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The Making of Finland's Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production

Analyzing dramaturgy and deliberation in a pioneering SCP policy process

Abstract: Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is a developing field of environmental governance that has been particularly visible on the international agenda since the Johannesburg Summit in 2002. So far, only some countries have made their own national programmes on SCP. This paper analyzes one of the forerunning processes, the making of Finland's programme to promote sustainable consumption and production.

The Programme "Getting more and better from less" was made by a broadly-based, consensus-oriented KULTU Committee with representatives both from the Government and stakeholder organisations. It has been analysed by interviewing 20 of its members. As a framework, I have used deliberative policy process analysis elaborated on the basis of Maarten Hajer's (2003 & 2005) recent work. In the framework, concepts such as performance, dramaturgy and deliberation play central roles.

The results show that Finland's round-table process was generally experienced in positive terms. Apart from the social sector, the access to the process was seen as open and inclusive and also some learning and committing to the process had taken place. However, the analysis also reveals the risks of "politics of lowest common denominator". When consensus was sought, the programme text became too vague to really support the Government in preparation work, to inspire media or even the Committee members themselves.

Thus, more innovative methods should be applied to help open-minded deliberation on SCP in the future. At times, even the composition of committees such as KULTU should be re-thought to allow in also the young, marginal and institutionally less dependent voices of each sector. If a policy programme is made, it should be meticulously analysed to whom and for what purpose it is written. In addition, preparation committees should be encouraged to publish not only the consensual proposals but also the crazy ideas, diverse visions and dissenting opinions as these are prime fodder for democratic discussion.

Key words: Sustainable consumption and production, deliberative policy process analysis, policy programme, dramaturgy, deliberation, performance

1 Introduction

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is a broad field of environmental governance that has emerged particularly after *Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development* in 2002. In Johannesburg, countries agreed to promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national SCP initiatives. The responsibility to take the lead was given to the developed countries.¹

Finland is among the few European countries that have already drawn up their *national SCP programmes*². The Programme, “Getting more and better from less”³, was drafted by the KULTU Committee⁴, a broadly-based group that consisted of representatives coming both from and beyond the Government. The process was lead by two Ministries, the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). The Chancellor of the University of Helsinki chaired the meetings.

To analyze the working behind Finland’s SCP Programme, I have *interviewed* 20 members of the KULTU Committee, its Secretariat and permanent experts⁵. The interviewees represent almost half of the whole group. Among the topics discussed in these interviews were the general dynamics of the working of the Committee, the issues of dispute and consent during the work and the experiences of learning and commitment to action in SCP.

The ideas of *deliberative policy process analysis* are interesting here as dialogue and learning were central parts of the policy making process in the KULTU Committee. The framework for analysis relies heavily on the recent work of Maarten Hajer⁶. In this paper, I try to elaborate and visualize his thoughts so that it would be easier to use them in finding and arranging interesting information. The basic idea is to assess the policy process as a *performance* and to attach attention to certain aspects of it such as its “dramaturgy” and the process of deliberation.

The use of theatre vocabulary should not be seen to signify that the analysed policy process is belittled or seen as a kind of political theatre. That is not the purpose. Instead, the aim is to look with open eyes the structures (dramaturgy) of a policy process as and the processes (performance/deliberation) as influenced by these structures. In practice, this means asking more “how” than “what” questions and evaluating e.g. the deliberation by using the angles of access, exchange, learning and commitment in the analysis. My research questions about the working of the KULTU Committee are: *How was the dramaturgy of the policy making process? What kind of deliberation took place? How was the performance of the process as a whole?*

¹ Johannesburg Plan of Implementation 2002, Chapter III, articles 14–19

² Among the others are Sweden, the UK and the Czech Republic

³ The Committee on Sustainable Consumption and Production 2005

⁴ KULTU was the agronym used for Finland’s Committee on Sustainable Consumption and Production and it comes from the Finnish name ”Kestävän kulutuksen ja tuotannon toimikunta”. Also the SCP Programme is frequently called KULTU Programme in accordance with the name of the Committee.

⁵ Please see Annex I for a detailed list of people interviewed

⁶ Hajer 2003 & 2005

In the following chapter (2), I will tell briefly about the development of sustainable consumption and production policies in Finland and abroad. Meanwhile, chapter (3) deals with the theoretical provisions of this paper. In chapter (4), the interviews and their preliminary analysis are introduced. In chapter (5) I continue from this and utilize the tools developed in the theory chapter to the material. In chapter (6) the results are summarized and reflected upon.

2 The development of SCP policies in Finland and abroad

2.1 International development and SCP

The concept of sustainable consumption and production has been on the international agenda since the early 1990s. However, practical tools and methods for implementation are only now evolving. The Rio Summit⁷ represented a watershed in the international community's way of thinking and the focus of environmental policy was shifted from the mere production to consumption and production. In Johannesburg Summit, the development and promotion of a ten-year framework of regional and national SCP initiatives was agreed upon. The actions outlined included the development of policy tools and measures, awareness-raising programmes, monitoring mechanisms and technology transfer. UNEP⁸ together with UN DESA⁹ now stand as the leading agencies in the development of the framework, which is also being referred to as the Marrakesh Process or the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP.¹⁰

Progress in the Marrakech Process is taking place on international, regional and national levels. On national level, some countries such as Finland, the Czech Republic, Sweden and the UK have already made their SCP programmes or action plans. The whole process is heading towards the meeting of the 2010–11 cycle of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). There, a proposal for the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP will be presented and reviewed.

2.2 Finland from the perspective of sustainable development

As regards the roots of the SCP process, one of them is clearly the more general discussion on *sustainable development*¹¹. In terms of sustainability, the picture about Finland is a bit ambiguous. The country has for several years been scoring high both in the World Economic Forum's environmental sustainability and competitiveness comparisons¹². On the other hand, the latest Ecological Footprint estimates show Finland having the third biggest footprint in the world.¹³

⁷ The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992

⁸ United Nations Environment Programme

⁹ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

¹⁰ Clark 2006

¹¹ The concept originates from the Brundtland Commission Report (1987) that defines it as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

¹² See e.g. Environmental Sustainability Index 2005; World Economic Forum 2006

¹³ The Ecological Footprint measures humanity's demand on the biosphere in terms of the area of biologically productive land and sea required to provide the resources we use and to absorb our waste. The Footprint is estimated per person and by

This has been explained by the structure of Finland's industry where particularly the material and energy intensive pulp sector has long played an important role¹⁴. In general, the common understanding is that Finland is a peripheral country with cold climate and long distances and that these circumstances have made it hard for Finland to boast in eco-efficiency comparisons¹⁵. In a study about sustainable development strategies in EU, Finland regarded SCP as a field where making progress is really difficult¹⁶.

Finland has often been described as an active country in environmental politics. During its years in EU¹⁷, it has adopted, however, a policy style described as pragmatic realism¹⁸. Still, in the development of the SCP agenda Finland has been active also on international level. It was one of the countries¹⁹ that were among the initiators of Johannesburg's SCP provisions and it has also retained its active role in the UN by e.g. leading the Marrakech Task Force on construction. The high profile in SCP discussion means that the practices and policies it manages to develop on national level might be spread also to wider circles. Apparently to contribute to this, Finland has translated the main provisions of her SCP Programme to English and put the text to Internet²⁰.

Sauli Rouhinen, Secretary General of the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (FNCSD), has emphasized that the Finnish model to promote sustainable development is characterized by a holistic approach, bottom-up structure and participation. Although the FNCSD is looking for common ground, constructive dialogue and mutual learning are considered more important than consensus.²¹ Different players have been made to participate to the shaping of the strategic principles - but not quantitative goals or timetables.²² The broad base makes the level of working general thus inheriting more concrete work.²³ This has been criticized by Niestroy²⁴ who notes that the broad stakeholder involvement in the Finnish SD model does not mean that conflicts would be explicitly addressed.

2.3 Finland's SCP process: the working of the KULTU Committee

In Finland, the working process for national programme to promote sustainable consumption and production began in November 2003 and it was concluded in June 2005. The task was to "prepare for the Council of State a proposal for a programme on ecologically, socially and economically sustainable manners of production and consumption"²⁵. The KULTU Committee was set up to do the job.

country. Living Planet Report 2006, 14

¹⁴ Ylä-Anttila 2004, 8

¹⁵ Rouhinen 2006, 315

¹⁶ Niestroy 2005, 63

¹⁷ From the year 1995 onwards

¹⁸ Sairinen 2003, 73–77

¹⁹ Finland, Denmark, Sweden and UK, Honkasalo 11.10.2006

²⁰ For direct web links to English versions of the programmes, please see The Committee on Sustainable Consumption and Production, Finland 2005

²¹ Institute for European Environmental Policy 2005

²² Rouhinen 2006, 307

²³ Kylliäinen 2004, 74

²⁴ Niestroy 2005, 105

²⁵ Ympäristöministeriö 2003

The making of the programme was *broadly participative*. During the one and a half years of work, there were some 40 persons who participated to the work either as Committee or Secretary members or as permanent experts. In addition, almost 50 specialists contributed to the work in the hearings or working groups. The members represented various ministries but also other stakeholders of SCP such as business and industry, labour unions, environmental organizations and research institutes.²⁶

The programme work included *extensive hearings* that were supposed to help in founding the strategy on scientific grounds. There were three background studies written about environmental policy tools, the environmental burden of consumption, as well as about Finland's role in the international business environment. In addition, some whole-day workshops were held outside the normal meeting venues and a part of the group even made a study trip to China.

The process was lead by the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). The Chancellor of the University of Helsinki, professor Kari Raivio, chaired the meetings. Professor Raivio did not have any previous experience on issues or processes related to sustainable consumption and production. He was, however, invited to take the job just because he was known about his visionary and courageous approach.²⁷ In addition, there were vice-chairs from the both Ministries leading the process and an executive group comprising of the Secretariat and the Committee and permanent expert members of both the MoE and the MTI.

The finalised paper "Getting more and better from less – Proposals for Finland's national programme to promote sustainable consumption and production" was *unanimously accepted* in June 2005. It includes a vision until the year 2025 as well as goals and action points for 11 fields that were considered important in promoting SCP. There are 73 action points introducing in total 93 *proposals*. Some examples of the proposals are establishing a material efficiency service centre, developing user-friendly models for assessing the environmental impacts of personal consumption, and setting up a panel for the stakeholders of the food chain. Together with its supplement memorandum, the Finnish SCP programme consists of 150 pages. However, the negotiated committee proposal is only a bit over 20 pages long.

The Government of Finland discussed the outcomes of the SCP programme almost a year after it had been published, in April 2006. The most concrete outcome of this discussion was that the MoE and the MTI were given a mandate to start negotiations on financial support for a material efficiency service centre²⁸. In addition, some themes such as the possibility for promoting SCP in public procurement and the importance of fiscal measures in the process were discussed but there were no concrete outcomes followed by these discussions²⁹. Since then, the financial support for the establishment of the service centre has been agreed and the KULTU Programme was also taken into account when updating Finland's sustainable development strategy in 2006.

²⁶Kestävän kulutuksen ja tuotannon toimikunta (KULTU) 2005; Nikula 2006

²⁷Nikula 2006

²⁸A service center for material efficiency was one of the most popular proposals of KULTU

²⁹Valtioneuvoston Viikko 2006

3 Deliberative analysis of a policy making process

Maarten Hajer³⁰ has been one of the scholars to note the changing context of policy making. According to him, political action is to an increasing extent taking place in *institutional void*: “(T)here are no generally accepted rules and norms according to which politics is to be conducted and policy measures are to be agreed upon”³¹.

In the case of Finland’s SCP policy making, the angle of institutional void seems fruitful. This is partly due to the fact that the policy field of sustainable consumption and production is rather *new*. Therefore, there are no fixed institutional settings that could alone - on effective, accountable and legitimate way - bear responsibility on it. On the other hand, the problems of the SCP field are very *broad* and they can be seen to comprise everything from polluting a sea in the North to violating labor rights in the South. Who could bear responsibility on these problems? Who should have power? What could be done, in this case, on national level?

3.1 Deliberative policy analysis and democracy

When a policy process takes place in institutional void, Hajer suggests that we should attach our attention to three aspects: polity, knowledge and intervention. What should be assessed is the quality of policy making both in terms of content and process. The assessment would include “a varied search for understandings of society to facilitate *meaningful and legitimate political actions*, agree upon *in mutual interaction* to improve our collective quality of life”³². What are the goals, the meaningful intervention and quality of life, are to be derived from the process itself. Hajer calls the approach for *deliberative policy analysis*.

What I find particularly useful in the approach of deliberative policy analysis is the open attitude towards the process and its goals. There is an attempt to understand the process from its own starting points. Here, it is worth noting that Hajer’s use of the concept *deliberative* is slightly different from the use of some other scholars. For example, the author of the concept *deliberative democracy*, Paul Hirst³³, has defined the concept as “government by *information exchange and consent*, where organised publics have the means to conduct a dialogue with government and thus hold it account”.

Departing from this, Hagendijk and Kallerud (2003) have developed the concept of *deliberative governance* where *equal access and consensus* are emphasised simultaneously with the ideas of governance. The authors describe the concept in the following way: “In its strong emphasis on consensus, ideals of deliberative democracy connote a dream to re-establish the conducive socio-political conditions within which - - policy could be formulated and implemented - -.” Thus, the radical version of deliberative democracy would require large-scale institutional

³⁰ E.g. Hajer 2003 & 2005

³¹ Hajer 2003, 175

³² Hajer 2003, 191

³³ Hirst 2000, 27

reform that would even involve “devolving as many of the functions of the state as possible to society” and “democratising as many as possible of the organizations in civil society”³⁴.

In political science, there has been also critical voices rising against the consensual policy making style suggested by the proponents of deliberative democracy. For example Chantal Mouffe³⁵ finds it misleading and dangerous for democracy to think that there would be something like “rational” political consensus as this idea hides the real exclusions, power and resource imbalances. Mouffe³⁶ gives arguments about the *need for conflicts* in democratic process: “ - - radical and plural democracy rejects the very possibility of a nonexclusive public sphere of rational argument where a non-coercive consensus could be attained. - - Instead of trying to erase the traces of power and exclusion, democratic politics requires bringing them to the fore, making them visible so that they can enter the terrain of contestation.”

In my opinion, all these angles to deliberative policy making are interesting and relevant in the context of my analysis. In Hajer’s thinking, arriving to consensus is not explicitly present and he emphasises merely dialogue and its qualities. However, in the context of Finnish policy making the question of consensus needs to be addressed, too. As was noted earlier, looking for common ground is central to the Finnish thinking on sustainable development.³⁷ According to my interviews, a unanimously accepted, consensual proposal was also something that was seen as a goal in the working of the KULTU Committee.

Considering the critique presented e.g. by Mouffe above, the normative ideals of deliberative democracy might not be a good starting point for policy analysis. What Hajer suggests is that policy making should move towards practices of deliberation that “succeed in building up both shared ways of orienting knowledge as well as the trust and credibility of the actors involved”³⁸. Later on, he makes the extent to which deliberation is taking place to mark the whole *democratic quality of a discussion*³⁹. These dimensions of deliberation and their context are something that I also try to track in this study. In the following chapter, I discuss more in detail the ways the analysis could be made.

3.2 Dramaturgy and deliberation in a policy making process

Broad participation was an important element in the deliberative working process of the KULTU Committee. However, Hajer⁴⁰ writes that participation often does not lead to authentic exchange of views. Therefore, it is important to look closer at the practices, mediations and languages of the situations where participation takes place. Here we end up close to the Foucauldian analysis on power where the question on “*how*” is much more important than the question on “*what*”.

³⁴ Hirst 2000, 28

³⁵ Mouffe 1996, 254 - 255

³⁶ Mouffe 1996, 255

³⁷ Institute for European Environmental Policy 2005

³⁸ Hajer 2003, 187

³⁹ Hajer 2005, 250

⁴⁰ Hajer 2003, 179 - 190

According to Foucault, it is essential to see how certain situations are constituted and how the subjects take their positions. He defines power as “action on others’ actions”. Thus, power in a society is never a fixed regime but rather an endless and *open strategic game*. Therefore, it is worthwhile to attach attention to the *micro level* where important *differentiations* take place. Power relations are exercised to an exceedingly important extent through the production and exchange of signs. “(I)t is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not”, Foucault⁴¹ sums up. An understanding about the use of power is the essence of a policy process analysis.⁴²

If we get back to Hajer⁴³, we can find a very recent work on the politics of planning where he analyses a policy process as *staged performances*. This analysis fits with the ideas of deliberative policy analysis even though he does not explicitly mention that. Hajer’s idea is that today’s world is full of situations where decisions are made in networks marked by unclear rules as to how to arrive at a legitimate decision. In these situations, the notion of policy processes as performances deserves attention. Hajer suggests that particularly three dimensions of a policy process should be considered: *discourse, dramaturgy and deliberation*.

Discourses refer to markers, structures and patterns in a discussion. In other words, “(d)iscourse is an ensemble of *ideas, concepts and categorizations* through which meaning is allocated to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced in an identifiable set of practices”⁴⁴.

Meanwhile, dramaturgy refers to the “physical-symbolical *contexture* of a discussion”. Some central concepts relevant to dramaturgy are listed in the Box 1.⁴⁵

Box 1: The dramaturgical dimensions of policy analysis according to Hajer (2005)

Scripting: The efforts to create a setting by determining the *characters* in a play and to provide cues for appropriate behaviour.

Staging: The deliberate *organization of an interaction*, drawing on existing symbols and the invention of new ones, as well as to the distinction between active players and audiences.

Setting: The *physical situation* in which the interaction takes place.

Performance: The way in which the contextualized *interaction produces social realities*.

With deliberation, Hajer⁴⁶ refers here to the *democratic quality* of a discussion. Deliberation can be analysed by focusing attention to several points:

1. Reciprocity refers to discussions conducted through an argumentative exchange, *hearing both sides*, and responding to one another’s arguments.

⁴¹ Foucault 1991, 103

⁴² Gordon 1991, 3 - 7; Foucault 2000, 336 - 346

⁴³ Hajer 2005

⁴⁴ Hajer 2005, 448

⁴⁵ Hajer 2005, 449

⁴⁶ Hajer 2005, 250

2. Inclusiveness means that stakeholders are made part of argumentative exchanges, and that *everyone with a stake can have his or her say*.
3. With openness is meant that staging of a debate should *avoid unnecessary barriers*.
4. Integrity requires that there is honesty and *no double play* in a debate.
5. Accountability of a process means that those involved are *accountable* to political bodies and to the public at large, also with regards to the degree to which the rules as laid out have been guaranteed.
6. With dialogue is emphasised *learning* through an iterative process in which knowledge is mobilized and enriched through confrontation with a variety of stakeholders and experts.

3.3 Elaborating a model for deliberative policy process analysis

To be able to use the thoughts of Hajer in my own analysis, I have tried to simplify them a bit. As discourse analysis is a well-established field of its own, I will just work here with the concepts of dramaturgy and deliberation. Putting things as simple as possible, my understanding is that *dramaturgy refers to the structures and players of a process in different times*. As dramaturgy is the context where interaction takes place, discourses can be seen also as a part of it. Meanwhile, *deliberation* happens within these structures and among the players. Moreover, *performance* refers to the whole process as understood by the characters.

In the Figure 1, I have tried to visualize the dimensions of dramaturgy in a policy process. Setting is the physical situation and scripting refers to the characters that are brought to place to interact. Moreover, staging means the way the interaction is organized in different situations and over time. The field where the interactive performance takes place is discursive. Thus, the quality of deliberation is dependent on both the dimensions of dramaturgy and the understandings of the performance itself that –again – might affect the dramaturgy and produce new social realities.

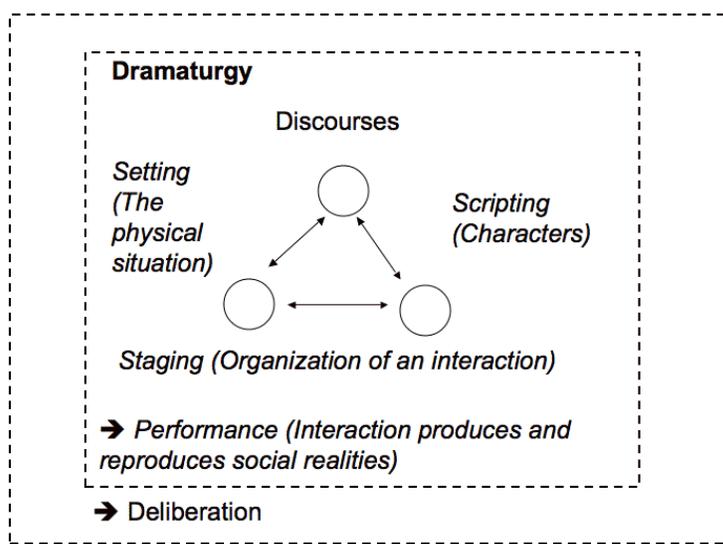


Figure 1: The dimensions of dramaturgy

When dealing with the quality of deliberation, six concepts by Hajer⁴⁷ were introduced above: reciprocity, inclusiveness, openness, integrity, accountability and dialogue. For the purpose of my analysis, the list seemed a bit too long and also unstructured. Thus, I grouped some concepts together. The terms openness and inclusiveness were grouped under the dimension *access*. Moreover, the concepts reciprocity and integrity were made part of the dimension *exchange*.

As with dialogue it was emphasised “learning through an iterative process”, I chose to simply call this dimension *learning* to avoid any confusion with the deliberation itself. Last but not least, accountability seemed to me as a difficult term to use in this context so I named that dimension *commitment*. Making commitments and learning were also words used in my own interviews, which made the analysis easier. The outcome of the process can be seen in the Figure 2 that visualizes all the four dimensions of deliberation.

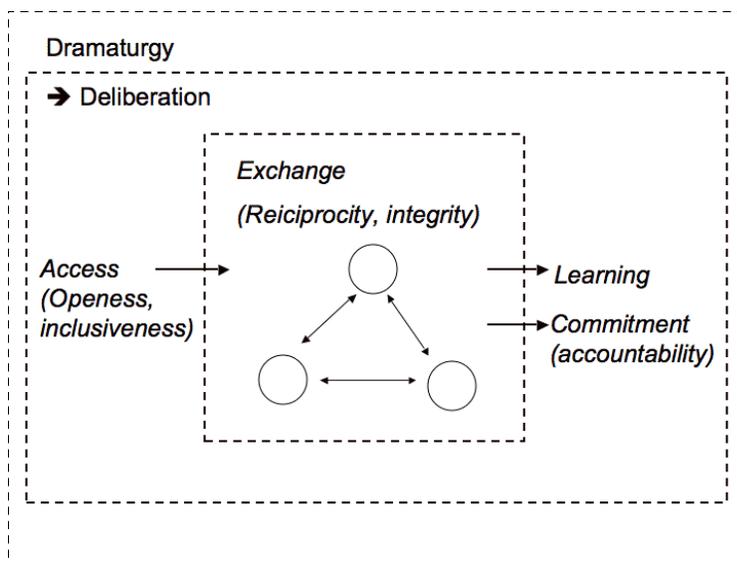


Figure 2: The dimensions of deliberation

Although the dimensions of deliberation are pictured here as happening neatly one after the other, in reality they take place simultaneously. For example, learning might affect the access to the process and commitments could influence integrity of exchange.

How the model could be used in practice? When the democratic performance of deliberation is considered, access is the first aspect to be evaluated. Here, it is important to pay attention to openness and inclusiveness. That means seeing that there are no unnecessary barriers present and that everyone with a stake can have a say. In the actual exchange or dialogue, reciprocity and integrity are the aspects to be evaluated. This means that in the argumentative exchange, the arguments of all sides are heard and responded to. In this process, honesty is required. What the exchange might yield is learning and possibly commitments to the process at hand. The extent to which learning is happening and commitments are made could be one criterion for evaluation.

⁴⁷ Hajer 2005, 250

4 Focused interviews and their preliminary analysis

My aim is to analyse dramaturgy and deliberation in the KULTU Process. For this purpose, I have 20 *focused interviews* that were conducted with the members of the KULTU Committee, its Secretariat and permanent experts. As there were some 40 persons who participated to the work by representing one of the before mentioned roles, the sample is half of the whole group. However, three of the interviews were made half a year before the others with specially tailored questions.

Focused interview is a *half-structured interview* where only some aspects are fixed. The interview is focused on certain themes that the researcher has found important when getting familiar with the field.⁴⁸ In my question body, *four themes* were dealt with. In total, 30 questions were asked and a part of them had also some more detailed sub-questions. In the Box 2, I have listed all the themes and also some examples about the questions included in them:

Box 2: Focused interviews - themes and selected questions

The SCP policy process and participation

- Was the participation and the hearing of different parties balanced during the process?
- What did you learn?

The content of the SCP Programme

- What do you think is new in the Programme?
- If you had had the chance to make the Programme by yourself, in which ways it would have been similar to or different from the current one?

The implementation of the Programme

- Do you think that it is good that in a national programme some responsibilities of implementation are given also to actors outside the Government?
- To what extent you believe the proposals of the Programme will be realised?

The general politics of SCP

- What is sustainable consumption and production all about? How would you define it in your own words?
- Who should have power and responsibility in making SCP related changes happen?

The choice of the interviewees was made by trying to pick the most *active and influential members* while retaining the *balance of the group*. As indicators for the balance, I used e.g. the representation of both genders, the number of people coming from the Government and the stakeholder groups⁴⁹ and the number of members representing the different pillars of sustainable development - the social, economic and environmental sectors. To accomplish the task, I received advice from the interviewees who had been in leading positions in the process. A full list of the interviewees can be found as the Appendix I to this article.

⁴⁸ Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2001, 9, 47 - 48

⁴⁹ E.g. from NGOs, business and research

Apart from the three first ones, the interviews were mainly conducted more than one and a half years after the end of the KULTU Process. The discussions took mainly place between the end of January 2007 and the mid-March 2007. At that time, the parliamentary elections scheduled for March 18th 2007 influenced the political discussions. The length of the interviews varied from approximately one hour to two hours. The interviews were recorded but also notes as detailed as possible were made during the discussions.

The aim is to make full transcriptions of the interviews and to analyse them meticulously. Here, however, only the *preliminary analysis* is provided on the basis of the interview notes. In practice, I have read the notes through several times. Then, I have written some notions and hypothesis partly on the basis of the theory framework presented earlier in this paper. In the end, I have tested the hypothesis by going through the notes again.

5 Deliberative analysis of the KULTU Process

Deliberative policy process analysis encourages us to look at the strategic games on the micro level of policy making. In this case, it is challenging as the material got about the process is to a large extent interviews conducted one and a half years after the process ended. As there is no systematic or detailed documentation available about the process, we must content ourselves with the *stories about the process*.

5.1 Dimensions of dramaturgy in the KULTU Process

In the theory chapter above, I developed a model for analysing the dimensions of dramaturgy in a policy making process. Among the dimensions mentioned were: scripting, setting, staging and discourses. Of these dimensions, only scripting and staging will be dealt more in detail here. As regards settings, it would have been difficult to analyse them because I do not have observations as my material. In addition, the physical situations where deliberation took place were usually not addressed in the interviews. As regards discourses, their analysis would have simply taken too much space. Therefore, discourses will be the topic of the next article.

Staging: organization of the interaction

With staging, Hajer ⁵⁰ refers to the “deliberate *organization of an interaction*, drawing on existing symbols and the invention of new ones, as well as to the distinction between active players and (presumably passive) audience”. From this perspective, there were basically two things that awoke discussion in the interviews: the meaningfulness of the expert presentations and the character of the discussions among the Committee.

The KULTU Committee assembled 23 times. The meetings took usually place in the Ministry of the Environment but there were also some special sessions organized outside the ordinary venues. There were at least 37 expert presentations given during the working of the KULTU Committee. The majority of them were given during the first year of the working of the Committee when the meetings usually began with hearings.

⁵⁰ Hajer 2005, 449

While it was a very widely shared opinion that the *beginning of the process was somehow “slow”*, the attitude towards the expert presentations varied. While some felt that they had learned from the presentations, others were skeptical and doubted the balance of the experts. Some also thought that the expert inputs were not connected to the general discussions and that there would have been the need to change the hearings to some more dialogical settings. What was clear, however, was that the staging in expert hearings made the Committee members an audience and some of the members experienced this as an odd situation.

If discussions were thought by some to be the best part of the process many also criticized them. Even though it was viewed positively that everybody had the chance to get his or her voice heard, many were frustrated about the old *polarized discussions* that took place in the meetings. Many felt that everybody just said what they were expected to say in their position and that new information and good arguments were not able to move the frontiers. The executive group had tried to ease the tensions by e.g. letting people in an early stage to tell about their organizations’ work as regards SCP and about their expectations about the process. Also some innovative ways to gather information and deliberate were used in the couple of workshops organized.⁵¹ Even though these methods were mentioned only by the Secretariat some members told also that they had found the workshops generally very useful.

If we try to sum up the important features of the KULTU Process from the perspective of staging, *intensive, demanding, time-consuming but rewarding* were the adjectives commonly used to describe the process. The process was intensified particularly towards the end as the Chair was not willing to postpone the deadline given to the Committee. There was even the fear for the whole process dissolving as the decisions had not been made step by step. In addition, several actors - The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation at the forefront - were considering leaving dissenting opinions to the Programme text. However, the Chair appealed to the Committee and negotiated with the members that no dissenting opinions would be left. The appeal worked and a consensual Programme paper was undersigned. Still, one and a half years after the end of the process there were still some interviewees who would have preferred that dissenting opinions would have been allowed in.

Scripting: characters and cues for appropriate behaviour

Hajer⁵² defines scripting as “those efforts to create a setting by determining the *characters in the play* - - and to provide cues for *appropriate behavior*”. In the KULTU Process, the characters of the play were chosen when the leading Ministries MoE and MTI were contacting the participating organizations and asked them to name their representatives. The Committee members, its Secretariat and permanent experts formed a group of 38 people. Approximately 40 % of them came from and 60 % from outside the Government. There were 8 representatives

⁵¹ The deliberation among the members of the Committee was tried to boost in workshops e.g. by using the so-called coffee table method. In that, each table discusses a separate theme among 10 people. A table has a chair and a reporter but the participants are changed every thirty minutes so that everybody can participate to every discussion. In addition, there were some foreign experts who were invited to the workshops to spur the discussion and also boards were used to gather ideas.

⁵² Hajer 2005, 449

from the organizations of business, industry and farming, 5 from the environmental and consumer non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 3 people representing research institutes.

In the interviews, the *broadly-based structure* of the Committee was perceived both as a weakness and as a strength. Its strength was the ability to reflect various viewpoints and to bring more input into the process. At the same time, among its weaknesses were the same heterogeneity of opinions and contradicting viewpoints that made it difficult for the Committee to take any bigger steps.

Some of the *characters took central roles* in the play. The common story told in the interviews gave to the environmental NGOs and particularly to the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation the role of the biggest challenger. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, MTI, the biggest trade union as well as the organizations of industry, business and agriculture were among the list of the conservative forces. On the other hand, some also added to the list of challengers or progressive players consumer NGOs, some of the ministries as well as the Chair and Secretariat of the Committee so the potential unbalance might not have been that big as it first seems.

How were the dynamics of working in the KULTU Committee? In the process, the task taken by particularly the environmental NGOs was to try to make *progress* in the field of sustainable consumption and production. Meanwhile, the role business and industry had taken for themselves – and this was also explicitly told in the interviews – was to *hinder radical changes*. Thus, this tension between progressive and conservative forces was a central part of the dynamics in the Committee. Of the actors, the Ministry of Finance was the one that was commonly seen as having *most power*. As it was also a part of the more conservative forces, the chances of the progressive ones were rather limited.

In the Finnish politics on sustainable development, Keijo Koskinen⁵³ has found four distinct groups of actors he has called for visionaries, compromise makers, adapters and productionists. Many of the actors I have called here progressive are named as visionaries in the categorization of Koskinen. Meanwhile, the group of productionists in Koskinen's model is close to my group of conservatives.

When scripting a political performance, the *role of the chair* is an important one. Also in the KULTU Process, the positively perceived role taken by the Chancellor of the University of Helsinki, Kari Raivio, was often spontaneously mentioned in the interviews. It was seen as a good thing that the Chair came from outside the SCP circles and from a high position. His approach was described as balanced, neutral, precise and progressive. He spurred the Committee to negotiate, find compromises and reach consensus. His character was seen as eminent which made the Committee members involved try to find better arguments and ways to negotiate a commonly acceptable paper.

⁵³ Koskinen 1995, 58

5.2 Dimensions of Deliberation in the KULTU Process

According to Hajer⁵⁴, deliberation refers to the “*democratic quality of a discussion*” and the point of a proper deliberation is to allow people to transform pre-given opinions into new preferences in a collective exchange. In this chapter, I’ll look the deliberation by using four angles sketched above. These dimensions of deliberation are: (1) access, (2) exchange, (3) learning and (4) commitment.

Inclusive and open access

With inclusiveness, Hajer⁵⁵ means that in debates it is required that *stakeholders are made part* of the argumentative exchange. Meanwhile, with openness it is emphasized that the way in which the debate is staged and conducted must *avoid unnecessary barriers*. With the term access, I have referred to the both of these qualities.

As regards access in the KULTU Committee, the story most commonly told in the interviews regarded the working as *inclusive and open*. However, the members with affiliation to the *social sector* saw that their branch was poorly present. While there were three representatives from environmental NGOs, there was not a single representative from e.g. welfare or health organizations.

Although the distribution of power varied among the members, everybody had their chance to speak out. There were no unnecessary barriers related e.g. to knowledge or language that would have hindered the participation. Different thing was, however, what kind of consequences the speak acts of different players had. As was mentioned when the scripting of the Process was analyzed, it was generally assumed that the comments of some of the members such as the Ministry of Finance had *more weight* than those of the others. Therefore the mere balanced access should not be regarded as the balance of power.

Weak reciprocity of exchange

While inclusiveness and openness were generally perceived qualities of the KULTU Process, reciprocity was not seen to be at that high level. Reciprocity means that discussions must be conducted through an argumentative exchange, *hearing both sides*, and responding to one another’s arguments. To assess the quality of deliberation, Hajer emphasizes also the meaning of integrity. Integrity underlines the importance of honesty and *avoidance of double play* in a debate.⁵⁶ Both reciprocity and integrity can be seen as qualities of exchange.

The problem related to reciprocity that many saw in the process was already taken up in the context of staging: Too often discussions in the Committee involved performative repetitions where different *players remained behind the old front lines*. As many of the Committee members had worked with the questions related to

⁵⁴ Hajer 2005, 450

⁵⁵ Hajer 2005, 450

⁵⁶ Hajer 2005, 450

sustainable development for years or even tens of years, they were familiar with the people and arguments of different organizations. In addition, they also knew the basics of the sustainability debate. Therefore, it was easy for them to shut their ears and concentrate on defending their position.

However, in the interviews it also came out that at some points the opinions of many players were surprisingly close to each other. For example the global challenge of sustainable consumption and production as well as the principles such as eco-efficiency were perceived in rather similar ways. In these general questions it seemed that the people also got encouraged to speak about their own thoughts and worries that necessarily were not things they were bringing up in official discussions. Even if these personal opinions were heterogenic too, there was clearly a good chance for finding common ground.

Learning through dialogue

Hajer writes about learning that it should happen through an iterative process in which *knowledge is mobilized and enriched through confrontation* with a variety of stakeholders and experts. When the interviewees were asked about learning, the answers varied to some extent. Many thought that *they had learned at least something*, usually something from outside their own core expertise. For many, it was, however, difficult to remember or point out what it was they had exactly learned. When specified, the learned thing could be related to many aspects of the KULTU Committee's working. For some, the learning experiences were related to the process while others felt they had learned most about the participating organizations or about the SCP topic itself.

A clear indicator about learning was however the fact that when talking about some *less politicized topics* interviewees were surprisingly *like-minded* about the answers. This could be interpreted as an indicator about learning. On the other hand, it is difficult to say whether the members had learned these common standpoints in the KULTU Committee or elsewhere.

Still, a more difficult question here is what should be the value given to learning in the working of the KULTU Committee. *How big importance should be attached merely to it?* As in many interviews the value of the Process was emphasized more than its result, what would have happened even without the KULTU Programme? And if the learning is the main reason why something is happening, how this learning could be enhanced? To take a step further from the current setting: Would it be more honest to invite the participants to learn and not to make a programme if that is not the point? And would the participants be motivated for a mere educative process? These questions will be addressed again in the concluding chapter.

Making commitments

Hajer⁵⁷ defines accountability in a policy processes by stating that “those involved are *accountable to political bodies and to the public* at large, also with regard to the degree to which the rules as laid out have been

⁵⁷ Hajer 2005, 450

guaranteed”. In the focused interviews, I asked about making commitments and that is also the concept used in the framework for analysis developed above. In both cases – in making commitments and being accountable – the question is about taking responsibilities in a policy process.

Most of the interviewees reacted positively to the question on whether they and their organization *can be committed* to the KULTU Programme. What some of them added a bit surprisingly was that they could easily be committed to it because “it was not very dangerous”. This can be interpreted to reflect the fact that as such the Programme was not about to take many things further and that the real work to process things to realizable form was still ahead. In addition, it gives strength to the earlier notion that some of the actors had actually joined the process with the aim of slowing it down. Therefore, committing to the Programme *did not mean taking too big responsibilities*.

In the KULTU Programme, the responsibilities for implementation were not only given to Governmental agencies but also to organizations outside the Government. However, many actors *did not recall* the responsibilities they were given. In addition, many saw that in the implementation their role would mainly be to participate - should the Government initiate something. In this sense, their perception about their role in implementation was *not very proactive* but rather one of a watchdog. These questions related to committing to the process will be dealt more in detail in the following chapter.

5.3 The general performance of the KULTU Process

It is time to sum up some of the results so far and provide a general picture about the KULTU Process as a political performance. Hajer suggests that applying the notion of performance to policy analysis is to suggest that politics and policy should be regarded as a matter of *mutual creation*. This means attaching attention to the way in which the “*contextualized interaction itself produces social realities* like understandings of the problem at hand, knowledge, new power relations”.⁵⁸ How the KULTU Process and its outcome were perceived? What kinds of expectations were produced about the future of the Programme? How about the roles of the actors, their power and responsibilities, how were they constructed?

Satisfaction was a common way to talk about the KULTU Committee’s working. It was broadly felt that there had been a *good spirit in the process*, that the access to the common deliberation had been balanced and that some sort of learning had taken place – despite the old frontlines. Thus, it could be thought that the general performance was perceived in positive light. However, an interesting contradiction arose from the fact that even though many were happy with the process they were *critical about the outcome*. Particularly many that had a progressive, change-oriented attitude towards SCP saw that the Programme was a good package of information but that it lacked concreteness, priorities and means to make true change. This makes us ask: What was the meaning attached to the mere process? How could the process be seen as successful if its concrete outcome was not perceived in that positive light? Why were the expectations built in the process higher than could eventually be realized?

⁵⁸ Hajer 2005, 449

These questions become even more relevant when we note that a few members of the Committee had not only felt *disappointed* with the KULTU Programme's content but also *with its status*. To these members it had been a disappointment that the Programme was not accepted officially as the strategy of the Government. Later on, it was found out that the leading ministries MoE and MTI had decided about the fate of the Programme only after it was finalized. This can be seen as a bit problematic as it would have been important for all the participants to know from the beginning what the process can and cannot yield in best or worst case. For instance the small NGOs need to decide where their scarce resources are most effectively used. In any case, there were not many in the Committee who could have directly influenced the third source of disappointment – the *little publicity* that the Programme got in media after its publication.

Still, many of the interviewees noted that taking into account the huge differences of opinion the commonly agreed Programme was a big achievement. Even though the environmental NGOs were disappointed to it, also the more conservative players saw that they had been pushed to make some compromises. In general, it seems that while the SCP conservatives had been forced to give way to some unpleasant wordings they had still managed to counteract the potential of the Programme to lead to some concrete changes.

While there were many who criticized the Programme many also saw that important things could be done if it would just been taken further. However, outside the Government circles a widely spread image was that *only one of the 73 action points*, the establishment of the service centre for material efficiency, *was about to be implemented*. In addition to that some mentioned other small steps but it seemed that the service centre was viewed as the only really substantial thing to happen as a follow-up to the Programme.

As at least the leading ministries had also made some follow-up of the process, it might have been wise to deliver this information more effectively to the Committee. Otherwise it could be felt in the organizations that participated to the process that the KULTU Programme did not really lead to anything. This, in turn, might affect the motivation to take part at similar processes in the future.

One and a half years after the process, the KULTU Committee members were generally still able to *remember* and mention some themes and concrete proposals of the Programme. Of the topics, ecological tax reform was the theme most commonly mentioned and the service centre for material efficiency the proposal most frequently taken up. However, considering the scope of the Programme the things the interviewees took up were very limited.

In the KULTU Programme, both the ministries and the stakeholder organizations were listed as parties *to implement the proposals*. However, the primary responsibility for each proposal was usually in the ministries. Interviewees were generally happy with this idea as many saw that sustainable consumption and production is not something that the Government could do alone. On the other hand, there were also demands that in case the non-governmental actors would start to work for the commonly agreed goals they should receive extra resources for their work.

So, what was already happening in the non-governmental field? To start with environmental and consumer *NGOs*, many of them felt that their general working was already in line with the KULTU Programme's broad goals and therefore there was no need to seek guidance from it. Meanwhile, some more conservative actors such as the business and farmers' organizations had started their own SCP related projects. In these projects, however, the aim was not to realize the compromises reached in the KULTU Committee but rather to make things loosely connected to the broad ideas of sustainable consumption and production.⁵⁹

To follow this, the negotiated compromise presented in the KULTU Programme could best serve as a support for the Government's work. However, the representatives of the *Ministries* generally did not see or remember much new provisions in the KULTU Programme - at least in their own fields. Some even pointed out that they would not have been able to let any new provisions to be presented there because they always require meticulous impact assessment.

When asking now, more than one and a half years after the publication of the KULTU Programme what the Ministries were about to implement, it was basically only the leading ministries MoE and MTI that had the follow-up on paper⁶⁰. The reactions of the other interviewed Government representatives varied. While one was able to tell the progress by quickly checking up their tasks from the Programme text, another was clearly unaware about the tasks her ministry had taken. In addition, one of the representatives was saying that they have been working on things in his ministry but that the work has been conducted on cross-cutting manner and it is not necessarily based on the compromises agreed in the Committee. These results reflect, once more, the importance of follow-up in any policy process.

6 Summary and reflections on the outcomes

This article has been about analysing one pioneering policy making process of sustainable consumption and production as a political performance. I have looked Finland's KULTU Process from the point of view of dramaturgy and deliberation. As research material, I have used 20 focused interviews that were conducted with the members of the KULTU Committee, its Secretariat and permanent experts. The results got are stories about the process. In political realities, stories and understandings about the state of things play central roles.

⁵⁹As their own SCP related undertaking, the representative of the Confederation of Finnish Industries mentioned a project called "Sustainable Value Chains" that is taking place during the years 2006–2007. Meanwhile, the representative of the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners told that they had made a programme on sustainable family forestry.

⁶⁰ The follow-up documentation reveals that particularly many of the research projects proposed in the KULTU Programme have been proceeding as well as some co-operation schemes and strategies. Nikula (2006)

6.1 Summary of the analysis

In the introduction of this article, I posed the following research questions to my material: *How was the dramaturgy of the policy making process in the KULTU Committee? What kind of deliberation took place in it? How was the performance of the process as a whole?* Now, I try to answer the questions one by one.

The process was staged in a way that in many meetings the Committee members were made an audience to experts. After that, the intensive and sometimes *polarized discussions* began. The polarizations were partly due to the fact that the Committee had been scripted as a broadly-based one where the progressive and conservative forces of the SCP field met. Here, the role of the Chair coming from outside the SCP field was seen as important and constructive one. In general, the process was described as intensive, demanding, time-consuming but rewarding.

As regards the dimensions of deliberation in the KULTU process, access as the first step was seen to be *open and inclusive*. Meanwhile, the reciprocity and *integrity of exchange* can be criticized as the discussions often had to do more with the performative repetition of old lines than really responding to the viewpoints of the others. Still, some learning apparently had taken place during the process and it was reflected both in the self-evaluation of the interviewees and in the surprisingly similar answers got to some less-politicised questions. A summary about the dimensions of the deliberation in the KULTU Process can be found from the Box 3 below.

Box 3: Summary of the results as regards the dimensions of deliberation

Dimensions of deliberation	Assessment on the basis of the interviews
Access	Open and inclusive access apart from the social sector
Exchange	Reciprocity low due to the old polarizations. Still, both sides made compromises.
Learning	Learning important part of the process. Widespread learning taken place particularly as regards the less-politicised issues. Questions remain whether learning is the most important outcome of the Process.
Commitment	Commitments made partly because the Programme is not thought to have effects. Many did not recall their tasks. NGOs are making own projects loosely connected to the theme. Government seen as the agency to implement the Programme.

A general notion about KULTU Process as a performance was that it had made the majority of its *participants content*. It seems that the process was somehow empowering. At the same time there were *critical voices* arising about the *outcome* of the Process. Interviewees were disappointed with its publicity, status and implementation. Some felt that with the KULTU Programme, the generally important SCP agenda would not be taken forward. This is understandable as the common understanding outside the Government was that only one of the 73 proposals had been proceeding during the one and a half years of the Programme's existence.

6.2 Reflections on the outcomes

The results summarised above reveal that apart from learning the results got in the KULTU Process were found somewhat vague. The negotiated text alone did not have much power to take things further and commitments to it were mostly partial or very general in nature. Why was that?

The challenge of politics of lowest common denominator

I think the syndrome the KULTU Process suffered and suffers from could be called for *politics of lowest common denominator*. What I mean with that is a bunch of problems that appear when consensus is sought in a broadly-based group with dissenting opinions and conflicting interests. Even though this kind of practice might bring the opinions of conservative and progressive forces closer, this achievement would not be attained without a price.

Among the sacrificed things might be the capability of the programme to propose something substantial, the interesting features perceived e.g. by media as well as weak signals that are important in visioning the future. If we start with the *weak signals*, why are they lost? The reason is that in national committees such as the KULTU Committee the representatives of e.g. industry organizations are already representing the lowest common denominators of their sector. Thus, the small entrepreneurs with new environmentally sound business ideas might not get their voice heard. However, the future makers might arise just from these marginal positions. Therefore, it would be important for a policy programme like KULTU to be able to find and support these weak signals.

On the other hand, also a *bigger backing* to a proposal might be lost when a text is formulated as unanimously acceptable. For example, it is not possible to read from the KULTU Programme how big support the proposal to make an ecological tax reform had in the Committee. In addition, it would certainly not be possible to guess by seeing the mere text that eco-taxes would be the theme most commonly taken up in the interviews with the Committee members. If the support for a proposal is this big would it be wise to have it clearly written e.g. as a dissenting opinion?

In addition to losing provisions from a text, also some generally expected profits of consensual processes might be missed. If the text includes too much irritating parts, it can be that the parties will not *voluntarily commit* to that – despite all the efforts. This was something that was taken up in the KULTU Committee particularly by the industry representatives. These members expressed openly that they are not that committed to the Programme and that they will even continue to oppose some of the provisions since they are still too radical for them.

If the outcome of a deliberative process is supposed to be a law text this lack of voluntarism might not be a problem. However, when the outcome is something less formal, the ability of the text to *inspire change* is important. Also with respect to media the potential to inspire and provoke *discussion* is important. As conflicts are prime fodder for journalism, it might be good to reveal not only the points of consent but also those of conflict. In

addition, it could be worthwhile to publish also the innovative but perhaps not that well developed ideas got in the committee work. If these ideas would be grabbed in the discussion, it could be a way to develop them further.

As described here, I think that the problems of politics of lowest common denominator should be taken seriously. However, I'm not trying to say that a unanimously accepted programme would not have value. A consensual proposal is a firm basis for the future work as was also noted by the parties who gave their statements to the KULTU Programme⁶¹. It is something that can be safely referred to and relied upon. However, it could be worth considering that a processes such as KULTU would yield three kinds of outcomes to get the best results: first there would be the commonly agreed things, then the parts where opinions are divided and last but not least the new and potentially fruitful but still underdeveloped ideas that should be taken further.

Is committee work the best way to learn?

So far we have mainly reflected the outcomes of the KULTU Process by looking at the provisions of the Programme and commitments to it. On the other hand, it might be that the learning that took place in the Process was more important than its other outcomes. Thus, if we look simply at the level of programme provisions the real point will be missed. On the other hand, the question follows: Is making programmes the best way to learn SCP related things?

On one hand, it seems that, indeed, negotiating on a programme text must be a *good motivation* to learn things relevant to the topic. This was also what a senior official meant when he referred to the Programme as the "reward" for the Committee. On the other hand, this kind of learning process might direct the knowledge bases of different actors to even more divergent directions. As the players need to find new arguments just for the views their organization is supporting, they might dismiss all the information that does not support their purposes. Would a "decision-makers sustainable development forum/academy/course" as suggested in the KULTU Programme⁶² serve this learning function better? And, on the other hand, if we maintain the committee process how learning within it could be best enhanced?

Best practices and methods of deliberation

When looking at the results as a whole, the *bad performance in exchange* likely works as a *bottleneck* for both learning and making commitments. Meanwhile, some aspects of the KULTU Process could be recommended as best practices for other similar processes.

First of all, in making sustainable consumption and production policies the round table method with broad stakeholder involvement seemed to be something that was experienced in very positive ways by the Committee members. Therefore, that could work well at least in another small country with consensual policy tradition.

⁶¹ Ilomäki & Hildén 2005

⁶² The Committee on Sustainable Consumption and Production 2005, 20

Another *best practice* recommendation would be the use of a chair coming from outside the SCP circles. It seems that this choice eased the exchange that was otherwise somewhat complicated in the Committee.

As regards setting and staging of the Committee work, it seems that the *methods of exchange* should be paid even more attention to in the future. In general, the policy processes of sustainable development should be *the* stages where new methods of societal dialogue would be innovatively used and tried. Among the suggestions got here from the KULTU Committee members were different methods used in futures research such as working through common experiences, back casting and tracking weak signals.

What to do with the inflexible positions?

If we think about the deliberative process KULTU Committee went through there is actually an interesting contradiction between the *flexibility needed in a true deliberation* and the *inflexibility of the representative roles* scripted for the Process. As was mentioned earlier, the leading Ministries contacted the participating organizations and asked them to name their representatives. However, when the roles are linked to background organizations they make the possibilities for both learning and taking stand more meager than for an individual being.

In big organizations, it is difficult to seek redefinitions to policies frequently or with a hasty pace. This leads the representatives to perform the same lines regardless of e.g. a piece of new information. Therefore, one and a half years was probably the minimum for a process such as KULTU to make even small changes. But much more time would have been needed to make something substantial. If the time given to committees cannot be expanded in the future either, could we do something else to script the members more freedoms?

One suggestion that came up twice in the interviews was that it could be worthwhile to gather a similar committee or a shadow-committee from e.g. the *younger generation*. In addition, there were also suggestions to make a first draft of the paper with a more limited group or in close co-operation with the best experts of the field. Moreover, one suggestion would even be to invite members to the Committee on *personal basis*. Then, they would be involved more as individual specialists. Their knowledge and experiences would enrich the process – and perhaps even trickle down to their home organizations - but at the same time they would be allowed to enact according to the best information and arguments available. Could these kinds of arrangements make the deliberation more genuine?

However, the demand for new faces might also have consequences to the power balance and democratic scripting of deliberative processes. If the senior specialists of interest organisations and governmental institutions would not be accepted as representatives what would happen? And, to continue, what if also the established partner organizations of the sustainable development field would be left out? If some novel proposals could be put forward they might later on experience opposition from many powerful sectors of the society. The exclusion from the preparation process might be doomed as *illegitimate* and also the proposals could be thus negatively

stigmatised. In addition, the possible learning experience that the senior experts could gain in a policy processes would be missed.

About the reasons to make a policy programme

Last but not least a word about policy programmes. Keijo Koskinen (1995) has made research on Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development. He notes that when making programmes aimed to integrate different aspects of environmental policy it is important to understand why programmes are made, to whom they are made, what are their goals and relations to other programmes.⁶³ In the official documentation about setting up the KULTU Committee these questions, particularly the question about target audience, were not really dealt with.⁶⁴

In an interview, a senior official noted that the Government is already “packed” with programmes. As the programmes are going out of date in an ever-increasing pace new committees and working groups need to be set up. Does this make any sense? “That is the future way of making politics”, the same senior official added. The globalization of markets and the new areas of governance such as sustainable consumption and production make new institutional voids to burst here and there. As politics are being performed also in ad-hoc settings it is important to have clear tools to analyze what makes sense and on what grounds.

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⁶³ Koskinen 1995, 66

⁶⁴ See e.g. Ympäristöministeriö 2003

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ANNEX I: List of focused interviews

Presiding officers

- 05.02.2007 Chair: Kari Raivio, Chancellor, University of Helsinki,
11.10.2006 Vice Chair: Antero Honkasalo, Director, Ministry of the Environment
29.01.2007 Vice Chair: Risto Ranki, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Trade and Industry

Members of the Committee

- 22.05.2006 Eija Koski, Researcher, The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation
01.02.2007 Maija Hakanen, Manager for Environmental Affairs, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities
01.02.2007 Pentti Tiusanen, Member of the Parliament, Environment Committee
02.02.2007 Markku Tornberg, Director, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners
06.02.2007 Benny Hasenson, Senior Adviser, The Confederation of Finnish Industries
06.02.2007 Risto Saari, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Transport and Communications
13.02.2007 Aila Korpivaara, Senior Architect, Ministry of the Environment
21.02.2007 Timo Airaksinen, Director, Technology Industries of Finland
22.02.2007 Sinikka Turunen, Secretary General, Finnish Consumers Association
27.02.2007 Timo Tanninen, Secretary General, WWF Finland
01.03.2007 Kaisa Pannimaa-Pätsi, Secretary General & Maili Mustonen, Chair, Kuluttajat-Konsumenterna - The Consumers
02.03.2007 Heikki Sourama, Consultative Counsellor, Ministry of Finance
14.03.2007 Liisa Ollila, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Permanent experts

- 07.02.2007 Sauli Rouhinen, Environment Counsellor, Ministry of the Environment
15.03.2007 Johanna Kohl, Researcher, Finland Futures Research Centre

Secretariat

- 02.06.2006 Taina Nikula, Senior Adviser, Ministry of the Environment
26.02.2007 Salla Koivusalo, Project Manager, Lifelong Learning Institute Dipoli

In total: 20 interviewees

- 11 men and 9 women
- 8 from and 12 beyond the government
- 4 representatives of NGOs
- 4 representatives from business
- 2 representatives from research