

Ecological Theory meets Ethics of Care:

Empathic rationality in the green state

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Abstract

How can the state be used to forward the sustainable society? We take a starting point in feminist ethics of care theory to ground a governance principle of “empathic rationality”, which, we argue, is a useful governance principle for the green and sustainable state. Our contribution is two folded and turned to two separate bodies of research. To ethics of care theory we expand its scope to include sustainability and future generations developing the notion of humans as interdependent. To green theory, we outline “empathic rationality” as rationality for change both at the individual and state-level. We relate the empathic rationality to other governance rationalities and provide policy illustrations.

1. Introduction

Our concern is how the state, or more precisely state institutions, can be reformed to forward the sustainable society. Our starting point is that state institutions are highly relevant in accomplishing a transition toward climate, environmental and sustainability goals because state institutions have the main responsibility for political decision making, implementation and evaluation of the strategies, policies and decisions that are designed to accomplish these goals. We make an analogy to how Nordic feminist scholarship have argued that the state is significant for the reformation of society toward gender equity goals and suggest that this theorizing can inspire how we think about transformation into a green state. We argue that a different rationale for making policy is needed to enhance this capacity of green policy making and we suggest that feminist theory, more specifically ethics of care theory, is suitable for this task. Our argument draws attention to patterns of behavior and conduct of the state, i.e. its rationality (Kronsell and Bäckstrand 2010). *Empathic* rationality is a pattern of behavior and conduct that is based on conceptions related to the ethics of care developed in feminist theory (Stensöta 2004). The relevance of empathic rationality for sustainability is based on the insight that some of the important challenges confronting the state with ambitious climate and sustainability goals, are similar to the problems and solutions recognized by feminist ethics of care theory.

To develop empathic rationality as a principle for green state governance, we first introduce ethic of care theory and outline how humans' relations to the environment as well as to future generations can be incorporated into the scope of ethics of care theory. In ethics of care theory, the cope of care has been widen from moral issues, to political issues within the realm of the national welfare state and further to international issues

and patterns of migration. Previous theory is however restricted to focus between (living) humans. We bring this expansion even further by incorporating “the world”, i.e. the environment as well as future generations.

In developing what the empathic rationality look like, we explore in some detail how ethics of care core notions; interdependence, contextuality and responsiveness are relevant for forwarding the green state. We argue that empathic rationality can be an alternative for the green state and suggest how, by relating it to other governance rationalities and by providing illustrations. We begin, however, with a brief discussion of the commonalities between how feminist theory and green political theory view the role of the state.

2. The role of the state in Green and Feminist theory

For many green political theorists; the state was previously considered the problem rather than the solution (Bookchin 1990). This was due to states’ historic trajectories as institutions co-evolving with the quest for material consumption, ever-expanding growth and economic development, embedded in a competitive and conflict-prone international state system (Paterson 2000; Hurrell 2006: 170). According to Robyn Eckersley, the limited liberal democratic state has difficulty in taking on environmental ambitions because neither long term nor environmental interests are represented, private property rights tend to trump collective solutions, decisions takes place through strategic bargaining and the policy process is guided by administrative rationality which cannot deal with ecological risk, furthermore, it tends to be reactive or preventive at best. This has been labeled the imperative of the state, rooted in economic growth and capital accumulation (Eckersley 2004: 85-104). This critique is however mostly directed to the

liberal state and the discrepancy between how scholars in a liberal context relate to the capacity and potential of the state in comparison to scholars in an encompassing context, as found in feminist theory, can illustrate how we can also think about this discrepancy within green theory.

In feminist theory we similarly find scholars who are critical to the potential of the state to reform and transform. US scholars held a critical position toward the state as a way to promote gender equality and characterized the state as infused with patriarchal power, reluctant to endorse the state as having a transformative potential (MacKinnon, 1987) A contrasting position in the debate was voiced by a state-friendly Scandinavian tradition of feminist research, with Helga Maria Hernes as one of the pioneers. Hernes argued that the building of the general welfare state involved of change for women's lives in the same magnitude that the industrialization had for men's lives (1987). This "women-friendliness" of the state is seen in the incorporation of care-tasks into public policy, through which previously held private care-assignments were made public. Although Hernes thereby evoked a positive view of the welfare state for women, she also acknowledged that the welfare state did not change underlying power relations (Hernes 1987).

Within comparative welfare state research there is today an established research field discussing how policy choices and policy design promote gender equality, for example by making care a public issue rather than a private concern for women. In this vein, Lewis (1992) developed the distinction between a breadwinner model and an individual model to highlight how different welfare state policy models had different impact on women's liberation and autonomy. This research line in welfare state theory is much more positive towards the reformatory power of the state, than its liberal counterpart and suggests to us,

a potential for bringing about the caring, ecological society. The related area of state-feminist discourse elaborated by the network RGNS (Research Network on Gender Politics and the State) has explored how women's movement actors have impacted on a predefined set of women's political issues (McBride and Mazur 2010).

The potential of the encompassing welfare state of Scandinavia for forwarding green policy is also recognized by environmental scholars Robyn Eckersley (2004) and James Meadowcroft (2005). This potential is due, they argue, to an environmental pragmatism embedded in the welfare state. The welfare state has mechanisms for negotiating its state authority and can intervene in different and also new areas in society and have in addition experiences in safeguarding against many types of risks, which makes it more adaptable also to ecological challenges (Meadowcroft 2005).

We argue that the welfare state on the whole, can be seen as a construct that handles the problem of care. While this concept of 'caring' may have been limited to caring for children, the sick and elderly and through welfare provision such as unemployment benefits and the offer of social services such as childcare, and later to patterns of migration, we are particularly interested in the potential of caring for transforming state practices and behavior toward climate and sustainability objectives as well as future generations. The next section turns to a specific scholarship within feminist theory, ethics of care theory.

3. Ethics of care theory

Ethics of care theory forms a separate part of feminist theory. The ethics of care became a concept through Carol Gilligan's research on moral development (1982), in which she

argued that human moral development proceeds over *two* paths; a justice oriented path and a care oriented path. The justice-oriented path coincided with general moral theory and Kantian conceptions and had hitherto dominated research on moral development. The ethics of care in contrast sees moral development as increased understanding of responsibility and relations and sees moral problems as rooted in colliding duties.

Subsequent research on ethics of care expanded the scope of care to include politics (Tronto, 1994). Joan Tronto defined care as a concern its own right, without contrast to justice. The definition of care developed by Tronto holds that care is a species activity that includes “everything we do to maintain, continue and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible” (Tronto 1994, 103). Care was seen as a universal need attached to humans. Building on the central stance of relations, an ontological basis of care ethics theory was developed, focusing on the human condition as interdependent, meaning that we as humans are both dependent and independent at the same time, which lead to a focus on relations and centrality of care. In research, care ethics was used as a critical lens for welfare state analysis, scrutinizing how welfare states may enhance the possibilities for giving and receiving care (Williams, 2001; Sevenhuijsen 2000; Hankivsky, 2004; Stensöta, 2004). The third generation of care ethics research has again expanded the scope of care ethics to transgress the nation state. Fiona Robnsson (2006) explores how care concerns may work as triggers for migration in the global context and how it may enhance global security.

It is in this line of increasingly wider scope of ethics of care that we put our contribution to ethics of care theory. Although there has been a considerable expansion of the scope of care in ethics of care theory, there is no research that expands the concept of relations to include non-human entities. Even in the widest concepts of care ethics, represented in

global issues, the concern is on humans and the care of humans. We want to integrate the insights of care-provision mechanisms provided by this research but expand the scope to interdependence and relations beyond human-to-human and to the next generation. Using Tronto's definition above it seems possible to include also human interaction with the environment. Through 'maintain, continue and repair our world' we can incorporate the concept of sustainability central to environmental policy-making in the ethics of care as well as future generations.

There are some developments of ethics of care theory within green theory but it has developed separate from the feminist debate and from welfare state research. Val Plumwood, proposes a caring ethics, which is, on the one hand about a care for the self, in relation to sustainability and the prudence in the individual lifestyle that sustainability calls for. On the other hand, it is about a care for others (Plumwood 2006, 66). However, the care for others is not restricted to kin or other human beings as in the feminist care ethics outlined above, it includes the caring for 'earth others'. Through the notion of 'earth others', nature is not perceived as an object for human manipulation, but as a subject, that deserves recognition and respect. Other green theorists have used the ethic of care explicitly in their work (Cheney 1987) and so have writers on animal ethics, arguing that ethics of care is a good starting point to re-evaluate human relations to animals and conceptualize intrinsic values of animals (Donovan and Adams 2007).¹

It is our conclusion that the ethics of care perspective used by the ecofeminist scholars,

¹ The contributions in ecological feminist literature, have been challenged and criticized for essentializing white women's experiences and in linking mothering, reproductive labor with caring for the environment (Cuomo 1992; Jackson 1995 see also Buckingham 2004, 147). Sherilyn MacGregor (2004) is highly critical of ecofeminisms' treatment of caring, which according to her is an unproblematized celebration of women's maternal caring which ends up de-politicizes caring. In re-reading the most important ecofeminist work both Thompson (2006) and Gaard (2011) counters the critique against ecofeminist use of care, as being flawed and ungrounded.

have not integrated newer concerns in ethics of care theory, including issues of the state, institutions, and practices of policy making. The ones who do (MacGregor, 2006) do not incorporate a thorough understanding of humans as interdependent, which give us a rationale for change at the individual level. Their accounts are also rather abstract.

By using the latest development within research on ethics of care and learning from how the welfare state has handled the problem of care, we suggest that it is possible to advance thinking on how the state might handle the problem of sustainability. In the next section we present core notion of an ethics of care perspective that we will build on to suggest how emphatic rationality can be a guiding principle for the green state.

4. Core notions

Most ethics of care approaches incorporate a basic set of notions; *interdependence* – which can be connected to a goal of care or “not-hurting”, *context sensitivity* and *responsiveness*. Below, we illustrate how these core notions have been processed in earlier ethics of care political research and discuss how they fit into and contribute to green theories.

4.1 (Inter)dependence and the goal of caring and “not-hurting”

Central in ethic of care theory is a comprehension of humans as interdependent, which means that humans are seen as both dependent and independent. We are dependent in some relations at some times, and independent in other relations at the same time or at other times. When we are young we are reliant on somebody taking care of us, but also when we are adult we often indirectly rely on others. If we are parents we need someone to take care of our children when we are working, we need someone to take care of our

garbage etcetera. The ontology of interdependence further gives specific attention to relations. Interdependence means that people do not exist in isolation from each other but in relations to each other and the world. From the central stance of relations, ethics of care theory arrive at the central goal of caring and “not-hurting”; as care is seen as a central part in sustaining relations. To care is comprehended as a way to grow as a person, and important for society as a whole.

If we turn to green theory, similar ideas can be traced. The cognitive base of green political theory is a holistic ontology based on ecosystem ecology. Different versions of green political theory can be noted, from deep eco-philosophical versions (Devall & Sessions 1985; Goodin 1992) to more shallow green theory, like environmentalism and ecological modernization (Hajer 1995; Weale 1992; Mol et al. 2009). What has been key to green political theory is the understanding of human beings’ and societies’ dependence on ecological and biological systems (Dobson 1990; Mathews 1991). Humans and societies are viewed as an integral part of ecological systems, enabled by its resources and ecosystem services and dependent on functioning ecosystems for their life and livelihoods. Whilst human actions have affects on the system, humans and societies are constrained by ecosystems and by the limits of resources (Capra 1982).

A conclusion of green political theory is that most environmental problems that we confront today are due to humans failing to see themselves, institutions and culture in relationship to other non-human entities and ecosystems. The failure to recognize this dependence and act responsibly within the limits has lead to environmental pollution and resource depletion and to climate change. While humans impact the ecological system through resource depleting and polluting practices, particularly evident in climate change (IPCC 2014), this might not be a problem for the ecosystem per se, but for species that

are affected, and certainly for the future of humans. A central argument for political ecology is that politics has to be conducted based on the notion that we are part of the earth's ecosystem(s) and what we do will affect ecosystems and the humans dependent of them for generations to come.² It should be noted that there are many concepts and ideas frequently used in environmental and climate policy and debates that rely on this understanding of humans close interdependency with ecological systems. Concepts like limits to growth (Meadows *et al.* 1972/74), resilience (Berkes and Folke 1998); ecological footprint (Wackernagel 1994) and planetary boundaries (Galaz et al. 2012).

If we regard interdependence as a central feature in human existence, on individual level as well as societal level, then arrangements that allow for people to learn the importance of care and “not-hurting” should be favored and spread. We refrain from assuming that some people know caring (as well as not-caring) from the beginning but think of care as something that is acquired through learning. Care is seen as a process that we learn both through becoming cared for, but also through caring for others. This may proceed through experiences in our own lives, for example by becoming a parent, or through other ways becoming aware of the fragility of life and the necessity to care for it. It may also proceed through education in a more formal way, for example to care-oriented professions. A public discourse and reflection centered around care is an additional way to forward responsibility and awareness. We argue however that the bodily based knowledge of becoming cared for and to care is a basis or a vessel that may house more

² The eco-system view has been introduced in policies and policy debates. Since the 1970s there is a fairly widespread understanding of limits, also among policy makers, i.e. that the environment constrains and limits human activities (Dryzek & Dunleavy 2009: 244). There is ample evidence of this in the Swedish context however it does not seem to have had a profound impact on governance conduct, nor on contemporary institutions. An exception is the attempt to reorganize jurisdictional units around bioregions, like a watershed area (EU water framework directive) hence, recognizing that water systems can best be governed if there is a recognition of the flows and cycles of water across jurisdictional and political boundaries (Hagberg 2010).

reason based awareness on the subject of care. These ideas have been established within previous ethics of care theory (Stensöta, 2004) but are further developed here.

Hence, the notion of interdependence not only fits to green theory, but also develops the idea of dependence to enclose a notion of change on the individual level. While dependence has been a notion in green theory previously, this research has not poned deeper into what an ontological basis of interdependence means for how change might proceed on the individual level.

Context sensitivity

Another core concept within the ethics of care framework is context. Context is about situatedness in a specific surrounding and specific circumstances. Already Gilligan comprehended moral problems as situated in specific contexts and that the ethics of care pays attention to this context when deciding how to handle the problem. In subsequent care theory, context has been referred to in varying ways. Virginia Held (2010) has, for example, argued for context sensitivity in social policies as a way to provide non-standard solutions. The idea of context sensitivity has also been comprehended more physically, as the importance of paying attention to people's local environment. Stensöta (2004), who traces ideas of care in day-care and law enforcement policy, provides a local-level account of what contextuality in a care-perspective entails. Starting from the notion of interdependence, it is argued that relations may be sustained through local context but also hampered.

The local is also central in green thinking, but in a slightly different form. It can be illustrated through the slogan 'think globally, act locally' originating and frequently used

by environmental organizations and green parties to imply that we should consider the effects on the whole planet while taking action in the local community. This can fruitfully be combined with 'caring for the world' in ethics of care thinking. To think globally and act locally implies 'doing caring' in the local context while at the same time, paying attention to and care about the global dimension. These ideas are present in green theory in terms of what constitute sustainable consumption (Fuchs 2013) how resources are used, what wastes are generated as well as how people are treated along the consumption chain (Acker 2004).

Green thinking emphasize the salience of the local context in relation to the importance of grassroots movements, democratization and citizen engagement both in gaining knowledge about environmental processes and conditions and to advance environmental responsibility which is understood to be more likely in the local context (Carter 2007; Dryzek 2013). From a policy perspective, the local context and the engagement of civil society can be important to assure implementation. In green theory, much less attention has been paid to the differences between humans and human conditions in the local, for example paying none or very scant attention to class, gender, ethnic and other differences (MacGregor 2010; Salleh 2009).

The green context sensitivity implies to act in the local context, in such a way that allows local actions to include the caring for people and the treatment of resources and non-humans in faraway places, for example where production of consumer products that we use in Europe take place. This implies acquiring knowledge about how our individual acts and actions in the local affect other people in different parts of the globe through globalized production and consumption (Newell 2012) in ecological unequal exchange patterns (Hornborg 1998) and then act differently.

To make these insights inform environmental policy-making, changes in existing strategies are likely needed, for example in the policies that steer toward ecological objectives or are based on precaution. Eckersley (2004, 135f) suggests that the precautionary principle is a useful policy mechanism because it shifts the focus to potential harm and potential risks when it is used as a guiding principle for policy making. This is the difference between care as a “cleaning-up” activity at the periphery of the world, and care as a central principle of our world. The precautionary principle carries a potential for looking into future harms and risks as well as including ‘earth others’. Yet, the principle has already been adopted widely by regional and national governments and in place for some time the effects of its application do not seem to live up to these ideals (Wiener et al. 2011).

From our perspective, the local context must be organized to contribute the most to this learning. This is done by paying attention to how the local context, and its inhabitants is vulnerable and may be cared for. From a care perspective, the local context should encourage relations to be built, and the web between persons and persons and nature, to grow and thicken. It would not just mean the web of relations to become thicker, but also that the goal of caring and not hurting is seen as central within these relations and in the local context on the whole. The web would include connections between local welfare state and private families, but also include civil society organizations. Citizens should be thought of as contextually anchored within their local environment (Stensöta 2004). When we think about these insights from ethics of care perspectives in relation to how a green state may be organized it seems that we need thick local ties between state and civil society, but also, that these ties would form a variety of different types of connections.

In our contention, the context is a site that may enhance care learning, or impede it. From our perspective, the local context must be organized to contribute the most to this learning. This is done by paying attention to how the local context, and its inhabitants are vulnerable and may be cared for. From a care perspective, the local context should encourage relations to be built, and the web between persons and persons and nature, to grow and thicken. It would not just mean the web of relations to become thicker, but also that the goal of caring and not hurting is seen as central within these relations and in the local context on the whole. The web would include connections between local welfare state and private families, but also include civil society organizations. Citizens should be thought of as contextually anchored within their local environment (Stensöta 2004). When we think about these insights from ethics of care perspectives in relation to how a green state may be organized it seems that we need thick local ties between state and civil society, but also, that these ties would form a variety of different types of connections.

Responsiveness

In feminist care theory responsiveness refers to the necessity of making sure that a need has been taken care of from the recipient's view. In care perspectives, responsiveness is about avoiding power abuse and particularly to prevent paternalism, which is when the care-giver applies his or her understanding of needs on the care-receiver and remains insensitive to whether this understanding matches the understanding of the care-receiver. The problem of paternalism is inherent in the care-relation as it often includes power differences, where the care-receiver may have less power than the caregiver. From the care perspective future generations and nature, can be comprehended as policy recipients

that have difficulties making their claims heard in the way we are used to hearing claims.

White (2000) provides a concrete example of how institutional solutions for responsiveness may be designed. White argues that if we understand paternalism as the process of speaking for others in the course of defining needs, we may be able to criticize domination in the practices of care without simultaneously threatening the prospect of collective responsibility for care. White concludes by suggesting deliberative structures for defining needs, where the persons in need of care are asked to participate in defining their needs.

According to Eckersley, “the opportunity to participate or otherwise be represented in the making of risk generating decisions should literally be extended to all those potentially affected, regardless of social class, geographic location, nationality, generation, or species.” (Eckersley 2004, 112). As such groups are not represented in contemporary democratic politics, ways for non-human and long-term ‘interests’ to be accounted for need to be worked out (Saward 2006, 183-185). According to Eckersley, this requires “that the opportunity to participate or otherwise be represented in the making of risk generating decisions should literally be extended to all those potentially affected, regardless of social class, geographic location, nationality, generation, or species.” (Eckersley 2004, 112). As such groups are not represented in contemporary democratic politics, ways for non-human and long-term ‘interests’ to be accounted for need to be worked out (Saward 2006, 183-185).

In the literature, there are some suggestions on how this can be done. Val Plumwood (2006, 71) speaks about the design of political and administrative systems, that they should be set up in a way that make non-human needs and their contributions visible and

known, and suggests it can be done by treating nature as stakeholders. For example, if we were to consider trees as stakeholders they could be given voice through debate, deliberation and reflection by those who are capable of doing so and are willing to search for shared meanings (Ball 2006, 144; Sama et al. 2004, 156) through forms of political trusteeship or stewardship (Berry 2006). Here, we could rely on interest groups, new social movements, on experts or member of civil society. Deliberative democratic processes that include processes of judgment, preference formation and transformation in the context of informed and respectful dialogue have been argued to be useful procedures to arrive at such shared meanings (Dryzek 2010; Lövbrand and Khan 2010).

We argue that responsiveness include future generations. From the care perspective future generations and nature, can be comprehended as policy recipients that have difficulties making their claims heard in the way we are used to hearing claims. We need to find ways for the entity in need to define the needs. Responsiveness is needed to account for future generations, for nature and for non-human species. At the center is not only the responsiveness to a broader set of participants but also the quality of the participatory process. By taking into account the problems of paternalism, discussed in the care perspective, it can also help ecological responsiveness to steer away from domination and power games in the processes to give voice to a larger political community of 'stakeholders'.

5. The empathic rationality of the green state

Based on the three core notions presented in the previous section we advance empathic rationality as core rationality for the green state. Here we align ourselves with a tradition of environmental governance that is about effecting societal change that leads to better

performance and effectiveness as to make state and societal behavior sustainable and environmentally sound. Rationality is about the ‘software’ of governance and concerns its underlying logic, the reasoning behind which action proceeds. Action may mean reproduction but it may also incorporate change. Kronsell and Bäckstrand (2010) analyzed rationalities used empirically in environmental governance and found that three types: bureaucratic, market and deliberative rationality co-existed. Different rationalities make different assumptions about how to bring about change and how to govern effectively. That is also what makes them intriguing for thinking about advancing governance in the green state. In order to develop empathic rationality we systematically compared it with the rationalities of bureaucracy, market oriented government and deliberative government.

The “empathic rationality”, builds on a notion of human interdependence and is directed towards the goal of care and “not-hurting”, summarized as empathy, and where the reason behind action is rational in the sense that it strives to accomplish the specified goal. Kari Waerness has previously used the concept of “omsorgsrationalitet” rationality of caring (1987), to connote how personell working in elderly care work toward fulfill the goals of caring, which does not coincide with their “selfinterest”.

The empathic rationality is a principle for change proceeds on the one hand on the individual level, through the assumption about interdependence leading to a goal of caring. On the other hand the empathic rationality as a principle for governing. Hence, we explore how the “logic” of government can be infused with care considerations. In table 1 below, the aim is to make clear what the rationalities may mean in practice and in relation to the particular problem under study.

TABLE ONE ABOUT HERE

The first row in table one is set on the *individual level* and deals with ontological view of humans, which incorporates an idea of change on the individual level.

Bureaucratic rationality sees humans atomistically, as anchored in a liberal worldview. The rationality for change on individual level is understood as rule following within hierarchies and change occurs when rules are changed. Market rationality also builds on an individualistic or atomistic view of humans. The rationality for change is based on self-interest meaning the rational choice assumption of the interest of individuals of achieving their predefined preferences with the least effort. Deliberative rationality sees humans as interconnected. Change on the individual level proceeds through deliberation understood as changing or “washing” preferences from self-interest.

Empathetic rationality incorporates a view of humans as interdependent, which is a deeper notion than interconnectedness. The transformative process of interdependence does not proceed intellectually (alone) but is grounded in an experience of vulnerability and the necessity to receive and to give care. **In empathic rationality, change is seen in relation to our mutual experiences of being both independent and dependent. It is expected to change preferences and worldviews through the experiences of meeting other people’s needs as well as having ones own needs met.** This connection deepens the relation between people in a very concrete way, which leads to an experience of the mutuality in interdependent relations. This deeper interdependence as part of the human condition is not emphasized by any of the other rationalities. This notion for change does not only include the mind, but also the shared experience of being a (vulnerable) body and mind.

The remainder of the table is set on *state level*. The state is analyzed as how it deals with context in space and time. Further it is analyzed along the dimensions of: Problem capturing, which is how the rationality translate problems. This dimensions is interesting as the way we perceive problems also leads the way to how solutions may be captured (Bacchi, 1987); Mechanism for change state level, which is central as it forms the heart of the “logic” we hare after; Main dilemma, which points at the main dilemma of the specific rationality and accountability, which describes how the rationality works to make sure that intentions have been pursued. Similar dimensions as these are commonly used to capture differences in state structures or policies or “logics” in relation to state. Together they form a coherent picture of how the rationality works on state level.

In regard of context (space), bureaucratic rationality does not consider it unless it is specified in rules. Rather, the whole idea with general rule following is that everything relevant about the context should be expressed in rules. The market rationality also does not pay specific attention to context, but the client’s choice can be seen as the mechanism by which actors are relating to their immediate surrounding. The deliberative rationality pays attention to context as the deliberation proceeds in an actual milieu. Stakeholders who take part in the deliberation represent in context.

According to the empathic rationality, sensitivity to context is of core importance. The empathic rationality looks upon people as anchored in relationships and circumstances of different kinds. The context is important as it may enhance or impede the building of relations within it. The importance of experience also spills over to the next core notion – context – as bodily anchored experiences can be seen as a form of contextualization. A feeling of belonging in a community with others makes us fell more fulfilled as we are

needed. This is seen as a transformative process where the importance of taking care and preventing harm is learned.

Context may also expand in time. If we relate the rationalities in particular to future generations, we see that the rationalities allow for the future generation to be incorporated in different ways. First, the bureaucratic rationality could incorporate the future generation in a rule, for example as in a mainstreaming rule of considering the wellbeing and interests of future generations in all decision-making at all levels of government. In the market rationality, future generations are considered as stakeholders. Costs and loans over generations are discussed. In the deliberative rationality, future generations have to be represented in deliberation. Representative stakeholders can act for the concerns of the future generations.

In the empathic rationality, solidarity with the future generation may be established through the experience of interdependence.

In regard of problem capturing; mechanism for change state level, mail dilemma and accountability, the bureaucratic rationality, problems are translated into general problems. In regard of change channeled over the state, the main tool of the bureaucratic rationality is to improve the rules. The main dilemma is when the political majority does not endorse ecological values. If the democratically authorized majority thinks that we should just keep on using up the world's resources, this clearly collides with ecological concerns. The bureaucratic rationality understands accountability as the following of rules.

The market rationality translates problems into costs. In order to make individuals change their course of action, the state may for example, alter incentives as to make non-

ecological behavior more costly than ecological behavior. The clear dilemma that emerges from this rationality is between ecological concerns and growth. Ecological concerns may be included as a cost in the form of externalities, that is costs that are not directly included in the product, such as diffuse and unanticipated social or ecological damages resulting from the production process. In the market rationality the state has in several ways withdrawn from accountability and given the power to customers “voting with their feet”.

The deliberative rationality translates problems into “tragedy of the commons”. The way the state can act to promote ecological change is to create institution where deliberation to create consensus on problem solving may take place. The main dilemma is similar to that of the bureaucratic rationality. **As consensus can only be achieved by the people represented in the deliberation, the question becomes whether ecological goals are represented.** It could be that the people taking part in the deliberation do not represent ecological values and the concerns of the future. Here, the deliberative model resembles the market model as we may talk about the presence stakeholders that defend the interests of the future. In the deliberative rationality responsiveness happens when deliberation takes place.

The empathetic rationality translates problems into the notion of doing harm and meeting needs. The way the state may forward these concerns is by spreading the experience of interdependence. Hence, inclusionary policies that include groups and individuals into the community are important. The main dilemma for empathetic rationality is when care-demands collide with progress/growth. The dilemma of care to progress growth can be highlighted in that care aims at preventing future harm and satisfying needs now. Preventing may have a constraining effect, as we want to be surer

than we are today that no unintended bad consequences happen. Further, care also has to do with accepting things as they are and learn to be content with that, whereas growth often assumes a discontent with the current situation. In the empathic rationality, response from the recipient of care making sure that the need has been met, is central to the understanding of responsiveness, which informs its concept of accountability. Professionalism means that the deliberation to conclude whether needs have been met occurs within a professional setting, where deliberation with care recipients take place, but where professionals have the last say. Translated into the arena of ecology this would mean that professionals (and experts) in relation to the subject would have the last say in deliberation. Professionals' would in this sense be represented by general experts on environmental issues.

6. The contribution of the empathic rationality to the green state

Empathic rationality outlines possible patterns of behavior and conduct of the green state that can advance policy making and institution building on sustainability and climate issues. Hence, empathic rationality may be seen as an institutional ideal/goal for the green state as an alternative and/or complimentary rationality. While other rationalities have been empirically verified (Bäckstrand et al. 2010) and empathic rationality found in the context of daycare and police (Stensöta 2004) empathic rationality has not been studied in environmental or climate governance.

Empathetic rationality centers on the view of humans as interdependent. The empathetic rationality sees solidarity as emanating from a first-hand but also shared experience of how we are both dependent and independent at the same time. This connection deepens the relation between people in very concrete ways, which leads to an experience of the

mutuality in interdependent relations. Solidarity with the future generation, as well as green ecological thinking may be established through the experience of interdependence. The main mechanism for change at the individual level is hence to broaden and deepen interdependent understanding for example, through policies that spread the experience of caring and taking care of humans, nature, other species and future generations. The way the green state may forward these concerns is to make the experience of interdependence more broad in society by advocating a generalist view of task division in society. Shared parental leave is an example of a policy that works in this direction. The green state should allow for people to step into the experience of being interdependent with nature, but also with others through inclusionary policies that include groups but also individuals into the community.

The transformative process of interdependence does not proceed solely intellectually but is rooted in the experiences of meeting other people's needs as well as having ones own needs met. The importance of experience spills over to the core notion of **contextuality** – bodily anchored experiences is a form of contextualization. Sensitivity to context is of core importance and people are seen as anchored in relationships and circumstances of different kinds. The context of empathic rationality helps preserve uniqueness. Rather, it builds on acceptance for variety and **the respect for diversity in experience.**

Empathic rationality is proactive in terms of the goal of meeting needs through preventing harm. Preventive policies are concrete examples that can be found within law enforcement work, when a shift from a reactive to pro-active law enforcement is promulgated. From environmental policies the precautionary principle is an example. The principle argues that it has to be shown that something does not do any harm before

it is allowed. The European Union has adopted the precautionary principle, whereas the US has not. In this respect the European Union must be considered as more empathetic than the US.

In emphatic rationality care aims at preventing future harm and satisfying current needs. A key dilemma for the green state is when care demands collide with progress and economic growth. Prevention and precaution may have a constraining effect, as we want to be sure that no unintended consequences occur. Further, care also has to do with accepting things as they are and learn to be content with what we have, whereas economic growth often assumes a discontent with the current situation and a seemingly insatiable consumption.

Empathic rationality also means that accountability includes being responsive to care recipients on whether their need have been met. This works against initiatives that are done without any real possibility of evoking a change. If initiatives are continuously evaluated on the basis of whether the need has been met, this may constitute a ground for moving quicker to solutions that actually protect nature also for the future. Care recipients are heard, but within the institutional structures of the state, so the professionals have an important influence on matters. The empathic rationality allows for more professionalism and power to public employees and the state than for example the market mechanisms where power tends to be handed over from the state to the market.

We have outlined how the ethics of care literature may contribute to the green state by providing a mechanism for change on individual and state level ie. a rationality. The policy suggestions that we mention are tentative and future research may explore more in detail how these may proceed.

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Table 1. The Empathic rationality in contrast to the Bureaucratic rationality, Market rationality and Deliberative rationality

	Dimension	Bureaucratic rationality	Market rationality	Deliberative rationality	Empathic rationality
Individual level	Human ontology	Atomistic	Atomistic	Interconnected	Interdependent
	Mechanism for change (individual level)	Rule-following/hierarchical obedience (changed rules)	Self-interest /RCT (changed incentives)	Collective preference formation (unification) through communication	Bodily and intellectual experience of being vulnerable, to care and be cared for
State level	Context (local space)	Exclude context except when specified in rules	Clients' choice	Deliberation proceeds in the local context	Context may be organized to enhance care-learning
	Context (time)	"Future mainstreaming" - obligatory rule to include the concerns of the future generation in all decisions at all levels.	Stakeholders representing the future are addressed through costs and loans over generations	Interest-based negotiation between stakeholders representing the future	Through the experience of vulnerability, solidarity with distant or mute others may be created
	Problem-capturing	Problems are translated into general problems	Problems are translated into costs	Problems are translated into "tragedy of the commons"	Problems are translated into doing harm and meeting needs

Mechanisms for change	Improve rules	Create incentives	Build institutions for deliberation	Build institutions to spread care- experiences
Main dilemma	Majority values - ecological values	Economic growth – ecological values	Deliberated values – ecological values	Growth, standardization - Caring values –
Accountabilit y	Rule-following	Customers “vote with their feet”	Deliberation	Responsiveness to recipients and professionals
