Where does my individual responsibility for the environment start and end? Should I be responsible for environmental stress in India only because my shoes were produced there, or for climate change that endangers species in Antarctica, or rising sea levels on Pacific islands which just might have been caused by my driving? What do I need to do if I think it is my responsibility? And how do I decide which is a better alternative from an environmental point of view? Who should I trust when deciding on what action to take, and what opportunities do I need for acting?

This multidisciplinary thesis takes the politicization of everyday household activities due to environmental consequences, and individualization of responsibility, as its starting points. These points make it increasingly important to understand what responsibility individuals experience, and how they act in accordance with these perceptions. The present thesis is a qualitative study with 28 Swedish households that concern how the householders express responsibility for the environment through their everyday activities, partly by claiming to be “environmentally conscious”, and how they attempt to exert political influence. The study contributes to the discussion on the wide field of sustainable development and environmental politics. It deals specifically with the ways four Swedish municipalities (Gothenburg, Hudinge, Piteå and Växjö) attempt to influence what the householders do in the private sphere when it comes to implementing sustainable development, and what opportunities they supply, and what expectations they have on householders. The study thereby discusses the possibility to interfere in the perceived private sphere, and different ways to participate politically.
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