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Abstract to the 2008 Annual meeting of Association of American Geographers, Boston, Ma

To the session “Governing Climate Change: New Politics, New Discourses, New geographies”

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### Climate Change Mitigation and Economic Growth - Determinants for Local Level Climate Policy?

Facing the challenges of global warming some cities are more ambitious than others in terms of inventing measures of mitigation and adaptation. In a way they take environmental justice more seriously than others. Despite the fact that their actions in the short run may have little impact on the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions they act as forerunners and good examples for other cities. However, climate change is only one among a multitude of challenges facing cities. Economic growth and the creation of new jobs is another challenge propelled by international competition. How do cities grapple with this dual challenge and what impact will different geographical settings have on the outcome?

Based on two Swedish case studies we bring to the fore local solutions to this dual challenge. The case studies reveal a lot of innovative capacity in combining climate mitigation and economic development. Local government cooperates with voluntary and business organisations, research institutes and private companies. At this level local or regional networks are mainly used for developing and commercializing climate friendly research or products, whereas in the trans-national networks exchanging experience and knowledge is more in focus. In one of the cases the city is very active in using its networks as platforms both for advertising climate friendly production and boosting itself as a forerunner in climate mitigation. The case studies show that local resources to some degree determine the way climate mitigation and climate friendly production are combined with growth strategies in the two cities, shaping climate policies.

Keywords: climate change, networks, Sweden, local government, economic growth