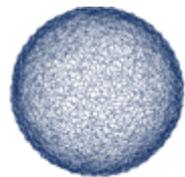




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# *ON A GENDERED ROAD TO COPENHAGEN*



COP15  
COPENHAGEN

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## ABSTRACT

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### On a Gendered Road to Copenhagen

2009 is a year of fate for the international climate negotiations, which in December hopefully will lead to a new climate agreement replacing the Kyoto Protocol. Surrounding the negotiations are organizations working for a fair, equitable and equal climate agreement. Among these, a movement lobbying for the importance of acknowledging gender in the climate process is growing stronger and is getting wider recognition. Climate change is a matter pinpointing that something is severely wrong with our planet and apparently with the way we are living our lives. The need for an alternative world order and a new way of doing things is one of the cornerstones of the ecofeminist school of thought, which highlights the connection between the *patriarchal oppression* of *women* and the *exploitation* of *nature*. Environmental politics in general and ecofeminism in particular has not been given much attention in feminist theory and ecofeminist theory has generally been looked upon with scepticism.

The *aim* of the thesis is to examine how and with what strategies and tactics four selected actors are framing gender in the international climate change process, as well as to what extent ecofeminism and ideas about the inclusion of women in politics has influenced their thinking. The selected actors are; *Ecofeminist Network*, *Green Women*, *GenderCC* and the *On the Road to Copenhagen* initiative. In order to reach the aim, I have developed an analytical toolkit grounded in Carol Lee Bacchi's *What's the problem* approach together with ideas about framing, ecofeminism and female political inclusion/representation.

Common for all actors is the argument that an *alternative* is needed and that the climate crisis cannot be solved just by "repairing" the flawed socio-economic structures, but that fundamental changes are required at the individual, technical and structural levels. Also, they agree that gender must be seen as the *missing component* in the climate debate and they all want to challenge the perceived *gender neutrality* of the climate process. Women are presented both as the prime *victims* of the changing climate and as important *actors* in the striving towards a more sustainable world. Women are believed to have a special knowledge of and interest in the protection of the environment, due to *gender inequalities*, *gendered social roles* and the *gendered division of labour* and it is claimed that their more environmentally friendly behaviour should be recognized and valued. Considering the inclusion/representation of women in politics, arguments about both the *democratic deficit* the exclusion of women results in and the *difference* women can make when included are put forward by all actors. The strategies of the actors seem to be influenced by their closeness to the negotiation core, implying that the ones operating from within tend to adopt more moderate strategies whereas those working from the outside seem to adopt more radical strategies. They all appear to regard the climate crisis as some kind of *window of opportunity*, for the development of greener technologies, the implementation of a greener economy or a greener feminism. Classic ecofeminist ideas are more or less prominent among all actors. I believe that ecofeminist thinking has much to contribute with in the climate debate, not least to the understanding of the crisis a social problem caused by interrelated power domination systems and the neo-liberal consumerist and over-exploitative world order. However, in order for ecofeminism to be more successful, it must offer a clearer and more coherent political agenda.

**Key words:** *ecofeminism, gender, climate change, COP 15, Copenhagen, climate justice, social movements, Ecofeminist Network, GenderCC, Green Women, On the Road to Copenhagen*

## List of Abbreviations

<b>AR4</b>	Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC
<b>CDM</b>	Clean Development Mechanism
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>COP</b>	Conference of Parties to the Convention
<b>ENGO</b>	Environmental Non-Governmental Organization
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gases
<b>IPCC</b>	Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change
<b>JI</b>	Joint Implementation
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>NGO</b>	Non Governmental Organization
<b>RTC</b>	On the Road to Copenhagen
<b>UNCED</b>	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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*Appendix A: Attention giving to the issue of gender and climate change in the UNFCCC process*

*Appendix B: Interview Guide Gender and Climate Change*

## **PART I:**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

*“Acknowledging women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change” (General Assembly Resolution: A/C.2/63/L.45)*

2009 is a year of fate for the international climate negotiations. The whole world is keeping its fingers crossed that a new international agreement, replacing the Kyoto Protocol after its expiration in 2012, will be reached in Copenhagen in December. There are still however many challenges to be overcome before the parties can find a compromise acceptable to all. The issues on the agenda in Copenhagen will be politically sensitive, embracing the urgent matter of the future of the planet, while reflecting questions of *responsibility*, the *right to development*, *global equity* and *social justice*.

The role of women in sustainable development has since long been emphasized by development agencies and organizations. Women have both been perceived as *prime victims* of environmental degradation as well as *key actors* in the striving for a more sustainable world. Their role as food providers and natural resource managers has been highlighted in projects centred on small-scale agriculture, forestry and water. The emergence of global warming has though implied a shift of focus within international environmental politics from “small-scale” environmental issues affecting the individual and the local community, to the threat of climate change affecting the planet as a whole. This change implies multifaceted international negotiations in technically complex high-level forums, to which access has been highly restricted. The issue of gender has not been as naturally positioned on the international climate change agenda, but its importance has nevertheless recently been acknowledged and is increasingly ascribed attention as an imperative matter by different actors. This increased awareness of the significance of gender in relation to climate has not however just “appeared” over a night, but is (and will further be) the result of a long and hard fought battle by women’s organizations.

Climate change is a matter pinpointing the fact that something is severely wrong with our planet and apparently with the way we are living our lives. Different actors around the world are raising their voices for the need of a new world order and a new way of doing things. The call for such an alternative way of living is one of the cornerstones of *ecofeminist* theory and activism, which underscores the need for a *holistic* view of the relations between humans and between humans and nature, which highlights the connection between the *patriarchal* oppression of women and the *destructive utilization* of nature, and which offers a strong critique of the modern Western civilization which is considered to be built on *domination*, *control* and *exploitation*. Ecofeminism

acknowledges the *interconnection* of different power struggles and oppressive systems and is in general claiming that women, due to diverse reasons, have a different relation to the natural world as compared to men and that women can be ascribed an environmental epistemological privilege based on natural connectedness and knowledge.

I believe that neither *ecofeminism* nor *environmental politics* have been given enough attention in the mainstream feminist theoretical and activist movement. When considering the increased global environmental, social and economic threat posed by climate change, especially to women, and the intersectionally connected power relations which the changing climate is bringing to a head, I find it relevant to acknowledge the ecofeminist critique of the paradigm of modernity for causing the current environmental and human crisis. Hence, one of my intentions in this thesis is to examine whether ecofeminist thought is or could be the inspiration for contemporary women's networks working on the climate issue in the run-up to COP15 in Copenhagen. Ecofeminism has many times been looked upon with scepticism and hostility and has often been accused for merely bringing an essentialist and biologist agenda to the feminist table. However, in the light of the devastating effects of climate change the world is already facing and the future threat it is posing to the planet and all its inhabitants, all possible alternatives should, I believe, be acknowledged. Therefore ecofeminist theory will be the *point of departure* for this thesis.

## **2. AIM OF THE THESIS AND INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS**

*The aim of the thesis is to examine how and with what strategies and tactics four selected feminist actors are framing gender in the international climate change process, as well as to what extent ecofeminism and ideas about the inclusion of women in politics have influenced their thinking.*

These actors are: the Swedish *Ecofeminist Network*, the Swedish organization *Green Women*, the international organization *GenderCC* and the *On the Road to Copenhagen Initiative* founded by Margot Wallström, Mary Robinson and Gro Harlem Brundtland.

In order to reach the aim, my intention is to answer the following questions:

- *What perception of the issue of gender in relation to climate change do the actors have?*
- *On what are the arguments about integrating gender in the climate change process based?*
- *How are the actors pursuing their politics?*
- *Can classic ecofeminist ideas be discerned in the arguments and actions on gender and climate?*

## **3. PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

In the field of ecofeminism a vast array of international theoretical studies has been conducted, of which a number will be referred to in the theory chapter. However, in Sweden, ecofeminism has seldom been the prime area of focus in doctoral theses or research studies, wherefore I

consider it relevant and essential to shed some light on this theoretical school. Many studies have previously been made on women and environment and the research on gender and climate change is rapidly increasing. Concerning the specific object of my thesis - *to examine how and with what strategies and tactics four selected feminist actors are framing gender in the international climate change process, as well as to what extent ecofeminism and ideas about the inclusion of women in politics have influenced their thinking* - I have found no comparative or similar research study, implying that this hopefully can make an unpretentious contribution to the field.

#### **4. LIMITATIONS**

Due to the thesis' limited scope and time frame, there are a number of issues that I unfortunately did not have the possibility to cover. First and foremost, I will not cover the discussion surrounding the actual *prevalence* of climate change, nor whether its impacts are *human induced* or not. It would indeed have been interesting to do a "*What's the problem*" analysis of the climate discourse, examining its problem representation, questioning for *whom* it is considered to be such and what consequences an entirely different representation would have had.

The immense field of the role of social movements in influencing international politics as well as the relation between these and states has in my thesis been given scarce attention. Lacking is precisely the *perspective of the states*, i.e. the primal actors in the negotiations and the ones to whom the lobbying actions are aimed. This would have provided a more nuanced picture and added an important feature by giving a hint of who (if anyone) is listening to the demands put forward, why certain actors (with reference to their age, gender, political affiliation etc.) are taking these serious and if so, how these demands are handled. However, in contrast to this, I think that the selection of the international organizations/initiatives such as GenderCC and On the Road to Copenhagen is positively contributing, as they are not constrained by any nation state affiliation.

When selecting the actors, my intention was to present such a diverse sample as possible. Initially, I had also chosen a fifth actor, the Ugandan *Eco-Watch Africa*, with the purpose to cover the perspective of the Global South, to whom the effects of climate change will be most devastating. However, since the organization is a member of GenderCC and since it was lacking adequate material, I chose not to include it in order to render possible a more in-depth analysis of the remaining four. The missing perspective of the Global South must indeed be seen as a shortcoming, but since GenderCC comprises many organizations from the South, I believe that this perspective at least partially will be covered for.

## **5. BACKGROUND**

### **5.1. The UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol**

In 1992, partly as a result of the first IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change) Report stating that human activities and especially the consumption of fossil fuels were negatively affecting the environment, the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The summit resulted in the first international agreement with the endeavour to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) - *the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*. The UNFCCC is built upon the principle of “*common but differentiated responsibilities*”, implying that since the industrial world historically has been the greatest emitter of GHGs it should accordingly bear the greatest burden in coming to terms with global warming. The UNFCCC’s weak and non-binding principles led in 1997, at COP3 (the third Conference of the Parties to the Convention) in Kyoto, Japan to the adoption of the *Kyoto Protocol* and the first binding targets for GHG emissions for 37 industrialized countries for the period 2008-2012 ([www.cop15.dk](http://www.cop15.dk)).

The core of the Protocol is its three flexible mechanisms; *International Emissions Trading, Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI)*, founded on the idea that the global scope of climate change makes the location of emission reductions irrelevant and that such thus should take place where it is most cost-effective ([www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int)). The Protocol is committing rich countries to stabilise GHG emissions but is not ascribing any binding targets to developing countries (Miljödepartementet, 2008:5). The Protocol has by many been considered to be a major failure as the US, the world’s major polluter, has not signed it and as Russia, India and China (three of the five largest emitters) have not been constrained by binding commitments (Aldy & Stavins, 2008:9). However, the Protocol has been an important legal tool for countries to push for national climate policies and has ascribed the issue of climate change high-level political attention (Cléménçon, 2008:88).

### **5.2. The Bali Action Plan**

In 2005 a two-year process with the expiration date at COP13 in Bali 2007 was launched in order to discuss *long-term action to address climate change* and to set up commitments for the post-2012 (post-Kyoto) period (Höhne, 2008:32). COP13, which was influenced by the release of IPCC’s Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), acknowledging the *unambiguous* signs of human-induced global warming and calling for urgent action, marked an important step in reaching a new agreement replacing the Protocol ([www.cop15.dk](http://www.cop15.dk)).

The key outcome of COP13 was the *Bali Action Plan*, whose two major breakthroughs, according to British political scientist Joanna Depledge, was that developing countries agreed to move beyond UNFCCC-commitments and that USA agreed to negotiate new commitments comparable with those in the Protocol (2008:154). The Action Plan is founded on four pillars; mitigation, adaptation, financing and technology. *Mitigation* relates to emission control and reduction, *adaptation* to the growing recognition that adaptation to climate change is a necessity which especially should focus on developing countries and *technology and financing* to the need for mitigation activities by developing countries to be enabled by the developed world through technology, financing and capacity-building (Cléménçon, 2008:73; Ott et al. 2008:92).

### **5.3. A new Copenhagen agreement?**

COP15 will be the culmination of intense negotiations and is by many seen as the last chance to achieve a new climate agreement in time before the Kyoto Protocol expires ([www.cop15.dk](http://www.cop15.dk)). Many issues still need to be addressed, such as if the new agreement should build on the existing Protocol architecture or a new one, how to stimulate further emissions reduction while ensuring societal development, how to facilitate adaptation and promote broader participation and what contributions developing countries should make (Aldy & Stavins, 2008:8; Boston, 2008:60).

The Swedish website “*MiljöAktuellt*” (“the biggest, independent environment magazine in Sweden”) has listed some challenges facing the delegations in Copenhagen. These are: the need of a *shared vision* of fundamental principles and a *common goal* based on the scientific evidence of the IPCC; the importance of *increasing emission reductions* for developed countries; the significance of *burden-sharing* between developed and developing countries and the formulation of *measurable efforts* for developing countries financially and technologically supported by developed countries. Also, issues concerning adaptation, financing and the engagement of the private sector in technology transfer must be considered (MiljöAktuellt, 2009-03-09).

### **5.4. Gender and Climate Change**

The vast array of literature that has been published on the subject of women and environment has emphasized the central role of women as *natural resource users*, *food producers* and *water collectors* and resulted in little disagreement about the importance of involving women in sustainable development (comp. Rodda, 1991 & Reardon, 1993). However, in the area of climate change, few references to gender have been made, despite the explicit commitment of the UN to mainstream gender in all its processes. Probable reasons for this might be the perception of climate change as a purely technical and scientific process and the need to focus attention and resources on more “universal issues” (comp. Dennison, 2000:3; Denton & Parikh, 2006).

Current research is however increasingly shedding light on the link between gender and climate. There is evidence that women and men affect and are affected by climate change in different ways. For example, a Swedish study concludes that globally, men and women leave different ecological footprints, due to differences in transportation, eating habits and consumption patterns (Johnson-Latham, 2007). A British study shows that women in the Global South will be the main sufferers, since the ability to adapt to climate change depends on *control over land, money, tools, good health and personal mobility*, resources poor women usually are lacking. Global warming might for example lead to *water stress, increased flooding, declining water quality and rising water levels* resulting in augmented diseases and malnutrition. This in turn will lead to increased workloads for women who are responsible for food provision and agricultural work, having to care for the sick and walking further to collect water (facing increased risks of sexual harassment), leaving less time for empowering activities such as income generation, school attendance as well as participation in public decision-making. Women and children are more likely to die from natural disasters than men, since they usually lack gendered knowledge like swimming. Post-disaster distress can also result in increased household workloads, leading to girls dropping out of school and becoming victims of sexual violence. These are just some examples highlighting that failing to address gender aspects in climate negotiations will imply decisions not reflecting the needs and priorities of all stakeholders, hence hindering the achievement of sustainable development (BRIDGE, 2008:3-7, 11, 15).

In relation to this a global social movement on gender and climate has developed, criticizing the negotiations for *lacking a gender perspective* and lobbying for *gender mainstreaming* in the UNFCCC process. The voices of some of the actors involved in this will be the object of my study and focus will be on how they are framing gender in the climate process, as well as to what extent ecofeminism and ideas about the inclusion of women in politics have influenced their thinking. (*A matrix of the development of the issue of gender in relation to the UNFCCC process can be found in Appendix A*)

## **6. ECOFEMINIST THEORY AND ITS CRITIQUE**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The motif behind choosing *ecofeminism* as the point of departure for this thesis was not only due to its relevance for the study object – *climate change* – but also its tendency to pinpoint and highlight many of the traditional dilemmas found in feminist theory together with the deep aversion and critique it triggers. Ecofeminism has been given scarce attention in the mainstream feminist movement and I want to question if the harsh critique it has faced is accurate or whether ecofeminist thinking can comprise a useful approach to climate change.

This section constitutes the thesis's theoretical foundation and is mainly based on classic *ecofeminist theory*. However, since ideas about female political representation and inclusion are incorporated in arguments about gender and climate change, I believe it useful and important to include an additional theoretical perspective rooted in *representation theory*, which will be given some attention in the end of this chapter.

I have selected two literary contributions as the base for the ecofeminist chapter; the anthology *Reweaving the World*, edited by Professor of Gender Studies Gloria Feman Orenstein and teacher of political science and gender studies Irene Diamond, and an introduction to/analysis of ecofeminism; *Feminism and Ecology*, written by Professor of Sociology Mary Mellor. These were chosen as they more or less represent the two different strands of ecofeminism: *spiritual* and *socialist* ecofeminism. Diamond and Orenstein's book includes chapters from a number of famous ecofeminist writers such as *Riane Eisler*, *Starhawk*, *Carolyn Merchant*, *Charlene Spretnak* and *Ynestra King*, hence not *only* representing spiritual ecofeminism, but indeed including a number of interesting spiritual contributions. The book written by Mellor will be used both as a *primary* source representing the socialist stance of ecofeminism and as a *secondary* source as it examines, collects and comments on a number of (both spiritual and socialist) ecofeminist theoretical contributions and its critics. The fact that *Reweaving the world* was published in the early 1990's might be a disadvantage, since ecofeminist theory has developed since then. However, I do find it relevant as it represents a good example of spiritual ecofeminism. Also, part of my analytical task will be to examine whether the actors' arguments are based on classic ecofeminist thinking or whether they have developed and changed in relation to the specific context of climate change. Concluding, the article "*Ambivalences and strategic choices*" written by Professor of Political Science Drude Dahlerup together with ideas put forward by the doctoral student of political science Jessika Wide about female representation/inclusion will be discussed in the end of this chapter. Dahlerup's article was chosen as it focuses on the strategic dilemmas facing feminist activists and Wide's book as it provides a fine overview of this theoretical perspective.

The chapter comprises two stages; to give the reader an introduction to ecofeminist theory and the rationale behind female political inclusion, and to compose the foundation of an analytical toolkit that will guide the analysis and that will be developed in the end of the method chapter.

## **6.2. Ecofeminist Origins**

*"The mad absurdity of the entire socioeconomic/cultural structure is evident. Ecofeminists have realised that we must question the entire civilization that mankind has contrived – all of its values, its goals, its achievements. It is not merely antifeminine, it is antihuman, antilife"* (Scofield Russell, 1990:225)

Ecofeminism as a concept was originally coined in 1974 by the French radical feminist *Françoise d'Eaubonne* in her manifesto *La féminisme ou la mort*, in which she argued that the success of feminism was the only way to guarantee the survival of humanity (Schultz, 2006:378). Ecofeminism emerged as a school of thought and social movement in the 1970's, as a response to the "crises of modernity", by some defined as the ecological cost of capitalist 'progress' and 'development' which had been spurred by patriarchal obsessions of *domination* and *control* (Mellor, 1997:44, 46; Spretnak, 1990:110) and by others as the failed mission of liberal feminism, questioned for example by Ynestra King as: "what is the point of partaking equally in a system that is killing us all?" (1990:106).

Ecofeminism merges ideas from the *feminist* and *green* movement and is confronting both, by criticizing the greens for failing to see the importance of gender inequality in ecological crises and challenging feminism when focusing on female embodiment and claiming that women, due to varied reasons, has a different relation to the natural world (Mellor, 1997:1-2). Historically, the relationship between *women and nature* has been characterized by ambiguity within feminist theory since the creation of the first women's movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Schultz, 2006:377). Women's biology and relation to the natural world has been rejected or celebrated by different feminists during different periods. Some have regarded it as *the* source of inequality, which should be discarded to escape biological determinism. To abandon biology would however not be a solution for ecofeminists who, according to Mary Mellor, assert that biological differences only become problematic in the contexts of *cultural value systems*. Ecofeminists have instead encouraged women to *reclaim* their bodies from patriarchal domination and make them *sites of struggle*. The association of women to the natural world, whether through their *bodies*, their *caring roles* or their *traditional subsistence work* has though been criticized for *reaffirming* women's subordination, not leading to empowerment, but to *conservatism* (Mellor, 1997:2, 78-80).

Valerie Bryson, author of "*Feminist Political Theory: An introduction*", labels ecofeminism as a form of *radical feminism*, which by linking the exploitation (rape, abuse and hate) of nature to that of women and by merging their identities, insists that women are closer to nature, more able to express its concerns and that only *their* values can save the planet from ecological destruction. Even though these ideas may be empowering, Bryson sees a risk that such biological determinism can result in *separatism* and fail to challenge patriarchal structures (1995:193, 208-210). Bryson published her book in the mid-90s, when the notion of ecofeminism still was fairly fresh and undeveloped and often only referred to in terms of *spirituality* and *essentialism*. However, after its publication, the theory has expanded and is today also embracing *socialist/materialist* ideological stances, making her view of ecofeminism somewhat outdated.

### **6.3. Ecofeminist Themes**

Doctor of theology David Kronlid argues that the combination of feminism and environmentalism makes ecofeminism a *unique* analytical tool, equalizing emancipation of humans with non-humans and claiming that one cannot happen without the other. He sees ecofeminism as a heterogeneous theory, although connected by the common feature of *non-anthropocentrism*, i.e. the view of nature and non-humans as *active, unpredictable agents* inhabiting an intrinsic *worth* beyond their usefulness (2003:13-14, 168-169, 208-209). Mary Mellor argues that regardless of theoretical backgrounds, ecofeminists see women as *key actors* in the shift to a sustainable society, to which the ending of *women's subordination* is a prerequisite (1997:179). During my review of ecofeminist literature, I have identified some common themes permeating ecofeminist theory, like the *strong critique of the western dualistic thinking* and *scientific rationale* and the acknowledgement of *female embodiment* and *epistemological privilege*.

According to Mary Mellor, most ecofeminists follow radical feminism in identifying *western patriarchy* as the main source of ecological destruction. A central feature of ecofeminism is hence its critique of the western understanding of society as divided into *hierarchical dualisms* such as men/women, culture/nature and science/spirituality. This dualistic thinking is considered to be the foundation of the western *logic of domination*, responsible for the suppression of women and the destruction of the environment as it institutionalizes *power relations* and divides categories into *opposite pairs*, elevating one on the expense of the other. An ecofeminist *egalitarian* and *ecological sustainable* society grounded in a *non-destructive connectedness* between women and men and between humanity and nature can only be reached through dissolving these dualisms and as suggested by social scientist Riane Eisler by embracing a *partnership* society, which does not equate diversity with inferiority/superiority (Mellor, 1997:5, 69, 111-112, 115; Eisler, 1990:28).

Ecofeminist philosopher Carolyn Merchant considers that the emergence of western *science* and *rationality* was the force that released the full destructive potential of western patriarchy and that constructed a view of nature as *dead* and thus materially, politically and ethically exploitable (1994:213, 235). There is, according to physicist and ecofeminist Vandana Shiva and ecofeminist sociologist Maria Mies, a direct relationship between the *western scientific model* and the occidental practices of *colonialism*, *patriarchy* and *capitalism*, which jointly have displaced ecologically sustainable knowledge systems and produced a view of the nature as *fragmented* and disconnected from humanity (1993:22, 47). Ecofeminists are, Eisler claims, not condemning science and technology per se, but highlighting the problem that, within patriarchy, technology has often been used as a tool for more effective domination (1990:32).

The *embodiment of human existence* is a central theme within ecofeminist theory and reflects the *co-existence* of the human body with the surrounding ecosystem and the idea that humans not only are affected by *socio-historical* contexts, but also by *ecological* and *biological* ones. Embodiment is, according to Mellor, not a determining factor but a *universal human condition* that must be discussed even though it might feed prejudices of biological determinism, and she emphasizes that *biology will not simply disappear*, but should be *theorized* and *strategically used* (1997:9, 68, 95, 177). *Female embodiment*, experienced by women either as *mothers*, *care-givers* or *subsistence workers*, is within most ecofeminist theories considered to provide women with a special *awareness* of the nature and a *privileged epistemological perspective*. Feminists have argued that *subordinated positions* give rise to *epistemological advantages*, since the experience of disadvantage generates a perspective of society denied the advantaged and it has been claimed that the relation women have to nature could be used as a “*vantage point*” for creating a different kind of culture and politics (Mellor, 1997:103).

Drawing on these themes I will for the sake of my analytical task define ecofeminism as follows; *a school of thought and activist movement, which combines feminist and ecological ideas, acknowledges female embodiment and epistemological privilege, fundamentally opposes the dualistic hierarchical thinking, androcentrism and anthropocentrism underpinning the patriarchal society and which argues for a holistic perspective on life*. However, I do find it relevant to examine two main streams of ecofeminism to facilitate the analysis and the final categorization of the actors.

#### **6.4. Two main streams**

Ecofeminism can, according to Mellor, be divided into two streams; a *cultural/spiritual/radical* one which stresses *patriarchy* as the root cause of ecological and social destruction and a *socialist/material* one which sees *capitalism* and the *sexual division of labour* as the main object of analysis (1997:5, 45). I have found this division, with some variation, to be a recurrent theme within the literature. However, the line between them is not always evident and some writers seem to embrace both. Before discussing the legitimacy and relevance of such a division, a short presentation of the two and the critique they have faced will be accounted for here.

##### **6.4.1. Spiritual Ecofeminism**

*“Ecofeminism challenges all relations of domination. Its goal is not just to change who wields power, but to transform the structure of power itself. When the spirit is immanent, when each of us is the Goddess...we have an inalienable right to be here and to be alive. We have a value that can't be taken away from us...That kind of value is central to the change we want to create. That's the spell we want to cast” (Starhawk, 1990:76)*

The spiritual form of ecofeminism developed as a response to what was conceived as a mutual devaluation of women and nature by patriarchy and the neglect of female spirituality in western male-dominated religions and societies. In its core lies a *celebration of women* and their relation to

nature as a *source of power* that can be used to radically challenge patriarchy instead of becoming part of it (Merchant, 1990:101; Sydee & Beder, 2001:281; King, 1990:111). Of central concern is the *reclamation* of a *holistic female spirituality* that, in opposition to the patriarchal religions, should be *earth-centred* and *goddess-based* and provide a base for women's empowerment outside patriarchal control. Spiritual ecofeminists have turned to traditional female reproductive practices such as *mothering* and *caring* as sites of struggle and power and aimed at making women agents of change by "spinning" new feminist stories honouring women's biology while affirming them as subjects and creators of history. The importance of the *politics of everyday life* is emphasized together with the claim that *transforming fundamental relationships* is more effective than adopting the power games of men (Diamond & Orenstein, 1990:xi; Mellor, 1997:48, 52, 54; Merchant, 1990:101).

Spiritual ecofeminism has been criticized for embracing *biological determinism* and a *totalizing* image of women (Mellor, 1997:46). Merchant claims that the tendency to emphasize the female, body and nature can lead to a continuation of the hierarchies it seeks to overthrow (1990:102) and its emphasis on *personal transformation* and *empowerment* has been criticized for only personalizing the political with the risk of *escapism* and *withdrawal* from the political sphere, in the end leaving real power in the hands of men (King, 1990:111, 117; Shiva & Mies, 1993:17-18).

#### **6.4.2. Socialist Ecofeminism**

*"The ecological crisis is related to the systems of hatred of all that is natural and female by the White, male, Western formulators of philosophy, technology, and death inventions...the systematic denigration of working-class people and people of colour, women, and animals is connected to the basic dualism that lies at the root of Western civilization. But the mind-set of hierarchy...has its material roots in the domination of human by human, particularly of women by men" (King, 1990:107).*

Socialist ecofeminism developed partly as a critique of spiritual ecofeminism for leaning towards essentialism and lacking an analysis of the effects of *capitalism* and *material forces* shaping the relations between men, women and nature (Sydee & Beder, 2001:285; Mellor, 1997:115). Socialist ecofeminists see environmental problems as rooted in *capitalist patriarchy* and its belief that nature can be exploited for human 'progress'. A basic object of analysis is the *sexual division of labour* alienating women and men from each other and from nature. Nature and gender are seen as "natural" and socially constructed and the division between women and men as representing a *distinction of material interests*. The nature constitutes the material base of human life and it is not *spiritualism*, but *materialism* and *political struggle* that are the driving forces of social change (Mellor, 1997:57, 62-63; Merchant, 1990:103, 105). As equally oppressed by patriarchy, women and nature are connected in a material relationship and women's ecological sensitivity is seen as *socially constructed* as well as a result of the *patriarchal rejection of embodiment*. It is hence the embodied

woman as a *social historical agent* who is the subject of material ecofeminism (Mellor, 1997:57-59; King, 1990:114, 117).

Even though socialist ecofeminism rejects dualism, it has been criticized for embracing dichotomous thinking. Professor of Development Studies Cecile Jackson claims that in socialist ecofeminism, the male half of the gendered dualism is often seen as deformed and in need of modification, while the female is seen as perfect in itself (1995). Further, socialist ecofeminism has been thought of as embracing an *essentialist* stance, as its foundation still is based on a logic of identity and an ontological claim to an essence, no matter biological or social (Sandilands, 1999). The claim of women to be epistemologically privileged has also been criticized as essentialist and universalist as it does not specify *which* women's views it represents (MacGregor, 2004:64)

Even though making a distinction between spiritual and socialist ecofeminism, Mary Mellor admits that there is no point of *forcing* different stances into categories and acknowledges that these many times are blurred (1997:57). Of the "spiritual" ecofeminist writers I have crossed in the anthology there are not many explicitly labelling themselves as spiritual, even though they show spiritual features, as they emphasize how *mothering*, *nurturing* and *caring* as well as the *reclamation* and *celebration* of female *spirituality* spur women to act and can induce empowerment and political agency, however on a small-scale level. It must be recognized that many of them claim that spirituality or *awakening* (Spretnak, 1990:7) is not an end in itself but must be grounded in action (Starhawk, 1990:74). What form such action should take is however described in a, in my opinion, somewhat provocative way. For example Starhawk writes: "*We can begin this...by first getting together with people in a small way and forming our own action groups...Maybe you will form a circle where members take off their clothes and go to the beach and jump in the waves and energize yourselves...*" (1990:84) or as written by Paula Gunn Allen: "*What can we do to be politically useful, spiritually mature attendants in this great transformation...? Find out by asking as many trees as you meet how to be a tree*" (1990:57). Clear is though that this recovery of spirituality is not seen as something merely allocated to women. I have within the texts discerned a tendency to associate women with nature, however not explicitly based on their *biology*, as for example clearly expressed in the statement by Spretnak: "*what cannot be said is that women are drawn to ecology and ecofeminism simply because we are female*" (1990:4).

The critique of ecofeminism for being essential and universalist is according to me both true and false. There are some tendencies within the spiritual ecofeminist writings of defining women solely as *mothers*, *carers* and *nurturers* in a many times heterosexist way, presuming the nuclear family to be at the core of the holistic world view. However, the claim that they are neglecting

differences among women is something that I do not agree with, as the authors explicitly express their concerns of the complexity of different *domination system* and the intersection of suppressive powers. However, it must be acknowledged that despite this awareness, implementing theory can I think, often imply a totalizing image of women by many times glorifying the environmental battle of poor women.

### **6.5. Ecofeminism – empowering or depoliticizing?**

Even though ecofeminism can be criticized for being essentialist, biologist and lacking political efficiency, “*what’s really wrong with ecofeminism*”, according to Lucy Sargisson, Professor of politics, is the fact that it’s failing to exploit its full potential. She underlines its important function as a force of *transformative resistance*, imaging an *alternative reality*, *re-presenting* the world from a different perspective and offering a *site for political critique*. The *visionary tone* of ecofeminism and its terminology can produce a “*new language for politics*” and a “*space for alternative means of expression*” (2001:54-55, 58-59, 62). Lee Quinby argues, in a faucaultian tradition viewing power as multilayered, that ecofeminism indeed can function as a *politics of resistance*, since decentred power requires decentred political struggles. She argues that the strength of ecofeminism lies in its ability to “*challenge power at the local level in a multiplicity of places*” (1990:124). However, criticism has been articulated that the many voices make ecofeminism *incoherent* as a movement (Mellor, 1997:158).

The celebration of women as *earth-carers* is in the context of the neo-liberal masculinist society, according to Sherilyn MacGregor, researcher of gender and environment, a risky project and she claims that the *valuing of everyday political practices* can lead to *affirmed gendered knowledge* instead of consciousness-raising and creation of political agency, failing to consider how women can move beyond the politics of survival to political resistance and transformation. MacGregor argues that by embracing *democracy* and *citizenship*, a more potential transformation of gender relations is possible (2004:61, 66-67, 72-73). The ecofeminist focus on grass-root activism is questioned by Molyneux and Steinberg who argue that the assumptions underpinning ecofeminist theory have the effect of *depoliticizing* the agenda and of reducing feminist politics and strategy to something given in the nature of being a woman. Hence, they argue, it fails to create an adequate politics, when arguing that the only evocative politics for women is *outside traditional patriarchal* power, in women-centred grassroots struggles (1995:102-104).

The critique of ecofeminism for being de-politicizing is rather harsh, but does indeed highlight the pertinent question of on what grounds and with what strategy the feminist struggle is most successfully battled, a question that will be further scrutinized in the following chapters.

## **6.6. Women and Politics – the rationale behind female representation and inclusion**

The many times ambiguous use of concepts such as *equality*, *inequality*, *sameness* and *difference* within feminist discourse are discussed by Drude Dahlerup in her article “*Ambivalences and strategic choices*”. Dahlerup shows how the feminist movement throughout history has embraced ambivalent arguments about the female-male sameness/difference distinction for legitimizing its struggle. From her study of the Danish suffragette movement, she identifies three types of arguments used to legitimize women the right to vote; the *justice* argument based on the perception of the female-male likeness; the *experience* argument based on the notion that women should be included in the political world due to their different experiences, claiming that female values will bring something good to society; and lastly the argument that women should be allowed to vote in order to safeguard their own *interests*. Her point is that in this movement, as well as in others to come, arguments about the *differences* between the sexes have been used simultaneously with arguments emphasizing their *commonalities* (2001:22-23).

A similar discussion is presented by Jessika Wide, who distinguishes between two arguments for female political inclusion/representation: the *substance argument* and the *democracy/justice argument*. The *first* argument embraces the idea that female inclusion/representation matters since women can place issues previously ignored or defined as non-political on the agenda and since women can have *different interests* than men in the same issues. Drawing on a number of studies, Wide concludes that: 1) *many issues are mainly pushed for by women*, like reproductive rights and sexual violence; 2) *women can prioritize entirely different questions than men* and 3) *women and men can have different interests in the same issue*, since they partly live under different societal conditions. The *second* argument implies that in a democratic society all citizens should have the possibility and opportunity to participate in political decision-making and implementation, wherefore the participation of women and men must be enabled by the same conditions, if the legitimacy of the system is not to be questioned. Wide further reflects upon how the participation of women in politics is considered differently by different feminist schools. Radical feminism is repudiating the institutions of established politics and is more interested in visualizing women’s political activities outside this arena. Liberal feminism is searching explanations for female subordination in inadequate rights for women or in the insufficient use of these and claim that it is possible to reach equality within the established system, where the real power of society exists (2006:4-6, 10).

Drawing on classical ecofeminist ideas as well as the above mentioned arguments for female inclusion/representation in formal politics, an analytical toolkit will be developed, based on the

methodological approach of Carol Lee Bacchi together with ideas about framing and strategizing, presented in the following chapter.

## **7. METHOD**

### **7.1. Material and Sources**

This study focuses on *qualitative literature studies* in the theoretical and methodological part and *documentary analysis* and *interviews* in the empirical. In the theory chapter, literature was selected to mirror spiritual and socialist ecofeminism. For the empirical part, I have chosen to focus on four actors who all are engaged (at different levels and to different extents) in the issue of gender and climate and who will attend COP15. The rationale for choosing the *Ecofeminist Network* was its recent creation and explicit ecofeminist position. *Green Women* was selected since it's a political organization which, as I have understood it, partly developed due to the inadequate attention given to gender in the Green movement. *GenderCC* is one of the most prominent international organizations working on the issue and *On the Road to Copenhagen* was selected due to its high-levelled and formal political agenda.

### **7.2. Interview and Documentary Analysis**

Since the relative novelty of the issue of gender and climate and the comparative newness of some of the actors, adequate material has sometimes been lacking and has been supplemented by interviews. The material constituting the foundation of the analysis have been *statements, recommendations, proclamations, presentations, press releases, debate articles, booklets* and *web videos*. The material and interviews are in the thesis equalized as primary sources. All material has been analysed with the help of my analytical toolkit, which also influenced the design of the interviews. The interviews were conducted both in person and via telephone. Even though one misses out on important factors such as facial expressions and body language when interviewing via telephone, such interviews can, according to Daphne Keats, author of *“Interviewing – a practical guide for students and professionals”*, anyways be helpful as it provides indications of the informants' tone of voice, speech style and speed of response (2000:12). The interviews were taped, except from the one with the Ewa Larsson from Green Women, which could not be recorded due to technical problems. All informants have had the opportunity to check that they have been fairly referred to in the interviews and they were provided the transcriptions in order for them to read, comment, add and modify my interpretation of what was said during the interview. Also, noted must be that the interviews were conducted in Swedish, and translated into English, why some concepts might have been translated in an imperfect way and why some linguistic nuances might have been lost.

The interview guide was designed with open-ended questions allowing the informants to freely respond to the questions asked (Keats, 2000:35). I found this structure adequate since focus will be on how actors are *framing* the issue of gender and climate change. A well articulated interview guide should not, according to Keats, include ambiguous questions, i.e. questions not precisely framed or resulting in answers possibly related to more than one part of the question (2000:40). This is however something I have not implemented, since my idea was for the informants themselves to interpret and put a meaning to the questions asked.

I had already encountered some of the actors before conducting the interviews. I was in February attending a seminar held by the Ecofeminist Network at the *Feminist Forum* in Stockholm. Further, I met and listened to a representative from GenderCC at the *Gendering Climate and Sustainability Conference* held in Copenhagen in March. These encounters have probably affected my perception of the actors and influenced the way I conducted the interviews and analysed the material. The informants were all well-articulated, politically experienced and well-educated within an area that for me was new and complex. The fact that I only chose to focus on women's organizations and networks and that all my respondents belong to an educated, political aware, middle-classed elite could imply a rather homogenous picture of the issue.

### **7.3. Carol Lee Bacchi: What's the problem (represented to be)?**

The feminist political scientist Carol Lee Bacchi has in opposition to traditional policy studies, whose (she claims) aim is to find *solutions* to social problems and which regards problem identification as a rather uncomplicated task, developed an analytical tool to understand the construction of social policies. She argues that 'problems' do not just 'exist', waiting to be 'solved', but are created by the policy community and that it is impossible to separate 'solutions' from 'problem identifications'. She calls this the "*What's the problem*" approach. According to Bacchi, policies should be understood as competing interpretations of political issues and in order to uncover a problem representation one should *diagnose* it by asking the following questions: *What is 'the problem' represented to be? What presuppositions are implied or taken for granted in the representations offered? What effects are connected to this representation of the 'problem'? What is left unproblematic? How would responses differ if the 'problem' was represented differently?* (1999:1-2, 20).

A central feature of Bacchi's social constructionist approach is the *deconstruction* of problem representations, implying that issues taken for granted should be challenged as contested claims about the existence, nature and implications of social problems. She underscores that it is pivotal to reflect on the *unaddressed* issues in a problem representation, since when asking what remains unproblematized, important silences can be examined. Also, she states that one can not presume

that a presupposition implied in a representation actually must be hold by the one making it, but that it is possible that it has been chosen for *strategical* reasons to reach a particular goal (1999:4, 9, 11, 51, 54, 59).

By equating policy with discourse, Bacchi is encouraging actors seeking social change to examine the *discursive framework* within which they are constructing their case. She claims that political environment and institutional factors influence the potential of discursive framing and that there may be political contexts in which it is necessary to ‘play the game’. Bacchi emphasizes the importance of reflecting upon the implications of certain groups’ positions when characterizing them as targets in policy proposals and to question the way a ‘problem’ is labelled. For example, to label something a ‘women’s issues’ can both be used to highlight the disproportional affects a policy have on women and at the same time work to marginalize the topic, since women’s issues often are subsumed under the ‘social’ part of ‘social policy’, degrading it as a result of the priority placed on economic policy (1999:40, 90, 93, 104, 137, 205).

There are a number of features in Bacchi’s approach that I find attractive. Her deconstructive stance will facilitate the design of my analytical toolkit and especially interesting is the way she wants to open up for *alternative interpretations* of problems, which indeed seems to be compatible with what I consider as one of the cores of ecofeminism. The focus on questioning the discursive formations of problems and realizing how discursive frameworks can be used instrumentally is vital for my thesis, which will be focusing on strategies for framing and action and the meaning of labelling the feminist battle in the climate change process. However, one cannot neglect the flaws inherent in Bacchi’s approach. Even though the majority of her book is meant to provide the reader with practical examples of how to actually conduct an analysis grounded in her scheme, she fails to supply a real, useful toolbox. After finishing the book, I am still confused over issues such as: How can I actually pinpoint issues *unaddressed* in a problem representation? How can I prophesy on what effects a problem formulation will have, without being subjective? How will I know what policy ideas really affect policy outcomes? Her approach seems to be underpinned by ideas of logical correlations, connecting certain problem representations to certain policy solutions in a logical manner, while the realist politics in which such problems are framed, interpreted and decided upon usually is not permeated by such logical thinking. Bacchi’s approach is very much grounded in formal politics and the way decision-makers are handling social problems. Since I will be focusing mostly on lobbying organizations, it will be necessary to supplement Bacchi’s approach with ideas on social movements and framing.

#### **7.4. Framing**

Framing strategies are discussed in “*Social Movements – An Introduction*” written by political scientist Donatella della Porta and sociologist Mario Diani. Even though all “my” actors cannot be seen as traditional social movement organizations, I do find the ideas of della Porta and Diani relevant. The authors are referring to frames as *schemes of interpretation* enabling the *localization, perception* and *labelling* of situations. They claim that *frame analysis* is a process of three stages; *recognizing* a problem, *identifying strategies* for solving this problem and *motivating action*. Similarly to Bacchi, they argue that social problems do not exist as such, but are interpreted in relation to the frames involved in their construction (1999:69-70).

According to della Porta & Diani, framing (interpreting) involves a process of looking for *alternative solutions* and new possible social patterns, relationships and exercise of power – a somewhat *utopian* task, making social movements actors through whom alternative and radical perceptions might develop. Different forms of framing are touched upon, such as *frame extension* (connecting a problem to a general and not so obvious context) and *frame transformation* (making the interpretation of a problem more coherent to the mainstream interpretation). della Porta and Diani emphasize the possibility of social movements to *redefine* concepts and symbols, but claim that the chance for successful framing is greater if the message presented can be related to the “*dominant master frame*” permeating a specific context (1999:72, 75, 80). When recommending strategies for framing and action, della Porta and Diani are not clear. They note that the *form of organization* and *action* a movement adopts is in itself part of a strategy. Further, they recognize that the greater the access to the decision-making system is the more social movements tend to adopt moderate strategies, while radical strategies more commonly are adopted by movements lacking material resources (1999:151, 168, 192).

The environmental political scientist Peter Newell has in his book “*Climate for change: Non-state Actors and the Global Politics of the Greenhouse*” studied the influence of environmental NGOs in international climate politics. After conceptualizing three platforms for NGO action: *Agenda-setting*, *Negotiation-bargaining* and *Implementation*, he concludes that the most effective forum for NGO influence is within the first. However, the ability of an actor to partake in the process of agenda-setting depends on its skills to ascribe an issue *high political status* (2000:129). Newell argues that NGOs can serve as *advisers* and *information providers* in the process of defining and diagnosing a problem and highlights that government’s positions in previous conferences often have been underdeveloped, making them willing to consider the advice of NGOs. Much NGO actions during climate conferences concerns *corridor lobbying* and events attracting *media* attention.

It seems however, Newell states, that NGOs often *self-censor* proposals that might be too radical, shown by the fact that many of the most influential groups are those whose policy prescriptions are suited within existing frameworks (2000:130, 142, 148-152)

According to Shannon Gibson, doctoral student of international studies and author of the paper “*Transnational Activist Network’s Framing and Direct Action Strategies*” a strategy shift within the climate movement has occurred, from *advocacy-oriented* to *activist-oriented* networks, embracing *direct action* and *outsider strategies* as opposed to *insider lobbying tactics*. The new environmental movement has altered the discourse, by claiming that climate change is an issue of *equity* and *social justice*. The fact that climate justice claims have been combined with frames of anti-capitalism/anti-globalization, could according to Gibson, lead to beneficial strategic framing as it renders possible opportunities for *cross-network alliances* and additional arenas for action (2009:6, 13-14).

## **8. FROM THEORY TO ACTION – THE ANALYTICAL TOOLKIT**

I have, in order to facilitate, structure, categorize and thematize the analysis developed an “analytical toolkit” based on Bacchi’s *What’s the Problem Approach* and influenced by ideas about *framing*, *ecofeminist theory* and ideas about *female political inclusion and representation*. The following themes will be the foundation of the analysis; the representation of the *problem*, the implications of *discursive framing*, the consequences of different *strategies* and the *general positioning* of the actors.

Fundamentally, I intend to examine what, if any, *ecofeminist features* the four selected actors are embracing and hence to categorize them as ecofeminists or non-ecofeminists. The latter category will be divided into sub-categories depending on the results from the analytical examination. The ecofeminist criteria directing the analysis will be; *the understanding of nature and non-humans as having an inherent worth*, *the acknowledgment of female embodiment*, *the denial of dualistic thinking*, *the rejection of the western model of science and technology*, *the claim of a female epistemological privilege and/or the explicit denunciation of the patriarchal/capitalist/dominator society*. If identified as ecofeminist, an additional categorization of these actors will be executed on the basis of their socialist or spiritual affiliation. Hence, spiritual criteria will be: *the celebration of womanhood and female spirituality as sources of power and the revaluation of everyday politics and traditional female practices such as mothering, caring and nurturing* and socialist criteria will be: *the rejection of the capitalist patriarchal society and the sexual division of labour and an acknowledgment of humans as socially constructed*. Further I will try to pinpoint whether ecofeminist ideas are affecting the strategies the actors tend to choose and what consequences such ecofeminist/non-ecofeminist framing might have.

Following the rationale behind female political inclusion and representation, a further categorization of the actors will be made. Drawing on the ideas put forward by Dahlerup and Wide, I have chosen to divide this issue in two classes of arguments: the *difference argument* and the *democracy argument*. The classification of the actors will hence be founded on whether they, when arguing for the need of a gender perspective in the climate process, are grounding their arguments on the importance of including women due to the *difference* that inclusion can lead to or due to the fact that women should be included, not because it would imply better climate politics, but because anything else would be *undemocratic* and *unfair*. My intention is hence to position the four actors within a schematic model in order to better grasp their positions, frames and arguments. If the actors do not present or embrace any ecofeminist ideas, my task will be to see if there is any other way of categorizing them, either within the context of ecofeminism or within an alternative green feminist context. The following toolkit will be used:

### **1. The Problem**

- Representation?
- Presuppositions?
- Effects?
- Solutions?
- Issues left unproblematic?
- Women as victims/actors?
- Conflict/consensus?

### **2. The Discursive Framework**

- Frames?
- Frame extension/transformation?
- Instrumentalism?
- Relation to dominant master frame?
- Closeness/relation to decision-makers?

### **3. The Strategies**

- What part of negotiations influence?
- How?
- Advocates/activists?
- Inside/outside formal politics?
- High political profile?
- Mainstreaming/revolution?

### **4. The General Positioning**

- Ecofeminist features? Spiritual/socialist?
- Difference/Democracy?
- Women's issue/women's organizations/networks?
- Representation/substantive adding?
- Categorization?

After conducting the analysis the following schematic model will be filled out:

	<b>Ecofeminist Network</b>	<b>Green Women</b>	<b>GenderCC</b>	<b>On the Road to Copenhagen</b>
<u>Feminist Approach</u>				
<u>Rationale behind gender dimension</u>				
<u>Frames</u>				
<u>Strategies</u>				
<u>Problem</u>				
<u>General Position</u>				

## **PART II: ANALYSIS**

### **9. ON THE ROAD TO COPENHAGEN**

#### **9.1. Introduction**

*On the Road to Copenhagen* (RTC) is an initiative launched by *Margot Wallström*, Vice President of the European Commission, *Mary Robinson*, former President of Ireland and Vice President of Club of Madrid and *Gro Harlem Brundtland*, former Prime Minister of Norway and UN Special Envoy on Climate Change. Invited by Wallström, *Respect Table* (a non-profit project facilitated by Respect, which manages and assists business leadership networks), *Club of Madrid* (an independent organization comprised of 64 former heads of states and governments and promoting sustainable democratic development) and *Globe Europe* (Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment) joined forces to together create this rather unique project to give stakeholders not officially entitled to partake in the formal climate negotiations, the opportunity to influence the process. The initiative is to a large extent focusing on the importance of including a gender perspective in the climate negotiation process ([www.roadtocopenhagen.org](http://www.roadtocopenhagen.org)).

RTC, which was launched in November 2007, offers through an interactive website individuals, organizations and businesses the opportunity to express concerns, ideas and proposals at the prospect of the international climate negotiations. The views expressed so far have been considered, discussed and refined at a high level meeting and put forward by Wallström, Robinson and Brundtland at the negotiations in Bali and Poznan. Also, in March this year,

Wallström and Robinson participated in the Theme Days on Climate Change and Gender at the “*International Colloquium on Women’s Empowerment, Leadership Development, Peace and Security*”, organized by Ellen Johnsson-Sirleaf and Tarja Halonen in Monrovia, Liberia. The purpose of the event was to “*strengthen women’s participation in sustainable development and climate change; to make leaders aware of women’s roles in natural resources management and the linkage between gender and climate change; and to highlight the various sources of financing that could enhance women’s leadership*”. Hence, the outcome document “*the Monrovia Call for Action on Climate Change and Gender*” will be included in the analysis. Since Wallström is the primal initiator of RTC, I have chosen to focus the analysis on *statements, speeches and articles* written by her together with documents such as *communiqués, letters and articles* commonly drafted by the three designers of the project. For all actors, the major material will be referred to in the text. Supplementary material and diverse smaller contributions used for the analysis will be listed in the list of references.

## **9.2. The Problem**

Climate change is described as a “*story about desperation and hope*” that can kill or save us all and that will force us to change (Article 1). Wallström is depicting the current situation as a result of an *unsustainable way of living* and the fact that the climate process has focused too much on the *technical and economic* factors and too little on the *human and social*. She emphasizes the *North/South* division of climate change, when stating that it is the already poor and vulnerable regions that will be most severely hit by the effects of climate change, even though the industrialized world is the main emitter (Article 2).

Problematizing the issue of gender and climate change, she asserts that women and men are not equally exposed to its impacts and do not have the same adaptive capacities, due to existing *gender inequalities*, different *societal roles* and the *division of labour*. There is, according to Wallström, a need to acknowledge these differences and take the gender perspective into account in the climate debate in order to avoid further gender inequality. Wallström et al. claim that since climate change most strongly will affect poor regions and negatively impact agriculture, food security and water supply, sectors usually under female responsibility, poor women will be hardest hit. Women are, as a result of their *special knowledge* of food production and natural resources described as important *actors* in the adaptation to climate change. Wallström is in my opinion almost *canonizing* women when describing how they during the Tsunami, instead of saving themselves, ran into the water to save their families (Article 3). Since women traditionally are primary managers of energy, forestry, agriculture, natural resources and water, their leadership is described as *critical*. Hence,

even though an understanding of women as the greatest *victims* of climate change is evident, focus is on their role as *actors and agents of change*.

Wallström is consequently assigning the climate context an air of hope by describing it as a *unique challenge*, a *catalyst for change* and an *opportunity* for the creation of a new society. In order to come to terms with the current problem, a new world order built on *equity, democracy, human rights, gender equality, transparency* and *accountability* is needed to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and create a balance between environmental protection, economic growth and social progress. Further, a *fairer* world trade system and global financial system is necessary. Essential is a *new way of thinking*, implying that political and social innovation and not merely technical is imperative, since she claims, by referring to Albert Einstein: “*we can’t solve the problems by using the same kind of thinking that created them*” (EUobserver, 2008). Wallström is hence presenting a strong critique of the current global society and its unfair economic structures. Something *new* is required she claims. However, *how* this new society can be reached is not clearly explained. Nowhere have I found explicit statements about the structures underpinning the current system, and critique of phenomena like *patriarchy, capitalism, neo-colonialism* or the “*development/growth*” *paradigm* is non-existent. The weakness inherent in this letdown to denominate the problem is shown by the failure of finding a clearly expressed solution to it. Hence, even though Wallström is pointing at unfair relations between men and women and between North and South, she is not explicitly pointing at on *what* these relations are founded nor what is needed to alter these.

Without confronting these possibly dangerous and abstract power relation systems, Wallström proposes a number of ideas for a successful climate politics to be realized. She argues for the necessity of interconnecting *mitigation* and *adaptation* strategies and ascribing them equal importance and she underscores the importance of developing *clean and green energy technologies*. Climate policies must be permeated by *democratic accountability* and the negotiations *broadened* to include civil society and the private sector. She demands *hands-on tools* to help businesses and citizens to act in a climate friendly manner. Of utter importance is the integration of a *gender dimension* in the new agreement, to ensure that all policies and activities are considered through a gender perspective. There is, Wallström states, a need for *awareness-raising* and more *information* on how climate change affect the daily lives of women. Further, the traditional knowledge of women of natural resource management should be better utilized and their role as *environmentally sound consumers* supported. In order for this to happen women must be encouraged to participate in the negotiations and the parties must create an *enabling environment* for this to be realized (Speech/08/150; Article 2). Hence, some perceived but undefined obstacles to female

participation are acknowledged, however without offering any deeper explanation of which these are or how they should be overcome.

### **9.3. The Discursive Framework**

Wallström is recurrently emphasizing the relation between the effects of climate change and the achievement of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs). She also makes a point of addressing the issue from the points of *Human Rights*, *Gender Equity*, *Climate Justice* and *Poverty Eradication* referring to formal and “universally acknowledged” commitments, like the Declaration of Human Rights and CEDAW. Wallström is persistently talking about the issue in a *democratic* perspective when claiming that the climate process should not only be open to a small, male elite, but that *all* affected should be able to influence the debate. I have noticed how she mentions *gender* in relation to issues such as *technology transfer* and *financing*, in what seems to be an attempt to mainstream or “naturalize” it, hence ascribing it the same status. It seems that in order for the claims to be successful, Wallström et al. have chosen to position themselves in the *dominant UN “master frame”*, by using agreed language in the UN context and by referring to relatively non-controversial international conventions.

In the terms of della Porta and Diani, a *frame transformation* of the position of the designers of the RTC could, I believe, be discerned. It seems like they are transforming their arguments to fit a *neo-liberal* context, continually positioning the issue within the framework of *smart growth*, claiming gender equity to be “smart climate financing” and arguing that recognizing the role of women in adaptation and mitigation will be *cost-effective* (Speech/08/150; Article 2). The high-level political profile of the project designers and their acknowledged international status is probably affecting the way they are framing the question of gender and climate change. They have a certain reputation in the international society, they do presumably have a close relationship with many of the key actors, they are used to the environment in high-level international forums, familiar with the language and concepts and aware of successful framing. However, despite the strategic usefulness in applying neo-liberal framing, I do see a danger embedded in this. When only referring to the *economic gains* the inclusion of a gender perspective could result in, no deeper analysis of *gendered power structures/relations* is made possible. Also, such instrumental arguments may have *counter-productive* effects by eventually limiting the interest of investing in gender specific activities, if the relation between the inclusion of women and “smart growth” empirically cannot be proved (see e.g. Jackson, 1996). Finally, even though the view of the current climate situation as an *opportunity* contributes to positivism, I do find it rather provocative, offensive and distasteful to describe this, for a majority of the world’s population, especially poor women in the Third

world, devastating scenario, as an opportunity. An opportunity for whom? Concluding, it is interesting to note how the neo-liberal framing have been adopted even by key representatives of the European social democratic ideology to which Wallström, Brundtland and Robinson belong.

#### **9.4. The Strategies**

One of the objectives of the RTC is, according to its founders, to render possible for actors formally excluded from climate negotiations to affect the process, since, they argue, the issue of climate change must be handled beyond the scope of *traditional government-to-government diplomacy*. Hence, by launching the web-site their intention was an interactive forum in which as many actors as possible, especially women but of course also men, would be given a voice in the negotiations. They want to change the way climate change is communicated and strengthen the links between *businesses*, the *civil society* and *individual citizens*, who they believe to be critical stakeholders ([www.roadtocopenhagen.com](http://www.roadtocopenhagen.com)). I find the initiative to be creative, since such a web-based interactive forum might be one way of opening up the austere restricted access to the climate (as well as other urgent and imperative international) negotiations, which in turn possibly could result in some kind of revitalized political interest and global democracy?

Due to their long and intense political experience, the three women must be considered as “real” actors to count with in the international climate process. They describe themselves to have *in-depth knowledge* of climate change, great *experience of high-level negotiations* and *access and power* to influence the policy makers in the negotiations ([www.roadtocopenhagen.com](http://www.roadtocopenhagen.com)). They seem hence to be playing by the “rule of the games” and strategizing within the context of *formal* climate politics. They are part of a global power elite, which gives their opinions strength, something they also tend to take advantage of as they in some kind of “give-and-take” manner are bargaining for the inclusion of gender in the negotiations by pledging that they *in turn* will be “*using their political processes to raise the urgency and scale of the climate change issue with our political leaders... and further integrating climate change in our considerations of foreign, security and development policy*” (Final Communiqué of 2007). Although playing by the rules of the game, one must acknowledge how they simultaneously are *challenging* the formalized political institutions, opening up for “ordinary people” to express their concerns and creating more direct communication between political leaders and civil society. They seem to believe in allying with countries already championing the inclusion of gender in the negotiations and with the broader climate justice movement. Change according to Wallström et al. does not seem to be advocated by revolutionary means, even though fundamental, systematic changes are required.

## **9.5. The General Positioning**

First and foremost, when considering the ecofeminist influence in the RTC, Wallström et al. are unquestionably not explicitly identifying themselves as ecofeminists (nor as *feminists* in general, even though I consider RTC to be feminist). They seem instead to be concerned to label themselves as high-levelled international politicians with specific interest and deep engagement in the issue of gender and climate change, however not expressed in the light of feminist, and especially not ecofeminist, frames. Despite the lack of explicit indications, some ecofeminist ideas can be discerned, like the socialist ecofeminist understanding that women due to the gendered division of labour are more involved in and dependent on the nature. Further, parallels to the critique of dualistic thinking are made, exemplified by the push for *development* at the expense of the environment. However, non-ecofeminist ideas are more prominent, like the *faith in technological solutions*, the *adoption of neo-liberal ideas* of development and smart growth and the non-mentioning of neither *anthropocentrism* nor *androcentrism*.

Considering the rationale for integrating a gender perspective in the climate process, varied claims are made why women must be entitled access to negotiations and why women's concerns must be considered at all levels. A number of *instrumental* statements on how the inclusion of women will *favour the whole society* and create *better living conditions* for poor people are made. Wallström underscores examples that show the *good results* achieved when women are ascribed greater power and that such "sunshine stories" must be acknowledged for women's experiences not to be excluded (Article 3). Such stories are certainly important as they shed light on the *difference* women can make as they get access to decision-making and implementation arenas. However, again the question, and danger, of instrumentalism is highlighted when such cute stories *legitimise* the involvement of women. What happens then if women do *not* contribute to a better society? It is claimed that women *can* and *should* make a difference, as they contribute with other experiences and ideas, better understand the situation of other women and can push for *enhanced policies* on health, education, development and trade. Wallström explicitly refers to Wangari Mathai, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, who claims that "*Those of us who understand the complex concept of the environment have the burden to act. We must not tire, we must not give up, we must persist*" (Speech/09/99). To add the "burden" of saving the environment on women is however, I believe, questionable.

The RTC organizers are also underscoring the issue of *democracy* around which the question of gender and climate is centred. Wallström claims that climate policies must reflect the priorities and perspectives, needs and aspirations of all stakeholders and that women should not depend on male decision-makers to prioritize issues they find imperative. Since gender balance does not exist

in the climate debate, there is a need to give specific attention to women, to break traditional female stereotypes and de-bunk the myth that women are less able to be political leaders (Speech/08/619). Hence, Wallström et al. are emphasizing that the full participation of women in all stages of the climate process is needed and are encouraging women to make their voices heard and to participate in political decision-making at all levels (Article 3; Monrovia Call for Action). This can be understood as a positive encouragement, although it in a way ascribes women the responsibility of this to happen, without acknowledging structural hindrances and barriers. Drawing from the above discussion about the non-ecofeminist features inherent in the arguments of the RTC I believe it is necessary to find an alternative way of positioning this actor. This task will be conducted in the summary chapter.

## **10. GENDER CC – Women for Climate Justice**

### **10.1. Introduction**

GenderCC is “*the global network of women and gender activists and experts from all world regions working for gender and climate justice*”. The network was the result of a side event at the COP9 in Milan in 2003, which was held to discuss the importance of gender in the climate negotiations. The apparent need of sharing experiences and knowledge and giving the topic wider recognition resulted hence in its creation. During the following COPs more action was undertaken and more gratitude was given to the topic. The network’s activities culminated in Bali in 2007 as it published and presented several position papers on a wide range of topics related to the gender dimension of climate change, which were met with interest and acknowledgement from many important stakeholders ([www.gendercc.net](http://www.gendercc.net)).

The network encompasses a number of organizations and individuals and functions both as a forum for collecting and providing information and as a platform for organizing collective action at climate events. Examples of organizations in the network are; *genanet* (a German coordination point linking gender justice, environment and sustainability); *The Gender and Water Alliance* (a global network dedicated to mainstream gender in water resource management) and *Women Environmental Programme Nigeria* (an NGO addressing gender injustices within environmental issues). At the individual level, actors such as *consultants*, *researchers* and *entrepreneurs* are represented in the network. I have found no evidence that men are not welcome in the network. However the name of the organization; GenderCC – Women for climate justice, seems exactly to be comprised of that, i.e. *women*. The GenderCC website is well developed and comprises a vast amount of documents like *position papers*, *reports*, *presentations* and *recommendations* on the gender dimension within issues like adaptation, mitigation, financing and technology transfer as well as

more specific topics such as agriculture, biodiversity, energy, forests, transport and water. The GenderCC has also webcasted a number of videos, for example one filmed at COP14 in Poznan, reflecting views, opinions and actions taken at the workshop and side event hosted by GenderCC. The *documents, statements* and the *video* will constitute the material base for the analysis.

## **10.2. The Problem**

Within the material a number of aspects of the current climate situation is acknowledged and discussed. I have chosen to divide these into four categories: 1) *the missing link of gender*, 2) *the gendered causes/impacts of climate change*, 3) *injustice* and 4) *androcentrism*.

GenderCC describes the *lacking awareness of gender* in the climate process as a *vicious circle*. It is underscored how the focus on *technical* and *economic* approaches to climate change has presented it as a *gender neutral* phenomenon (Paper 2). The technocratic framing and neglect of social aspects is thought to push women away from the negotiations and it is claimed that if women's organizations not actively are involved, gender will not be addressed, and with gender unaddressed, women's organizations will not participate. GenderCC acknowledges how women mainly have been seen as *victims* in the climate process, and not as *policy designers* and *decision-makers* (Paper 3). As a result of not enough research to clarify the linkages between gender and climate, *gender sensibility* among the decision-makers is missing. The deficient research is related to the lack of *gender awareness* within the IPCC, who has failed to look for, collect, and publish such. Further, even though the principle of *historical responsibility* is a core of the UNFCCC, focus has only been on that between *North and South*, and not within *gender relations* (Paper 1, Paper 2)

The *causes* and *impacts* of climate change must, the network claims, be analysed through a gender perspective. Due to *social roles, gendered division of labour, gendered identities* and *differences in consumption patterns*, women and men affect the climate differently. Hence, focus is not on *biological differences*, but on *structural patterns* determining the social positioning of the sexes. GenderCC argues that women contribute less to global warming by working closer to home, using public transport to a greater extent and consuming less than men. Attention is brought to how women tend to make more *sustainable consumption choices* and that women generally put faith in *lifestyle changes* while men tend to trust technological solutions. The above mentioned factors also influence how climate change *affects* women and men differently. For example, it is shown how women, due to poverty, limited access to land and low education, are the most *vulnerable* to climate change. Since women are responsible for agriculture, water and food provision they will be ascribed more time- and labour consuming tasks, leaving less time for education, participation in decision-making processes and income-generating activities ([www.gendercc.net](http://www.gendercc.net); PPP3).

GenderCC argues that the climate problem is an issue of *injustice*, both *between* and *inside* regions and nations, e.g. shown by the question of *consumption*, identified by it as a major cause of climate change. The radical contrast between the over-consumption of the North and the fight for survival in the South is, I must say, really bringing societal cleavages to a head. GenderCC links this over-consumption to the production patterns of industrialized countries, which together with agro fuel expansion, fossil fuel extraction, monoculture plantations and lack of respect for indigenous people contribute to climate change. Therefore, suggested is the implementation of the “*polluter pays*” and “*sufferer receives*” principles between more or less polluting countries, sectors and groups of people (Paper 3).

GenderCC is also in a booklet partly produced by genanet called “*Gender Justice as the basis for sustainable climate policies – A feminist background paper*” offering a more theoretical approach, whose main point of departure is a critique of the *androcentrism* permeating the climate debate, determining the definition of the problem, the theoretical approaches and methods and which is built on a *hierarchy of the sexes*, in which the male is (over)empowered while the female is left de-empowered. Within this hierarchy *human* is equalized to *male* and maleness is seen as a universally valid, objective and general applicable category. Climate change is seen as a result of a *third wave of neo-liberal colonialization* of nature and livelihood, leading to exclusion, appropriation of assets and resources and devaluation of “the other”. It is claimed that the aim for constant growth and trust in market-based solutions result in short-term ecological and economic improvements, while what climate policy needs is a long-term perspective (Röhr et al, 2008:7, 12, 16-17).

Drawing on this, the network prescribes a number of possible solutions. Needed is the integration of a *gender analysis* at all levels of the UNFCCC process. This analysis must, it is argued, be *multi-ethnic* and *multi-cultural*, to fully grasp diverse needs and preferences of different women and men. Further, *gender budgeting* and *gender sensitive indicators* should be developed and *gender training* for key actors implemented. Additionally, earmarked funding of projects designed and implemented by gender experts, explicitly addressing women is suggested. The vision for COP15 is that *gender mainstreaming* will be integrated within the whole UNFCCC process. Further, GenderCC urges the parties to adopt a *resolution* on gender justice and to fulfil the binding obligations on gender that the UN already has endorsed, like CEDAW, the MDGs and Resolution 1325 and suggests the establishment of a *high level expert advisory group on gender and climate*, whose findings and recommendations should be considered official inputs in the process. Even though the importance of mainstreaming is acknowledged by the network, its most recent statement clearly expresses that in order to reach true climate justice for men and women,

fundamental changes in cultures, structures, institutions and relationships is required (PPP1; PPP2, Position Paper 3).

Hence, apart from ‘technical’ prescriptions, more *structural* solutions are suggested, like legal protection mechanisms for women and enhanced control of land. Strongly expressed is the need for an *alternative*. The markets cannot be trusted to preserve the Earth from climate change, why *non-market solutions* need to be explored and expanded. Also, what I believe to have been an earlier expressed faith in technology is contradicted in one of the documents claiming that technologies must be seen only as a *partial solution*, and sometimes even as part of the problem. However, no deeper explanation is given in relation this, thus still depicting faith in technological solutions.

The adoption of the concept of *gender justice* instead of *gender equity* in the climate debate is by GenderCC explained by the need for a *reorientation* of the access to and distribution of resources together with a higher *appreciation* of traditional female care-giving activities. The term represents a feminist approach beyond seeking equitable share in the power system that actually has caused the current problems, an idea that clearly can be linked to Ynestra King, who wonders “*what is the point of partaking in a system that is killing us all?*”. The system must change, because as Einstein said: “*we can’t solve the problems by using the same kind of thinking that created them*” (Röhr et al, 2008:5, 22). It must be recognized that the economic and climate crises are based on the same failing fundamentals; *ignorance of the economic, ecological and social limits to growth, over-consumption, unsustainable living, and the view of natural elements vital for our survival as merely “resources”*. What is needed is an economy based on “caring” instead of “carelessness”, adapted to the environment and the needs of women, indigenous people, and socially disadvantaged, not vice versa. GenderCC claims that critical feminist theory provides an important way of “*thinking outside the box*” and that hence, feminist scientists must be capacitated and encouraged to do climate research (Position Paper 2).

There is a clearer link between the problem representation and the solutions proposed by the GenderCC as compared to the RTC. When referring to the issue of *gender justice* in relation to climate change, the question of *responsibility* is highlighted in what I believe to be a more radical way, especially as expressed by the “*polluter-pays, sufferer-receives*” principle. The need for people in the industrialized world to change is emphasized together with the need for the male norm to adapt to the female traditional ideals. The explicit critique of the androcentrism also legitimizes and facilitates the argumentation for the proposed solutions.

### **10.3. The Discursive Framework**

GenderCC is fighting its battle within a strong (eco)*feminist* discursive framework, not shying away from using feminist ideas and concepts. The possibilities to alter the socio-economic

structures that a feminist critical perspective based on ‘caring’ can offer is emphasized together with critique of the deeply rooted *androcentrism* in the climate debate. Interesting is the choice to talk about *gender justice*, instead of the more conventional concept of *gender equity*. I understand this to be a manifestation of a more radical agenda than the one presented by the RTC, indicating that a liberal feminist path is not the optimal to take, but that indeed a more fundamental alteration of the current world order is required.

Prominent is the recurrent emphasis of the importance of including *gender expertise* and tools like *gender indicators* and *gender budgeting*, indicating a possible frame *extension* to what I would call a technical development discourse. GenderCC seems to put greater trust in professional gender experts to contribute to change, than to female negotiators and state representatives within the formal political arena (Paper 1). Since the climate change process is permeated by technical concepts and negotiations, perhaps such a professionalization is required for the gender advocates to be heard, even though this might imply that academics, researchers and other ‘experts’ are entitled the task of identifying and formulating the problem and its solutions. Interestingly, there is no mentioning of whether these experts are women or men or what interests they are representing, which raises the question if the goal is so important to reach that the means used do not matter.

#### **10.4. The Strategies**

The tactics used by GenderCC are diverse and seem to be well formulated and designed, combining *campaigning from the outside* with *advocacy from within*. Its main strategy is lobbying the negotiations and UNFCCC process to be more gender sensitive, using forums such as *corridor lobbying*, *exhibition booths*, *media*, *press conferences* and *capacity-building workshops* for activists. I have got the impression that the network is an important supporter of grassroots women’s organizations from all over the world. In the web video, it was described how the workshops are used to translate the technical language of the negotiations to make them understandable to grassroots actors as well as to translate the voices of these to make them heard in the climate context. It seems to me that these workshops play an important role sensitizing grassroots activists about the foundations of the UNFCCC process as well as the issues at stake, hence leading to empowerment, increased climate knowledge and enhanced climate agency. In 2007, GenderCC sent a women’s delegation to COP13 in Bali, involving women from Africa, South America, Asia and Eastern Europe representing indigenous-, research-, and environmental organizations. Its purpose was to draft position papers, contribute with gender inputs in the general debates, lobby delegations, prepare side events and arrange the exhibition booth (Report, 2008).

A number of conclusions regarding tactics can be drawn from the material. The trend within state delegations to include more NGO representatives is believed to open up for more women attending the negotiations. Prolonged and ineffective negotiations seem to offer a space for gender issues to be acknowledged, whereas these are neglected during more fiery phases. Some doubt about the relevance and participation of key ENGOs is raised by GenderCC, since many seem to defend emission trading and market solutions as the only effective ones. Hence, the GenderCC is discerning a de-radicalization of these organizations due to their embeddedness in the system, which can be related to the claims put forward by Newell on how larger NGOs defuse their arguments to make them fit (Paper 2).

Interestingly, the *strategic* use of certain neo-liberal arguments such as *cost benefits* of gendered funding mechanisms is supported in one document (Paper 1) Even though it seems like the network is aware of the *instrumentality* of such framing and not generally supports it, it does not mention anything about the *risks* of such arguments. Concluding, it is also stated that the task of combating androcentrism implies a change of strategy, away from “*repairing*” to an *active, institutionalized* and *systematic* review of the society (Röhr et al, 2008:18).

### **10.5. The General Positioning**

There are no explicit references made to *ecofeminism* in the material, even though a number of classic ecofeminist ideas can be discerned. I have found statements related to an ecofeminist *holistic* view, exemplified by the claim that the Earth’s carbon-capacity should not merely be treated as a *commodity* (Position Paper 1). Also, an ecofeminist perception of the *female caring economy* as an alternative to the destructive industrial economy is presented. Echoing ecofeminist perceptions of the closeness between women and nature, women’s environmental awareness and willingness to preserve the environment is emphasized as is their more environmentally friendly behaviour as a *benchmark* for all. The critique of the *androcentric* (however not *anthropocentric*) society, based on a *hierarchical positioning* of women and men have strong features of ecofeminist thinking. The ecofeminist critique of the modern patriarchal “civilization” based on an interconnection between different power relations is also evident in the GenderCC critique of climate change as a third wave of *colonialization*, permeated by male-dominated ideas and destructive behaviour.

When considering the rationale behind the inclusion/adaptation of a gender perspective in the climate process, focus is mainly put on the *difference* women can make. It is believed that the equal involvement of both men and women is required to ensure that measures will benefit all and that relevant knowledge is integrated in the policies. Due to *gendered social roles and responsibilities*, women

are presented as more dependent on the environment, with greater interest in its protection. I have identified an eagerness to present an *intersectional awareness* and describe women and men as *heterogeneous* categories, differing with respect to age, ethnicity, education and income. One of the reports conducted a mapping of the women within state delegations, indicating that these have been more active than their male counterparts regarding interaction with for example delegations from developing countries (Paper 2). It is repeatedly claimed that albeit an increased representation of women is *necessary*, it is not *sufficient* for change to happen (Paper 1). Neither does equal participation of women automatically imply more attention to gender concerns, wherefore GenderCC once again supports the inclusion of gender experts in the climate change process. Similar to the discussion about the general positioning of the RTC, I do find it necessary to develop a new label for positioning GenderCC.

## **11. ECOFEMINIST NETWORK**

### **11.1. Introduction**

The Swedish based but internationally wide Ecofeminist Network was founded during the European Social Forum in Malmö, Sweden, in September 2008 on the initiative of Lotta Hedström (green entrepreneur/analytic and former spokes person for the Green Party), Marie Milling (behavioural scientist with focus on eco pedagogy) and Helene Ahlborg (societal environmental scientist and human ecologist). The network has approximately 100 members (both men and women, even though women are in majority) among which the famous activist Vandana Shiva is one of the most prominent.

The network is described as a forum for people interested and engaged in questions of feminism and environment. Its purpose is to gather knowledge, competence and engagement, to share experiences and collectively find successful ecofeminist strategies. It is explicitly stated that all members participate in the network as *individuals* and that none of the members can speak for the whole network. Important is that the initiators do not share *one* static perception of ecofeminism, which has to be kept in mind throughout the analysis. The focus on Hedström and Milling is also emphasized by their roles in other contexts; Hedström as chairman in the first climate committee on a regional basis in Sweden, and Milling as engaged in the feminist network of the organization Klimat Aktion. The novelty of the network implies that almost no written material have been produced, particularly not on the climate issue. Instead the interviews with Milling and Hedström will constitute the material base for this section and will be analysed in the light of them as *ecofeminist individuals* and not *spokes persons* for the network. Apart from the interviews, the booklet

“An introduction to ecofeminism” and the chapter “Why are not all greens ecofeminists?” in the booklet “Is there a need for a Green Ideology?” (ed. Per Gahrton) written by Lotta Hedström will be used.

In one of the network’s flyers, it is stated that being ecofeminist implies, even though the definition still is under development, to reveal and challenge *dominance* and *control* among the different *polarizing, asymmetrical power relations* underpinning the human civilization and most relations today; to act from a new (and ancient) system view embracing *partnership* with animals, plants and ecosystems; to reclaim our roots in the dynamic and multidimensional system of *cooperation* and *mutual dependency* in all that is alive; to embrace the needs of future generations and with the help of our *imagination* make them *equal partners* in the creation of a sustainable future.

## **11.2. The Problem**

Based on the interviews and Hedström’s writings, I will divide the Ecofeminist Network’s portray of the issue of gender and climate change into three categories; 1) *the lacking understanding of the link between feminism and ecology in the green and in the feminist movement*; 2) *the lack of a gender perspective in the climate debate*; and 3) *a critique of the modern civilization*.

Both Hedström and Milling claim that feminism in general and ecofeminism in particular have not been given enough attention in the Green Movement, which, according to Hedström (2008) can be explained by a number of factors. She describes how the Green movement has been busy gaining *political recognition*, formulating a *political agenda*, establishing itself as *political actor* and fundamentally detecting the environmentally destructive system, why no time or energy has been left for ideological development and exploration of e.g. patriarchy. The formal political arena is situated in a *male, rational, competitive* context, in which features like being attentive, including and inviting are not valued. The ecofeminist emphasis on values and action instead of power and theory can hence, Hedström argues, explain its neglect. Milling underscores that the *hegemonic masculinity* also is strong within the movement and that green men already are situated outside the male norm, why an ecofeminist positioning in which they might be associated with spirituality and biologism is seen as a risky project. Milling describes how she experienced a rejection of ecofeminism also among the feminists in the movement, e.g. in drafting a study material named *Green Feminism*, in which no mention of ecofeminism was accepted (Interview, Milling, 2009).

Considering the feminist movement, Milling explains how she initially identified herself as ecofeminist as a *provocation* towards this, which she claims, has been afraid of commenting on bodies and nature at all. The fact that she considers herself not only as “socially constructed” but also as “experiencing a physical reality and nature” is something she as a feminist always is struggling with. However, by identifying herself as ecofeminist, she can combine a *systematic*

*ecological* understanding with the *social constructionist* stance of feminism (Interview, Milling, 2009). Both Hedström and Milling problematize the *academic* feminism, Milling when claiming that it has been given far too big interpretative prerogative and Hedström when arguing that its focus on the division between equality versus difference is dualistic and impossible for ecofeminism to approach, leading to an ambiguous positioning of ecofeminism within feminist academia (2007:68).

Turning to the climate debate, both Milling and Hedström acknowledge its *lacking attention* of gender. Hedström claims that climate and gender are related both in the *emergence* of and in the *solutions* to the problem. Considering women's connection to the climate, she emphasizes how women in the North negatively seen is a major consumer group, but positively seen are contributing less to the changing climate by eating less meat and using public transport to a greater extent than men. Globally, poor women are the least climate contributors, which should not be considered a *merit*, but a *fact*. The view of these as the prime *victims* of the changing climate is unfortunately true and relevant, since they have the least resources to create alternative strategies. Hedström admits that depicting women as victims might be dangerous, but only if this picture is seen as *deterministic* and not temporary true (Interview, Hedström, 2009). That women should be *prime actors* in the climate process is something she does not agree with even though there might be keys to a more sustainable lifestyle in the *traditional "female" approach* (Interview, Hedström, 2009) and that *"female" values* (whether truly female or not), like *listening, cooperation* and *caring*, are vital to ending war, oppression and over exploitation of human and natural resources (2008:76). If attention to gender in the climate debate is lacking, an incomplete picture of its *causal connections* is deployed and holistic explanations and solutions are missed, she claims. However, Hedström emphasizes that saving the climate is not a specific "women's issue" but a question of *survival* for humanity. She claims that to regard something as a *"women's issue"* is to embrace an exclusive, patriarchal approach (Interview, Hedström, 2009).

Milling asks in what way climate is *not* a gendered issue and claims that a gender perspective in the climate process implies an analysis of how *all* stakeholders, both *human* and *non-humans*, are affected. This missing gender attention is linked to the *Western rationalistic thinking*, which lacks a *systematic holistic* perspective. Even though she acknowledges that men and women are situated in the same *domination system*, she highlights the *hegemonic masculinity* as part of the problem and underscores the greater tendency of women to adopt holistic views while being more open to lifestyle changes. Milling recognizes that the climate issue's *abstract feature* and *immense scope* might make it difficult to effectively convince the decision-makers of the importance of gender (Interview, Milling, 2009).

Concluding, the current climate situation is by both Hedström and Milling understood as a result of the *Western patriarchal domination model*, by Hedström described as based on *dualistic thinking, profit maximation, production- and consumption hysteria*, and by Milling on *capital accumulation and the view of nature as a resource* open to human exploitation. Hedström argues that the dualistic, polarizing and excluding ideas permeating Western culture, which are organizing reality in *dualistic pairs* of opposition and *hierarchically positioning* one above the other, have allowed a system based on *dominance* and *control* and resulted in suppression of women and “female” values and in the self-ascribed human right to exploit nature (2008:70). The current production system has, she claims, only embraced *technical rationality* and not *caring rationality* and led to personal identities being replaced by consumer identities. We are no longer what we *are*, we are what we *have* and our identity is based in what we *own*, she claims. Even though constantly returning to patriarchy, Milling insists that she prefers to refer to these destructive structures as a *domination system*, as she is tired of positioning men and women against one another and as she has ceased to regard the gender-power order as the most fundamental in society (Interview, Hedström, 2009).

Hence, based on this, Hedström and Milling are prescribing a number of solutions, of which the most prominent is an *ecofeminist view* in the climate debate. Hedström believes a *holistic ecofeminist perspective* to be a practical tool for identifying the link between exploitation of nature and other discriminatory power relations. A systematic ecofeminist understanding of the world can re-establish the *value* of the nature and lead to a respectful *cooperation* and *coexistence* with all species in a *holistic* and even *holy* system (Interview, Hedström, 2009). Further, traditional female principles and the *caring rationality* inherent in ecofeminism are needed, as it values *life* more than money, growth and power (2008:59-60; 2007:75). Similarly, Milling underscores how ecofeminism can contribute with a useful *power analysis* in the climate debate and provide *realistic utopias, fantasy* and *courage* to explore alternatives, since she claims, referring to Einstein, “*we cannot solve the problems by using the same kind of thinking that created them*” (Interview, Milling, 2009). Hedström suggests that one solution to the problem of climate change could be *small-scale, household adjusted, local cultivation*. Even though self-sustainability is not an optimal solution, ideas inherent in it can hold keys to solving the crisis, focusing on *life quality* instead of *profit* and *growth*. She claims that we should acknowledge the *spiritual* and *lovable intelligence* constituting the centre of our existence, because if we fail to recognize this, we will be led to egoism, greed and short-sightedness, characteristics that have caused the current destructive context (Interview, Hedström, 2009).

Compared to the previous actors, the definition of the problem presented by Ecofeminist Network is offering a deeper and more radical critique of the fundamental structures underpinning the world order, indicating a closer correlation of them to ecofeminist classics.

However, the proposed solutions do not appear as clear as the ones suggested by GenderCC, whose technical approach resulted in a number of tools for increasing the attention given to gender within the climate debate. Instead, when pinpointing the structural flaws of the domination system, more ideological, and hence not as easy implemented solutions are suggested.

### **11.3. The Discursive Framework**

The network is indeed formulating its arguments within an ecofeminist discursive framework, drawing on classic ecofeminist values such as *gender equality*, *equity between humans and non-humans*, *ecological balance*, *holism*, *pluralism*, *diversity*, *cooperation*, *coexistence* and *non-hierarchy*. Compared to the previously presented actors, the emphasis on the inherent value of *nature* and *non-humans* is much more evident, which indicates its eco-theoretical fundament and *green ideological* connection.

Also, focus is put on the *imaginative* character of ecofeminism and its strength of offering alternative perspectives and ideas about the potentiality of humans to find new ways of living. Despite this, I have got the impression that the Ecofeminist Network does not want to define the current crisis in terms of an *opportunity* like Wallström did. Milling emphasizes that if an agreement cannot be reached in Copenhagen, the world will face a situation in which our relations will be seriously affected by the increased risks of conflicts, war and anxiety-creating actions and counteractions at the individual, national and global level. Hence, if action is not taken, the world will be a much safer place (Interview, Milling, 2009).

The arguments presented are much related to the action or rather inaction of the industrialized world in combating climate change. Even though both Milling and Hedström are pinpointing flawed structures they are also emphasizing the role of the *individual* in lifestyle changes and behavioural patterns. Even though not focusing on it, the struggle of poor women in the Third world is omnipresent in the discussion. Further, the arguments are mostly framed within an *academic*, *theoretical* and *intellectual* range, focusing on theory instead of practice, which is understandable since the network is still in its initial phase. Concluding, not many references are made to what should be understood to be the dominant master frame of the climate context. Instead a more radical and critical stance is adopted by the network.

### **11.4. The Strategies**

Due to the novelty of the network, no implemented projects or clear plans for forthcoming actions on gender and climate exist to be analysed. Hence, focus for this section will be the *potentials* for an ecofeminist movement to formulate and put into action strategies and tactics.

Hedström describes ecofeminism as a *critique of civilization*, an *academic discourse* and a *civilian extra parliamentary activist movement* (2007:9). However, she claims that it is its *action* and *activist* part that makes ecofeminism interesting, because the reality is more important than the map and because the demand for *cogency*, *logic* and *freedom from paradoxes* in theoretical dogmas would result in ecofeminist theory losing its miscellaneous soul. She does not however neglect the important contribution of ecofeminism to politics and development of ideas (2008:56, 73-74). She rejects the critique of ecofeminism for being de-politicizing as nonsense, since she considers that it is its *potential* for *individual* and *collective action* that makes it interesting (Interview, Hedström, 2009).

Hedström sees no value in categorizing different forms of ecofeminism, which I think makes sense since such a categorization in itself implies something of a dualist act (Interview, Hedström, 2009), a conclusion that I have reached during the course of writing this thesis. She does however acknowledge how some ecofeminists have adopted more *religious models* for explanation and *spiritual speculations* about women and nature. Even though this has led to the accusation of ecofeminism for disqualifying as a *political force* and serious *analytical tool*, she claims that a deeper view of human existence is required, since it is the *absence* of *holiness* and *respect* of all that is alive that has created the environmental problem and imbalances facing the world today. Hence, there should be nothing unserious about a more *spiritual approach* to life (2007:66-67). She believes that it usually is enough to talk about *feminism* and *ecology* per se, and not to be “nagging” about the ecofeminist label. She has met much resistance during her political life, but does not think that the *ecofeminist* epithet has induced more opposition than anything else, even though admitting that the ecofeminist identification can have disqualified her from certain aspects of political life, since people have regarded it as too *fuzzy*, too *academic* or too *subversive*. Considering the question of *strategy*, she claims that action is needed at *all levels*. On the ground, she advocates *spectacular mass demonstrations* and *activities* in order for people to react, like women joining to make statements such as: *Do like us: travel more by public transport; Do like us: eat less meat!* (Interview, Hedström, 2009)

Marie Milling states that when pursuing ecofeminist policy, one must be *clear*, *distinct* and careful not to *embrace misrepresentations* of ecofeminism which can result in romanticizing women. Like Hedström, she does not want to divide ecofeminism into determined categories, and explains how she herself has embraced both *spiritual* and *socialist* understandings of ecofeminism (*spiritual* as in adopting an *eco-systematic* perspective and *socialist* as in embracing a *critical feminist intersectional* analysis of the relations between humans and between humans and other living beings and ecosystems) as this combination is the *quintessence* of being ecofeminist. Even though she would like to see more people acknowledging ecofeminism, the *identification* of them as ecofeminists is not an end in itself. To use charismatic means to “convert” people to ecofeminism would only be

to adapt to the rule of the games within the dominance culture. In order to increase the attention to gender in the climate debate, Milling considers that action must be taken at *all levels at the same time*. She calls for an *active, explorative, and imaginative* movement and she recognizes that it sometimes is required both to *play by the rules of the game* while at the same time adopting a more *revolutionary stance*. She acknowledges that in order to be *subversive*, one must learn the most *successful strategies*, even if they imply a treacherous position. Regarding the critique of ecofeminism for being *de-politicizing* as grounded only in the every-day practices of women, Milling replies that she cannot think of any political practice that is not grounded in or should be more worth than *grassroots politics*, even though she acknowledges that there is a risk of being trapped in *traditional patterns* when the every-day politics of women is brought into formal politics (Interview, Milling, 2009).

The “representatives” of the Ecofeminist Network claim that they do not represent one static version of ecofeminism, since diversity is the theory’s strength. However, I do think that the claim of *diversity* and *inclusiveness* sometimes negatively affect the wish to be clear and instead adds to the understanding of ecofeminism as something fuzzy and difficult to comprehend. This was something I experienced during my first encounter with the Network at a seminar held at the Feminist Forum. The three initiators wanted to demonstrate this diversity by offering three varied understandings of ecofeminism. However, I think that this was not an optimal strategy in such a basic presentation of the theory, since what I believe to be a majority of the participants left the seminar feeling more confused than when entering. When comparing the strategies adopted by the others, like Wallström’s connection to key actors in the core of the negotiations and the GenderCC technical expertise, the influence of the Ecofeminist Network will probably be aimed at a somewhat different level, on a what I believe to be more *grassroot oriented one*, encouraging activists to engage and take action in Copenhagen in December.

### **11.5. The General Positioning**

It must be concluded that the Ecofeminist Network indeed pursues an ecofeminist agenda, as it explicitly embraces classic ecofeminist *ideas, categories* and *theoretical concepts*. However, the diversity of arguments and the somewhat different positioning of two of its initiators make it difficult to place it in either the spiritual or the socialist/material sphere, but as Milling expressed it; the combination of these stances is the quintessence of ecofeminism per se. Even though embracing both, it seems to me that Milling is leaning more towards the socialist stance, while Hedström more explicitly embraces the spiritual.

Regarding the relation between women and nature, Hedström claims that such a link has developed as a result of *historical practical reasons* and that she has found no evidence in ecofeminist literature claiming that women *genetically* are closer to nature, nor that they are the *only* ones with such a connection (Interview, Hedström, 2009). She thinks that *female leadership* in politics often has shed light on *new policy areas* and that female leaders seem to *add* values that the conventional male politics has neglected, even though women in such positions many times have abandoned their “female” values and adopted male standards. She recognizes that those who have been *disadvantaged* and gravely *suffered* in a society are eager to achieve change and earlier can pinpoint societal flaws and find *alternatives* (2008:60, 66, 69, 73). Milling agrees that the traditional female role embraces caring and empathy and that these features are needed in society but she emphasizes that women are not *owners* of them. She hopes that bringing “female values” into the public room will enrich it and that women in political positions will not array themselves in the male role (Interview, Milling, 2009). To attribute the Ecofeminist Network an ecofeminist label does indeed make sense. A clearer and more explicit positioning of the organization will however be done in the summary chapter.

## **12. GREEN WOMEN**

### **12.1. Introduction**

Green Women is a politically and religiously independent feminist women’s organization specialized on gender equality and the environment. It is organizing its work based on the belief that the patriarchal structures and the current gender power order is a superior problem that structurally needs to be confronted and changed. It describes itself as the first Swedish women’s organization that has grounded its work on a *holistic* and *cyclic* way of thinking based on the idea that what you do to nature, you will also do to yourself and others. Green Women acknowledges the connection between the violence against women and the violence against Mother Earth and believes that structural power relations hamper equality between men and women, *politically, economically, ecologically, legally, socially* and *culturally*. The organization wants to reveal the link between environmental degradation, exploitation, impoverishment and patriarchy and to make visible the feminization of poverty and the patriarchal structures underpinning energy systems. Its fundamental values are described as; *solidarity with all humans and with coming generations, solidarity with all animals, nature and the ecological system* and *solidarity with Mother Earth* ([www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se))

Green Women focuses on feminist political activities of change with the aim of influencing political parties and organizations on the importance of green feminist thinking and that all parties, not only the Greens, should come to terms with and break the patriarchal power

structures permeating them. Green Women has published a number of *press releases, reports, debate articles* and *analytical papers* on diverse subjects such as; *gender budgeting, nuclear energy, religion* and *women's human rights, women's bodies as battle fields, gender related violence* and *prostitution and trafficking*. However, not too many of these cover the specific topic of gender and climate change, why an interview with the chairperson Ewa Larsson, social scientist and former parliamentarian representing the Green Party, was conducted. The articles, reports and papers found on the web page will, together with this interview, constitute the material base for the analysis.

## **12.2. The Problem**

In an attempt to summarize Green Women and Ewa Larsson's portray of the underpinning factors of the problem of gender and climate change today, I have chosen to divide these into two categories: 1) *critique of patriarchal structures and its interrelatedness to neo-liberalism and the energy sector* and 2) *the male-centeredness and lack of gender perspective in the climate debate as well as in the Green Movement*.

Larsson presents an understanding of climate change as a result of *patriarchy*, defined as a system rooted in the Judaeo-Christian and Islamic religions, which, however grounded in a common message of love, are based on *hierarchical* thinking and *obedience*. Patriarchy is permeated by a *hegemonic masculinity* and formed in a *pyramid* construction, where *one* perspective is all-embracing, *one* truth is accepted and where *power* is defined by power *over* someone/something. The patriarchal structures have pushed "female" values aside and the view of human as *superior* to nature have led to an acceptance of us *taming, using* and *exploiting* it. Larsson sees a link between climate change and the *global economic structures*, whose *neo-liberal* core is dismantling the connection between humanity and nature, optimizing power and centralizing capital ([www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se), Report 1). Related to this, she defines the climate problem as grounded in a total lack of a *holistic* perspective, irresponsible *GNP-measures, over-exploitation, unfair distribution* of scarce resources and a global *banking system* built on fictitious and invented values. Crucial is also the *Western lifestyle* and *consumption pattern* defining what should be considered life quality. Green Women is emphasizing how the patriarchal structures are permeating the *energy sector*, with its large-scale, control demanding structures. A fundamental hindrance for developing sustainable energy production is claimed to be the system's stubborn patriarchal structures that demand society to adapt to the energy system instead of the opposite and that trust should be put in *one* energy source, i.e. nuclear power, instead of developing a multiplicity of energy systems (Press Release 2, Article 1).

Turning to the *scarcity of a gender perspective* in the climate debate, Ewa Larsson emphasizes how absurd it is that a women's perspective has not been integrated in the process, since women and

men are differently affected by the climate, react differently to climate changes and have appropriated different experiences and knowledge related to the issue. She recognizes how the global society still is structured by the man as the *norm* and *all-embracing gender*. The lacking perspective of women is repulsive through a *human rights* perspective and is indeed a *democratic* problem, connected to the matter of *who* is entitled to identify the problem and steer the debate. Even though women are prominent in environmental organizations world-wide, it is still men who dominate the public environmental debate and it is still male interpretations that determine the measures taken.

The same can also be said about the Green Party in Sweden, which although claiming to be feminist, according to Larsson, still lacks an adequate gender approach (Press Release 3). She acknowledges how the Green Party has struggled just to enter formal politics and how they already are stirring political life. However, what the Green Movement needs is *feminism* as its ideology and strategy; *gender* as its knowledge perspective and *gender equality* as its goal. Therefore, actors like Green Women situated outside formal structures are needed to push for environmental ideas within women's organizations and feminist ideas within environmental organizations. Larsson wants to question the dominant picture of women in the climate debate as *victims* in need of aid, since lacking in this portrayal is the discussion of the responsibility of women and men in the so called developed countries. To victimize women will not assist in acknowledging them as actors, entitled to participate in decision-making.

In order to come to terms with the destructive climate process, Larsson suggests that needed is not more of the same medicine, but a change of both the doctor and the drugs. The importance of *technical* solutions such as *gender budgeting*, *gender sensitive indicators*, *gender equality goals* and *gender disaggregated statistics* is recurrently emphasized, since this can result in fair and sustainable policies and an understanding of how political decisions affect women and men respectively. Gender budgeting also has *economic* and *democratic efficiency* advantages, resulting in a more effective use of resources and improved service to all citizens ([www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se)). Larsson emphasizes that we cannot continue to see the environment as *separate* and *detached* from gender equality and economic responsibility. Needed is a feminist ecological perspective embracing a *green cyclic economy* permeated by social and ecological *long-term thinking*. Keynes should not be abandoned all together, but *sustainable utilization* of the environment must be brought in and *regulating structures* are needed to stop the *over-exploitation*. We need more of what the church has appropriated, i.e. *ethics* and *morality*, Larsson claims, since the question of global *social responsibility* is highly relevant. There is already sufficient knowledge on how to provide humanity with food and energy. But, parallel to this, the economic system is feeding itself of certain consumption behaviours. Larsson

is confident that when the industry understands how the sun can be used to make profit, change will occur. She thinks that the *more sustainable behaviour* of women should be rewarded and stimulated. For example, within the transport area, which has important environmental/climate as well as social aspects, the attitudes and travelling patterns of women can and should encourage the development of more sustainable transport system and result in men learning from women's smart way of travelling, not the opposite (Press Release 1, Article 2).

Explicit throughout the problem representation of Green Women is the understanding of patriarchy as the superior fundamental problem and of gender equality as the superior priority. Compared to GenderCC and Ecofeminist Network, Green Women is not as keen to refer to a more intersectional idea. This can be seen as providing a clearer connection between the problem representation and the solutions suggested, but perhaps not as offering an understanding as varied and deep as when adopting an intersectional way of thinking.

### **12.3. The Discursive Framework**

Green Women is formulating its politics within the framework of *green feminism*, however without any explicit references to ecofeminism per se. Larsson claims that she has chosen not to identify herself as ecofeminist, or any *-ist* whatsoever, since such an identification might imply that she always can be rejected as the wrong kind of *-ist*. When asked, she admits that it was a strategic choice not to embrace the ecofeminist identification, as she believes it enough "just" to be feminist without a prefix. She considers that such labelling implies an obsolete either/or way of thinking and defining what is right and what is wrong, but believes that ecofeminist thinking has been missing in the climate change, especially when it comes to seeing the connection between suppression of women and the exploitation of nature.

Larsson embraces a deep critique of the *neo-liberal* system, which, when failing, has not been abandoned, but patched and repaired. There have however not been any real alternatives offered and missing has been a *green ecological economic analysis*. Finally, a *frame extension* can be discerned in Larsson's arguments, both to the dominant UN master frame when acknowledging and referring to a number of UN conventions such as CEDAW, the declaration of Human Rights and the Convention of the Right of the Child and to the more technical development framing of the gender problem, for example shown in the embracing of a number of gender technical tools.

### **12.4. The Strategies**

Green Women has great experience of public awareness-raising and political lobbying and Larsson has herself participated in a number of international women's conferences, where the

issues of climate/environment and women have been integrated. Larsson claims that when strategizing, work has to be done at different levels simultaneously, and that *cross-over co-operation* between *politicians*, *social movements* and the *private sector* is required. There should be a number of parallel workshops at the conference in Copenhagen, and it is important to get the delegates to participate in these. Also, NGOs should be entitled access to the political high-level forums. The gender deficit should be acknowledged, for example by women wearing colourful outfits, to make women *shine* with their absence, a bizarre way to highlight this absurd fact. She thinks that it is important both to work by *mainstreaming* gender and by adopting a *separatist stance*.

It is stated that it seems easier to communicate the message of sustainable development in the era of climate change, since what is perceptible is always stronger felt (Report 1). Larsson's contribution in Copenhagen will be continued awareness-raising actions and support to brave and courageous politicians, because this is a time when these are needed to change attitudes about what is important in life and to create new rules of the game. It is, on the web page, claimed that *good* men, building on their experiences of inequality, are welcome to join the organization and work for a more equal and fair world. Women joining together is *one* strategy, which historically has seemed to work ([www.gronakvinnor.se](http://www.gronakvinnor.se)). The organization expresses that it is good for women, building on their common experiences, to choose their own representatives and to set the agenda according to their own needs and priorities.

### **12.5. The General Positioning**

Even though embracing a number of classic ecofeminist ideas, like the connection between the *suppression of women* and the *exploitation of nature*, the critique of the *patriarchal* society based on *hierarchical* structures, the need for a more *holistic* perspective and the acknowledged appropriation of a close *relationship* between women and nature, Green Women has chosen not to identify itself as an *ecofeminist*, but purely *feminist* movement.

Considering the rationale behind arguments for including women and a gender perspective in the climate change process, Larsson considers the lack of women in the debate as a *democratic deficit* and demands that more women should participate, since there will be no *democracy* without *gender equality*. The perspective of women is also needed as women can *contribute* with other *experiences* and *knowledge*, which will lead to a more adequate picture of the problem. Albeit women do not have an *inherent closeness* to nature, it is a fact that the ones responsible for feeding the family also have greater knowledge of what is eatable and not. Also, research has shown that women are more *environmental-friendly* as they use more public transport, consume more ecological products, buy less energy-consuming products, and are more interested and concerned about investments

in alternative energy sources like sun and wind energy. Therefore female behaviour should be valued as a role model, and men should act more like women, instead of the opposite. However, she emphasizes that she is not legitimizing women's involvement in the climate issue by claiming that the world will be *better* (however not worse) but indeed *different* by adding wider knowledge and wider perspectives. She underscores that the act of *legitimizing* the necessity of equal participation of women and men is *anti-intellectual* and *democratically humiliating*. *Everyone* is responsible for caring for Mother Earth and should therefore be included in the decision-making. But, since the ones with decision-making power today has to look and act in a special stereotypical way, she is willing to adopt affirmative action to get more women involved.

Even though many ideas connected to classic ecofeminist thinking can be discerned within the arguments of Green Women, the organization has chosen not to identify itself as ecofeminist, implying that an additional positioning is required.

### **13. SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

Grounded in the discussion presented in the analysis chapter, my intention of this section is, with the help of the earlier developed analytical scheme, to offer an overview of the selected actors and to label their general position within the gender and climate debate. All the concepts used in the scheme are categorizations identified and developed by myself, and must not be understood as the actor's own identification.

As formulated in the introduction the aim of the thesis was: *to examine how and with what strategies and tactics four selected feminist actors are framing gender in the international climate change process, as well as to what extent ecofeminism and ideas about the inclusion of women in politics have influenced their thinking*. Based on this, an analysis of the selected actors has been conducted and the results, together with my definition of their general positioning are presented/summed up as follows:

	<b>Ecofeminist Network</b>	<b>Green Women</b>	<b>GenderCC</b>	<b>On the Road to Copenhagen</b>
<u>Feminist Approach</u>	Ecofeminist	Green Feminist	(Eco)Feminist	No explicit feminist identification. Focus on gender <i>equality</i> . (Liberal feminist)
<u>Rationale behind integrating gender dimension</u>	Difference	Democracy/ Difference	Difference/ Justice	Democracy/ Difference

<u>Frames</u>	Ecofeminism, ecology, individual responsibility, imagination	Environmentalism, green economy, feminism, energy, human rights	Technocracy, gender justice, gender experts, androcentrism	Democracy, UN-discourse, gender equality, neo-liberalism, opportunity
<u>Strategies</u>	Academic theorization, inclusive radical activism and networking, grassroots mobilization	Lobbying political parties, influencing environmental and women's organization, networking	Activism, advocacy, grassroots mobilization, collaboration theory & practice	Formal, high-level politics, inter-active democratic fora
<u>Problem</u>	Lacking understanding of link between feminism and ecology, lack of gender perspective, critique modern civilization	Critique of patriarchal structures and its relatedness to neo-liberalism and energy, lacking gender perspective, male centeredness	Missing gender perspective, climate injustice, androcentrism	Lacking gender perspective, global injustice, unfair economic system
<u>General Position</u>	Radical, Spiritual/Socialist Ecofeminism	Critical Green Feminism	Radical/Academic Gender and Climate Justice	Formal Environment and Gender Equality/Democracy

*Framing* is by della Porta and Diani defined as a somewhat utopian task and a process of searching for alternative solutions. Based on this, concluded can be that all four actors indeed are conducting such an activity. All of them are in one way or another claiming that an alternative to the current system is required and that such an alternative does not merely imply “repairing” the flawed socio-economic structures. Interestingly, three of the actors are referring to the citation of Albert Einstein when claiming that “*we cannot solve the problems by using the same kind of thinking that created them*”. Instead, in order for this to happen all of them argue that changes are required at the individual, technical and structural level, although some of them put more emphasis on one level at the expense of the others. Recurrent in the arguments is the critique of the fundamental structures underpinning the world system, however labelled by different means, such as *patriarchy*, *male-centeredness*, *androcentrism* and *domination system*. Also, frequent is the critical review of the neo-liberal global markets built on *unlimited growth*, *exploitation* and *over-consumption*.

Common to all actors is the understanding of gender as the missing component in the climate process and the challenge of the perceived gender neutrality in the climate change issue. They are all pointing at the non-existence of gender and are hence offering an important contribution to the debate by uncovering and shedding light on this silenced and unaddressed issue, and as

described by Newell, by functioning as advisers and information providers. The role of women as both prime *victims* and important *actors* in the climate debate are emphasized. However, all of them, except for Wallström, are keen to avoid the victim mark and are more concerned to underscore the agency of women in the climate matter. Further, none of them prefer to regard this as a women's issue, but as an issue concerning the whole humanity.

Neither of them refers to *biological differences* between women and men, or to a certain biological relation between women and the nature. Instead, women are believed to have specific knowledge of and interest in the protection of nature due to *gender inequalities*, *gendered social roles* and the *gendered division of labour*. The “female” values and behavioural patterns exemplified by women as being more environmental friendly, making more sustainable consumption choices and being more open to lifestyle changes, are emphasized and required to become the benchmark for all. However, I believe that there might be a risk that such raising of women can be universalizing and essentializing, ignoring differences between them as a group.

Considering the rationale behind integrating a gender perspective in the climate debate and the inclusion/representation of women in the climate process, arguments building on both difference and democracy have been identified among almost all of the actors. However, certain variance can be discerned, like Wallström suggesting that women involved in decision-making and policy implementation will contribute to a *better* society, whereas Ewa Larsson claims that the society may not be better (or at least not worse) but indeed different when women are included. Also, as argued by GenderCC, it is not enough “just” to include women or female representatives in order for change to happen, instead *gender expertise* is needed.

The assertion made by della Porta and Diani that the closeness of the actors to the decision-making arenas determines their discursive framing and strategies and the claim by Newell that the most influential actors are those whose policy prescriptions are suited within existing frameworks, seem indeed to be adequate in this context. For example, RTC and GenderCC who must be considered as having a closer relation with and greater access to the core of the negotiations, show evidence of more moderate and instrumental strategies, whereas Ecofeminist Network and Green Women, situated more outside the formal arenas, are arguing for more radical strategies. Drawing on this, it seems, at this initial stage of pursuing a politics of gender and climate change, that the embedded strategies of RTC and GenderCC are rather successful. The role of the actors described by Newell as advisers and information-providers is indeed relevant in this context, as it was highlighted by all that there is a need for collaboration of actors inside and outside the formal political arenas and an implementation of different strategies at all

levels simultaneously. It seems thus sometimes necessary to play by the rules of the game and sometimes to adopt a more radical, separatist stance, which also opens up for networking and allying, something none of the actors are shying away from. Also, a further cooperation between the academia and the grassroots activism must be developed. Even though not all four actors prefer to consider the climate crisis as an opportunity per se, they do seem to acknowledge that the current devastating situation might imply some kind of *window of opportunity*, either in the form of the development of green technologies, the implementation of a greener ecological economy or a greener feminism. Interesting and important in relation to this is the ecofeminist stress on the need and strength of *imagination, fantasy and realist utopian thinking*.

#### **14. EPILOGUE – FINAL REFLECTIONS**

The writing of this thesis has been a journey of despair and hope but first and foremost a wake-up call about the dramatic challenges facing the world today. The issue of climate change is bringing all imperative factors of human life to a head, as it questions the fundamental structures of society and all its ecological, economic, social and human aspects. Obvious is that something is severely wrong with our planet and the way we are living our lives.

The importance of gender in the climate process is an issue I came across during the fall of 2008, when doing an internship at the Swedish Mission to the UN in New York. One of my tasks was to assist my colleague who was facilitating the negotiations on the climate change resolution in the General Assembly. When the negotiations began I was asked to formulate a proposal for a gender paragraph to be included in the resolution. Before this, I had never reflected on the climate issue from a gender perspective. Now this is a matter deeply engaging me and something I have very much at heart. Interestingly, during the recent months, increased attention has been given to the question of gender and climate and the matter have been discussed in various contexts and forums, both nationally and internationally, indicating that this is an issue that will achieve even greater awareness in the coming future. However, the continued lack of a gender perspective in the UNFCCC process and in the general climate change debate is still apparent.

One of my main queries when initiating this study was whether ecofeminist thinking could be a successful tool in formulating a politics of gender and climate, and my main conclusion is that it indeed can provide many helpful arguments. I believe that ecofeminist thinking can assist in the much needed move from only viewing the climate issue through a *technical* perspective to a wider *social* understanding of the problem, i.e. that climate change is not something that we should “master” but that radical changes of the way we are living our lives are needed. Missing in the

climate process is, I believe, the view of nature as essential and valued in itself, and prominent is instead the understanding of nature and non-humans as resources obtainable for use and exploitation. The ecofeminist valuation of nature and all that is alive is hence needed to present a more holistic understanding of the world and the relation between all its inhabitants. Also, its intersectional strength implies a much broader perception of the crisis as part and result of a number of interrelated power domination systems. The ecofeminist critique of the fragmented neo-liberal consumption/growth system, which I believe to be one of the main causes of the current climate crisis is highly relevant and its emphasis on the connection between the exploitation of the nature and the oppression of women (and all other creatures not being white male) makes the question of gender and climate change even more interesting. Needed now is not more solutions of how to *spend* our way out of the crisis, but to find solutions where consumption, growth and over-exploitation are not ends in themselves. When all possible alternatives to the current social and ecological crisis the world is facing are needed, ecofeminism offers a possibility to combine different paths to find a more holistic understanding of the problem and to acknowledge that another definition of what is considered good life is possible. Hence, that ecofeminism should be de-politicizing is something I do not agree with. Instead, its transformative potential and radical pinpointing of the fundamental flaws of the society today must be seen as an empowering tool.

I am however left ambivalent about what implications an explicit ecofeminist politics might have in the climate change debate. The issue of gender and climate is still rather novel, and pertinent now is I guess, first and foremost to politicize the issue and ascribe it a natural position on the climate agenda. Therefore, at an initial stage, it might be risky to pursue a too strong ecofeminist politics, based on the existing misunderstandings of what it represents. However, without an explicit ecofeminist position, the significance of the issue might be unaddressed, important aspects lost and inadequate policies designed. What is needed, I presume, is a balance between strategy and ideological conviction and a consideration by the actor itself of what tactics will be most successful in order to reach the goals. Drawing on what I have learnt from this study, even though I am hoping for it to be different, I think that at this stage an explicit ecofeminist politics will be better suited and more successful at a more radical, grassroot level and less strategic at the high-levelled, formal political arena, in which the neo-liberal framing seems to be dominant. However, needed in such male-dominated fora is indeed the radical ecofeminist questioning of the destructive structures. My ambiguity seems hence not to decrease in this matter, since I believe ecofeminism to be an ample political tool desperately needed in the formal political arena.

I think however that the school of ecofeminism still has work to do to be a stronger political force and to gain wider recognition within the feminist and the green movement. The perception of ecofeminism as embracing essentialism, universalism, biologism and goddess-worshipping, does I think, result in its strong rejection. Hence, I do believe that ecofeminists must be *clearer* when presenting their ideas and positions, in order to come to terms with many of the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of ecofeminist thinking. For example, as a result of its focus on the gendered dualisms in society, a certain degree of hetero normativity becomes inherent within ecofeminism, which denies space for those who do not fit into these categories. Also, even though the grassroots struggle should be acknowledged, this cannot be seen as the only platform for truth or solidarity. Even though its inclusive approach opens up for differing interpretations of what ecofeminism really stands for, I do believe it useful for ecofeminists to be more *coherent* in their outreach activities. If too incoherent, or if too straggling, the ecofeminist political message will be lost. I believe that the ecofeminist school should, in a more untied, but still critical way consider and acknowledge the entrances of formal political power structures in order to be able to challenge them in a more successful way. Therefore, the connection between the ecofeminist grassroots level and the academia should be recognized and strengthened, which in turn leads me to the lack of attention given to ecofeminism within the academia in general and mainstream feminist theory in particular. During my six years of studies at the university, not once was ecofeminism or environmental politics mentioned or recognized neither in the general study of political science nor in the more particular study of feminist theory. Considering the world we are living in today, I believe this neglect to be a major failure of the academic institutions. Hopefully, as the issue of climate change is ascribed more attention, the importance of acknowledging environmental politics and the ecofeminist contribution to this will be recognized.

Concluding, 2009 will indeed be a year of fate for the international climate negotiations, and the feminist actors I have studied do certainly have an important role to play, since the issue of gender probably will not be considered if their voices are not loud and clear enough. However, within this already complex question, one must not forget that the international climate negotiations can be considered to be the world's most important high-levelled poker table, where the stakes are high, the gains small and the losses great and where negotiation cards are toughly fought for. In the current context, the gender card is still "just" one among many, a card which can be negotiated and traded with in a strategic manner, for example by the developing world when negotiating for emission rights. This fact does however even more than ever prove that a strong, well-articulated, united and loud (eco)feminist climate movement is needed.

Even though I do not favour the picture of the current climate crisis as an opportunity per se, I must admit that there indeed exists a window of opportunity within it, an opportunity for a shared platform of a global (eco)feminist movement which can offer a radical challenge to the current destructive world order and a forum for increased solidarity among women across the world.

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- *Gender, Climate Change and Agriculture*
- *Gender, Climate Change and Biodiversity*
- *Gender, Climate Change and Consumption*
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## APPENDIX A.:

### Attention giving to the issue of gender and climate change in the UNFCCC process

<b>COP1 BERLIN 1995</b>	An international women's forum was organized as a side event, resulting in a list of demands like increased participation of women in decision-making, alternatives to the technological approaches to climate protection and the explicit consideration of women's aspects in planning and implementing climate projects.
<b>COP2 GENEVA 1996</b>	- No activities or papers recorded.
<b>COP3 KYOTO 1997</b>	- No activities or papers recorded.
<b>COP4 BUENOS AIRES 1998</b>	- No activities or papers recorded.
<b>COP5 BONN 1999</b>	- No activities or papers recorded.
<b>COP6 THE HAGUE 2000</b>	A side event was held, but did not attract much attention. The media published several articles on the low participation of women.
<b>COP7 MARRAKECH 2001</b>	The first official mentioning of women was made in a text referring to increased recruiting of women to UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol bodies.
<b>COP8 NEW DELHI 2002</b>	A well recognized and well attended side event "Is the Gender Dimension of the Climate Change Debate Forgotten...?" called for gender mainstreaming in the UNFCCC.
<b>COP9 MILAN 2003</b>	The informal meeting "Is gender an issue in climate change negotiations?" resulted in the creation of gendercc. An official side event organized by Women Environmental Ministers Network was facilitated by Lena Sommestad, Sweden's Environmental Minister.
<b>COP10 BUENOS AIRES 2004</b>	Two side events were held, focusing on the importance of a gender perspective in all adaptation initiatives and how mitigation impacts affect women and men differently, and resulting in a common position statement distributed at the conference.
<b>COP11 MONTREAL 2005</b>	The gender activist strategies shifted. A preparatory paper was drafted, identifying different entry points for gender aspects in the climate debate. A number of strategy meetings were held, information booths were introduced, two climate talks on gender were held and for the first time a statement of behalf of "women" was held in the plenary.
<b>COP12 NAIROBI 2006</b>	An intervention on the impacts of climate change on women in Africa was held in the plenary. A group of women lobbied to make the conference recognize the social impacts of climate change. Information booths were available where many discussions with delegates took place and a side event was organized.
<b>COP13 BALI 2007</b>	COP13 was an important breakthrough. For the first time, gendercc, the worldwide network of women for climate justice appeared and presented several positions paper on the gender aspects of the issues under negotiation. A variety of activities were organized, five side events, a meeting of the Network of Women Ministers of Environment and a press conference were held, a statement was made in the plenary and everyday a women's meeting to discuss strategies and positions was organized.
<b>COP14 POZNAN 2008</b>	The activities increased. Every day during the conference a Women's Caucus was organised, an information booth was set up and well visited, side events, conferences, press conferences, actions and interventions in the plenary were held.

Source: [www.gendercc.net/policy/conferences](http://www.gendercc.net/policy/conferences)

## APPENDIX B:

### Interview Guide: Gender and Climate Change

- In what ways are gender and climate related? Why is it important to implement a gender perspective in the climate process? What is the main argument for the necessity of a women's perspective in the climate issue?
- Has gender been given enough attention in the climate debate? Why/Why not? If not, why do you consider it problematic that gender is "missing"?
- Is the climate issue a "women's issue"? Should climate be considered a "women's issue"? Why/why not?
- Do you think there might be a danger in portraying women as victims of the changing climate or as prime actors in the climate process?
- Do you consider yourself to be ecofeminist? Why/why not? If yes, what kind of ecofeminist? Spiritual/socialist? Something else?
- What consequences does the fact that you are calling yourself ecofeminist have in your work on gender and climate? Have you ever experienced any resistance towards this?
- What, if anything, can ecofeminism or ecofeminist thinking contribute with in the climate debate? Do you think that there might be any danger in formulating an ecofeminist politics in the climate debate?
- Why do you think that ecofeminism has not been too successful in Sweden before?
- Do you think that women have a special relation to the nature?
- Do you think that women have a certain responsibility to care for the Earth? Are women more capable of doing this than men?
- What is the fundamental problem underpinning the climate related problems facing the world today? How would you define/describe this problem?
- What is your "recipe" for solving the climate change problem? What is your picture of a climate friendly utopian society? How can we reach such a society?
- Do you think it is possible for the world leaders to reach an agreement in Copenhagen? What could be the main threats/challenges hampering a new agreement?
- What is the most important issue on the agenda in Copenhagen?
- What are your expectations of the negotiations in Copenhagen?

- Will you participate in Copenhagen in December? What will be your role? In what ways do you want to influence the negotiations?
- What is the best way of getting your voice heard in the climate debate?
- How should we talk about gender in relation to gender in order to produce results?
- Critics claim that ecofeminism indirectly implies a de-politicization of the feminist agenda, since ecofeminist theory reduces feminist strategies and feminist politics to something given in the nature of women. They claim that ecofeminists lack the ability to formulate a concrete politics to handle the environmental threat, since they argue, many ecofeminists think that the only possible politics for women is outside the traditional patriarchal power sphere, in women-centred grassroot organizations. What is your opinion about this critique?
- In what ways to the Green Movement fall short in questions on gender? Is there space for feminist actions within the Green Movement? Is a separatist organizations needed to act around these issues or is it possible to pursue a gendered politics in the mainstream Green movement?