public in implementation of the energy plan. Söderköping also touches upon one of the underlying values for policy driven participation with their statement that they want to create an energy plan that is useful for all in the municipality (public benefits). Söderköping has one statement that relate to the social learning objective of learning by doing; Söderköping want to create understanding and interest for energy issues among smaller groups of citizens through participation activities. Söderköping has identified two groups of stakeholders falling under the categories of citizens and interest groups. Commuters are a targeted citizen group and the interest group targets citizens that already have some interest in energy issues. According to the objectives of Söderköping participatory tools that might be appropriate are tools that mainly targets information sharing such as advisory boards (Rowe & Frewer, 2000) and tools that create support and acceptance such as ESTEEM (Raven et al., 2009).

As in Söderköping, the key statements from Tranås mostly relate to policy driven participation (Table 4). Tranås main objectives are knowledge spreading, relating to information aspects of policy driven participation and gaining support for the implementation of the energy plan, relating to management aspects of policy driven participation. Tranås has one objective that falls under social learning, a sharing of experiences between stakeholders and municipality. Sharing of experiences relates to the concept of knowing in social learning,
where sharing of experiences leads to knowledge and learning. Tranås targets interest groups as their stakeholders because for them, interest groups represent a good channel for information and knowledge spreading to large and important public groups. In following with Tranås’s objectives, they might work with participatory tools that mainly target information spreading such as public hearings (Rowe & Frewer, 2000) and tools that create support and acceptance such as ESTEEM (Raven et al., 2009).

Table 4. Survey results plotted into the theory matrix. Each statement is represented by a geometric shape. Each municipality has its own colour and geometric shape, making it easier to at a glance spot under which category most of a municipality’s statements fall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Collective process that creates relations, insight, action and social change through learning</td>
<td>Expansion of voices to be heard in decision making processes</td>
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5. Discussion
The main contribution of this thesis to the participation research community is the categorisation of participatory approaches into a theoretical framework. The literature study identified three approaches suitable for use in a municipal energy planning context: democracy based participation, social learning and policy driven participation. The overall aim of this thesis was to begin to close the gap between theory and practice when it comes to participation. The participatory framework developed, with its categorisation of approaches, is a beginning of closing this gap. The major contribution of the developed framework towards this aim is the way it presents the different participatory approaches side by side
which makes it easier to compare them with each other and also gives a good grasp what the different approaches stands for. The practical application of the framework was tested on the municipalities in the energy planning network and the survey results give an indication that the framework could be used as a support when choosing participatory approaches to work with.

The categorisation of participatory approaches into a framework is unique because three different approaches are compared side by side and also by its focus on a specific context, in this case municipal energy planning. There have been other studies making comparisons of different participatory approaches but most compares two different approaches. Collins and Ison, (2006) is one such example making a comparison of Arnstein’s continuum approach and others that build on the continuum first developed by Arnstein with a social learning approach. Bayley and French, (2008), have made a categorisation of several different objectives as a support tool for choosing what participatory approaches to work with. The categorisation includes: information sharing, democratic ideals, community cohesion, practicability and decision (Bayley & French, 2008). The main differences between Bayley and French, (2008), study and this thesis is that their focus is on objectives, while this thesis has focused on approaches, where each approach has a set of objectives. Another difference is that Bayley and French, (2008) are not oriented towards a specific context of participation, while this thesis is written within a municipal energy planning context.

The participatory framework’s major strength lies in the way it points out similarities and differences between the different approaches. One weakness could be that it has missed participatory approaches by limiting the literature search after the initial categorisation was made to the identified three approaches. This is something that could be further improved on and developed in future studies, by continuing to add more participation categories than the three used in this thesis. Another weakness of the framework is that the methods and tools section of each participatory approach is underdeveloped. This is mainly due to lack of participatory tools and techniques that is presented as belonging to a specific approach. The methods and tools section is something that needs to be further developed in future studies. The usefulness of the framework as a way to support choosing of what kind of participatory approaches to work with is something that needs to be further developed and tested in future studies.

A second point of study regarded the municipal energy planners’ views on participation and how their views related to different participatory approaches. The analysis of the survey results confirms that the municipal energy planners’ views are possible to relate to the studied approaches, showing that objectives and targeted stakeholders between the municipalities differ. It is important for municipalities wanting to engage with stakeholders, to have a clear understanding of what their objectives are, what they want to achieve with participation and with which participants. Objectives, rationales and targeted participants will differ between different municipalities and will probably also differ between different projects, giving an indicating of that different approaches will be appropriate for different situations.

While the studied literature states that stakeholder participation should be done as early as possible, the findings from the survey show that those municipalities (Mjölby, Motala, Söderköping and Tranås) that have come furthest in their planning process are most interested in stakeholder participation. A conclusion that can be drawn from this is that an energy planning process need to gain a sense of maturity before it is even possible to think about involving other stakeholders. A possible reason for Mjölby and Motala wanting to work with
stakeholder participation even though they have completed energy plans, are that the plans were developed by external consultants. Since they used external consultants these two local authorities might feel that for the plans to be legitimate they need the input that stakeholder participation can give.

Even though Mjölby, Motala and Tranås have approved or almost approved energy plans, there might still be room for some stakeholder involvement in the implementation and evaluation phases of energy planning in their municipalities. As Mjölby, Motala and Tranås have done one round of energy plans and have learned lessons from this about the process, they have a good opportunity to engage with stakeholders when it is time to update their energy plans in the next round.

The municipalities of Söderköping, Vadstena and Valdemarsvik are all roughly in the same phase of the planning process, namely that of goal, vision and measure creation. These three municipalities have a great opportunity for stakeholder involvement at least theoretically, since the literature defines this stage as very appropriate for participation processes. Lack of time and monetary resources could be a reason for Vadstena and Valdemarsvik not wanting to commit to a possibility for stakeholder participation.

One explanation for the result that none of the municipalities that are in the earlier stages of the planning process (Kinda, Ydre, Åtvidaberg and Ödeskö) have responded to the survey, is that they need to work on internal support for energy planning, before they can even think about engaging with other stakeholders. However, some participatory tools might be useful for them to engage with for their work with internal support for definition and understanding of the energy planning process. After gaining the support needed from municipal politicians and other municipal top management these four municipalities have a potential to engage with stakeholders in the next phase of the energy planning process.

Literature on participation approaches very seldom acknowledges that stakeholders have different goals, objectives and motives for engaging in participatory activities and none of the three participation categories studied in this thesis acknowledges this as a problem. The exceptions in participation literature are Kangas et al. (2010), with their classification of stakeholders that show very differing views on what constitutes a good participatory process and Andersson, (2009) that question the assumption that most stakeholders are:

“...benevolent servants of the public interest who are patiently waiting for opportunities to engage in public decision processes” (Andersson, 2009).

As a conclusion it can be stated that the participatory framework developed in this thesis has a potential to become a helpful aid in two ways. Firstly it presents what each participatory approach stands for in a structured and easy way and secondly it has a practical application in that it can be used as a support to choose what kind of participatory approach to work with, which the survey results gives an indication of.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many persons without whose help this thesis would never have been realised. I would like to take the opportunity to mention a few: My supervisors Jenny Ivner and Karin Westerberg for being so enthusiastic and supportive Per Eriksson for all support and for being my sounding board
My contact persons at the four responding municipalities: Dag Segrell, Marie Hägglund, Michael Botvidsson and Jimmy Karlsson for giving me some real world input, allowing my thesis to have practical applications and preventing it from being purely theoretical.

References


SFS 1977:439 *Law on municipal energy planning* [Lag om kommunal energiplanering]


Appendix 1 – Survey questions to municipal energy planners
(Representatives from municipalities working with energy planning)
The aim of the survey is to get the planners views and thoughts about stakeholder participation.

Respondents
Date:

Name and occupation of respondents:

Municipality:

Questions:
1. Would you like to engage in stakeholder participation in your municipality? [Skulle det vara intressant för er att arbeta med medborgar/intressentdeltagande?]

2a. Which stakeholder groups would you like to work with? [Vilka intressenter/grupper skulle vara intressanta för er att arbeta tillsammans med?]

2b. Why do you want to engage in a participation process with these groups, what do you think you can achieve? [Varför vill ni arbeta med dessa, vad tror ni att ni kan uppnå genom att arbeta med dessa?]

3a. Why do you want to work with participation? [Varför vill ni arbeta med deltagande?]

3b. What do you want to achieve from engaging in a participation process? [Vad vill ni uppnå med en deltagande process?]

4. Give an approximation on how much time and resources you can spend on a participation process? [En uppskattning om hur mycket tid och resurser ni kan lägga på deltagande processer?]