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Gender and Climate change in forest communities in sparsely populated areas of Sweden

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Abstract: Studies that combine perspectives of gender and forestry with regard to Sweden are rare. Approaches that study gender and climate change issues in the Swedish context are also scarce. In a research program that enquires into gender and climate change at the municipal, local level in Sweden, a study that incorporates the perspective of forestry has been initiated. A thorough literature search for other studies that can serve as precedent, even if only indirectly, has revealed only a few examples.

The work of Seema Arora Jonsson has emerged as seminal with regard to the issue of gender and forestry in Sweden. Using our own studies of concrete climate change response in Swedish municipalities as a foil, we have analyzed Jonsson's work in an attempt to find points of contact, contrast and synthesis with our own. In each of 2007 and 2008, we interviewed authorities in all 290 Swedish municipalities in order to learn more about the way in which climate change response is being organized locally and how that activity interacts with other levels in Swedish society. A gender perspective was part of those studies and provides useful material for comparison with Jonsson's work. Beyond that, we aim for a view that synthesizes the two perspectives into a unified set of questions, both with regard to the interrelation between gender, climate change and forestry, as well as the way that this has relevance for an understanding of municipal governance processes and the role of other sectors (i.e., transport, energy, housing) in the overall picture of Swedish climate change response at the municipal level.

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