

Annex 1

Starting points for management and
monitoring (RiR 2013:19)



Annex 1, Starting points for management and monitoring

Management of climate policy follows the general regulatory framework applicable to the Swedish constitution. The parliamentary chain of mandate and responsibility means that the Riksdag is the main representative of the people, that the Government is responsible to the Riksdag, that the Government governs the country and that the administrative agencies are answerable to the Government. The agencies report back to the Government, which in turn supplies the Riksdag with the reference material it requires to monitor implementation of political decisions.

Policy management is subject to particularly severe testing in a complex area such as climate policy. The starting point is the climate measures implemented to achieve the Riksdag's climate objective: Limited Climate Impact.¹ The Riksdag decision affects several sectors and many different actors. Therefore climate policy imposes particular demands on the Government's management and coordination.

Climate policy not only affects the internal affairs of the public sector but also has major consequences for other parts of society. To allow agencies, companies and consumers a reasonable planning framework the Government must clarify how emissions of greenhouse gases are to decrease over time. Long-term rules of play and coordinated reporting are required to enable actors concerned to make rational decisions, for example on investment and other measures with a long time horizon.

Since climate policy is long-term and affects substantial values, particular requirements apply to its scrutiny and monitoring. The overall remit of the Swedish National Audit Office is to scrutinise whether public resources are used effectively. By means of independent audit as laid down in the Constitution, the Swedish National Audit Office can contribute to strengthening democratic insight and sound resource management.

Clear objectives

Clear objectives are a fundamental prerequisite for successful political control. The objectives of an activity must be well-formulated, measurable and monitorable for results-based management to

¹ See for example Committee Report 2008/09:MJU28, Riksdag Communication 2008/09:300.

be meaningful and to enable objectives to be set in relation to costs. To enable follow-up of the objectives of an activity the performance data must be relevant in relation to the objectives set.²

For climate policy measures to have the effect intended there must be well-defined and monitorable objectives in both the short and long term. For long-term objectives to have an influence they should not only describe a general direction but also indicate a specific date by which a certain objective should be achieved.³ One way of facilitating analyses of effectiveness is to clarify how emissions are intended to be reduced in coming decades by using an emission reduction pathway. Given the constitutional division of responsibilities it is the Riksdag that sets the climate policy objectives. The Government must propose to the Riksdag the rate at which emissions of greenhouse gases are to be reduced and specify the necessary measures.⁴

Coordinated analysis

A prerequisite for effective management is a knowledge base in which costs, effects and side-effects are analysed, not only for each separate measure but also from an overall perspective. To enable achievement of different goals at low cost and without undesirable side effects, coordinated analysis is required.⁵

The need for such coordinated analysis is particularly great in the climate field, since climate policy is so strongly affected by other social objectives. To reduce the risk of various policy instruments hampering and counteracting each other, decisions that have a material impact on the conditions for achieving climate objectives must be analysed and coordinated by the Government. This makes major demands of the Government Offices' ability to handle conflicting goals, assign priorities and coordinate measures. The steering effect will be jeopardised unless the Government specifies an order of priority for the climate objectives in relation to other objectives and public interests.

² See Committee Report 2000/01:FiU20, Riksdag Communication 2000/01:101 and Committee Report 2003/04:JuU1, Riksdag Communication 2003/04:106.

³ Committee Report 2007/08:FiU2, National Financial Management Authority (ESV 2007:23), *Resultat och styrning i statsförvaltningen*, Committee Report. 2000/01:FiU20, Riksdag Communication 101 and Committee Report 2003/04:JuU1.

⁴ In Committee Report 2010/11:MJU1, Riksdag Communication 2010/11:119 the committee requires the Government to report on the trend that can be observed to 2050 – i.e. if emission reductions are assessed to be of the extent desired. Also in LETS 2050, *Vägval 2050 - Styrningsutmaningar och förändringsstrategier för en omställning till ett kolsnålt samhälle*, LETS Report November 2011, p 8 and 24, the importance is stressed of clear leadership in which one of the most important tasks of central government is stated as being to indicate the course to be taken and establish a political vision that important public actors can support. But it is also stated that the vision should be accompanied by political measures to govern and organise implementation and to create credibility, legitimacy and acceptance for climate adaptation.

⁵ The Committee on Environment and Agriculture has also, in Committee Report 2011/12:MJU1, Riksdag Communication 2011/12:99 stated the importance of monitoring the effects of total measures. "To achieve a sound economy and economise on common resources, a combination of measures should be implemented that achieves the desired long-term objective at the lowest possible cost; in other words the most cost-effective combination of measures."

Effective accountability

Representative democracy builds on the possibility of demanding political accountability. Effective accountability assumes that it is possible to distinguish who is responsible, that it is known whether the public activity has been run well or badly and that there are mechanisms for actually demanding accountability.⁶

Since climate policy affects several different sectors of society and actors it is particularly important to establish the division of tasks and powers of authority between the Riksdag, the Government, central government agencies and other bodies. Otherwise the risk is that responsibility will fall between stools and that different actors will blame each other. The way accountability is organised will have major consequences for electors' opportunities to call politicians to account on election day and thus for the way representative democracy functions.

Clarifying reporting

Knowledge and information are essential preconditions for political control in general and democratic accountability in particular.

Reporting of measures that have a material impact on conditions for achieving climate objectives should therefore be coordinated and transparent. Costs, effects and side-effects should be reported by policy instrument and in a coordinated way.⁷ The Riksdag needs such clarifying reporting to be able to monitor whether measures and level of ambition are reasonable based on climate objectives and other social objectives.

Continuous follow-up

Effective results-based management requires continuous follow-up of the outcome of various measures. In that way the Riksdag and other actors concerned can obtain a current picture of whether policies pursued are successful or not. This monitoring should include data on the extent to which political objectives are achieved. Furthermore, it must be possible to set the outcome of measures against costs.⁸

In climate policy continuous follow-up should not only provide information about current outcomes, but also allow the possibility of assessing the effect of today's measures in the longer term. That will make it possible to assess how current measures affect the conditions for fulfilling objectives in both the short and long term. Continuous follow-up should also provide data on costs

⁶ Ahlbäck Öberg, Shirin, *Att kontrollera förvaltningen: framväxten av granskningssamhället*, in ed. Rothstein, Bo, *Politik som organisation – Förvaltningspolitikens grundproblem*, SNS Förlag, fourth edition, 2010, p 171-172.

⁷ The Riksdag has requested better follow-up and reporting on the climate field from the Government in Committee Report 2009/10: MJU1, Riksdag Communication 2009/10:129.

⁸ See for example Committee Report 1999/2000: FiU13, Riksdag Communication 1999/2000:16.

and side-effects. That creates a basis for assessment of negative effects and the need to weigh up considerations in relation to other objectives and public interests.

