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Creating Ecological Citizenship

An Example of Voluntary Oil-Combating in Finland

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Author:
Riitta Ojala
Lund University
LUMES
Alakatu 6

39700 Parkano, Finland
E-mail: riitta.ojala.296@student.lu.se
Phone: +46 73 65 12 109

Supervisor:
Andrew Jamison
Aalborg University
Department of Development and Planning
Fibigerstraede 13
DK-9220 Aalborg, Denmark
E-mail: andy@plan.auc.dk
Phone: +45 96 35 84 21

ABSTRACT

Transferring the responsibility for the environment to individuals is an ongoing process that has its roots in the belief that a sustainable society can not be achieved without commitment of individuals in its creation. A rather new term that underlines the importance of this process is ecological citizenship. However, what ecological citizenship could mean in practice has remained rather unclear. Therefore this thesis is trying to illuminate this ongoing process and also one of the ways in which ecological citizenship could be practised. It focuses on the collective voluntary work for the environment from the point of view of individuals and their opportunities to carry it out in practice. As an example of this, individuals who are using the given opportunities and participating in collective environmental action and in this case being actively involved in WWF Finland's oil-combating group are analysed. Furthermore their conception of voluntary work, motives to do it and the relationship between organised volunteering and the other mundane environmental action is examined. This study is not able to identify a certain group of perfect ecological citizens. However, on one hand individuals, who personally want to take part in solving environmental problems not only by their everyday life choices but also by doing collective voluntary work, do exist. On the other hand, collective environmental work act as an initiative to environmentally responsible action in the other areas of life. It is also important that environmental organisations act as mediators and offer possibilities for individuals to participate. Moreover, there is a dream about an environmentally active citizen who is ready to do his bit for the environment, voluntarily. This study concludes that, collective voluntary action can be seen as one component of a broader cultural system of ecological citizenship, and therefore it can be considered to provide a sort of social feedback mechanism for dealing with environmental problems.

Keywords: *Ecological Citizenship, Voluntary Work, Environmental Organisation, Oil-Combating*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ESI	Environmental Sustainability Index
IAVE	The International Association for Volunteer Effort
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
MPK	Maanpuolustuskoulutus ry – Education Organisation of National Defence
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WWF	World Wild Fund for Nature

INTRODUCTION

Serious environmental problems do exist – that is a widely recognized fact – and that is a matter that concerns the entire humankind, and demands practical measures. That is why everyone is challenged to be environmentally responsible, including individual citizens. The environmental information campaigns have increased rapidly during the last few decades and also the values and attitudes of people show that they are more concerned about the environment (cf. Tulokas 1998 & 2000; Tanskanen 1997). This has not, however, led to a situation where all the people actually would behave according to their knowledge, values and responsibilities (*ibid.*). Neither have the environmental problems been solved by no means at full length at any level. Thus there is a gap in general between the rhetoric and practice, thinking and doing.

However, the challenge that is addressed to individuals is taken seriously. In similar way as sustainable development is geared towards propagation of ecological, social and economical responsibility both in time and space, the same is now done in the idea of citizenship. Indeed, the vision of ecological or environmental citizenship searches for a individual that is not only passive, though using his rights, but broadminded active citizen, who has more obligations than rights and the obligations are extended in space and time to include humans and non humans, in local and global levels, now and in the future (Dobson 2003).

The behaviour of individual citizens, for example mundane consumption, is nowadays seen more and more as a political issue. Moreover, citizens acting in the private sphere are not seen as powerless actors, but rather, the citizen's rise to power has been enforced by offering responsibility to them for example in the form of sustainable consumer options (cf. Ympäristöministeriö 2003). Although activities of an ecological citizen are quite often connected to sustainable consumption (cf. Seyfang 2004), the influence of a citizen in solving environmental problems is not limited to consumerism – everyday life is not restricted to consumption. Therefore, other options for an active citizen, in order to 'do something good for the environment' should also be evaluated. For that reason, this study concentrates not on ecological or sustainable consumerism, but on the possibilities offered by organized environmental voluntary work, also referred to in this study as eco-volunteering.

In this study eco-volunteering means that people consciously, at least in their opinion and within their own possibilities, are using the given opportunities to do one's bit for the environment. The empirical example of voluntary oil-combating that is used in this study is considered to be that kind of action, in other words eco-volunteering. The specific characteristics of this particular type of eco-volunteering is that, it is on one hand, organized and collective, and on the other hand the action does not require very much of commitment and it is not done on regular basis. And these are also the reasons why it is an interesting example of eco-volunteering from the point of view of an individual. Moreover, the interest increases, because this eco-volunteering is organized by a rather institutionalized and professional environmental organization, namely WWF. Therefore, it is interesting to know the importance of voluntary work for this kind of organization.

Something that brings together all the issues that has been mentioned in this introduction is the question of the time that we live now or the time that is now emerging. It is the time that has many names, such as post-modernity, post-industrial and reflexive modernity (Bauman 1996; Beck et al 1994). This time has been argued to be highlighted by increasing ecological crisis, decreasing amount of paid work, individualisation, globalisation and revolution of genders (Beck 2000).

OBJECTIVES

In large scale the main aim of the study is to analyse the environmental voluntary action from the point of view of an individual, and by using the ideas of environmental responsibility and ecological citizenship as a framework for this examination. The aim is also to connect the so called eco-volunteering into environmentally responsible lifestyle in general and to detect the links between the mundane lifestyle and collective eco-volunteering. Thus, voluntary action is tried to be seen as a component of a larger cultural system of ecological citizenship. Moreover, it is important to understand that the object of the study is in movement, thus the study is about a process; something that is occurring in the time that we live now.

There are two objectives through which the main aim is then reached. First one is to analyse the idea of ecological citizenship; why it is such a hot topic among environmental politics and whether it is possible to reach, and if it is, how could it happen. The second objective is to analyse the environmental voluntary action as part of being a green citizen. For this purpose, as an example, analysis of the action of a voluntary oil-combating group in Finland is used. Thus, in general, this paper tries to find out on what terms the ecological citizenship is possible, if at all, and what could be the role of collective voluntary action in the creation of it.

METHODS, MATERIAL AND LIMITATIONS

The research method used in this research is qualitative, however, some quantitative results are connected to for example the background of the volunteers. Qualitative research method as an approach for the study was chosen, because there already exist quite a lot quantitative results of the environmental attitudes and behaviour of Finnish people. Therefore the rehash of these results was thought to be unnecessary. Secondly, the whole research strategy is based on what Burgess (1982) calls *a multiple research strategy* (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 39). This means that different types of methods are used in the research and are then combined to complement each other (*ibid.*). Although multiple research strategy (or *triangulation*, cf. Yin 2003, 97) has been methodologically questioned, because it can be assumed to lead to conceptual confusion, acceptance of conflicts and non-theoretical publicity (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 71), it still can be seen as interesting and versatile way of gaining information of the subject.

The theoretical part is done by using books and scientific articles as sources of information. When choosing the literature that was used, the deciding factor was the issue that was dealt within the writings and not the discipline of them. However, rather a lot of the material comes from the branch of sociology. The theoretical part of the thesis looks into such changes in both society and the environment that has led to the creation of the idea of ecological citizenship. Moreover, voluntary action as a practical form of ecological citizenship is dealt with. Theoretical part is an important component of the study, because in it, the different theories are combined and the conceptions are defined.

Data that has been used in the empirical part of the study, i.e. the example of the voluntary oil-combating group, was collected from different sources. Out of the different methods, an online survey, group discussion, participatory observation and half-structured interview was used. First one, an online survey, was conducted for the volunteers that were going to take part in the oil-combating training weekend, called ÖLJY 2005, held in Porvoo, Finland during 16th and 18th of September 2005. This survey was conducted in order to get factual information on the background

of the volunteers; their conception about voluntary work in general, motives to participate in this action and actions of everyday life.

In practise, the online survey was created with software called Survey Monkey¹. The link to the internet page of the survey with a cover letter was sent via e-mail to all that were enrolled for the training. The list of e-mail addresses was gotten from WWF. This list of addresses, however, included also addresses of people who did not belong to the actual group organised by WWF, thus other people were also able to enrol for the training. Therefore, in the cover letter, it was emphasized that only those who belong to the WWF's voluntary oil-combating group, were supposed to answer. This was necessary, because before the training weekend there was no information on who of those enrolled belonged to the WWF's group and who, on the other hand, did not. The same survey was also delivered as a paper version in the beginning of the training to those, who did not have an e-mail address or to those who did not have the time to answers the survey before the training. There were in total 71 answers received, of which 62 were filled through the internet and nine on paper form. After the training weekend it was found out that the number of WWF's participants in the training was 70. Therefore, all of the ones that were sought after and one extra person (who wrote an e-mail saying that is not going to take part in the training, but belongs to the WWF's group) answered. The answer rate can be high partly because the first e-mail for the volunteers, which told about the research and the survey, was sent by WWF. However, not all the respondents answered to all the questions.

Second source of information about the voluntary group was gained by means of a group interview that took place during the training weekend in Porvoo. Group interviews are seen as a way to get information quickly from many respondents and also to gain collective view on the issue (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2003, 61-62) and that is the reason why group interview was decided to use in this study as well. It was also a rational way to conduct an interview in the training situation, where the respondents already were in the same place. The willingness to participate in this was already asked in the internet based survey, and the result of it indicated that many were ready to contribute to the study. However, in practise it was noted that the group interview was not that easy to arrange, because the schedule of the training was rather tight. Nevertheless, a suitable time and place was arranged, and 11 persons attended the interview. The interview was divided into themes that were delved into more or less one at a time. The duration of the interview was around one hour and fifteen minutes, which seemed to be the maximum time in that situation. Of the respondents two were men and the rest of them were women. The gender distribution was not tried to obtain with intention, however, it does not differ very much from the gender distribution of the whole group (70 per cent are women and 30 per cent are men). Age distribution of the respondents was rather comprehensive.

Thirdly, the empirical part of the study was done partly by making use of researcher's *personal engagement* (Jamison 2005) in what was studied. During the training weekend in Porvoo, *participant-observation* (cf. Yin 2003, 93-96) was a used as a way to gain insight into the concrete action of the group. The drawbacks of the method are quite obvious. From these the difficult double-role of the investigator, i.e. being at the same time an observer and a participant caused some difficulties. Another minus point was that while being actively involved in the action, the time left for observation, every now and then, shrank to almost nothing. Regardless of the minus points

¹ For more information about Survey Monkey, see web page www.surveymonkey.com

of the method, information that could not have been achieved in any other way was gotten hold of by being a *fly on the wall*.

Perhaps here it is good to mention some of the motives that influenced when choosing the topic of the research. I have not been actively taken part of any of so called environmental stewardship programs before; nevertheless, I can not say that my attitude towards the collective environmental action would be neutral. Moreover, I can not say that I would not consider the oil accidents important environmental problems; they are after all, reported in attention-grabbing and fascinating way in the in the public eye. In a way or another, I feel sympathy for the people who give their time for practical environmental work and are not content to be passive members of an environmental organization who only pay the membership fee. Or perhaps are looking something beyond rushing from home to work and shop and then back home again. On the other hand, as personally being someone who is more of an environmental actor in the private everyday life, the collective doing is strange in appearance. Therefore it is rather interesting also personally to study the motives and the role of collective voluntary action in life of individuals.

Fourthly, in order to gain the perspective of the organiser, a semi-structured interview with the protection coordinator of WWF Finland Jari Luukkonen was conducted. The mode of the interview allowed the interview to be as much of questions and answers as discussion – finding the questions in the actual situation. The focus on the interview however was on few themes; voluntary work in general in WWF, the importance of voluntary work, oil-combating as one form of voluntary work and its importance. In addition, personal communications in form of informal discussion were held during the training weekend, both with the volunteers as with the representatives of the organising quarter, as an example a fire chief and people from Maanpuolustuskoulu ry (MPK).

The language that was used in the data collection was Finnish and it was the most natural option, since everyone involved in the survey and interviews were Finnish-speaking. The material gathered was later translated from Finnish into English by the author, and as always when translating, nuances of the language used could have disappeared and some translation errors could have happened.

PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This study has been divided into six main sections. The first one here is the introductory part that gives the point of departure for the whole study. The second and the third section construct the theoretical part. The purpose of these sections is to make a foundation for the empirical part of the study that will follow. Moreover, it tries to place the concept of ecological citizenship into larger system dealing with environmental change. The theoretical framework consists of combining into a coherent whole the cluster of ideas that are dealt within the study – the new environmental agenda, ecological citizenship and voluntary action – through the links that are post-modern time and sustainable society. The fourth part is the empirical part, which gives an example of collective voluntary action carried out by the WWF Finland's voluntary oil-combating group. In this section the results of the empirical work are presented and also analysed. These include the action of the group, the meaningfulness of it from the point of view of the volunteers and the organising quarter. The fifth part is the discussion, where the results of the study are discussed in the relation to the objectives of the study. The sixth part concludes the study.

NEW ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

This chapter delves into those changes that have brought about the concept of ecological citizenship – the concept that is tried to be located in this study. Thus, the development of ecological citizenship is here put into a kind of a historical perspective, and this is done by examining the changes in the relationship between society and the environment. The term sustainable development was launched for the first time already almost twenty years ago, and a lot have happened after that. The concept of sustainable development has been supplemented with other concepts, such as ecological modernisation and reflexive modernisation. They are referred to, when action for the environment in the level of an individual or the whole humankind is searched for. That is why it is relevant at this point to present these concepts and indicate how they differ from each other. This is meaningful to do, as will be noticed later, when the ecological citizenship comes under discussion in the third chapter of this study.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS BECOME PART OF THE SOCIETY

The environment has gone through changes that have affected the way in which the environment is perceived nowadays. According to Giddens (1994a, 77) nature has gone through such a complete human intervention and socialization, that we have started to speak about the environment instead of nature. Similarly as the nature has been socialized, also the environmental problems have become part of the social discussion. Environmental problems can be defined as consequences of such changes in the environment that in the last analysis threaten the productivity of the nature and the health and welfare of people (Haila & Levins 1992, 295). Accordingly, although the environmental problems have an objective background that is based on the factual information of the changes in the environment, these facts themselves do not create a social environmental problem, but the changes have to be interpreted and defined as problems by someone (Carolan 2004, 498).

The problems that have been under the discussion have, however, differed over the decades. Starting from chemical pesticides, that came into the international discussion in the 1960's, followed by discussion about resource and energy crisis and then opposition to nuclear weapons and nuclear power, global environmental problems in the end of the 1980's and biodiversity in the 1990's, the discussion has been waving forwards (Rannikko 1995, 66).

The fact that the environmental problems have become important issues and part of the social discussion, have made many to think about the reasons for that. For example Göran Sundqvist has been reflecting on the reasons for why environmental problems actually have attracted so much interest in the society during the last few decades. He has arrived to a conclusion that there are four of them:

1. Firstly, it is simply the question of environmental problems themselves; they really have become a more serious threat;
2. Secondly, the question is not necessarily about the seriousness of the environmental problems themselves, but the increasing knowledge about the environmental problems have increased the consciousness about them in general;
3. Thirdly, the changes in the environment have been started be related to other threats that exist and these have been increasingly since the 1960s spread for example through public media, that handles the environmental problems threats or risks;

4. Fourthly, the interest in the environmental questions is connected to economic prosperity. Thus, the interest in environmental issues rises when the people have reached a certain level of economic prosperity (cf. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs²). (Sundqvist 1991, 2-3).

Thus, the environmental problems are constructed both in the environment and also in the mind-sets and behaviour of people. Although all of these seem to be reasonable explanations, however, in a way they are too simplistic and partly contradictory (Sundqvist, 1991, 3-4). Moreover, concerning the third reason that he mentions, perhaps it is good to remind that there are also other actors that participate in the process of defining the problems. These are for example researchers, environmental movements, politicians, citizens and public decision making bodies (Rannikko 1995, 66). However, it should be remembered, that the changes in the environment are not necessarily reflected to the action in the society, and then again, that if environmental problems become socially invisible, they would not exist in the environment (Väliverronen 1996, 39-40). Nevertheless, the socialization of the environmental problems is important, because it means that then the environmental problems are connected to the social context, and also to the life of individuals (Haila 1991, 60-62).

FROM SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP

Sustainable development as term was brought out into the open³ in the final report of the UN Commission on Environment and Development, entitled as Our Common future, or perhaps better known as the Brundtland Report. It provided for sustainable development as a solution to the problems of the economic growth and environment, and as often quoted "*ability to make development sustainable - to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" is seen as the main message of the report (WCED 1987, 8). Moreover, according to Allardt (1991, 12), sustainable development is in particular a critical concept concerning the state of the nature and therefore the environmental degradation and its reduction play a central role in it. The aim of sustainable development then became more or less a compromise between its three dimensions - economically efficient, ecologically sound and socially adequate development – here and elsewhere, now and later (Hakala & Välimäki 2003, 236-237).

The guidelines of sustainable development were dealt with internationally and countries committed to them in the highest political level in the UN conference in Rio de Janeiro 1992. Goals of sustainable development have been defined in short and long terms (Kates et al 2005, 12-13). These are the goals of Millennium Development Declaration, Sustainability Transition and Great Transition, and these goals have either very specific or vague targets (*ibid.*) However, as it has been noticed, the ecological sustainability is difficult to plan in general level; therefore the aim of sustainable development should be specified in local level. In order to do this, Agenda 21 programme that deals with implementing sustainable development in national and local level was approved in the same conference (Kates et al. 2005, 32). In national level, for example in Finland, the government's programme for sustainable development was published in 1995 and it is fostering the ecological sustainability and creating possibilities for economical and social to support it. In

² According to A. H. Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of human needs, if the needs in the lower level of the hierarchy of needs (i.e. basic needs) are not satisfied then the satisfaction of the needs in the higher level (Glaeser 1997, 108).

³ Before that it was already mentioned in 1980 World Conservation Strategy of IUCN - The World Conservation Union (Kates et al. 2005:10). The strategy was done in collaboration with UNEP and WWF.

order to foster the ecological sustainability, important issues concerning an individual have been brought up in the programme. Those have been for example the need to change the production and consumption less environmentally degradable and also to increase the environmentally sound choices (Ympäristöministeriö 2003).

At local level, one part of the Agenda 21 Programme that has been used is chapter 28 of it, namely the *Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21*. In this chapter the Local Agenda 21 (LA21) is called for, because “*Local authorities [...] as the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development*” (UN 1992, chapter 28). In Finland, the LA21 has gained a lot of interest within the municipalities, which are considered to be the main actors in achieving sustainable development at local level in Finland (Niemi-Iilahti 2001, 40). Result of that, in 1999 LA21 had been initiated in around two thirds of the municipalities and around one fourth was going to do it in the near future (*ibid.*). However, despite the many attempts to implement LA21 in the Finnish municipalities, according to Niemi-Iilahti (2000, 53-56), the implementation is still in progress and therefore, the main results of the effort to engage citizens in pursuit of sustainable society, are going to be seen in the future.

Sustainable development has also come under strong criticism. Some have claimed that sustainable development has become *an oxymoron*, some kind of window dressing to different kinds of activities, even for those without any environmental or social targets (Kates et al. 2005, 20). As a consequence of this, finding solutions to environmental problems through sustainable development becomes more difficult in practice, because it is used in different ways by different actors. In the Finnish discussion about sustainable development there are different opinions about the meaningfulness of sustainable development. For example Massa (1994, 93) writes that there is a lot talk about sustainable development, however in reality, the economic policy is still working as before, thus in the illusion of eternal economic growth. On the other hand, it could be argued that idea of sustainable development has already taken root in Finland, and therefore it is going to be also permanent. However, the results of Finland's ecological sustainability are two-sided; while on one hand Finland took the first place in ESI⁴ 2005 (Esty et al. 2005), on the other hand, the ecological footprint of Finland was the 6th biggest in the world in 2001 (Wagernackel et al. 2005).

Concept of *ecological modernization* is quite closely related to sustainable development, and has gained foothold as one of the solutions to solve environmental problems (Carter 2001, 195). This rather optimistic way of trying to perceive the relations between economy, environment and politics, was originally developed by Joseph Huber, and has gained interest mainly in western societies since 1980's (Cohen 1997). In large scale, ecological modernisation has been used to cover nearly everything in the environmental discussion, and it has been connected to idea of enlightenment, where people can change the society with their imagination, rationality and technology (Jokinen 1995, 57-59). However, according to narrower interpretation it deals only with production and the changes in it (*ibid.*). Thus, ecological modernization can be defined in different ways, however essential to all of them is, on contrary to more radical environmental ideology, that environmental problems can be solved by putting the production go through so called *super-industrialization*, which basically means the use of more efficient and cleaner technology in order to reach ecological direction (*ibid.* 109). Moreover, using pre-cautionary principle, internalising environmental responsibility in organisations and strict governmental regulations to promote

⁴ ESI – Environmental Sustainability Index – ranked 146 countries on 21 elements of environmental sustainability. Index was produced by experts at Yale and Columbia Universities (Esty et al. 2005).

environmentally sound innovations are seen as means to solve environmental problems (*ibid.*). Additionally, the basic idea of ecological modernisation is that the so called win-win situation between economic growth and environment is possible, and it can be achieved with the currently existing institutions (Jokinen 1995, 53). This on the other hand not necessarily could be possible in the frame of sustainable development.

As ecological modernisation stresses the role of technology more than the role of organisational learning capacity, almost naturally, the criticism that ecological modernisation has gotten has to do with its vision about rather production concentrated solutions (Cohen 1997). Also its rather Western European point of view, and that it is rather ambiguous and open to interpretation has produced criticism (Tirkkonen 2000, 43-35). However, the ecological modernisation has gained interest, and in practice there are concepts that are derived from it. One of them could be for example eco-efficiency (*ibid.*). As a conclusion, ecological modernisation is an attempt to, in a way, reach the sustainable development according to the needs of industrial societies, contrary to sustainable development, that is more concentrated to reach the sustainability through local level solutions.

Thus, there are some differences between these two above mentioned concepts. However, the role of an individual in solving environmental problems has remained as a side issue in both of them. Nevertheless, what is important to emphasize in this study, is the central role that individuals have in the process of achieving sustainable society. Therefore, in addition to these two concepts, it is interesting to bring up the concept of *reflexive modernisation* (Beck et al. 1994).

To start with, Beck (1992) has criticised the inability of the industrial society to see the ecological aspects. However, according to him, the awakening to reality has happened through the large environmental accidents, such as the nuclear plant accident of Chernobyl (*ibid.*). According to him, as a result, there has been a shift from *industrial* to *risk society* and from *simple* to *reflexive modernity* (Beck et al. 1994, 28-29). The risks, according to him, are resulting from the technical and economical decisions that are concerning large groups of people, and therefore the origin of the risks is the society itself (Beck et al. 1994, 8). Thus, we live in a risk society. On one hand, risk society creates quite gloomy picture of the world, where everything is possible, especially realization of risks. On the other hand, according to Beck (1994) living in the risk society calls for re-definition the situation, in which the western industrialized society is at the moment. He sees the situation to be *reflexive modernisation* and by that he means, that the industrial society needs “*first the disembedding and second the re-embedding of industrial social forms by another modernity*” (Beck et al. 1994, 2). And in the reflexive society, there is also the silver lining of the issue. That is that, individuals, both individually and collectively, have a possibility to change the direction of the development and bring the situation under control, at least in the local level, by actively taking measures in their private and every day life (Beck et al. 1994: vii). Thus, reflexive modernisation is searching for active individuals that can be in the context of environmental issue be connected to both environmental activists, that are in a way or another attached to organized activity and also to normal citizens that can be participating also in their mundane life.

ENVIRONMENT AND INDIVIDUAL

At the same time, on one hand, environmental problems have actually come closer to everyday life of people. For example excessive amounts of nutrients could have changed the water in the well to non-drinkable or caused toxic algae blooms in the lake nearby, and thus made it not suitable for swimming. Also pesticide residues in nourishment have brought the environmental problems

literally on the kitchen table. Environmental problems have come closer also in form of increasing amount of information about them. It is nowadays almost impossible to avoid information concerning the environment. Therefore the awareness of environmental problems has increased and also changed the way how people see the environment and the changes in it (Brandt 1997). Moreover, as Jamison (2001, 168) states “*An ecological consciousness, we might say, is in the process of being internalized into our cultures and personalities*”. And indeed, protection of the environment has already lost its novelty and become part of mundane living. The ecological choices have become so myriad that the *personal environmentalism*, as Jamison (2001, 168) calls it, has become more difficult. On the other hand, environmental problems have drifted away from the everyday life. Problems have become more complex and they have global dimensions. Also the information that is available on these issues is characterized by contradictory. This is the true for example in case of climate change; its existence and the causes and consequences of it.

The so called greening or ecological consciousness seemingly has become more common in all spheres of society, not only as far as individuals are concerned. Sustainable development as a term flashes in political documents, newspapers, environmental policies of industry and in everyday life talk. Thus all the different squatters of the society swear by the name of sustainability and environmental action. No one even dares to say that they are not environmentally responsible. Despite of all this, environmental problems seem not to be vanishing. Moreover, the situation could be described as Konttinen et al. (1999, 15) has that in the situation where everyone is green, no one is green. This kind of saturation of environmental information therefore could even cause a backlash towards environmental responsibility. Massa (2001) has been talking about similar situation, and calls the backlash as *quilt shield* (own translation), meaning a situation where a human builds this kind of shield to protect the customary lifestyle from environmental politics separate from the normal lifestyle (Massa & Haverinen 2001, 22).

Thus, the environmental problems have become social, and as a consequence some kind of environmental responsibility has been started to be required from individuals. The attitudes towards the environment have been studied quite a lot in Finland and they show that Finns are very concerned about the state of the environment (Tulokas 1998 & 2000; Tanskanen 1997). Moreover, according to Tanskanen (1997) the concern about the environment has increased also internationally, and in the 21 countries that were included in his study, 80-90 per cent of the people were in some level concerned (*ibid.* 44-45). In Finland the concern about the environment varies according to the spatial level of problems. In the local level, people are most concerned about littering and quality of the water in the lakes and rivers (Tulokas 2002, 65). In general, Finns are more worried about the national and global environmental problems, than the problems in the area where they live (Tulokas 2002, 18). However, the concern about the local level problems increases the higher the population density is in the area, in other words, the concerns are higher in the cities than in the sparsely populated areas (*ibid.* 21). In the national level people are the most concerned about the oil accidents, air pollution, consequences of the pollutions to human health and nuclear and hazardous waste (Tulokas 2002, 65). Furthermore, in the global level the Finns are the most worried about the degradation of the forest resources, risks of the nuclear plants and extinction of plant and animal species (*ibid.*). The dimensions of sustainable development in the order of importance are ecological sustainability, economical sustainability and social sustainability (*ibid.* 27). Finns are less than average worried about the environmental problems and less ready to make commitments or sacrifices for the environment, although the knowledge about the environmental issues is relatively good (*ibid.*). However, as already mentioned above, despite the fact that there is

a lot of information available there is gap between the environmental knowledge and even consciousness and environmental behaviour.

As a conclusion, Finns do think that environmental protection is important (Tulokas 2002, 13). Although the knowledge about the environment has increased, the knowledge about the driving forces behind the environmental problems is still rather small (*ibid.*). Moreover, although the environmental issues have become part of everyday life, they are still rather vague for some of the people (Tulokas 2002, 29). Furthermore, environmental protection is less visible in the everyday life action than could be assumed on the grounds of the environmental consciousness, concern and knowledge (*ibid.*). This could be, on one hand, because many think that the environmental protection is something that is supposed to be done by the government rather than by an individual citizen, on the other hand, the personal work can seem to be unimportant, because the environmental problems are regarded to be very big and therefore the importance of an individual very little (*ibid.* 36). Moreover, individual advantages are for the so called free-riding; one can enjoy the common goods without taking part in their promotion (*ibid.*). Free-riding can be detected for example then when the environmental protection would demand spending more money or time and effort (*ibid.*). The connection between the information about the environmental issues and environmental responsibility has been also studied, and for example Brand (1997) has come to a solution that information not necessarily leads to actions that are environmentally responsible. The common belief that if someone has a lot of environmental knowledge would automatically lead to environmental consciousness and accordingly to environmental behaviour is according to Brand (1997, 206), not correct. In his text he refers to empirical studies that have been made, and those found almost no correlation what so ever between these three factors (*ibid.*). In general, according to Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002, 240) there is no ultimate answer for the question why there is a gap between the environmental knowledge, awareness and pro-environmental action. Furthermore, pro-environmental behaviour consist of a complex fusion of factors having influence, whether promoting or hindering pro-environmental behaviour, “*such as demographic factors, external factors (e.g. institutional, economic, social and cultural) and internal factors (e.g. motivation, pro-environmental knowledge, awareness, values, attitudes, emotion, locus of control, responsibilities and priorities)*” (*ibid.* 239).

ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP AND VOLUNTARY WORK

In the time that we live now, in many writings about it, individual and his choices are brought to the discussion. This has been noticed also already in this thesis. In addition to this, for example Zygmunt Bauman (1996, 43) draws attention to the post modernity and its call for ethical choices, morality and responsibility of individual. These, according to him, were taken away from individual by modernity. However, according to him, also post modernity is taking away something that was promised by modernity, namely the protection through the universal guiding principles. As a consequence, people have to form their ethical statements by themselves. Thus, everything is possible in post modern world that is not guided by any principles. He calls this an *ethical paradox* of the post modernity (*ibid.*). These changes appear in lives of people as uncertainty and problems that do not have the right solutions (*ibid.*). Similar ideas that Bauman has, are shared by Anthony Giddens (1991&1994a). He talks not about post-modernity, but about *radical modern* and the risks and the distressing influence that it has on people. He similarly sees that especially environmental problems bring about the link between the actions of individual and global problems, thus he underlines the global consequences of individual action (Giddens 1994a, 57-58). Consequently, the actions of individuals become more meaningful and influential. In practice, in the life of an individual this could mean for example changing a car ride to cycling. Giddens on his behalf sees the society of today as a *post-traditional* society (Giddens 1994a). According to him, the kind of modern traditions that in the modern society brought the permanence to it are now crumbled away (*ibid.*). These traditions had to do with for example religion and family. The reasons behind the breakage he regards to be the increasing interaction, new media and means of communications (*ibid.*).

Environment is an important element in the choices of individual. Changes in environment force people to make different solutions to the questions that are dealing with different areas of life; such as possibilities and human relationships. Ecological citizenship deals with these issues. Thus, this chapter generates the idea that ecological citizenship can be seen as a broader cultural concept and moreover, voluntary action as part of.

THE ESSENCE OF ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP

Lately there has been an aspiration to connect the concept of citizenship with ecological thinking and as a conclusion some people have arrived to develop a new concept of citizenship, namely the ecological citizenship (Smith 1998; Barry 1999; Dobson 2003). Citizenship can be comprehended “*as the mediating practice that connects the individual and the institutional levels of the society*” (Barry 1999, 228). Thus, that makes ecological citizenship to be an interesting topic, since it has been widely noticed that a sustainable society cannot be achieved only by institutional changes, but also the commitment of individuals is needed in it (Carter 2001, 293). Moreover, if we take into account what has been introduced as the goals of sustainable development, and if the concept of ecological citizenship is tried then to be combined with it, as a result there are new demands for the definition of citizenship. This has been pointed out also by Dobson, who however, does not think that ecological citizenship would be the only solution to achieve sustainable society, yet, he regards that it should be examined more, because many citizenship sounding issues has been raised among ecological politics (Dobson 2003, 4). And while the environmental problems have become part of the society and intruded also the sphere of a citizen, the ideas of ecological citizenship have gained interest in different levels of society. Therefore also the idea of citizenship has to be converted to the current situation. It should be mentioned that the concept of ecological citizenship is not such a difficult as it sometimes is seems to be. Basically ecological citizenship is about combining the

concepts of environmental responsibility and sustainable development in to the one of citizenship, and to see what is needed to clue these together.

Andrew Dobson is a person that perhaps the most has been evolving the theory of ecological citizenship. He has been discussing about the idea of ecological citizenship in relation to the traditional ways to define citizenship (Dobson, 2003). He sees that the old versions, liberal and civic republican traditions of citizenship are not applicable in the situation where the environment is included in the picture. Therefore, he has developed the idea of citizenship further and he sees rise of a new for of citizenship, what he calls as post-cosmopolitan citizenship, as a applicable one and he sees the ecological citizenship as an example of that type of citizenship (Dobson 2003, 33).

Traditionally, the debate around citizenship has culminated in the passive and active rights and obligations that a citizen has in relation to the state. Ecological citizenship emphasizes the latter ones, thus the duties and responsibilities that we have as humans, and moreover, the expansion of them towards the existing and future generations, both humans and non-humans, here and elsewhere (Dobson 2003). And as Dobson (2003, 106) puts it “*ecological citizenship is a citizenship of strangers [...] not only towards each other, but to each other’s place, and even time [...] the obligation of ecological citizen extend through time as well as space, towards generations yet to be born*”.⁵ This symbolizes the union of ecological citizenship and sustainable development, in regards to the obligations to the future generations. Moreover, the responsibilities of an ecological citizen are considered to go beyond the formal political realm, therefore also actions such as waste recycling and environmentally responsible consumption are part of activities of an ecological citizen (Barry 1999, 231). Thus, this means that although Barry (1999, 65-67) thinks that there is a difference between a person as a citizen and as a consumer, he however, regards the consumption as part of the realm of a citizen.

Similarly, traditionally citizenship has been regarded to be connected to the context of nation-states. Moreover, citizenship usually begins with resolving the membership in a nation-state (Janoski 1998, 9). However, globalisation has been deteriorating the power of nation-states (Harju 2003, 92), and as has been noticed already above, the environmental problems are not restricted to the boundaries of nation states. Therefore “*the space of ecological citizenship is [...] not something that given by the boundaries of nation-states or supranational organizations such as EU [...] it is rather produced by the metabolic and material relationship of individual people with their environment*” (Dobson 2003, 106). While the actual action is not possible to be done globally, therefore the green slogan ‘think globally, act locally’ is meaningful to connect to the idea of ecological citizenship. Consequently, Dobson connects the ecological citizenship to ecological footprint and regards the ultimate goal of an ecological citizenship to be the minimizing the size of their ecological footprint (Dobson 2003, 106). Thus, also the idea of environmental justice is subsequently brought to the picture.

Dobson (2003) regards ecological citizenship to be very much an anthropocentric notion, and moreover, he sees no need to assess the relationship between human and other species in ecocentric terms. Therefore, the realization of ecological citizenship would not necessarily need that many changes in the behaviour of individuals. However, according to Mark J. Smith ecological

⁵ Also according to Mark J. Smith (1998:98-99), ecological citizenship is passes beyond the bounds of traditional way of seeing citizenship. He regards the ecological citizenship breaks the boundaries between entitlements and obligations, the action in private and public sphere and also between the species (*ibid.*). Moreover, he sees important to reassess the obligations, because in the risk society that we live, the uncertainty and interconnectedness demands it (*ibid.*)

citizenship and the obligations of it requires ecocentrism in their achievement, and he affirms that the “*transformation from an anthropocentric to ecocentric relationship between society and nature would involve significant shifts in human assumptions, behaviour and institutional structures*” (Smith 1998, 99-100). Barry (1999, 231) points out that, the expansion of the responsibilities towards non-humans and those not reachable, does not imply that the interests of the non-humans and others should be actively endorsed, yet, it means that the interests of theirs should be taken into account when considering and justifying one’s own interests.

Important in the creation of ecological citizenship are also activity and participation. It is meaningful to emphasize the role of an active citizen in regard to ecological citizenship, and to state that ecological citizenship is created by acting. Therefore, citizenship is considered as a role, and in order to maintain and develop the role one has to work for it constantly, more than if the emphasis would be on the obligations and rights that have been defined through laws (Harju 2003, 92-93). Besides being active, citizenship is also created through participation. Participation can be regarded as wide activity in the society (Harju 2003, 96). Participation, however, is nowadays more of just taking part in the activities than actually having an influence (*ibid.*). Moreover, especially the participation of young people is characterized by lightness and loose activities (*ibid.*). Some people, however, spend their time by doing something for the environment; thus behaving pro-environmentally. The action of an ecological citizen can be practised in many ways. In the following chapter one of the possibilities to practice ecological citizenship is dealt with. This is voluntary work.

A WAY TO CREATE ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP – VOLUNTARY WORK

International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)⁶ has made an international declaration of voluntary work and it has been approved in Amsterdam in 2001. It begins like this:

Volunteering is a fundamental building block of civil society. It brings to life the noblest aspirations of humankind - the pursuit of peace, freedom, opportunity, safety, and justice for all people. In this era of globalization and continuous change, the world is becoming smaller, more interdependent, and more complex. Volunteering - either through individual or group action - is a way in which:

- *human values of community, caring, and serving can be sustained and strengthened;*
- *individuals can exercise their rights and responsibilities as members of communities, while learning and growing throughout their lives, realizing their full human potential; and,*
- *connections can be made across differences that push us apart so that we can live together in healthy, sustainable communities, working together to provide innovative solutions to our shared challenges and to shape our collective destinies.*

⁶ “The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) is an international non-governmental organization that promotes, celebrates, and strengthens volunteerism worldwide. IAVE has individual and organizational members in some 80 countries around the world.” (<http://www.iave.org/about.cfm>).

At the dawn of the new millennium, volunteering is an essential element of all societies. It turns into practical, effective action the declaration of the United Nations that "We, the Peoples" have the power to change the world.
(IAVE, 2001).

This declaration thus exceedingly emphasizes thus the role of volunteering can be considered as an essential part of the role of an active citizen. Also on a smaller scale, environmentally active citizen can increase his possibilities to have an influence through volunteering. Voluntary action is sometimes also considered to be *"the way in which, by changing their lifestyles, most individuals can make a contribution sustainable society"* (Carter 2001, 293). There are many options for an ecological citizen to choose the voluntary activities from. One can engage in a wide range of voluntary activities, including green consumerism, recycling, ethical investment and voluntary conservation work. From the point of view of this study, however, the interest is on the organised and collective voluntary work. Therefore, this action is dealt more with.

First the term voluntary work itself has to be clarified. In general voluntary work emphasizes the role of an individual (Koskiahho 2001, 16). However, the volunteering definition of voluntary work is not otherwise that simple. When starting to think about the concept, and then trying to imagine and describe what voluntary work is, one will become aware of the fact that the answer is not straightforward. For someone the first image coming to mind might be a person that is standing at the corner and raising funds for 'something good' or collecting signatures for a petition. For someone else it might be an image of an organisation working in an area ravaged by catastrophe and helping in reconstruction. And to the third person it might be a blood donor. In short, there will be different reflections and pictures crossing one's mind about the work itself and about the one's that are doing it. Also various familiar organisations may come to mind. Moreover, these pictures are then connected with one's own experiences. These images are obviously all correct and thus create a personal description of voluntary work.

Therefore it is no wonder that there is diversity in how the voluntary work is defined and what is counted to be voluntary work. However, what voluntary work most often is about can be defined with two words: unpaid and voluntary (Yeung 2002, 11). Thus, in contrast to work done in the job market, voluntary work is unpaid, and in contrast to housework, it is freely taken (Wilson & Musick 1997). Voluntary work is considered to be the opposite of the action of the state and other officials (Koskiahho 2001, 16). Sometimes, volunteers get education and supervision; however, real salaries or monetary rewards are not paid. It is good to keep in mind, that there are different forms of voluntary work, and voluntary work can be divided into organised and unorganised or formal and informal (Wilson & Musick 1997). The latter ones are meaning e.g. helping friends and relatives. One more issue that characterizes volunteering is that, professional skills are not supposed to be required, thus a willingness to do should be enough. Organizers can give education for the work, however, that does not make volunteers to become professionals – they rather get tools to work as volunteers (Vapaaehtoistyön koulutuskansio 1996). Thus, in general, voluntary work is unpaid, and something that an individual is doing the work on one's own volition to participate to action that done for the common good.

An individual motivation is the keystone that allows the realization and continuation of voluntary work (Yeung 2004, 21). Thus, motivation is an important aspect in voluntary action. Therefore also motivations of voluntary oil-combaters are looked for in this study. Motivation has to do with the reasons of action, which then are also connected to the goal of the action, thus what can be achieved (e.g. Maslow 1943). Gisela Jacob (1993) has defined five types of voluntary work according to the motives that the volunteers have:

1. Service and complement of the responsibility;
2. Carving out a career;
3. Looking for the biographical orientation;
4. Realizing the essential themes of life through volunteering;
5. Volunteering marginally (reviewed by Matthies 1994, 53-56).

These types are mostly self-explanatory. However, the third one, “looking for the biographical orientation” has to be explained a little. Jacob (1993) described all these types by using one or two people of this type as an example. In the case of people looking for a biographical orientation, she used as one example a man who is trying to mend his new manly bearing after loosing his sight in an accident by volunteering in different organisations and thus trying to find a new identity (reviewed by Matthies 1994, 53-56).

Terms volunteering, voluntary work and voluntary action have already above been used to stand for the same phenomenon and this practise will continue throughout this study. Thus, voluntary action and voluntary work are used as synonyms for each other. However, it is good to point out that sometimes voluntary action is considered to be the concrete work that individuals and groups are doing and voluntary action, on the other hand, is seen as the activities done by the quarter organising that action (Koskiaho 2001, 16).

To connect voluntary work to ecological citizenship is not very difficult. As ecological citizenship looking for an active and environmentally responsible citizen, ecological volunteering seems to be one of the ways to carry it out in practise. Moreover, the arena where the voluntary work is done, the third sector, is seen as “*positive field of freedom, where active citizens have opportunities for participation, self-realization, being initiative, and interacting with each other*” (Pohjola 2000, 44).

VOLUNTARY WORK FROM FINNISH PERSPECTIVE

There are some special characteristics in the Finnish voluntary sector⁷. The interest in voluntary work research rose in the wake of third sector research in the mid 1990's. While the welfare state's ability to take care of the all its tasks was decreasing, eyes were turned into the third sector and the voluntary work done there (Helander 1998, 15). The interest in the voluntary sector and voluntary work has been twofold; firstly, unlike in other European and even Nordic countries, the interest has been on the structural point of view, hence the economic and employing dimensions of the sector (Helander 1998:15; Harju 2003, 119); secondly, the emphasis has been on the individual level of the voluntary action, then for example the motives and commitment of the volunteers has been dealt with (Harju 2003, 119).

⁷ Other terms that are used along with voluntary work sector, are for example third sector, civic sector, non profit sector, informal sector, alternative society (even civil society) (Harju 2003; Matthies 2000, 210). However civil society is usually used as a term that includes voluntary work, third sector and social movements (Koskiaho 2000, 17).

Finns participate in voluntary action rather actively. This appears from Yeung’s exhaustive study of voluntary action in Finland that was made in UN’s international year of volunteers in 2001 (Yeung 2002). According to the study, almost two fifths of the population (15-74 years old) took part in some voluntary action, moreover, they spend on the average close to 18 hours a month volunteering during the years 2000 and 2001 (Yeung, 2002, 24-25). The people who participated in voluntary action were almost equally from both genders and also from different age groups (*ibid.* 24-26). Moreover, half of those people who have not been volunteering would participate if asked (*ibid.* 46). In southern Finland voluntary work is seen more as a specific target or generally good issue, while in the other parts visions are more to do with the unpaid character of the voluntary work (*ibid.* 20). Moreover, the most common motive for volunteering in Finland is willingness to help (Yeung 2002).

Thus, Finns participate and are interested in voluntary work. However, it is important to notice that there are great differences in the participation activity in different sectors. Figure 1 below shows this. The top three areas in which the Finns volunteer the most are connected with sports, health and social services and education of children and young. The sectors that Finns the least participate are the ones related to environmental and animal protection, nature conservation and refugee activities and ethnic associations. It should also be noticed that participation is overlapping; one person can be participating more than in only one sector (Yeung 2002).

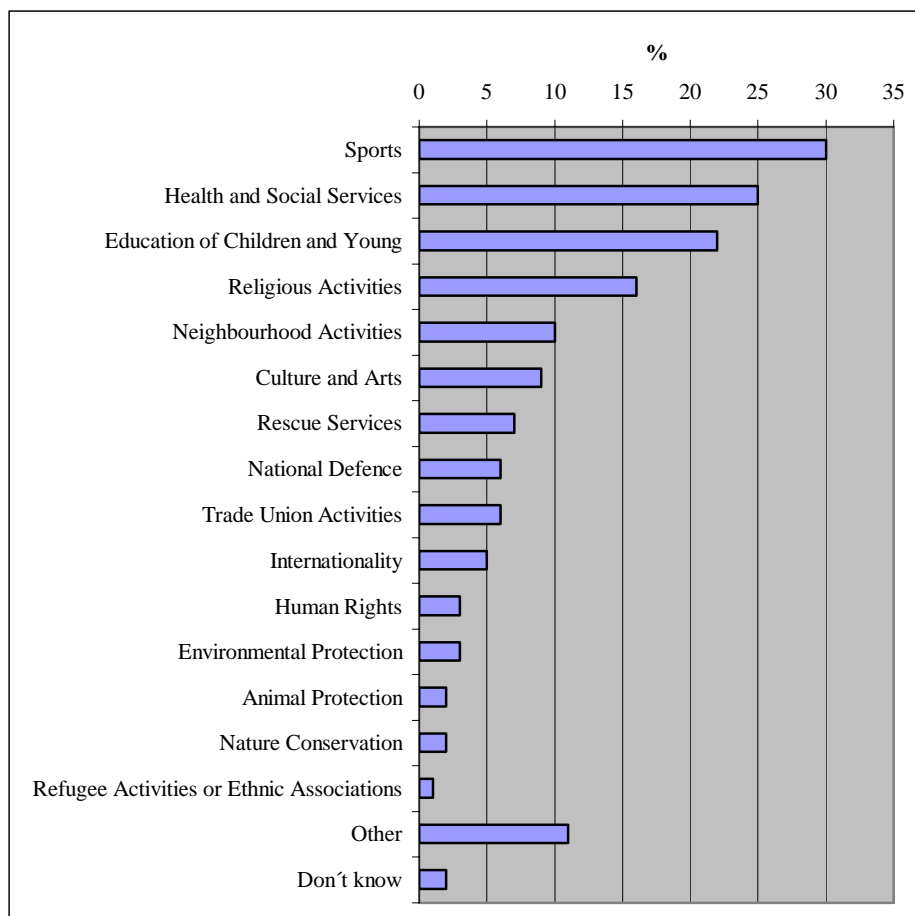


Figure 1. Participation in different voluntary activities in Finland in 2001 (Yeung, 2001: appendix 3).

Thus, voluntary action is an important part of the Finnish third sector and civil society. However, voluntary sector is in a way underemployed – as was stated above, more people are interested to participate than are participating now (Yeung 2002). Volunteers are also of importance to organisations. As Heinänen (2001, 7) has condensed it: “*Volunteers are a treasure and resource of an organisation, a radiant addition to the image, and a credible element*” (own translation, quoted by Harju 2003, 123). As in many other countries, also in Finland voluntary work is seen positive in general and principles of voluntary work include among others reciprocity, common happiness, equality, voluntary, unpaid unprofessional and confidentiality (Yeung 2002, 11).

The changes of the post modern or post traditional society are regarded to be seen also in voluntary work. The new characteristic of the voluntary work are considered as exchange system of help and responsibility, in which the knowledge, experiences and services are exchanged (Matthies 1994, 32). Also the voluntary work that is tied up in for example to religion and ideological activities is regarded to come to an end (*ibid.*). However, there is no answer to the question how is the voluntary work going to be like in the future, therefore there is only consensus about the instability of the continuation and quality of it (Matthies 1994, 33). However, one of the main characters according to Giddens (1991) in the post traditional society is that ‘*everything is possible*’, therefore also the possibility that the voluntary work could in appear in any form also in the future, is not impossible. Moreover, according to Harju (2003, 123), the contribution of the volunteers to civic activity is going to be needed also in the future, and therefore it is not probable that the importance of voluntary work is not going to diminish.

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS – SETTING FOR VOLUNTARY WORK

Because this study uses as an example the action of an oil-combating group that is part of the action of an environmental organisation, and while environmental organisations quite often provide the framework for environmental voluntary work, an introduction how environmental organisations can be connected to the idea of citizenship is relevant to do as well.

This study is about the citizenship, namely the active side of it. The attention, when talking about the active side of the citizenship, is directed at the civil society. Civil society is regarded to exist outside of the state apparatus, and to be consisted of voluntary groups of citizens. Janoski (1998, 12) has defined civil society as dynamic and responsive area of public discussion in the area between the state and the markets. According to him, however, the areas of the state, the markets and the civil society are not very clearly marked, and the action of them is partly overlapping (Janoski 1998, 13). Janoski (1998, see figure 1.1 on page 13) has mapped the social movements to belong to the centre of the civil society. As being part of the civil society, environmental organisations concern the active side of the citizenship, the production of the citizenship by the citizens themselves.

The environmental organisations, like other social movement organisations, have to decide how to organise their action. According to Dianni and Donatelli (1999, 15) there are basically two ways to do it, i.e. there are two different resource mobilisation strategies. First, organisation can try to get as large public support as possible or second, they can rely on smaller, but more committed group of activists (*ibid.*). Organisation has to decide also, what to mobilize; it can be either money or time (*ibid.*). This is a difficult task to do and all the options require a lot of work from the organisation (*ibid.* 15-16). However, it is important that organisations find a balance between these two ways of making their action possible.

While the environmental movement organisations are an example of so called new social movements, old movements most often resemble labour movement, the most important social movement of the industrial society (Touraine 2002). An interesting classification from the viewpoint of this study has been made by Jasper (1997), who has divided social movements into citizenship movements and post-citizenship movements. Jasper's (1997) classification regards the differences between the movements that were trying to change something inside the government machinery and the ones that are directed to something more comprehensive cultural changes (Jasper 1997, 78). According to him, the citizenship movements exist to struggle for the political rights of an oppressed group of citizens (*ibid.*). Whereas, post-citizenship movements concentrate on something that is not related to group issues as citizenship movements are; on the contrary, the focus is on cultural or outside of political equity existing common good issues (*ibid.* 88). On one hand as an example of a citizenship movement could be mentioned labour movement and on the other hand a good example could be environmental movement.

In general, environmental movement organisations have been evolving from the late 1960's onwards (Rootes 1999, 1). In Finland, the transition from the old social movements into the new social movements is often considered to have happened through an incident that took place in Kojjärvi in 1979. According to Jokinen & Saaristo (2002, 236), this event when a group of environmentalists prevented a deepening of an outlet of a lake that was considered to be an important area for birds, changed the history of the Finnish social movements in three different ways. First, after that, direct action was considered to be part of the action of social movements, secondly, the media were started to be used in a totally different way than before, and thirdly, it was a symbolic turning point in the sense that it visibly changed the period between old and new social movements (*ibid.* 236-237).

In Finland, the last decades of the 20th century were a remarkable time for environmental organisations (Jokinen & Saaristo 2002). Similarly as Jamison (2001, 82) has divided the environmental activism into six different phases, Konttinen and Peltokoski (2004) have presented the environmental movement in Finland as four different waves. Although the Finnish environmental movement has some characteristics of its own, there are also similarities to the internationally detected phases (cf. Väliverronen 1996:49). According to Väliverronen (1996, 49) there are three points in common. First, the national organisations and that are based their action on voluntary work have moved over and international organisations where work is done more professionally have replaced them (*ibid.*). Secondly, the scientific information and professionalism have increased, and thirdly the public media has become an important in defining environmental problems (*ibid.*). The fourth and the latest wave of the environmentalism in Finland is detected to be the radical environment movement that includes as a clearly visible part the animal rights movement (Konttinen & Peltokoski 2004). However, it should be noticed, that although the radical environmental movement is on the crest of the wave, the other types of environmental activism is existing and it is versatile crucial.

Nowadays, the environmental movement is not the only actor that is dealing with environmental questions. Eder (1996) has suggested, that the environmental movement might have lost its position in the area of environmental discussion, because the western countries have moved to time that he calls *post-environmentalism*, and that is the time when the environmental questions are already everyday questions (Eder 1996, 190-191). This can be seen as self-evident fact in all walks of life; in the programmes of the different political parties, in the policies of industry as well as in everyday

life of individual citizens. Therefore, environmental movement, the pioneers of putting environment into the public agenda, according to Eder, have to struggle for its popularity (*ibid.*).

However, the environmental organisations in Finland are still regarded to have an important role. Environmental organisations have been seen also as important producers of expert knowledge (Saaristo 2000). This has been affirmed by Eyerman and Jamison (1991), according to whom, the environmental movements have created a new conceptual space, in which ecology and environment are connected to political and economical meanings. Moreover, according to them (*ibid.* 52), environmental movements have acted as an intermediary between everyday and professional information. In other words, movements have interpreted the professional information to the language of everyday-life or the environmental problems of everyday-life into the language of science.

EXAMPLE OF COLLECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTARY WORK

As mentioned already above, the example that is used in this study to describe and analyse eco-volunteering in practice, is the voluntary work in WWF Finland, more precisely the volunteers and their action in WWF's voluntary oil-combating group that is located in southern Finland. In this section of the thesis, the problem of oil-spills, the action of WWF in general and also the action of the voluntary oil-combating group are presented from a historical point of view.

OIL SPILLS – AN EXAMPLE OF AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM

Many environmental problems are global and difficult to perceive. A good example of this is the climate change - one of the biggest environmental problems of our time - that is both very global and difficult to perceive. Moreover, instead of having just one environmental question, the problems create a tangled skein of questions. From this skein, the single problems might pop up for example in form of an environmental accident. One of these problems is the problem of oil spills. The problem of oil spills is an international problem that has gained rather a lot of attention in the recent years, mainly due to the large oil accidents that have happened. Moreover, as mentioned above, oil spills are the accident that the Finns are the most concerned about in the national level. However, in general the quantity of oil spilt in the world has decreased, as can be seen from the figure 1 below.

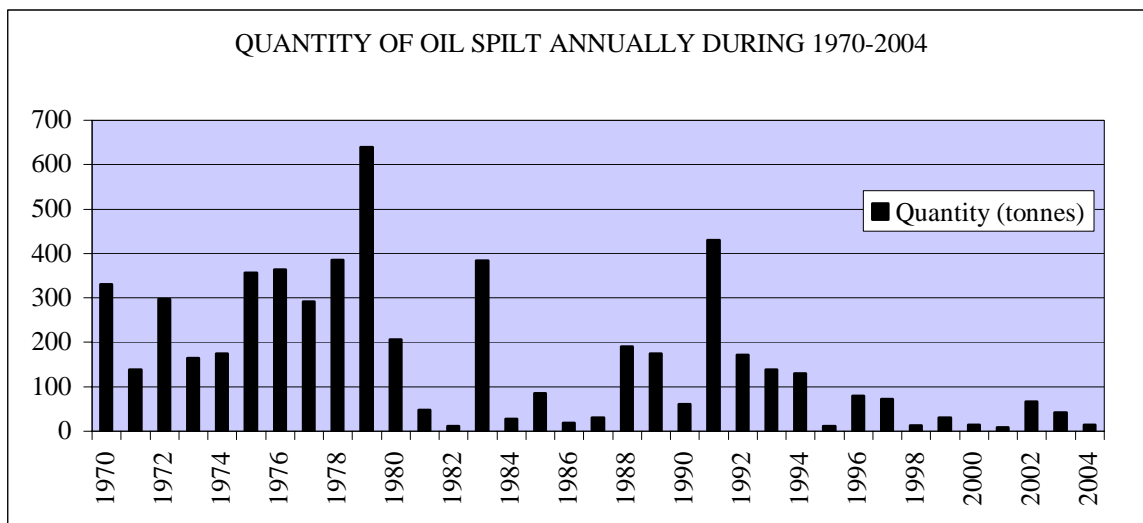


Figure 1 Quantity of oil spilt in the world annually during the years 1970-2004 (Data from ITOPF, 2005)

The Baltic Sea (see the map of the Baltic Sea area in the appendix I) is an ecologically unique brackish-water sea area with a variety of very special marine and coastal environments shared by nine countries. Baltic Sea is heavily under the influence of human activities. At the moment Baltic Sea is strained with enormous amount of nutrient inputs and as a consequence eutrophication of it (Hänninen & Rytönen 2004). Also myriad hazardous substances, increasing marine traffic and oil transportation are driving forces behind the problems (*ibid.* 2004).

Also in the Baltic Sea the large oil spills have been very rare. However, the risk of an oil accident is increasing in the Baltic Sea area. In the Gulf of Finland the main cause for the increase of the risk is the rise of the amount of oil transported. The increasing trend is showed in the figure 2 below. The

quantity of oil transported is moreover predicted to increase to be 150 million tons in year 2010. Transportation is predicted to increase most in the due to the port of Primorsk located in Russia.

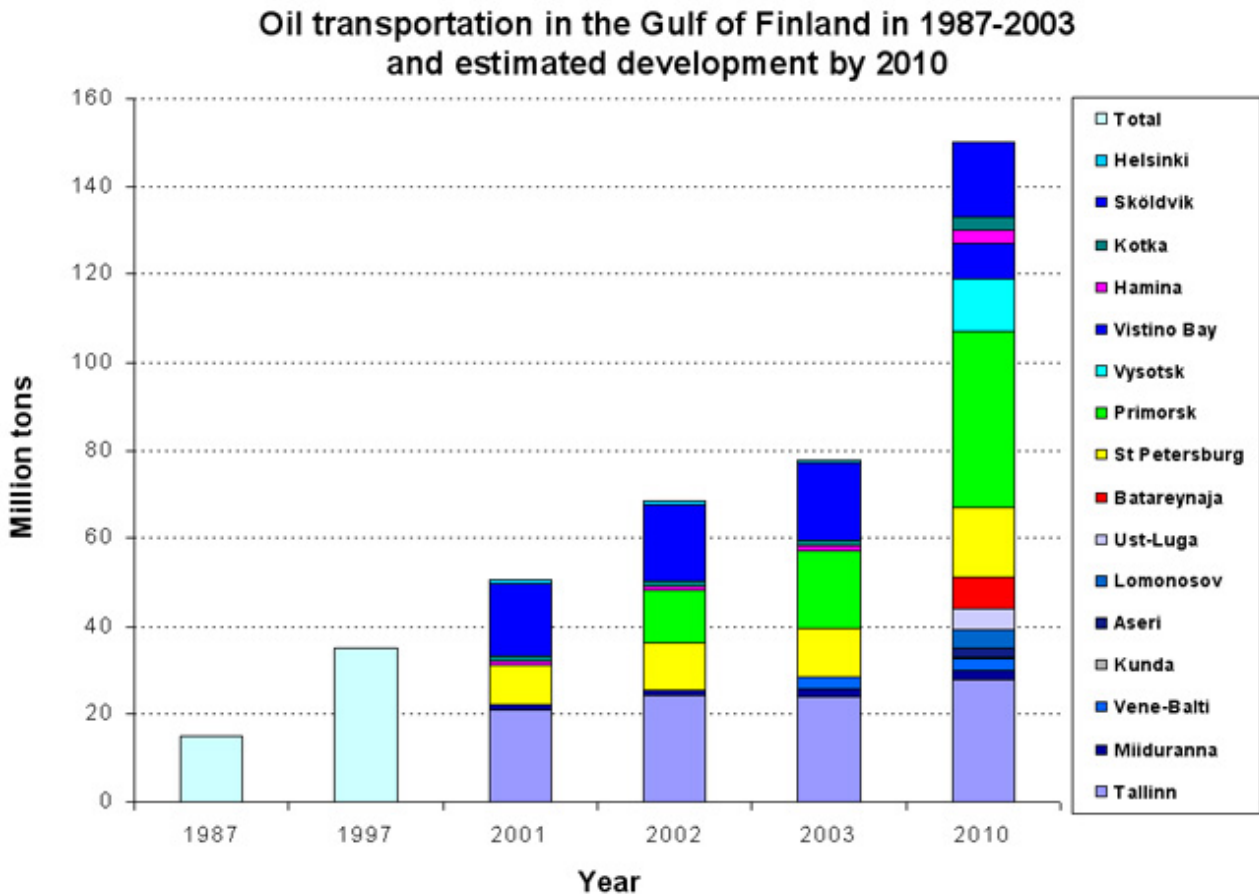


Figure 2 Oil transportation development in the Gulf of Finland (Hänninen & Rytönen 2004:B1)

As the problems are international, also the solutions are tried to find in the international level. To response to the rapid move to pervasive environmental degradation there has been many international. In the international environmental politics, the environmental problems are quite often observed from the point of view of Garret Hardin's (1968) theory of tragedy of commons. Tragedy pointed out by Hardin referred to a Middle-Age village in England, where the pasture land was utilized by individual cattle owners. While the benefit of individual cattle owner required amount of cattle in the pasture land to be as big as possible, the pasture land of the village suffered before long from over grazing. Also the solutions to the tragedy are pondered by Hardin. First one, according to him, is to make an appeal in the common village meeting that would restrict the amount of cattle. Hardin, however, doubts the efficiency of the appeal, because it would not affect to the behaviour of all the cattle owners. Second solution, that Hardin gives, is an agreement among the cattle owners to restrict the amount of cattle. This agreement should work if all the cattle owners take part in it and the realization of it is controlled and the ones that disobey are punished. The third option is to change the ownership structure so that also the cattle are transformed to be common property of all the villagers. Hardin doubts also the efficiency of this solution, because the interest to livestock production. The fourth and the best alternative according to Hardin, is to change the ownership structure so that the pasture land in addition to cattle is divided between the cattle owners. It is the

best one, according to Hardin, because then the cattle owners beat the costs and benefits that they get from livestock production. Although the idea of Hardin has been criticized (e.g. Conca et al. 1995), it, however, suits to describe the character of the international environmental cooperation (Carter, 2001). International cooperation indeed is based on appeals and statements produced in international negotiations. Moreover, international agreements have been done by among two or more states. As an example of multilateral agreement can be mentioned UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that was accepted in 1992.

Also the problem of oil spills in the Baltic Sea has been tried to solve internationally. The Helsinki Convention was established in 1974 and came to force in the 1980 (HELCOM, 1992). The convention is taking care of the pollution in the whole Baltic Sea area, both in the sea and also in the catchment area. The new convention was signed in 1992 and then the participants were all the nine Baltic states and in addition European Union. Helsinki Commission, Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, or shortly HELCOM is the governing body of the convention and thus taking care of the realization of the Convention.

As the risk of an oil accident to happen can not be eliminated completely, also measures to be taken in the case that an accident happens have been considered. The main responsibility is on the Ministry of Environment, and the main operations in order to clean the oil spill, is on the municipality, in which area the accident have happened (SYKE, 2005). The operational oil combating that occurs in the sea area, is done by professionals and different technologies are used in that. However, the cleaning of the oil from the shore is work that requires perhaps not that much profession or developed technology, but is very mechanic and mainly done manually.



Picture 1 "Oil tanker on aground" - Stating of the oil accident in ÖLJY 2005 oil-combating training in Porvoo, 17th of September 2005.

WWF – THE MEDIATOR OF THE (VOLUNTARY) ACTION

The story of WWF– World Wide Fund For Nature (Formerly World Wildlife Fund)⁸ was set off in the beginning of the 1960's when a British biologist Julian Huxley's hard hitting articles about the disappearing wildlife in East Africa due to hunting and habitat destruction were published in The Observer newspaper. This triggered some people to see the need for an organisation that would raise funds for the nature conservation. Huxley, who had already been involved in the foundation of IUCN – The World Conservation Union, then asked ornithologist Max Nicholson, Director General of Britain's Nature Conservancy, to be the one to launch the fund raising organisation. Nicholson therefore with help other people founded WWF in 1961 as a charity in Switzerland and adopted a black and white logo after Chi-Chi panda that arrived to London zoo around the same time. In order to raise funds internationally, WWF's offices were set off in different countries to raise funds for the WWF International as well as to environmental projects in the location countries. Since its foundation WWF has been working in cooperation with other non-governmental organisations and also having good relations to governments.

It was clear already in the end of the 1970's that WWF was not anymore only concerned about endangered species. Furthermore, WWF was also collaborating with IUCN and UNEP in publishing the World Conservation Strategy in 1987 that, as mentioned already before, initiated the use of the concept sustainable development in the first place. At the moment the offices and associates of WWF are located in 40 different countries, WWF is funding almost 2 000 projects in more than 100 countries and employ nearly 4 000 people. The operational income of the whole WWF Network in 2004 was US\$469 million, of which 21 per cents came from individuals. Moreover, year 2003 WWF had almost 5 million regular supporters. Thus, the activities of WWF have been expanded from the original small organisation that protects single species, into global actor that is taking part in trying to solve international and complex environmental problems.

In Finland, WWF was founded in 1972, and the activities were based on the voluntary groups formed by experts from different areas. The working groups were concerned in protecting endangered species, such as *Haliaeetus albicilla* and *Phoca hispida saimensis*. From the 1980's onwards there is a similar shift in the action of the WWF Finland as in the WWF International towards more versatile, cooperative and international direction. One of the actions of WWF Finland is nowadays oil combating, in which it was involved first time after an oil spill in the Quark area in the Baltic Sea in 1983.

Voluntary action that WWF does has gone through some transformation during its existence in Finland. The first reason for the changes has been the development of environmental administration. WWF was launched in Finland in time before environmental administration. That was in the 1970s. At that time there was no one to actually take care about the endangered species. Therefore WWF was doing quite a lot of work on that (Luukkonen 2005). The situation changed in the 1990s when WWF deliberately shifted the responsibility of endangered species to environmental administration. That changed the form of also voluntary work and the teams that had been previously working at the endangered species were not necessarily working under WWF but under officials. However, it was still possible for volunteers to work in the groups. Enthusiasm for volunteering among the individuals has been permanent. According Luukkonen, during the time

⁸ In 1989 the name was changed due to the changes in the organisations actions from World Wildlife Fund to World Wide Fund For Nature, and has been used since. Exceptions are WWF-US and WWF-Canada that are still using the old name.

that he has been working at WWF, *“people have always been ready to work”* (Luukkonen 2005). There are also new forms of volunteering, such as voluntary oil-combating group.

Volunteers are an enormous resource for WWF Finland and different ways for an individual to volunteer are being offered. The work ranges from being a specialist in climate change issues to be registered for voluntary oil-combating group and onwards to being a person who pays support fees. The amount of voluntary work done in WWF Finland has been evaluated to be around six labour units (means 6 x 1 600 hours / year) (Luukkonen 2005). When proportioned to the context of WWF Finland, where 11 paid workers are doing environmental protection work, it can be considered to be important. In addition to these volunteers, WWF Finland have also voluntary work camps, in order to restore for example traditional rural biotopes, has a register for people who want to participate and they are around 600 people (Luukkonen 2005). The monetary value of voluntary work has estimated in year 2004 around 250 000 euros (WWF, 2004). In addition, importance is not big only due to the amount of work, but also because of the quality of the work done. Volunteers bring with them such knowledge that could not be found from the WWF office otherwise, *“they know the life totally from a different perspective that anyone in the office”*, as Jari Luukkonen pointed out. This knowledge comes in knowledge in natural science as well as in totally different areas of knowledge. For example, there was a couple that volunteered to do an educational film about oil-combating, because that was their profession, which is something that the WWF otherwise would have not had the resource to do (Luukkonen 2005).

It can also be argued that the volunteers not only are a resource of work, but also a group of people with loud voices, that are heard and seen also outside the place where the volunteering takes place. *“It is power when we go to speak with politicians or decision makers that we can say that this amount of people agrees with us or that these people think this issue important. If we did not have them, the political message would be weaker”*, Luukkonen (2005) said. Therefore this is the case also within the WWF Finland. And while the largest group of volunteers are the voluntary oil-combating group, the meaning as a message is big. The people that belong to the oil-combating group are in large part passive, thus they do not actively take part in the action even every year. That almost makes it sound that to join the group means to sign a petition. However, the importance as a message is important.

A group of passive people - so what is the use of that? Although the meaningfulness mainly is concentrated perhaps on the message, however, as reference to Luukkonen, he also thinks that *“there is a big group of people who are not necessarily in environmental issues otherwise...that kind of group that has been gotten to move in a certain way towards ecological direction”* (Luukkonen 2005). That is perhaps the biggest achievement that the action of the group has.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GROUP – FROM FOUNDATION TO THIS DAY

The group was founded in 2003, thus this type of organised voluntary action is a rather new phenomenon in Finland. Although being a newly started action, the group has already obtained around 3 400 registered volunteers so far, and that makes it the largest voluntary group that WWF Finland has. The reason for the interest can be approached from different viewpoints; oil spills as an environmental problem, volunteer or organiser. The main activities of the group have so far been education of the volunteers and participating in cleaning of few minor oil accidents in the coast of Finland. The basic idea of the group is to help in the cleaning of the oil from the shores in the case of an oil accident.

There are several reasons for the foundation of the group. In the interview with the Conservation Coordinator of WWF Finland Jari Luukkonen the reasons for the foundation of the group were discussed. The first reason that came up has to do with the risk of an oil accident itself. It became clear that the main emphasis of the oil-combating that WWF does, is not on the cleaning the oil from the shore after an accident, on the contrary, it is on the decreasing of the risk of an oil accident. As Jari Luukkonen, commented, *“we have done work in order to improve the safety of the vessel traffic in the Baltic Sea. And the main emphasis is given to that. The aspiration is naturally to a situation where oil accidents do not happen”* (Luukkonen 2005, own translation). But then again the fact is, as we have seen, that oil accidents do happen. And Luukkonen (2005) pointed out that, *“...the accidents in recent years...they have all demonstrated that the accidents are based on the humanity of people. And no matter what measures are taken, the risk of an oil accident cannot be totally removed”*. Thus, the existing risk creates the main reason for the foundation. What is also connected to the risk of an oil-accident is the fact that the oil transportation in the Gulf of Finland has increased and is increasing constantly. The amount of oil transported has become fivefold within the last decade and year 2004 the amount was expected to be more than 100 million tonnes, moreover the amount is predicted to almost double by year 2015 (Hänninen & Rytönen 2004, see figure 2 in this paper). Thus, the increasing oil transport is increasing the probability of the risk of an accident. *“ We wanted to prepare also for that situation that something happens”* (Luukkonen 2005).

The second reason for the foundation has to do with the actual working possibility of the group. As Luukkonen commented, *“what have been learned from the previous accidents that have happened, is that, the unorganised volunteers are very difficult get to work reasonably, to help, is very difficult”* (Luukkonen 2005). Thus, these difficulties can be avoided by educating people beforehand. The aim in the education is to give enough information to people who can then in a real life situation guide 10-15 other people to do the work in a right way. Because if there was an accident, there would be a lot more people coming to help than are registered to oil-combating group at the moment (Luukkonen 2005). One more issue that has hand with the actual working is, according to Luukkonen, that in a case of an oil accident, the officials doing the combating work do not want a large group of people that they have to guide, because it might cause them more work than if they would do the work by themselves. Therefore if the group is organised, the cooperation with the officials should also be easier.

Cleaning oil is not very difficult in itself. However it takes a lot of time and there are certain rules that are good to know, in order not to make more mess than clean (Luukkonen 2005). Therefore the education of the people to such extend that they have a basic understanding about the issue and the cooperation with the officials is important already during the trainings. The same view was shared also with fire chief in the Rescue Department of Itä-Uusimaa, who thought that the organisation of the groups is very important, so that people know in the case of an accident what to do (Ekman 2005). He also said that all the help in the case of an accident is needed (*ibid.*). One of the organisers of the training weekend Hannu Nuutinen (from MPK ry), who thought that the training in general was very successful, also considered the creation of the cooperation between different actors in oil combating as an important issue that should be emphasized even more (Nuutinen 2005).

The operations that WWF oil-combating group has participated have been the cleaning of the oil that has been washed ashore from few minor oil accidents. Those have happened in Inkoo and Tammisaari in autumn 2003. One action where 70 of the volunteers of the group took part previously was the ÖLJY 2005 training weekend that was organised by different quarters, however

main organiser being Maapuolustuskoulutus ry⁹ in Porvoo, area of Tolkkinen, during 16th and 18th of September. Altogether, around 200 people participated the training, of which around 150 were actually been trained. Others were organisers and also guests, that were for example from WWF Estonia, Norway and Russia. The training was directed at different voluntary workers that would be needed in the case of an accident. The area is situated in the coast of the Gulf of Finland and in near location is largest oil harbour in Finland and around 1 000-1 200 ships carrying all together around 16-19 million tons of oil (Neste 2005). So the location of the training was realistic.

The training included kind of simulation of a real life situation, if an oil accident would happen. The story in the training situation was as follows. There had happened an oil accident in the in the training area, where an “oil tanker” (see picture 1 in this paper) had run aground and there was oil washed ashore. In this case the oil was changed into peat. The official of the area, in this case Rescue Department of Itä-Uusimaa, had called the voluntary groups to help. These included people from different organisations, such as WWF Finland, Red Cross Finland and Maanpuolustuskoulutus ry. Therefore in this training the aim was also to train the cooperation between different actors in oil-combating work. The rescue department isolated the polluted sea area with booms (see water booming in the picture 2 in this paper). At the same time the volunteers practised their oil cleaning skills (see picture 2 in this paper). Moreover, the group leaders practised communication and managing of the volunteers.

WHO ARE THE VOLUNTEERS?

In this study volunteers are the ones that spent their weekend in Porvoo, slept in half-platoon tents for approximately 20 persons, woke up at sunrise and practiced both their oil-combating and social skills. In other words they belong to the WWF Finland’s oil-combating group and participated in the ÖLJY 2005 training weekend. As is shown in the figure 2 below, the ones that answered to the internet survey are 19-60 years old; however most of them were born in the 1970’s. In general in Finland women and men participate in voluntary work equally as much (Yeung, 2002, 40-42). However, of the respondents 51 out of 71 are women and the rest of them (20) are men. This is also near the gender distribution of the whole voluntary group; around 70 % of them are women and 30 % are men (WWF, 2004b).

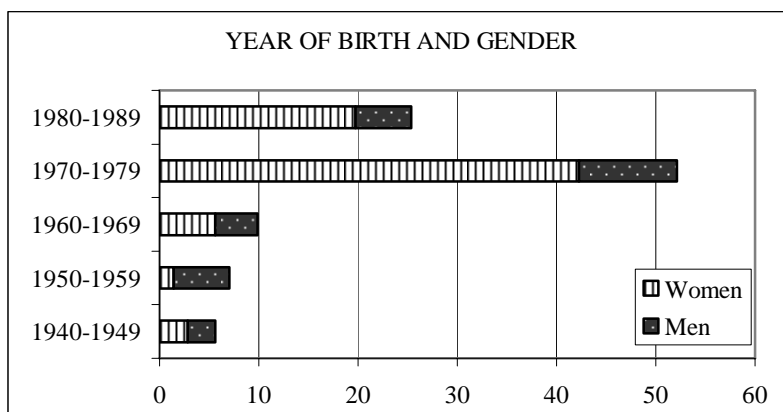


Figure 4 Age and Gender Distribution of the Respondents

⁹ Maanpuolustuskoulutus ry (MPK ry) is an education organisation that educates citizens to better survive everyday life’s dangerous situations and in exceptional circumstances (MPK ry 2004).

Respondents are rather highly educated; most of them have a university degree, and moreover, most of them are at the moment students by profession. This is quite understandable when considering the age distribution of the respondents; level of education among the younger people in general is higher than it is among the older age groups. Other than students, respondents are mostly clerical workers, employees, pensioners and one of them is an entrepreneur. No one is unemployed. Most of the ones that are doing paid work and have a full-time job. Most of them have taken part to the action of WWF also in other ways than just being a member of a voluntary oil combating group. This includes actions from other voluntary work to buying products of WWF.

Highest Degree	%	Profession	%
Elementary School	2,8	Entrepreneur	1,4
Vocational School	9,9	Lower Clerical Worker	16,9
High School	22,5	Upper Clerical Worker	23,9
College	11,3	Worker	21,1
Polytechnic	23,9	Student	32,5
University	29,6	Pensioner	4,2
		Unemployed	0

Table 1 Education and Profession of the Respondents

ACTIONS OUTSIDE COLLECTIVE VOLUNTARY ACTION

Into this chapter some examples how the volunteers behave in their everyday life are collected. These have to do with consumption, waste recycling and travelling.

Thoughts about the Mundane Consumption

The common opinion of the volunteers was that there is no one in the group that would not be interested in the state of environment in Finland or in the world, and therefore they are also acting pro-environmentally in their everyday lives. And they are indeed considering the consequences of their everyday choices. Consumption - considered and avoided - is an important issue in the everyday life of an environmentally responsible individual, and the respondents have noticed that. For example, as shown in the figure 4 below, the respondents often buy locally produced food. Organic and fair trade products find their way into the shopping basket every now and then. Genetically modified foods are avoided. Moreover, most of the respondents (83 %) are mixed eaters, some of them are vegetarians (13 %), none of the respondents is vegan, and the rest state to have some other diet that they observe. A study that was dealing with the activists of radical environmental and animal rights movement in Finland in the 1990s showed that 47 % of them were vegans, 37 % were vegetarians and the rest had some other diet (Konttinen & Peltokoski, 2004, 104). Compared to these results, the volunteers of the oil-combating group are far from being radical environmental activists.

WHAT KIND OF FOOD DO YOU BUY?	Always	Often	Every now and then	Rarely	Never
I buy locally produced food	5% (3)	42% (26)	35% (22)	13% (8)	5% (3)
I buy organic food	0% (0)	32% (20)	40% (25)	19% (12)	10% (6)
I buy fair trade products	2% (1)	29% (18)	45% (28)	18% (11)	6% (4)
I avoid genetically modified foods	42% (25)	12% (7)	15% (9)	22% (13)	10% (6)

Table 2 Example of Everyday Life Action – Buying Food

Routines of Recycling

One of the volunteers said that the best that could be done for the waste is not to produce it. This is of course true. Moreover, the waste production can be decreased; however, there still is some waste left. In general in Finland, year 2003, there was around 2.3 millions tonnes of municipal waste generated in Finland (Ministry of the Environment 2005). From it around 60 per cent was deposited in landfill sites, 30 per cent was recycled as material and the rest of it were reused in the energy sector (*ibid.*). One thing that volunteers are doing as a routine is waste recycling. It is not seen as that much as hard or difficult thing to do. It was considered more just a part of everyday life as are the other daily activities that do not have to be thought about that much. Therefore, most or all of the respondents recycle paper, glass, metal, clothes, cardboard, electronics and hazardous waste.

Individual and Car – Best Friends?

In general, it can be claimed that Finns travel rather long distances. The average travel per person in a day is around 35 km and that was the fifth highest in the European Union area in 2000 (European Communities 2003). The amount of passenger transport has increased since the early industrial society greatly, moreover, kilometres travelled has more that doubled since 1970s. The change that has happened in the amount of transport is mainly due to the increasing car use. While the numbers of absolute amount travelled by rails, buses and coaches has stayed almost the same, the increase in car use has been immense. Nowadays almost 85 per cent of passenger transport in Finland is done by passenger cars (European Communities 2003). Therefore, one thing that an individual can have a great influence is the choice of the mode of the transport. The volunteers are not the most typical representatives for the actors in the current passenger transportation situation. Less than one fifths of the respondents do their daily travels by car. The rest of the travels are made by using public transportation, bicycle or on foot. Car is more likely to be used on longer trips, however, train is still more common mode of transport than a car.

FROM CONCERN TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Conception of Volunteering

Volunteering is an ambiguous term and creates different meanings depending on the person from who it is asked. However, the answers that were given to the question about the visions of volunteering, few characters of volunteering were repeated in several answers. The answers of course reflect the common ideas of voluntary work, however also the personal motives to volunteer. The answers quoted in table 3, are selected in such way that different types of answers are presented.

ALTRUISM	ENVIRONMENTALISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Work for the common good without compensation” • “Helping” • “Helping those who are in need of help” • “Work without getting paid, willingness to help” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “For me voluntary work is acting for nature and animals” • “Unpaid work for example for the environment and animals”
COMMUNITARIANISM /CIVIC ACTIVISM	“PLURALISTIC”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Together bringing something about” • “Positive communality, social capital” • “Meaningful doing, important issues and nice people. Huge resource!” • “Sense of responsibility” • “Active citizen” • “Participation” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Useful work for something that is important to one self” • “Hobby for the common good” • “Variety to work – learn something new” • “Doing one’s bit for the world, let it be directed to anywhere; people, nature etc.” • “Useful activity, which can be fitted in own schedule” • “Foreign countries and getting a good feeling for oneself by helping others”

Table 3 Visions of voluntary work

Basically, the answers could be categorized into four different ones. Firstly and mostly, volunteering is considered to be doing in order to help someone or something else, not gaining something oneself, thus these types of answers can be characterized to be *altruistic*. Moreover, the most typical visions of voluntary work included words helping and doing without getting paid or compensation. Secondly, some of the answers emphasised the importance of doing together, participation and responsibility. Thus, there are things that one can do alone, individually or privately; however, the voluntary work among the respondents, is seen more as something that is done together, not alone. Therefore, these answers are categorized to be *communitarianism or civic activism* in general. In some of the answers the importance of the fact the volunteering is done for the environment was brought up. Therefore these answers are categorized to be *environmentalism*. In the rest of the answers, a variety of different views were produced. Some of them included also the point of view that one can benefit from doing voluntary work, for example learn some new skills or meet new people. Therefore, the rest of the answers are categorized to be “*pluralistic*”.



Picture 2 Practising in case of an accident in ÖLJY 2005 training weekend in Porvoo. Some of the volunteers, and the rescue department booming the water.

Motivation for the Action

As motivation is regarded to be one of the cornerstones of the continuity of voluntary work, also the motivations of the oil-combating volunteers were examined. In accordance to the results, the answers of the survey were categorized as can be seen in the table 4 below. These categories are then also compared with the ones that Jacob (1993) has identified (see p. 19 in this paper). Moreover, the answers of the survey are complemented with the issues brought up in the group discussion.

Essential Theme - Environment

As far as the oil-combaters are concerned; the initial question of their eco-volunteering has to do with the concern about the environmental problem of oil spills. Therefore, they generally are “*realizing the essential themes of their lives*”- type of volunteers (see p.19 in this paper). That is of course no wonder, because as it was mentioned already above in this paper, the national level environmental problem that the Finns are the most concerned about, are the oil spills. Many of the volunteers were reflecting their motivation to volunteer on the previous oil accidents, namely on the accident of Prestige in year 2002, which had been some kind of wake-up call to see the problem of oil accidents. One of the volunteers had been also working as a volunteer in Galicia after that accident. Moreover, the discussion about that accident, as the volunteers remembered it, was lively in the Finnish public eye, and that had set many people to think about the situation in the Baltic Sea as well. Additionally, the rapidly increasing oil transportation in the Gulf of Finland, and the new large oil harbour projects in Russia¹⁰, and their even more increasing influence on oil transportation

¹⁰ Russia has become the largest oil producer in the world and a large part of the production is exported to world markets (OPEC 2005). Therefore also new routes to transport the oil are needed. The oil port of Primorsk was opened in

were also concerning the volunteers. Moreover, another reason that can be connected with this type of volunteering is, as some of the volunteers mentioned, that their studies had influenced their decision to participate. That was the case with the people who had been studying environmental sciences or something connected with that. Thus, there is a common concern among the volunteers about the state of the Baltic Sea and they have a “worry about the environment” (see table 4).

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE?	I totally agree	I agree to some extend	I partly agree, partly disagree	I disagree to some extend	I totally disagree
"Sense of Duty"					
I want to do my part for the environment	84% (54)	11% (7)	2% (1)	0% (0)	3% (2)
I want to do something concrete for the environment	84% (54)	11% (7)	2% (1)	0% (0)	3% (2)
"Worry about the environment"					
I am worried about the state of the Baltic Sea	66% (42)	27% (17)	5% (3)	0% (0)	3% (2)
I am worried about the increasing risk of oil accidents	68% (43)	22% (14)	5% (3)	2% (1)	3% (2)
"Rewarding Action"					
I want to gain new skills/knowledge	50% (32)	36% (23)	8% (5)	3% (2)	3% (2)
I want to get new experiences	45% (29)	34% (22)	12% (8)	3% (2)	5% (3)
I want to get to know new people	33% (21)	28% (18)	33% (21)	2% (1)	5% (3)
"Suitability of the Action"					
The project like character suits me	42% (27)	38% (24)	9% (6)	8% (5)	3% (2)
I have extra time	3% (2)	16% (10)	27% (17)	25% (16)	30% (19)
"On Request"					
I was asked to join	6% (4)	2% (1)	8% (5)	13% (8)	71% (45)

Table 4 Reasons for the action (results of the questionnaire)

Sense of Responsibility

However, “*Service and complement of responsibility*” (see p.19 in this paper) was seen as an important reason to participate as well. According to the results of the questionnaire, most of the volunteers totally agreed that the ability to do their own bit and something concrete for the environment were the reasons for their volunteering (see table 4). These reasons were also brought up in the group interview and one of the volunteers commented: “*here the greatest thing is that you get actually in concrete way to do something*”. And it was also commented that “*somehow it feels like that there the possibilities to have an influence are getting fewer and fewer [...] quite often the environmental issue is dealt in somewhere there in high political level, and a citizen has rather little power, after deciding what to recycle*” (One of the interviewees). Thus, the oil-combating was regarded as an action to take in addition to actions that can be done in everyday life and to be done because they have “sense of duty” (see table 4).

The volunteers considered that when trying to influence in solving of the environmental problems, the ways to do it differ according to the nature of the problem. Oil spills were compared to global warming and out of these two oil spills were regard as a problem that people acting together as a group can obtain results. Oil spills were considered to problems that are in easy to understand. One of the volunteers expressed the intelligibility of the oil spills as an environmental problem in following way: “*I have been thinking about these world issues, and oil spills comparatively is a very black and white problem. We all know that the oil should be inside of the tanker, providing that it was put in the tanker in the first place, and not outside of the tanker. That is a very clear situation*”. What is more, oil-spills were considered to be problems which existence can not be denied by anyone. It was seen as a problem to which “*nobody is trying to claim that this is actually*

2001 and the port of Vysotsk in 2004 and the traffic through them will increase the oil transported in the Baltic Sea (Hänninen 2005, 11).

a good thing that we have this oil in all over the place in the sea”, as was said by one volunteer. The problem was also compared with the anthropogenic climate change and contentions that exist about it. Global warming, on the other hand, was viewed as something that one can influence through the other everyday-life choices, such as consumption and recycling. Additionally, the other options to influence, besides voluntary work, were not seen irrelevant either. *“I regard it to be in the first place a responsibility, that in a way one justifies the on necessary consumption [...] one has to do something to counterbalance it”*, as one of the volunteers stated.

Suitable in many ways

Of course, the motives for the action were many and not all of the respondents of the survey or of the group discussion shared the same opinion about all of them. One motive that was important for some of the volunteers was the “project-like” character of oil-combating and as one of the volunteers commented: *“I am quick to leave; if there was an alarm in the middle of the night, I would be ready to go. Just as I leave to do bird-watching. But then let’s say, for example the friend service of Red Cross, where I should meet some old lady at her place every Wednesday at 5 p.m., does not suit me”*. However, some other respondents had not been even thought about this character of the voluntary work.

The volunteers did not regard as important that the voluntary work is done in the name of a certain organisation. Thus, the most important thing is the oil-combating itself. However, the fact that it is WWF that is organising the work is considered to be a good thing. This is because, *“WWF is not a single-issue group for weird people, but rather as an organisation that has gained its popularity and respect by actually doing important things”* (One of the volunteers). Moreover, a good thing was that WWF is especially behind the action; nothing more, thus other activities of WWF are not included in the oil-combating. Also the Conservation Director pointed out that WWF is on purpose not including people that belong to the oil-combating group to other things that WWF does. In practice meaning that the oil-combating volunteers are only informed about the issues that directly concerns oil-combating. Another issue that came across that is related to the organised action is that voluntary oil-combating is so well organised, and made easy to approach and participate, makes it attractive as well. In other word, people participate, because it does not require that much actual involvement; the participation is enough. Thus, the “suitability of the action” (see table 4) appears in different ways.

Participating every now and then

When taking into account that the oil-combating as voluntary work does not require that much of commitment and time, at least not regularly, it is interesting to find out, whether the respondents are doing or have been doing some eco-volunteering somewhere else, and if they are not doing any other eco-volunteering at the moment, would they like to spend more time on it or do it more regularly. These questions were asked also in the internet survey and the answers are shown in the table 5 below. Most of the respondents are not currently doing or have nor been doing before eco-volunteering, thus, oil-combating has been an initiative for their eco-volunteering career. It was mentioned already above that some of the people are motivated to do oil-combating because of its irregularity. However, most of the people would like to volunteer more regularly and spend more time doing it. Moreover, some people were volunteering in many other environmental and other activities, thus oil-combating was seen just as one of them. However, the fact is, that at least up to now, most of the volunteers have not been doing all that much volunteering, they can also be categorized in the *“volunteering marginally”* type of volunteering.

Do / have you participated in other voluntary work for the environment?	
Yes	No
21,9 % (14)	78,1 % (50)

If you do not participate in other voluntary work at the moment, would you like to...			
...spend more time on it?		...do it more regularly?	
Yes	No	Yes	No
71 % (41)	29 % (17)	67 % (38)	33 % (19)

Table 5 Time to do voluntary work

Rewarding Action?

One type of volunteering that Jacob (1993) had distinguished was the “*carving out career*”- type (see p. 19 in this paper). It would be rather unrealistic to even assume that someone would volunteer in oil-combating in order to carve out one’s career. However, the action can be rewarding to the workers in other ways. Something that is similar to this type of volunteering is that, as the most of the volunteers considered, that they want to get new knowledge or skills, and consequently saw that as one motive. This is an understandable reason, because the trainings for the oil-combating volunteers include also lectures about the oil in general, oil transportations, responsibilities of oil-combating in different levels and the different cleaning techniques. This information is then applied in practise, like was done for example in the ÖLJY 2005 training, by trying to do everything like oil accident really had happened. Another similar reason is that people participate in voluntary oil-combating also partly in order to get to know new people or new experiences; these however, were mostly not totally agreed with. Similarly the reason to participate was not that much connected to the idea, that one would be volunteering because is having spare time.

It is not that unusual in Finland that people volunteer because they were asked to. According to Yeung (2002, appendix 3) almost every tenth person have volunteered because someone asked them to do it. Also in the case of the oil-combating volunteers, the motives to participate were influenced in some cases to with the fact that someone else had asked them to participate.

DISCUSSION

Throughout this study, the general drift has been to understand and describe the process of transferring the responsibility for environment towards individuals. As it was discussed earlier, the driving forces, so to speak, that have caused this transfer are connected both to the changes in the environment and to the realization of them in the society. Firstly, the environmental problems have changed their character in a way, which has made us to realize that the problems that we face are not restricted by the borders of nation states or by generations. Secondly, there has been a broad shift in how we perceive the nature. In other words, we have witnessed what can be called “*the end of nature*”¹¹, and as a consequence “nature” has changed into “environment”. Moreover, there has been a change from *simple* to *reflexive society* (Beck et al 1994). As a conclusion, as has been considered in this paper, we do live in a society, in which more requirements to be active, participant and responsible are imposed to people. In this society, the proposals that ecological citizenship has brought forward are at least to a certain extent realistic. This is discussed in this section.

REALIZATION OF ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP

In the classical definition of citizenship, a person becomes a citizen, when he gets outside the circle of individuality and starts to participate and be active in different communities and in the society, however, a person is an individual when working within one’s own thoughts, behaviours and life style choices (cf. Janoski 1998). Therefore, the role of people is regarded to be twofold; on one hand they are individuals, and on the other hand they are citizens. What ecological citizenship has suggested, is that the role of a citizen is also connected to individual sphere of life (Dobosn 2003). This was also tried to do in this thesis by making connections is the both mundane actions and the collective voluntary work for the environment.

Citizenship has been usually divided into passive and active citizenship (Janoski 1998). Ecological citizenship is fundamentally a search for the active side of the citizenship. Also this thesis has been concentrating on the active side of the citizenship; however, it should be mentioned that the passive citizenship is possible and also totally acceptable. Although, the ecological citizenship is considered to be more about obligations than it is about rights of a citizen, however, it is difficult to believe that in the society that is emphasizing individuality, the everyday life of people could be changed very radically through institutional changes. At least for the eco-volunteers important factor seems to be the ‘freedom’, that is also one character of this particular action of oil-combating - they want to do their own decisions, whether it has to do with the collective voluntary action or other mundane doing. Moreover, my sophisticated guess would be (although I did not realize to ask in the interview) that no one would like to live in a country where the head of the state would practice ecological tyranny. Therefore it would be possible, that the idea that Barry (1999, 233) points at, namely the obligatory ecological public service (like military service) introduced by the state, perhaps would not receive a warm welcome. As a conclusion, to be an active citizen is a question of personal choice, not force or obligation.

The basic assumption that is done when talking about the ecological citizenship, is that the practice of it “*is a process by which individual preferences may be transformed not just as a result of reflection, justification and debate, but also because the virtues educate and refine preferences*”

¹¹ Bill McKibben (1989) wrote a book called *The End of Nature*, in which he argues that humans have changed the nature in such comprehensive way, that the nature, in a way, does not exist anymore.

(Barry 1999, 65). Moreover, environmental issues have perhaps, as has been suggested, pushed their way through the whole society and changed the environmental protection in general to be more about everyday life actions than sensations. However, the concern about the environment is sometimes further increased through the dramatic accidents, such as oil accidents. They are attention-grabbing, and thus interesting news can be reported about them. Moreover, as Jamison (2001, 21) has written: *“It has been a series of dramatic events, or disasters, over the past fifty years, that has helped make us aware of the disappearance of a separate realm of non-human nature”*. Furthermore, concern of people is still often directed to those particular environmental problems. These kind of environmental problems and reporting about them are important precisely to point out the problems to the general public and to request to seek for solutions, as well as realization of those solutions. The eco-volunteers of this study, do not either act inside of a void; the environmental problems, as they are defined in the society, are reflected in their action.

Other issue that is connected to the environmental problems and the possibilities of an individual to have an influence in solving of the problems, is that some environmental problems are easier to grasp than others. According to Carolan environmental problems can be categorized according to their epistemological distance and their complexity (Carolan 2004, 498). As an example he points out to oil spills as somewhat easier problems and to dioxin as more difficult one: *“some environmental facts do seem to ‘speak’ for themselves more so than others...for instance, an oil spill speaks much louder to us than, say, dioxin”* (ibid.). Also the volunteers shared the same opinion, therefore, they regarded oil-combating as good target for voluntary work, because it is on one hand an easy problem to understand and on the other hand that in general there is unanimity about the existence of the problem of oil-spills.

However, it is not only the sensations that are guiding the action of eco-volunteers. There is also an information flood when it comes to different guidebooks for ecological lifestyle or green consumerism. This material is also all the time increased by different environmental organisations and environmental administration. Also the evaluation of one’s own consumption is possible to count, for example with the help of ecological footprint or something similar that can be founded also in the internet. And the result, although a ruff one, could be interesting and even awakening, when one realises the amount of own consumption compared to the one someone else in different country. Of course these types of indicators are limited in the information of lifestyle input to them. Therefore defining the criteria of ecological lifestyle is rather difficult, because personal environmental stress includes almost unlimited number of different factors (cf. Jamison 2001, 168). This was also shared by the eco-volunteers, who thought that while it is sometimes difficult to know, whether the action that is done, is ‘good for the environment’ in the last analysis, volunteering for oil-combating was considered to be a clearly good option. Moreover, connected to the good option of oil-combating, one interesting aspect that is connected to combining the individual and collective work for the environment came across while doing the research. The intensive collective voluntary work, where one has to be strongly committed, is not seen as very good alternative. However, this kind of action, where one can in a way work alone, but having the same goal, is seen to as better option.

Just as the attention grabbing, dramatic news can give an impulse to act for the environment, similarly taking part in this action can act as a catalyst for the change in behaviour towards pro-environmental direction in general. The ones that take part in the oil-combating work, are not necessarily the most environmentally active or radical part of the society. However, they have got the incentive to do their bit and perhaps are starting to think more about their mundane actions as

well. Because the oil-combating group is not by any means a homogenous group of people thinking or behaving in similar ways in all areas of life, consequently it can not be said that this is true in case of everyone. It can be also the other way around. The ones that are doing already a lot for the environment in private everyday life, might want to expand their influence to also outside of their own mundane world. Thus, environmental activism shows for us in different forms. Moreover, nowadays, to be environmentally responsible is not characterised with words alternative or radical. And as Brand (1997) has stated: “Nowadays, ‘ecological lifestyles’ have very little in common with the ‘simple’, ‘close to nature’ and life of long haired and, libertarian eco-freaks” (Brand 1997, 204).

Moreover, as it was discussed earlier, in the time that we experience now, the decisions not necessarily are guided by any moral principles, thus decision comes more individual. Giddens (1991b, 124) has forward with term *life politics* that deals with these every day life choices that people have to make and in that vision the particular stress is changed from top down politics to life politics that stresses individuals, which is politics that concerns decisions of life (Giddens 1991b, 214). Life politics emphasizes the ability of an individual to choose one’s own values, consider the different alternatives and be prepared for risks (*ibid.*). The focus is choosing of lifestyles and the aspiration to happiness and good life. In the post traditional society individual is responsible for oneself, when the crucial social question is how people control the changing situations of life (*ibid.*). Thus, mundane actions, individual and collective, private and public are important part of also environmental protection. The eco-volunteers have chosen to do something that they think is important in their lives and at the same time they indicate their readiness to contribute for the ecological common good in the context, in which they are participating. Every one of the volunteers is acting according to their own capabilities, knowledge and skills that they have.

The volunteers also thought that it is sometimes difficult to have an influence on solving the environmental problems, because they are, not only complex, but also handled mostly in high political level. However, they also thought, in spite of this, that also the all the actions have an influence to the state of the environment. Therefore it is good to make a difference between the different levels of environmental politics, but also to add that they are not totally separated from each other. One way to do it is to divide environmental politics into *small* and *big environmental politics* (Massa & Haverinen 2001, 22, own translation). In this division the small politics means the action that takes place in the world of individual and families and the big environmental politics means the politics that is occurring in the macro level (*ibid.*). Of course these two levels of environmental politics also meet, and that happen often through the individual or the family. Therefore the changes that happen in the level of individual people, the changes in the every day activities have an effect also to the big environmental politics.

The concept of ecological citizenship, as discussed before, emphasizes the global dimension of environmental responsibility (e.g. Barry 1999; Dobson 2003). The volunteers were also considering the global environmental problems as something that one can, through everyday life choices, have an influence. However, the concreteness of the oil-combating, seeing the results of the work right away, was seen as a good reason to participate in organised voluntary action.

It should be underlined, that this study is not able to identify a certain group of perfect ecological citizens that would represent a larger group of similar people. The people that were examined in this study are trying to find an ecological basis for their lives. The volunteers regard themselves as normal citizens, however, perhaps a bit more environmentally oriented than some others. In the

research that was dealing with Finns and the environment (see pp 13-14 in this study) a group of people that are more environmentally responsible or more environmentally conscious, at least in the level of action, was found. If the people that were studied here would like to be categorized into something, they would be people in this category. Volunteers of this study are, at some level, closing the gap that exists between the rhetoric and reality. They have a dream of an active citizen – both by being active in mundane life, also by aiming to reach a better environment collectively.

The role of environmental organisations in creation of ecological citizenship should not be undermined. On one hand, environmental organisations are seen important actors in creating transferring the professional environmental language to be understandable for normal people (Eyerman & Jamison 1991). On the other hand, the environmental organisations function as mediators of possibilities to carry out the environmentally responsible life choices. One example of this is the one that is used in this paper, the organisation of the action of voluntary oil-combating group. However, the fact is also that WWF needs its volunteers. Without the contribution of voluntary work many of its actions would be impossible to carry out. Although, there have been suggestions that the both need of voluntary work and the influence of environmental organisations in general would be diminishing (e.g. Väliverronen 1996; Eder 1996), it seems not to be the case in WWF Finland. As was discussed above, the character of the voluntary work might have changed, however, not the willingness of people to do it. Thus, volunteers are an important part of the activity of WWF Finland.

As has been discussed so far, ecological citizenship is created by acting both in the private realm of life as well as within the environmental organisation. However, it is not enough just to state that voluntary work is important for the environment, individuals or for the environmental organisations. Indeed, it is important to see voluntary work as part of a broader cultural system of ecological citizenship, and in a sense, anchor this type of activity to a larger picture. Ecological citizenship, as it is understood in this study, provides a kind of tool to promote the activity of an individual in dealing with environmental problems. In this way, voluntary work for the environment provides a social or individual feedback mechanism for coping with environmental problems.

CONCLUSION – ON THRESHOLD OF ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP

This thesis reviewed a possibility to create ecological citizenship through voluntary collective action, and as an example of this, the action of voluntary oil-combating group of WWF Finland was made use of. From this review it can be concluded that although there are several actions that can be classified as actions of an ecological citizen, one of them is collective voluntary work for the environment. This is what WWF's voluntary oil-combating group is also about. Although the action of the group might neither be the greenest, nor epoch-making, however, while it has been widely noticed that a sustainable society is rather impossible to reach without changes in the behaviour of individuals and that voluntary action is possibly the main way in which citizens can make their contribution to sustainable society, ecological citizenship in all its shades, can act as a motivation for these changes. In general, this kind of activity can be regarded as an attempt to also break the wall between the individual and collective action, as it is in a way collective work done individually. To do eco-volunteering has been an individual choice, however, there is a willingness to have an influence in a larger scale.

A rather obvious result of the example of collective voluntary work that was used in this study is that the meanings of voluntary work vary depending on who you ask. Voluntary work has different meanings to different people, also motives to do it differs from people to people. However, in the case of oil spill clean up group, the common criteria why people volunteer is the common concern about the future of the environment – in this case the future of the Baltic Sea. Perhaps this work is just the beginning for many to realise and interpret the environmental problems in more profound way. Moreover, to sum up these meanings and importance, the most important goal seems to be that people – the ones doing the voluntary work as well as the ones in way or an other affected by it – will wake up to the reality and their situation in it, and will start to act in order to make betterments that they think are good for the environment. After this awakening people will abandon keeping quiet and being passive and thus will take the opportunities to make one's voice heard. This includes also that these people will refuse shifting the responsibility to others. In other words, this is a process of learning. Thus, what ecological citizenship means is to act and expand this action every day.

The action of the volunteers is thus guided by a strong need to do something good for the environment, and doing it in the way, that one considers it to be the right thing to do. Important is also that the voluntary work suites well for the person and that it easy to access. Moreover, especially the concreteness of this specific action was considered to be very important. The mundane environmental actions are weighed carefully, and thinking about the real consequences of the actions. Not only to be happy about buying an ecologically friendly-labelled product, but thinking about the necessity of buying itself. Moreover, from most of the answers the inadequacy of just to donate money to environmental protection shined through the answers.

An important observation is also that the creation of the opportunities to act is important. The volunteers thought that the organised action of oil-combating as a convenient way to participate. Moreover, volunteers are an important resource work and creator of visibility and reliability. Therefore, more attention should be paid on the role of the environmental organisations as giving the opportunities for individuals to have an influence. It goes to show that providing opportunities to take part in environmental action is a task for not only of environmental organisations, but also other quarters of the society. In the future, this is going to be a great task for the whole society.

In short, in the ecological citizenship, the question is not only about the environment or individuals, but also about how we define ourselves and our society. Ecological citizenship is an ethical request, and the requirements of it are directed at all of us and the everyday life choices of ours. To say it in other words: “The ecological crisis is not simply a combination of technical problems to be ‘solved’, but also a set of collective moral dilemmas” (Barry 1999, 200). Collective voluntary work is not creating the complete picture of ecological citizenship; however, it is a meaningful part of a larger whole. Thus, collective voluntary action can be seen as one component of a broader cultural system of ecological citizenship, and therefore it can be considered provide a sort of social feedback mechanism for dealing with environmental problems. Thus, ecological citizenship is possible and one possibility to create it is voluntary work for the environment. To conclude with, in the last analysis, in the level of persons, let them be individuals or citizens, sustainable development is about changing the lifestyles, and this of course concerns everyone.

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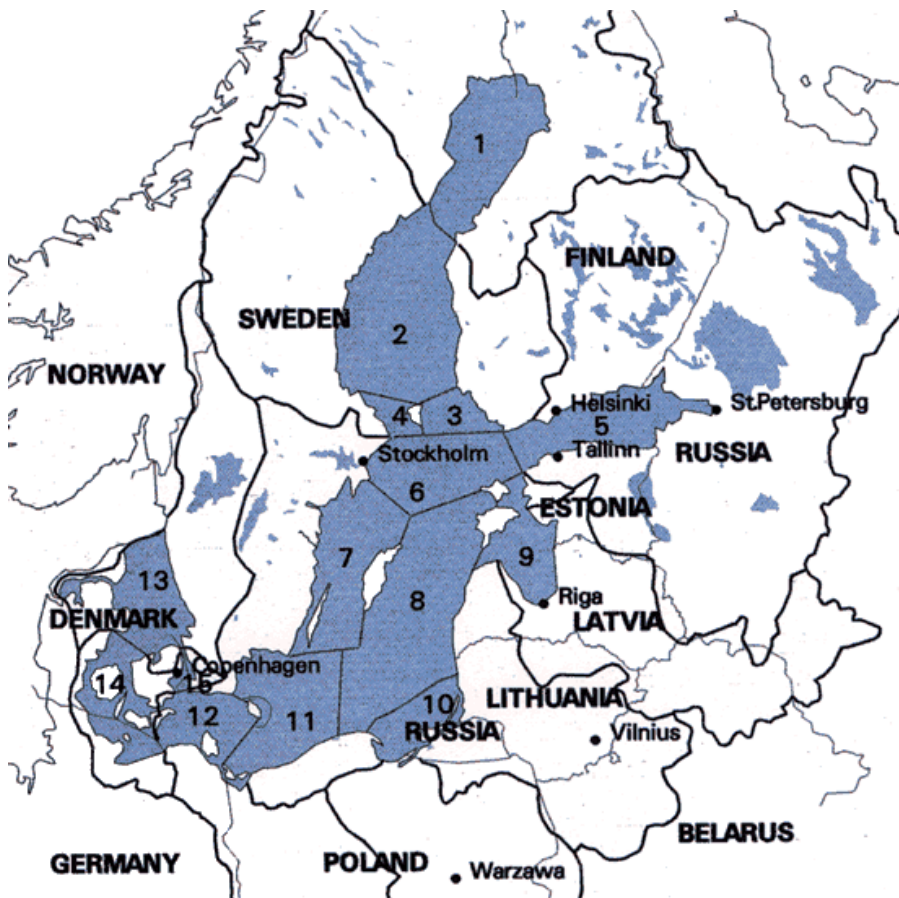
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* The translation of the titles of the referred material from Finnish to English is done by the author.

APPENDIX 1 - MAP OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION



1. Bothnian Bay
2. Bothnian Sea
3. Archipelago Sea
4. Åland Sea
5. Gulf of Finland
6. Northern Baltic Proper
7. Western Gotland Basin
8. Eastern Gotland Basin
9. Gulf of Riga
10. Gdansk Basin
11. Bornholm Basin
12. Arkona Basin
13. Kattegat
14. Belt Sea
15. The Sound

By courtesy of VTT (<http://www.baltic.vtt.fi/demo/baltmap.htm>)