



Just Futures?

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Abstract

Looking closer at four long-term urban development strategies for Stockholm, we found that they all intend to depict a sustainable urban development, but the images described are very different. This creates a good starting point for discussing the contested concept sustainable development. We argue that discussing sustainable development implies examining the distribution of environmental goods and bads. Thus, planners must be clear about their view on justice.

In this article we contribute to the discussion and development of the concept environmental justice, how it relates to sustainable development and how it can be used in long-term planning.

Introduction

The very purpose of planning is to prepare for the future, but planners do not only seek to predict the future, but also to create better futures (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000). Today there is a trend of planning for sustainable development, but Richardson and Connelly (2003) write that there is no well-defined guiding policy for sustainable development – rather there are many different and competing discourses.

In this article we take a closer look on four future developments for Stockholm. One is the *Regional Development Plan 2001 for the Stockholm Region* (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003). The other three are taken from a recent book on sustainable images of Stockholm (Gullberg, Höjer & Pettersson, 2007). Even though they all start out from the concept sustainable development, the images described are very different which creates a good starting point for discussing the contested concept sustainable development. Also, it is a good foundation for discussing futures studies' function in planning.

The aim of this paper is thus twofold:

- shed light on why planners implicit understandings of sustainable development are problematic and also how the concept relates to environmental justice
- discuss how futures studies could be a way for planners to communicate their interpretations of sustainable development and environmental justice

The relation between sustainable development and environmental justice

Sustainable development has become mainstream but elusive. Thinking of that sustainability has its roots in a global political process, the diversity of the concept is not surprising. It started with the 1972 UN conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm where 113 nations pledged to begin the process of handling environ-

mental issues on a global scale. However, Newman and Kenworthy (1999; p.2) write that “Third World nations saw the agenda as just another way to prevent them from attaining their development goals.” *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Sustainable Development, 1987) launched the concept sustainable development as an attempt to solve this conflict.

Even though sustainable development is often understood as a uniting concept that will resolve the tensions between social and economic development along with environmental protection, there is always balancing and trade-offs made (Richardson & Connelly, 2003). Thus, “sustainability is one of the most diversely applied concepts among academics and professionals discussing the future” (Newman & Kenworthy, 1999; p.5). Similarly, Harvey (1996) pinpoints that different environmental discourses exist and that those are sometimes antagonistic and mutually exclusive. What he calls the *Standard view of environmental management* holds that one should only intervene after environmental problems have arisen which means that environmental issues are seen as market failures. *Ecological modernization* relies instead on the belief that economic activity systematically produces environmental harm, therefore society should adopt a proactive stance – not ad hoc, fragmented and bureaucratic as the standard view. Ecological modernization is the dominating discourse in Sweden since the social democrats launched the *green folkhem*¹ in 1996 (Anshelm, 2002). It is an optimistic discourse that finds it both possible and desirable to develop economically and socially while the environment is conserved. It brings about a weak idea of economic sustainability which means that manufactured capital is seen as interchangeable with natural capital. Ecological modernization thus means that the aggregated stock of capital should be kept constant for coming generations. (Rees & Wackernagel, 1996) *Ecological economics* instead sees economic sustainability as a development that pass on an undiminished stock of per capita natural capital from one generation to the next. Because of the focus on natural, or biophysical capital, this discourse is also representing the deep green, or strong sustainability view, on ecological sustainability. (Rees & Wackernagel, 1996) The libertarian right support what Harvey (1996) calls “*Wise use*” and the *defence of private property*. This discourse is based on the view that property owners want to maintain and sustain their property in the best way. *Environmental justice and the defence of the poor*, lastly, challenges the discourses mentioned above by putting inequalities at the top of the environmental agenda. It illuminates power structures that creates or reinforces existing environmental injustices. The background of the concept can be found in studies from primarily the US showing that certain social groups bear a disproportionate burden of environmental problems. Environmental justice differs from many other environmental discourses by defining the environment as the set of linked places “where we live, work and play” (Turner & Wu, 2002; p.4). The definition is broad, but it differs from mainstream environmentalism or “deep green” interpretations, which have a more nature-centred world-view (Haughton, 1999; Turner & Wu, 2002). Instead of seeing nature as remote and separated from everyday life, it is seen as the place where human activities of different kinds occur. It means that cities, and city life, are part of the environment. We therefore find environmental justice suitable for urban and regional planning and research.

Just sustainable planning

Gleeson and Low (2003) write that urban planning has relied on an implicit understanding of justice since at least World War II. Campbell (2006) underlines that the conceptualizations of justice that have recently influenced planning theory to a large extent have focused procedural concerns. Questions of value and what is seen as good have simultaneously been regarded as problematic. In today’s liberal spirit of the time, justice is understood as maintaining the liberty of the individual. Additionally, Campbell (2006; p.94) writes that “commitment to individual self-expression has been stimulated not only by various strands of liberalism but also by post-modern sensibilities about identity and difference”. However, individual liberties may conflict themselves and one might also ask whether because we desire something we ought to have it.

In relation to planning matters, the nature of interests is often complex and problematic; for example, individuals generally both desire clean air and to be able to drive their car(s) freely. Our preferences are therefore often inconsistent and overlapping. (Campbell, 2006; p.95)

In today’s pluralistic world where multiple truths are appreciated “the legitimacy of choosing between substantive versions of better and worse in relation to politics or planning is seen to be inappropriate” (Campbell, 2006; p.97). What is just is instead expected to result from a deliberative planning process. We see two dilemmas with this view on justice. One is how to handle the rights of future generations to meet their own needs and the other is how to safeguard less powerful groups’ participation in, and influence on, planning processes.

According to Hansson (2001) justice consists of two parts – the concept and the conception of justice. While the concept is constant, the conception varies. Hansson (2001) pinpoints three factors in the concept of justice:

1. Justice is unambiguously a positive concept
2. There ought to be a reference group consisting of the ones that should be treated just
3. Justice implies that any differences can be explained by acceptable reasons

Defining acceptable reasons, Hansson (2001) writes, we are no longer analysing the concept of justice, but we are interpreting different conceptions of justice. Also, we would add, defining the reference group is very con-

¹ The expression *folkhem* is associated with the welfare state in Sweden and literally means the people’s home.

tentious. Should justice be defined for a distinct ethnical group, for a nationality or for all people on our globe? And what about future generations? This leaves only bullet point 1 above as unproblematic which makes justice a positive but empty concept; as long as you do not specify what conception of justice you are a follower of.

Environmental justice researchers and activists have started out from three different broad categories of justice: *distributional justice*, *procedural justice* and *entitlements* (Turner & Wu, 2002). Researchers focusing *distributional justice* have shown the disproportionate location and exposure to toxic substances near minority and poor communities with the intention to prevent these burdened areas from new risks (Turner & Wu, 2002). Environmental justice from a *procedural perspective* focuses the possibility for different social groups to take part, and influence, the processes where environmental decisions are made (Turner & Wu, 2002). The *entitlements* approach instead concentrates on minimal standards such as a universal right to a clean and healthy environment. Turner and Wu (2002) write that since decision made through a fair and open process may be considered just regardless of their distributional impact, procedural environmental justice therefore focus on *procedural fairness* and the *ability of groups to participate*. This includes community empowerment, shedding light on the role of knowledge and expertise in class-stratified societies and the right of communities to be involved in all stages of planning processes.

In our understanding environmental justice can be seen as a part of sustainable development. The amount of resources used by people differs and so do the accessibility to healthy environments. Since the carrying capacity of nature is limited², we argue that discussing sustainable development necessarily implies examining the distribution of environmental qualities and risks. Starting out from a procedural environmental justice perspective, focus would be on how to involve more people and perspectives in decisions that affect the distribution of environmental goods and bads. Even though open and transparent processes are important, they can never safeguard a just outcome. We thus argue that the distribution and entitlement approaches are important complements.

Now and then

Today's situation

The environmental justice situation in Stockholm is not clearly described anywhere, but statistics and reports can give a hint on the circumstances. In total, 17 percent of the county's almost two million inhabitants were born in another country than Sweden. Immigrants from other EU-countries are spread all over the county whilst immigrants from outside EU are concentrated to areas in the north- and southwest³. In these areas the share of people born outside the EU is over 40 percent. Additionally, the income conditions vary strongly between different areas in the county. (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2000) Air quality varies too and guidelines are constantly being exceeded in some places in Stockholm, especially close to heavily trafficked roads (City of Stockholm Environment and Health Administration, 2006). Particulate matter (PM₁₀) and ground-level ozone are most severe for health and research shows that PM₁₀ causes more than 5000 people in Sweden a premature death (Sjöberg, Persson, Pihl Karlsson & Brodin, 2006). However, socio-economic statistics has not been linked to information on air quality in Stockholm. This has been done in Malmö⁴ where eight statistically significant clusters of low socioeconomic status children were identified, all of which were located in the most polluted areas. The same study identified four clusters of high socioeconomic children, all of them located in the least polluted areas. (Chaix, Gustafsson, Jerrett, Kristersson, Lithman, Boalt & Merlo, 2006)

On commission by the Swedish Left party, Rönnbäck (2005) has written a report showing that large roads are much more often built in tunnels if the income is high, or the share of immigrants low, among the affected citizens. Still another example is a recent report from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Road Administration and the Swedish Consumer Agency (2007) showing that Danderyd⁵ is the municipality in Sweden where new cars bought during 2006 has the highest levels of CO₂ emissions (g/km) in all Sweden. The report also shows that women in the county of Stockholm bought new cars with less fuel consumption than men⁶ and with less average CO₂ emissions⁷. Knowing this, it might come as no surprise that the tenth part of Sweden's households with the highest disposable income contribute more than three times as much to Sweden's CO₂ emissions than the tenth part being the least wealthy. The reasons to this lack of equality are factors like wealthy households buying more goods and services and driving more car. (Statistics Sweden, 2003)

² Carrying capacity should not be seen as fixed or static though, it is contingent on technology, preferences and the structure of production and consumption (Arrow, Bolin, Costanza, Dasgupta, Folke, Holling, Jansson, Levin, Maler, Perrings & Pimenteler, 1995).

³ Tensta, Rinkeby and Sollentuna Centre are such areas in the northwest part of Stockholm while Fittja and Alby are situated in the southwest part.

⁴ Sweden's third largest city.

⁵ An affluent area in the northern part of Stockholm.

⁶ 7,3 l/100 km compared with 8,0 l/100 km.

⁷ 175 g/km compared with 194g/km

There are thus many indications showing that environmental justice is an emerging issue in Stockholm. However, environmental justice is an absent perspective in Swedish political and planning discussions. Maybe because it points to a somewhat known fact, but today there is no established way of handling it in Swedish planning (Bradley, Gunnarsson & Isaksson, 2007).

Different kinds of futures studies

Environmental justice tends to focus intra-generational equity rather than inter-generational equity. Moreover, environmental justice highlights the conflicts between economic, ecological and social sustainability. Planning is instead future oriented and do sometimes depict future societies that are apparently sustainable and conflict free. We want to see whether it is possible for futures studies to make use of and contribute to the ongoing debate on environmental justice and sustainable development.

Since the future is not a disconnected end-state, but rather rooted in both the past and the present (Myers & Kitsuse, 2000; Simonsen, 2005), images of the future will inevitable bear traces of yesterday as well as today's zeitgeist. Simonsen (2005) and Orrskog (2005) are two of many writers showing that there are dominating stories about today as well as tomorrow's city. But also that there are challenging stories presenting alternative solutions. There are real, possible, dreamed and forgotten visions about the city (Orrskog, 2005).

There are many different kinds of futures studies, and they can be pursued with different objectives. This is the starting point for a recent classification of scenarios, where it is suggested that all futures studies respond to one of the three questions "what will happen", "what can happen" and "how can a specific target be reached". The three categories are called *predictive*, *explorative* and *normative* scenarios (Börjeson, Höjer, Dreborg, Ekvall & Finnveden, 2006; p.725). Predictive scenarios can be used for adapting to expected situations. Predictive scenarios are divided into *forecasts* and *what-if scenarios*. Forecasts assume that prevailing trends will maintain, what-if scenarios answer the question "what will happen, on the condition of some specified event". One example could be a referendum where the outcome is uncertain, but the effects of either result of the referendum can be forecasted (Börjeson et al., 2006; p.726). Explorative scenarios are divided into *external* and *strategic scenarios*. External scenarios try to answer the question "what can happen to the development of external factors?". This means that factors seen as beyond the influence of the actor are in focus. Strategic scenarios seek an answer to the question "what can happen if we act in a certain way?" (Börjeson et al., 2006; p.727). Normative scenarios are divided into *preserving* and *transforming scenarios* where preserving scenarios depict images of the future built on today's societal structures. In transforming scenarios the goals are seen as very difficult to reach within today's structures – major societal changes are therefore seen as necessary. The aim is often to create a foundation for a discussion on long-term development and goals. Preserving scenarios thus seek to answer "how can the target be reached, by adjustments to current situation?" and transforming scenarios to "how can the target be reached, when the prevailing structure blocks necessary changes? (Börjeson et al., 2006; p.728).

Images of the future

In this paper we scrutinise four images of future Stockholm. The *Regional Development Plan 2001 for the Stockholm Region* (Rufs) was developed by the Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation. It was adapted as the official regional plan by the county council in 2002 and it is valid until 2008. It should be the basis for municipal planning, state agencies and other actors involved in activities affecting regional planning (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003). The other source is a book published in 2007 where three urban structures form the basis for images of a future Stockholm (Gullberg et al., 2007). The scenarios are hereafter called the "Rufs-scenario" and the "Gullberg-scenarios".

The most distinct part of the Rufs-scenario is the development of seven suburban cores that should accommodate much of the forecasted rapid population increase – the base scenario predicts an increase with 212 000 inhabitants and the high scenario an increase with 606 000 from the year 2000 to 2030. Besides the proposed cores, settlements should be concentrated to areas adjacent to communication bands and thus build on Stockholm's star-shaped structure, which creates good possibilities for effective public transport. The idea is to allocate a high number of new working places in the region to the cores, so that they can compete with the city core in terms of availability of most services. Also, they should make up local labour markets.

The three Gullberg-scenarios are called Cores, Reinforcements and Low. In each of those the Stockholm region grows by 600 000 inhabitants. The first scenario resembles the development proposed in the Rufs-scenario, but in Cores a lot more housing is allocated to the cores. In Reinforcements, today's radiant structure is intensified so that new developments are concentrated to approximately 130 new nodes of limited size, most of them with high-quality public transport by rail to the city. In Low, the new housing in Stockholm are spread out in the region in new buildings of 2-3 stories and a high share of detached houses. All the scenarios have a long-term perspective – the Rufs-scenario to 2030 and the others to 2050.

A common point of departure for the images of the future is sustainable development. The Rufs-scenario has as its overarching vision to achieve long-term sustainable development, which is defined in accordance with the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Sustainable Development, 1997), and elucidated as "growth with a social and ecological balance" (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.9). However, it is

also stated “from an international perspective, the environmental situation in the Stockholm Region is good, with extensive access to natural variety” (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.14) and compared to other regions in Sweden, the energy consumption per capita is less and that the impact of the energy system on the environment has decreased. If the current settlement structures continue, the Rufs-scenario writes that “the total energy needs will grow, but more slowly than the population” (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.55). Three basic objectives for the Stockholm region’s development are highlighted: international competitiveness, good and equal living conditions and long-term sustainable living conditions. Rufs’ final chapter shows an awareness of the weak perception of sustainable development put forward:

The regional development plan, however, does not nearly deal with all the factors of significance for long-term sustainable development. The plan is the result of a process where the region’s actors have had major influence, both on what issues are treated in the plan and with what emphasis proposals should be formulated. The proposals thus comprise a balancing of solutions which are positive in different respects against what is, from various perspectives, considered possible to actually carry out. The plan has in itself no or only a very weak control effect, and the outcome is therefore dependent upon the actions of various actors. (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.67)

Rufs also states: “with the current pace of actions, it will be difficult to achieve more than half of the environmental objectives by the year 2020” (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.68)⁸.

The three Gullberg-scenarios take a different starting point and ask what a city, and city life, where demands on sustainable development are met, could look like in 2050. As in the Rufs-scenario, the authors start out from the Brundtland definition of sustainable development, but clarify it as human activities being limited by boundaries set by the earth’s carrying capacity. The value of natural resources should be kept to coming generations, and the natural resources should be distributed among nations according to population. The climate change, and therefore energy use, is seen as the most challenging problem. With the prerequisites regarding distribution of energy among nations and predictions on population growth and scenarios on global energy supply, the Gullberg-scenarios depict a Stockholm where energy use is reduced by 60 percent per capita. Social and economical aspects of sustainable development are only seen as subsidiary conditions that are unsuitable for forming independent criteria. Rufs instead states clearly that the three basic objectives⁹ implies that all people should have equal possibilities to work, habitation, education and a healthy and safe environment. Neither sex, age, ethnicity, physical resources and socioeconomic conditions, nor geographical circumstances should restrict peoples’ opportunities. Also, the built environment should be healthy with aesthetic as well as well-being values and the level of education in Stockholm should be at least as high as the level in other regions. It is also pointed out that “[o]ne of the region’s greatest weaknesses by international comparison is the lack of integration between Swedish-born and immigrants.” (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.25) and that “[r]educed poverty, reduced residential segregation and special resources for children and youth are urgent actions to improve health.” (Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, 2003; p.71-72)

Analysis

From the description above, it is clear that the scenarios are different. They all state sustainable development as an important goal, but depict different images of the future. We argue that there are at least three reasons for the scenarios being so different:

1. The scenarios seek answers to different questions
2. The scenarios follow different sustainability discourses
3. The scenarios are developed in different processes

Different questions

All the scenarios use the Brundtland definition of sustainable development, but they end up describing the future in quite different ways. The saying “you get what you ask for” is not far-fetched. The Gullberg-scenarios and the Rufs-scenario use predictive scenarios to understand what implications today’s trends might have on the future. However, when the different images of the future are developed, Rufs tries to reach the sustainability target by adjusting to those trends, while the Gullberg-scenarios see prevailing structures as blocking necessary changes. Rufs is thus what Börjeson et al. (2006) defines as a normative preserving scenario that tries to find out how a certain target can be (cost-) efficiently met. This is a common way for planners trying to merge different targets concerning environmental, social, economic and cultural factors (Börjeson et al., 2006). The Gullberg-scenarios instead represent what Börjeson et al. (2006) would define as normative transforming scenarios. This means that the targets seem to be unreachable if the current development continues and thus a trend break is necessary.

Another difference is that while the Gullberg-scenarios declare a 60 percent reduction of energy use as the target for sustainable development, Rufs has many more but not clearly outspoken targets. The Gullberg-scenarios

⁸ The Swedish Parliament adopted 15 national environmental quality objectives in 1999, 2005 a 16th was added.

⁹ International competitiveness, good and equal living conditions and long-term sustainable living conditions

chose a simplified definition of sustainable development and ignore many other sustainability factors. This position is defended by arguing that the potential effects of an accelerating greenhouse effect are of a magnitude that puts it in a place of its own when looking at long-term ecological problems. Rufs instead sticks to the predictions that energy needs will grow. Rufs is thus more of a forecasted future and the Gullberg-scenarios a challenging story. We can see the usefulness of all the scenarios categories, but planners must be aware of what questions they ask about the future: what will happen, what can happen or how can a specific target be reached? Especially the Rufs-scenario is unclear about how important the targets are, or if the scenario is just an attempt to adapt to current trends. The Gullberg-scenarios are instead very simplified. We therefore see the need for developing future studies methods to incorporate a broader complexity in normative scenarios.

Different discourses

The reason for the scenarios depicting different future Stockholm is not only that they ask different questions, but also that they follow different environmental discourses (which might influence the questions being asked). The Gullberg-scenarios take a fair distribution of environmental resources as a starting point and thus resembles the discourse Harvey (1996) denotes *environmental justice and the defence of the poor*. However, environmental justice focuses local environments and often analyses power structures that creates or reinforces existing injustices, which the Gullberg-scenarios do not illuminate. They do not put ecological sustainability in the light of social, political and economical power structures. The gist is that even though the Gullberg-scenarios start out from a global perspective on environmental justice, local environmental justice is not treated. Instead, the scenarios are on a general level, apparently free from conflicts, where the environmental impact of people living in Stockholm is discussed and urged to decrease to a level per capita that is fair distributed all over the world and within the limits of the earth's carrying capacity. This reminds of the *ecological economics* tradition. However, the three scenarios differ. Low gives all people the possibility to live in low-rise buildings. Biodiversity seems to be less important and owners are supposed to take care and sustain their property, it thus reminds of the discourse *wise use*. In Cores and Reinforcement buildings should not be sprawled, natural capital like biodiversity seems more important, and the ecological economics perspective is thus stronger than in Low.

Rufs contains some semantic aspects of local environmental justice. It is clearly stated that the objectives¹⁰ are meant to imply all people's equal possibilities to work, habitation, education and a healthy and safe environment. However, the Rufs-scenario sees an increased need for energy and one might ask how this should become sustainable and benefit all. It seems like the environment should not stand in the way for economic growth, Rufs thus follows the ecological modernization discourse.

Concerning the global perspective, Rufs argues that from an international perspective the environmental situation in Stockholm is good. This should be interpreted as the local environment being of high quality, but the Environmental impact of Stockholm and its inhabitants are not put in a greater perspective. Whilst the Gullberg-scenarios focus a schematic environmental justice on a global level, the Rufs-scenario bear some traces of local environmental justice where socio-economic conditions and geographical circumstances constitutes no restrictions on peoples' opportunities. However, power relations are not analysed and reducing segregation and improving health is seen as conflict free measures.

We agree with the Gullberg-scenarios that the potential effects of an accelerating greenhouse effect are of great importance. However, we do also find it important to focus local injustices that might be even more immediate than the climate crisis in some places. Local issues could be such as the access to clean and healthy air – who is *generating* and who is being *exposed to* those risks? Thus, it is important to combine the critical perspective put forward by environmental justice and global carrying capacity.

Different processes and views on justice

While the Rufs-scenario is a plan on how to adapt to trends while trying to be somewhat sustainable, the Gullberg-scenarios present three alternative images of the future, narratives regarding a different Stockholm. The scenarios are also the result of different processes. While the Rufs-scenario is the outcome of a process where many regional actors were involved, researchers constructed the Gullberg-scenarios. Rufs is the result of negotiations and balancing between different interests, the Gullberg scenarios are produced of researchers in the field of environmental strategies and planning research. The implementation of Rufs depends on the actors in the region; the Gullberg-scenarios were not made to be implemented. Instead they aim at presenting alternatives to ongoing unsustainable trends and by that fuel the debate on how to plan a sustainable society.

Rufs started out from some kind of procedural justice where important actors from the region were invited to take part in the planning process. However, community empowerment and the right of communities to be involved in the planning process were not safeguarded. Thus, it was not a procedural justice from an environmental justice perspective.

The Gullberg scenarios instead follow a distributional justice approach. Distribution of energy use and thus the emissions of climate gases are in focus, but local environmental problems are not. Consequently, it is not evident

¹⁰ International competitiveness, good and equal living conditions and long-term sustainable living conditions.

that poor communities will be prevented from new risks. There might be hidden conflicts between local and global environmental justice that are not handled by the scenarios. It is clear that depending on planners view on justice, both the process and the outcome will differ. Distributive justice might sound as an easy solution, but one must ponder about what should be distributed in an equal way. Is it some inner state like happiness, satisfaction or self-fulfilment? Or is it external circumstances like environmental qualities and housing?

These could be delicate issues in planning where it could be discussed whether mobility or clean air should be equally accessible. Bruegmann (2005) see mobility as an acute justice issue and argue that more people should have access to a car. More cars implies more emissions, an urbanised countryside which makes it more difficult to reach nature and also a sprawled urban area which means that there could be greater differences between the ones generating environmental risks and the ones being exposed to them. This is a question about *what* should be distributed by the planning process. It also raises issues about whether it is okay to compensate a community exposed to environmental risks with another good, e.g. a school? How important is a just environmental space in relation to a just distribution of other important utilities? Can planning be seen as a way of levelling out inequalities? Is the planning system actually a complement to progressive tax rate schedule trying to reduce consequences of income gaps by creating safe and healthy environments for all?

Value judgements like those influences planning processes and their outcomes. Planners often want to stick to scientific knowledge, but value judgements cannot be scientific. Since there are many ways of understanding sustainable development and justice, we argue that planners must elucidate their understandings. Only when elucidated, enough information is put on the table to start the negotiations a planning process implies.

Bringing values and substance into the open will provide the public, politicians, and other planners with insights as to why decisions were made and hence why in the future, as circumstances, knowledge, and values change, different courses of action might be appropriate (Campbell, 2006; p.103-104).

As we see it, planners must work with procedural environmental justice, but also distributive environmental justice and entitlements to safeguard a just and sustainable development. Due to the communicative turn in planning, procedural justice is the most influent perspective on justice in planning theory and practice. We argue that it is also possible for planners to take onboard radical goals on sustainable development and distributive environmental justice in a similar way as Gullberg et al. (2007) do. However, planning must of course also be about safeguarding a secure and healthy local environment, which is not the focus in the Gullberg-scenarios, and this is what entitlements are good for. When these are safeguarded, the design can be negotiated since aesthetics varies between people. We thus see a need for a broader discussion on justice and the need for planners to discuss issues of justice in a transparent way. This means that planners must go beyond what can be scientifically fixed and instead discuss different interpretations of justice. As long as your understanding of justice is not elucidated, it is merely a positive, but empty, concept.

We argue that planners can take a pro-active environmental justice position through: 1) taking onboard radical goals on global ecological sustainability together with distributive environmental justice, 2) promoting local environmental justice and access to a healthy environment through entitlements and 3) facilitating different social groups to take part, and influence, the planning processes.

Conclusions

Since planning is future oriented and infrastructure and houses will stand for many years, we argue that planners must be aware of what questions they ask about the future:

- What will happen?
- What can happen?
- How can a specific target be reached?

We see environmental issues like climate change and environmental injustices as acute matters that need to be handled by planners. Thus, there is a need for pro-active planners that elucidate their conception of justice and:

- Take onboard radical goals on global ecological sustainability together with distributive environmental justice
- Promote local environmental justice and access to a healthy environment through entitlements
- Facilitate different social groups to take part, and influence, the planning processes

Also, there is a need for mapping the environmental justice situation in welfare cities like Stockholm, and also the images of the future of those cities.

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