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A collaborative approach to developing a shared morality to protect the natural environment

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Doctor of Philosophy
in Philosophy



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A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, (...)

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty,

not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts

of those who look only for gain

at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation,

to recognize that we are profoundly united

with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle

for justice, love and peace.

FRANCIS, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of the Holy Father Francis.*

On Care for Our Common Home.

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Abstract

Given the limitations of current governmental approaches in influencing people to take pro-environmental action, especially in the longer term, this thesis explores whether a shared morality towards nature can be developed. Focusing on one community in the UK, the thesis investigates the potential of this alternative approach, the means by which it can be developed and implemented, and its effectiveness. Through an exercise in practical philosophy which uses a variety of methods (a focus group, a questionnaire, multiple interviews, and a debriefing session), the research finds considerable public appetite for such an approach, and works with participants to first construct and then deploy a 'moral code' for environmental protection. The development and implementation of the approach prove effective amongst both 'green' and 'non-green' participants. It raises people's awareness of the consequences of their unsustainable actions and motivates them to be more environmentally conscious. It also brings wider, collective benefits such as community well-being and mutual support. These findings indicate that a shared morality strategy to fostering respect for nature has significant potential. It could be rolled out in other settings and could usefully inform future policy-making aimed at environmental protection as well as wider active models of citizenship.

Key words:

shared morality; environmental protection; pro-environmental action; politics of climate change; environmental policy and governance; behavioural change; values and frames in nature conservation; ethics and the environment; citizen engagement and participation;

moral motivation; respect for nature; moral learning; case study research design; mixed methods research.

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If ensuring a sustainable future is a cooperative endeavour, I am confident that human beings can embrace 'a life that is rich in ends and simple in means, where the focus is on being rather than having, where one treads more lightly on the planet and shows kindness to one's fellows, humans and non-humans alike' (Hayward 2012: 846). Finally, I trust that by aligning the right kind of values across climate change communications, challenging unhelpful frames and defining a shared morality, people would be able to regain the (radical) hope that global cooperation and local engagement and participation for environmental protection are indeed possible.

1. Introduction

The Earth has a long history of interdependence between its species and ecosystems and a steady evolution of the natural order. Taking into consideration the whole existence of the planet, Homo sapiens managed to drastically transform the environment within several thousands of years for the benefit of their species (Carson 2000). People became so confident in their capability to alter the surrounding environment that they took on the mission of conquering the Earth entirely. They were not a part of nature anymore but a superior being. As a result, the entire functioning of the planet has become so profoundly affected by human civilisation that the current geological epoch was become named the Anthropocene.

Certainly, the planet can readjust itself from being affected by human population growth and overconsumption. However, the recovery will not be calm and steady considering the severe interference of mankind (Ceballos et al. 2017). The seemingly indefinite expansion in economic growth and human 'well-being' will soon stagnate and will be followed by a rapid decline, due to Earth's resources being finite and unable to support people's unlimited wants (Leopold 1949). In the last century, we began to experience more serious ecological, economic and social effects of anthropogenic climate change with each passing year, like air contamination, sea level rises, extreme weather events, habitat loss, global mass extinction of species, and the transformation of land by deforestation and overexploitation. It is human advancement, and more specifically modern industrialised society and its abundant lifestyles, which accounts for all these.

In consequence, all signs point to people acknowledging and taking responsibility to make changes in their behaviour in order to ensure a more sustainable future for humanity, other species, the ecosystems, and the Earth as a whole. As Jamieson (1992: 151) notes, the climate change phenomenon 'confronts us with questions about who we are, our relations to nature, and what we are willing to sacrifice' for the prospects of a better world.

In an attempt to look for strategies to address anthropogenic climate change from a collective perspective, our research study is concerned with motivating pro-environmental action and inspiring citizen engagement and participation in community settings. Hence, the thesis takes the form of a normative enquiry premised on the initial assumption that groups of people can collaborate in defining a shared morality for environmental protection¹ at the local level. More specifically, we are interested in exploring the process of motivation for action in the light of our original question 'can a sense of moral responsibility towards nature be cultivated?' and in stimulating the development of moral character and the attitude of respect for the Earth (as a living 'organism' with a good of its own).

The next part of this introduction outlines the purpose of the thesis in more detail and makes the case for its overall importance. Then, the second section presents the

¹ The terms 'environmental protection' and 'nature conservation' are used interchangeably in this thesis to refer to human practices directed towards maintaining the integrity of all species, populations and ecosystems and ensuring the well-functioning of the Earth, as a whole.

background and context of the research study and engages with the significant debate in the academic literature surrounding how pro-environmental behaviours may be influenced, and what the most effective ways of motivating moral agents in changing harmful lifestyles might be. The third part of this introduction then sets the aims of the thesis and refers to the questions that will guide our enquiry, arguing in favour of a shared morality approach to motivating attitude change for environmental protection at the local level. Finally, the last section presents the structure of the thesis and outlines some of the topics that will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

1.1. Importance of research

The purpose of this study is to explore the possibility of there being a shared morality in a community setting which might underpin attitudes and practices in respect to environmental protection. The direction of the overall argumentation is to study the development of moral character and conduct in the context of anthropogenic climate change and then to encourage people to collaborate for nature conservation at the local level. Ultimately, we plan to develop a methodology for defining a shared morality within a collective and to evaluate its practicability in motivating pro-environmental action in the long term. The significance of this study lies in the proposition that a shared morality will raise moral awareness and empathic concern for nature conservation and will bring attention to the positive contribution that every individual can make at the local level, while actively becoming involved in joint initiatives.

A shared morality approach to motivating attitude change could be judged as idealistic, considering the widespread belief that ‘human beings are greedy and selfish by nature’ and the difficulty of facing the large-scale challenges of climate change. However, just like beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes, a person’s moral character can be further developed because it is ‘at least in part historically constructed, rooted in the conditions of life in which they developed. What we need are new values that reflect the interconnectedness of life on a dense, high-technology planet’ (Jamieson 1992: 150). By employing the concept of shared morality in this research study, we are able to propose a collective strategy for nurturing the attitude of respect for nature and for reframing the environmental narrative to overcome climate scepticism and inspire more sustainable lifestyles in the future.

1.2. The background and context of the study

The interdisciplinary nature of anthropogenic climate change and its global impacts makes it a controversial topic of research. There are not many existing studies of our kind that we can draw on. This in itself is a clear justification for the necessity of the current one. Attempts have been made to propose possible strategies for influencing behavioural change for sustainability – e.g. McKenzie-Mohr 2000; Rose et al. 2007; Darnton 2008; Defra 2008; Thaler and Sunstein 2009; Crompton 2010; Lakoff 2010b; Defra 2011; Dolan et al. 2012; Schwartz 2012; PIRC 2013; Poortinga and Darnton 2016; Common Cause Foundation 2018. However, these studies have not always displayed solid and detailed intellectual grounding, and they have also often not appreciated the specific features of the issue in sufficient depth. This is precisely what we intend to do here. In what follows,

the concepts, problems and questions which are fundamental to our enquiry are brought together to provide background and context and to indicate the gap we are going to address and fill.

The interdisciplinary nature of our enquiry required us to keep a completely open mind, and we invested a lot of time and effort in developing a robust rational foundation, achieving objectivity of judgement and getting satisfying outcomes out of the process of data analysis. Our subject of research required us to explore a tremendous amount of resources and publications in more than one academic field including the politics of climate change, environmental policy and governance, behavioural change and social psychology, ethics and the environment, social research strategies and computer-assisted data analysis. We worked hard to overcome the challenges of interdisciplinary study in order to make the case that philosophers do not need to pass the climate change matter to experts in other disciplines on the premise that the investigation is far too demanding and very selective if not, impossible (Gardiner 2004).

Human society is rooted in the anthropocentric worldview that Homo sapiens are the most significant species of all; a conviction, profoundly embedded in people's cultures and consciences to the present day. This firmly held belief and the favouring of the human perspective seem to be the seeds of the problems and the harms created by moral agents (Hayward 2012). People do not take responsibility or do not provide any compensation for the individual and collective consequences of their everyday actions. This situation, combined with a need for comfort and the excuse for exploitation of non-human things, in turn, generates a tragedy of the commons. As noted by Gardiner (2004:

565), 'if we knew exactly what was going to happen, to whom, and whose emissions would cause it, the [climate change] problem might be more easily addressed' but, in the current situation, to consider ourselves helpless bystanders is not the response we urgently need. The phenomenon generates discomfort and conflict of interests hence moral agents tend not to assimilate information and communications which would affect or force them to reconsider the standard of living they happily enjoy at present (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002).

In consequence, the fundamental challenge is to change the popular mindset and the immediate intuitions of individuals in order to accept an ecocentric outlook on nature – that is the view that the other species, populations, and ecosystems have inherent worth and represent vital components to life on Earth. To motivate people to acquire respect for nature is indeed a difficult task as it 'is likely to raise serious, and perhaps uncomfortable, questions about who we are and what we want to be' (Gardiner 2006: 402). Yet moral agents of today's society can no longer ignore the obligations of compensation and reparation to the planet, as a whole (Taylor 2011).

In order to organise human activity in ways to be ecological possible to sustain into the ideally indefinite future, people need to redefine their concept of living well (i.e. consuming substantially less and undertaking experiments in simplicity) by putting their imaginative excellence at work (Thompson 2010). The quotation that appears at the beginning of the thesis, taken from the 2015 Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father Francis is written within the scope of encouraging people in their 'struggle for justice, love and peace' (Francis 2015). To improve the prospects of future generations to

flourish, we need radical hope and the commitment of moral agents to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in the long term.

Our enquiry was significantly inspired by Booth's (2009) article 'A Motivational Turn for Environmental Ethics' where she writes that the field should start promoting activism to turn moral ideals concerning nature conservation into practice. Unfortunately, we lack empirically grounded theories to use to stimulate pro-environmental behaviours and therefore our understanding of the psychological mechanisms involved in triggering people's motivation for action is still minimal. What one ought to do depends on what others do, and individuals have different views on what should be done for environmental protection. People also have different degrees of commitment to change. Moreover, according to the 'value-action gap', a person's values and attitudes are not directly connected to appropriate action (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002) and people's behaviour is also hard to predict. Given all this, more research work is needed to determine the motivational factors involved in the process of taking action.

Given these circumstances, we took up the challenge of trying to tighten the gap between one's values and being sufficiently motivated to act as a consequence of these. Modern people live their life away from nature and, due to this alienation, they are often no longer aware of the interdependent connections that exist at the planetary level, and for many, environmental protection has no particular meaning. Therefore, our enquiry into finding an effective strategy for attitude change explored the development of meaning in life and stimulated the adoption of pro-environmental behaviours with the scope of creating a better world.

Anthropogenic climate change has exposed us to a complicated problem that our current way of thinking is not yet well-prepared to solve. By viewing climate change and its impacts as moral challenges, we can bring these 'into the domain of dialogue, discussion, and participation. Rather than being management problems that governments or experts can solve for us, when seen as ethical problems, they become problems for all of us to address, both as political actors and as everyday moral agents' (Jamieson 1992: 150). The normative discourse can help us to organise our thinking about what ought to be done and can motivate action by moral assessment, examining the ways we live our lives at present and questioning the kind of societies we wish to build for the future. In addition to duties and responsibilities acknowledged by moral agents, the scope of successfully tackling human-caused climate change will require mankind to revise its conception of respect for nature and to abandon its old mission of 'conqueror of the land-community' (Leopold 1949: 204). Given this, the expertise of practical philosophers is needed to turn the focus away from the hopeless doom of climate change towards the subject of moral motivation for nature conservation.

There is plenty of evidence to believe that a flourishing future for the Earth is indeed possible. As awareness and concern about anthropogenic climate change increase, the interdependent connections between people and nature become evident, and everyone should be expected to assume the collective duty of ensuring a more sustainable future. Much of the climate change debate involves what nations, governments or individuals should do to address the phenomenon and its impacts (e.g. Lucas et al. 2008; Parliament of the United Kingdom 2008; Collier et al. 2010; Roberts 2010; Defra 2011a; Connelly et al. 2012; United Nations 2015; Committee on Climate Change 2016c). But what about

what groups of people could do at the collective level? The collective is indeed a strong tool for change. As Connelly (2006: 69) observes, 'if people were always already perfect specimens of the self-interested utility maximizer assumed in the rational choice literature, we would never be able to account even for the levels of voluntary environmental activity that we see around us day by day'. Therefore, by bringing individuals together to deliberate, negotiate, and resist, and by motivating action based on the contribution one could make at the local level, we can ensure people have strong ties to others in the collective. Local action for nature conservation could be sustained in the long term but only by developing a thorough understanding of in-group connections between individuals and how cumulative duties and responsibilities are embraced, and then managed by the group. Accordingly, the community setting should be considered an essential channel, and even a constitutive instrument, to be used in the process of motivating moral agents to give up harmful habits.

1.3. The key aims of our enquiry

As has been stated, this thesis will argue in favour of a collaborative approach to defining a shared morality for environmental protection in community settings. Such an enquiry is ambitious considering the large amount of interdisciplinary literature to be investigated and the lack of normative studies of this kind which could have offered us a solid foundation for advancement. In spite of that, we introduce a critical social science perspective to people's empowerment for environmental protection and do this by way of a case study research design. The thesis focuses on activism, where action is motivated not by political force but by citizen engagement and participation. However, if we manage

to build a strong argument demonstrating that groups of people can collaborate in developing a shared morality at the local level, we can then pursue a more explicitly path to put our normative strategy into practice.

The main aims of the study underline the need for approaches (such as the present one) that will ensure a well-functioning Earth in the future and help people to improve their character and avoid causing unnecessary harm. The hope for change rests in open-hearted dialogue and in facilitating moral learning in civic spaces of joint practices, where people can address each other directly, take the time to listen to experiences and opinions, and realise once and for all that climate change is not just another technical problem to be managed by others.

Our first aim is finding an alternative way to connect abstract and very global climate change to the local context. Hence, a shared morality strategy will play a vital role in engaging the minds of people, and then their hands, to action. We plan to work directly with human subjects to find effective methods to increase their involvement in the community. We will pay careful attention not to impose our strategy of activating a person's motivation and strengthening specific beliefs, values and frames in any way. Instead, we are focussed on inspiring citizen engagement and participation for nature conservation. Our enquiry puts people at the heart of a more sustainable future in order to drive attitude change and provides a safe space for thinking about harmful habits, deliberating together and coming up with interventions. This whole approach can be applied, monitored and refined locally.

In view of this, our second aim is to show that groups of people can collaborate, by realising the individual and collective impacts of everyday actions and by highlighting the importance of one's contribution to the common good at the local level. We do not need to become fixated on separating people into segmented groups to control unsustainable lifestyles and to manipulate people's choices. On the contrary, we intend to explore the differences in motivation by coming together and listening to each other, and in so doing, taking the opportunity to investigate the resistance of non-greens to act pro-environmentally and address this resistance adequately. Based on people's empathy and cooperative instinct, we plan to demonstrate the motivational capacity of community settings and reveal the potential for working in partnership with others to generate new ideas, insights and maximise citizen engagement and participation. Hence, our proposed strategy will generate shared beliefs, values and the attitude of respect for nature and strengthen people's sets of intrinsic values and identities as citizens.

Ultimately, our third aim is to endorse hands-on moral learning in a civic space of joint practices, as an effective instrument that can boost people's motivation to adopt an ecocentric conception of flourishing human life. If we think of morality as a skill to be acquired, then we will have a starting framework for the development of moral character and responsible conduct for nature conservation, provided that citizens, community groups and other local actors are willing to engage in such an exercise. A collective (shared) morality would be a catalyst in shaping the interdependent relationship between people and nature, facilitating a continual recommitment to each other and supporting the in-group duty of environmental protection. Our strategy does not imply that there is one apparent moral standard that everyone is meant to subscribe to. Instead, we root our

initiative of motivating pro-environmental behaviours in what we can agree on, not on what we cannot. In working to define a shared morality at the local level, it is very likely that moral agents will agree on at least some of the necessary preconditions for human existence in harmony with nature within which a collective develops its own conception of the common good. There are very few studies in practical philosophy that aim to bring morality into discussion at a table of non-philosophers and develop applied uses for it at the local level. Therefore, the current thesis hopes to encourage ethicists to develop further and defend the use of morality in practice, and to propose future normative approaches to addressing anthropogenic climate change and its impacts.

Of course, as with any study, there are limitations to this enquiry. Most obviously we recognise that there are limits to the generalisability of the study's findings given that the enquiry is based on research conducted in one specific place and with a particular community of individuals (see section 5.1.). However, and as will be explained in greater detail, we have tried to mitigate these concerns through careful research design and by making use of multiple research methods which combine quantitative and qualitative approaches (see section 5.2.). Throughout, we have also attempted to keep our discussion of our findings and results and their potential impact measured and balanced. That is, we have done our best not to over-conclude or to over-promise.

1.4. Thesis structure and content

This chapter has set out the topic of research, has outlined its importance, and has clarified the main aims of the enquiry. The next chapter – Chapter 2 – moves on to

explore the most popular governmental approaches to changing behaviours for sustainability, as implemented in the UK. We investigate laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing, all of which are used to address unsustainable practices. In exploring these tools, it becomes clear that the UK Government has concentrated its approaches on influencing people to act by chance, not choice, and often without allowing them to understand why a particular behaviour is the right one. In light of this, we argue that these governmental approaches need to be used in conjunction with other types of motivational strategies to ensure that individuals are committed to adopting more sustainable lifestyles in the long term.

Given these findings, Chapter 3 concentrates on value-based strategies for fostering pro-environmental attitudes. Here, we discuss activating cultural and social frames and strengthening certain kinds of values in order to motivate citizen engagement and participation in environmental protection. In our quest to address harmful behaviours towards nature, we endorse an active model of citizenship, talking about the rights and duties of global citizens. By bringing groups of people together (at the local level) and promoting awareness of the contribution every person can make to nature conservation, we place people at the heart of a sustainable future. In short, environmental-related citizenship calls for a commitment to justice and the acknowledgement of the interdependent relationship human beings have with nature.

Chapter 4 then advances our collaborative approach to developing a shared morality for environmental protection in community settings. We discuss the philosophical background to our enquiry, stating that moral agents have the collective duty to ensure a

more sustainable future and arguing in favour of using the ecocentric outlook to inspire attitude change. As far as duties and responsibilities towards the planet are concerned, a person's character expresses respect for nature when it enables her to preserve the existence of all Earth's entities and avoid causing unnecessary harm. In addition, we investigate beliefs and moral judgements as principles of behaviour to be used as motivational enhancements of pro-environmental action. We employ an externalist position in the theory of moral motivation that increases people's awareness and concern for nature conservation, based on the formation and realisation of moral judgements and the development of a shared morality at the local level. A shared morality consists of an in-group set of norms, principles and standards incorporated into a declarative code of practice expected to improve people's moral reasoning and stimulate engagement and participation.

Having made the case for a value-based strategy for fostering pro-environmental attitudes and a collaborative approach to developing a shared morality locally, Chapter 5 presents the methodology of the enquiry. It includes a comprehensive description and justification of the research design adopted, the sampling strategy employed, the data collection methods used, and the data analysis strategy. Notwithstanding the use of some quantitative elements in some of our methods, our methodology is mainly qualitative in nature, reflecting the concept of the social world and people's life in society. The focus is on people's beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes and on any perceived duty of care for nature, and it is also on behavioural expectations, norms and standards that might be developed within a community, to which individuals in a social group might be motivated to conform.

Chapter 6 then moves to discuss our findings and results and in doing so explores whether a shared morality can indeed be developed at the local level, and if it can, how it can then be deployed in the context of environmental protection. The fieldwork will provide a better understanding of what a shared morality is, whether it really exists, and, if it does, how we might define it. If our strategy proves to be successful in practice, we will have grounds for highlighting the positive effects of in-group relationships, which provide a common space for people to work together and which can inspire long-lasting lifestyle changes at the local level. Having argued that a shared morality does indeed exist, this chapter then moves on to investigate whether a moral code can be developed, and if one can, what it might look like, how it can be communicated, and how effective it could be. Based on our participants' active involvement in the research activities, we showed that a moral code could be developed. Thus, we are in a position to argue that the abstract identity of a collective can be translated into concrete norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character for environmental protection. In consequence, we will demonstrate the extraordinary potential of a community setting in bringing people of together to innovate and implement collaborative initiatives for nature conservation at the local level.

Finally, the concluding chapter – Chapter 7 – summarises the contribution of our research study and presents its implications, potential applications and recommendations. In addition, it suggests how our findings and results might further influence the understanding and the application expertise in the field of politics of climate change, and it also outlines directions for future potential work in the field.

1.5. Final remarks

As has already become evident in the description of the chapters that are to come, the current thesis makes the case that the development of a shared morality to protect the natural environment is indeed possible. This outcome, and the research on which it is based represents the culmination of a long-held desire to research this subject. Indeed, years ago the researcher witnessed the ability of people to come together and collaborate to take action locally, by sharing beliefs, values and attitudes, but she found it difficult to explain and convince other audiences of the potential of such in-group morality to motivate pro-environmental behaviours². As a consequence, she decided to work to establish the theoretical foundations of such a strategy and to devise practical applications that might see it become a reality.

The outcome is one of optimism. That is, our enquiry has shown that people are capable of change and can find the motivation to contribute to the well-being of their community, no matter what their background is. From what we gathered, a more sustainable future will require us to reconsider the beliefs, values and attitudes that underlie the choices we make and only dialogue, engagement, and participation strategies (such as the one presented here) are guaranteed to nurture people's sense of moral responsibility towards nature. The thesis suggests that there is good potential for the approach to be applied to other settings, and for it to be embraced not only by academics but also by practitioners,

² The researcher has twelve-year experience in the roles of student representative, volunteer leader and youth educator, working with collectives both in academia and the non-governmental sector in Europe. Being part of these communities of practice, she gained valuable leadership and management skills and got involved directly in planning, implementation and monitoring of different youth activities and projects, including pro-environmental initiatives.

campaigners and other agents of change. Thus, even though the challenge of tackling anthropogenic climate change and its impacts is an extremely daunting one, the outcome achieved by this enquiry is very exciting.

2. UK Government's approach to changing behaviours for sustainability

In the 2008 Climate Change Act, the UK Government pledged to achieve a 35% reduction (below 1990 levels) in CO₂ emissions by 2020. As '75% of UK carbon emissions are from the products and services [people] buy and use', we will argue that effective approaches and instruments for behavioural change are essential to ensure the government keeps its promises (Defra 2011c: 5). In this chapter, we will investigate current strategies to influencing pro-environmental behaviour adopted by the UK Government.

However, first, we shall explain how we relate to behaviour in the context of environmental protection and define the mental states that we will refer to in our enquiry. Thus, behaviour is the practical way in which a person conducts herself and the sum of her actions and habits. Someone's practice or routine is motivated by attitudes which rest within herself; hence, behaviour (which is external) is a consequence of the totality of internal attitudes that determine a person's actions and habits. Furthermore, attitudes represent people's response to their surroundings, based on experience and observation and are shaped by beliefs and moral judgements. Beliefs are mental states that invoke a person's truths (firmly held opinions), and moral judgements are standards of behaviour, indicating what people ought to do. In short, beliefs and moral judgements impact attitudes; attitudes motivate actions; repeated actions become habits, and all these together form our behaviour. The UK policy agendas discussed here work to influence people's actions and habits which in turn, impact their behaviour. In this

chapter, we will argue that behavioural change strategies, which shape attitudes are the ones which will encourage people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in the long term.

Our enquiry into finding an alternative to encouraging people to act pro-environmentally will start by studying the challenges, contradictions and limits of popular governmental approaches like legislation and social marketing. These can influence people to take the 'right' actions in the short term; however, when all incentives are stopped, only the self-motivated will stick to their environmental commitments. Hence, we argue that the UK Government does not set a straightforward connection between the carbon emissions reduction needed and people's duty to protect the natural world. At the same time however, it is worth noting that the dissertation is not focused only on environmental policy and so for reasons of length, we only examine the merits and weaknesses of these governmental approaches, to be able to build a stronger framework for an alternative initiative for cultivating pro-environmental behaviour.

In the first section, we will present the legislative approach to nature conservation, which regulates human behaviour to ensure people do not harm the environment. Here, we will argue that laws and regulations are not favoured in contemporary environmental policy-making, as perhaps they used to be. In the second section, we will discuss the social marketing approaches to influencing human behaviour: nudging and Defra's segmentation model. In the third section, we will explore an 'optimal mix' of governmental approaches to encourage more sustainable lifestyles in the future. Finally, in the fourth section, we will propose a collaborative alternative to generate behavioural

change in a community setting and so, motivate groups of people to adopt eco-friendly practices.

2.1. The British legislative approach towards sustainability

As environmental problems have ‘a transboundary nature’, the EU supports effective policy-making and helps all member states (including, the UK) tackle climate change and promote a sustainable European future (Connelly et al. 2012). The EU is a treaty-based supranational trade organisation, considered ‘one of the most influential bodies of environmental law in the world’ (Baldock et al. 2016: 6). The EU legislation on environment and climate change strives ‘to ensure the careful use of natural resources, to minimise adverse environmental impacts of production and consumption, and to protect biodiversity and natural habitats’ (Wysokińska 2016). The environmental policy of the EU is mainly based on command and control directives and regulations to facilitate nature conservation. However, the organisation is also working with ‘new environmental policy instruments’, like voluntary agreements between governments and industry, self-regulated management standards and market-based instruments such as taxes and tradable permits (Connelly et al. 2012: 209). A broad geographical sphere of influence works favourably in the sustainability context; the EU sets out a shared commitment and responsibility and, ‘in many countries, it facilitates a more ambitious approach than they might feel able to adopt if they were acting on their own’ (Baldock et al. 2016: 6). Thus, the EU legal framework and the long-term policy direction (barely present in international agreements) encourage public authorities and private investors to set common objectives and consider the long-lasting effects of environmental degradation.

The governmental departments in charge of the UK's policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote domestic adaptation to climate change are the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) (which became part of Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in July 2016), and the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra). British environmental policy is greatly influenced by the rules and regulations ('to avoid distortions to competition and to prevent governments from lowering national standards to benefit their own industries') dictated by the EU (Baldock et al. 2016: 7). Thus, the domestic legislative approach to environmental protection has been remodelled with the help of the EU, and so, the UK rebuilt its reputation after being called the 'Dirty Man of Europe'. Indeed, as Burns (2013: 1) argues, 'through its EU membership the UK government has been required to put in place a host of policies with strict targets that are legally binding, and to provide regular publicly available reports upon its performance in relation to those targets'.

Between 1990 and 2015 UK greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 38% when the government implemented rules and regulations with significant environmental and health benefits, by using European standards (Committee on Climate Change 2016b). Baldock et al. (2016: 9) argue that the air protection legislation and water and waste management policy of the EU ensured 'better air quality for the UK, dramatic improvements in waste recycling, and much higher quality of bathing waters and rivers and coasts with far lower pollution levels than before'. Simultaneously, the body of EU laws, policies and norms generated a relatively large market for green industries and business opportunities and

promoted the ‘initiative to build a “circular economy” [to] expand this market considerably further’ (Baldock et al. 2016: 7).

At present (July 2018), there is still much uncertainty regarding the future nature of the UK’s regulatory framework and expected impacts on the environment and economy, after the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union. The UK’s progressive environmental policy could be affected by a ‘hard’ Brexit, ‘in the absence of external pressure and auditing from EU actors, particularly in the areas of habitats, birds and bathing water’ (Burns 2013: 1). Baldock et al. (2016: 9) predict that a complete withdrawal from the EU regulatory framework will put pressure on the government to lower environmental standards in order to boost UK’s global competitiveness outside of the single market:

Judging by UK government responses to a range of environmental proposals from the European Commission in recent years, it seems more likely that the current government, and possibly its successors, would opt for a less ambitious approach than that adopted by the EU in a number of areas, including air pollution, recycling, and aspects of nature conservation.

Thus, a hard Brexit is expected to ‘create identifiable and substantial risks to future UK environmental ambition and outcomes’ due to the renewed agreements (in favour of lower standards and lighten compliance procedures) to be signed with the EU and other countries outside Europe (Baldock et al. 2016: 12).

Nevertheless, the 2008 Climate Change Act is the framework for UK action on climate change: ‘a piece of domestic legislation implemented by the UK Parliament as a contribution to global efforts to prevent dangerous climate change’, which will remain applicable after Brexit (Committee on Climate Change 2016b: 5). As stated in the *Government Response to the Committee on Climate Change* (HM Government 2016: 6):

Until (...) negotiations are complete, and the UK exits the EU, our commitment to and our obligations under EU legislation on climate change remain unchanged. We remain fully committed to the UK’s Climate Change Act and the targets under it.

The Act sets targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 35% by 2020 and 80% by 2050, below 1990 levels. The 2050 target is meant to be the UK contribution to a global emissions path aimed at keeping the global average temperature at around 2°C above pre-industrial levels (Committee on Climate Change 2016c). Moreover, the 2008 Climate Change Act requires to establish legally-binding five-year carbon budgets and includes the National Adaptation Plan, which demands ‘the Government to assess the UK’s risks from climate change, prepare a strategy to address them, and encourage critical organisations to do the same’ (Committee on Climate Change 2017). Lastly, the Committee on Climate Change came into existence in 2017 ‘to advise the Government on emissions targets, and report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions’ (Committee on Climate Change 2017).

In addition to the 2008 Climate Change Act, the UK ratified the Paris Climate Agreement in November 2016, ‘under which parties to the Agreement submitted pledges to reduce

emissions by 2030 (...) [and] must also submit their plans for mid-century decarbonisation by 2020' (Committee on Climate Change 2016b: 6). Thus, the agreement describes a higher level of global ambition in emission reduction than the UK's 2008 Climate Change Act. It is meant 'to limit warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. To achieve this aim, the Agreement additionally sets a target for net zero global emissions in the second half of this century' (Committee on Climate Change 2016c: 8). The UK withdrawal from the EU is unlikely to affect the country's support to the Paris Climate Agreement. Rather, as announced in the *Government response to the Committee on Climate Change* (HM Government 2016: 6):

We remain committed to honouring our obligations under the Agreement. The UK is playing its part in delivering the Paris goals through our Climate Change Act 2008 and our legal obligation to reduce emissions by at least 80% by 2050 on 1990 levels.

A hard Brexit is not likely to affect the UK's commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the 2008 Climate Change Act and the 2015 Paris Agreement. The UK's 2050 target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 80% relative to 1990 levels (approximately 160 MtCO_{2e} per year) is achievable in the power sector, the heating sector, and in the transport, mainly due to the help of green alternatives. As the *2016 Progress Report to Parliament* (Committee on Climate Change 2016a: 11) noted:

Emissions have fallen by 13% in the last three years to 38% below 1990 levels in 2015. However, almost all the fall in emissions has been in the power sector, as a result of reduced use of coal and increased generation of electricity from renewables.

However, agriculture, aviation and industry sectors 'are currently not expected to reach zero emissions' and meet the 2050 target (Committee on Climate Change 2016c: 10). In the *Government response to the Committee on Climate Change*, the Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry, Nick Hurd stated:

We know that meeting our carbon targets represents a significant challenge. (...) We all use energy - in our homes, businesses and industry – so this will be a shared challenge, and we will want to engage on our proposed solutions (HM Government 2016: 4).

The UK met the first (2008-2012) and second (2013-2017) carbon budgets, and the government stated that the third carbon budget (2018-2022) would be adhered to.

However, the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (HM Government 2016) declared a 'gap' in meeting the fourth (2023-2027) carbon budget, equivalent to a 51% reduction on 1990 levels (currently projected to be 10% greater than the budget level). Furthermore, the 'gap' to meet the fifth (2028-2032) carbon budget, equivalent to a 57% reduction relative to 1990 levels is currently projected to be 18% greater than the budget level.

Both the 2008 Climate Change Act and the 2015 Paris Agreement put pressure on the UK Government to aim towards long-term behavioural change and convincing people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles for the future. The government has responded to these pressures by asking policymakers to investigate further human behaviour and its motivational triggers in preventing unsustainable actions which in turn, contribute to

reducing greenhouse gas emissions of the British population. Hence, the UK Government is no stranger to shaping people's behaviour for the well-being of society, using 'tools such as legislation, regulation or taxation to achieve desired policy outcomes' (Dolan et al. 2010: 4).

Legislation provides the broad parameters of what is permissible and sets out the provisions for action, with the precise details of the policy tools to be used being left to secondary legislative instruments (laws and regulations). In 1994, the UK government issued its first Sustainable Development Strategy (updates of the document were published in 1999 and 2004) to highlight 'the growing need for national governments to develop and implement policy interventions that are capable of reducing the impact of a wide range of behaviours which have a negative impact on the environment' (Lucas et al. 2008: 457). Laws and regulations will always be necessary instruments in environmental policy-making, however, as Collier et al. (2010: 3) note, these do not always help people understand why their behaviours have an adverse impact on the environment:

Some policies may change behaviours without changing the underlying attitudes and motivations – for example, introducing a tax on a behaviour usually results in a reduction in that behaviour but if the tax is removed any behaviour change will not necessarily be sustained.

In the field of behavioural change, legislation is considered a 'hard' instrument because it restricts 'by law, the choices that an individual person can make in relation to a range of different potential behaviours' (DEA 2011: 2). Indeed, Collier et al. (2010: 3) argue that the legislative approach needs careful handling:

Whether this is reducing behaviours that impose costs on others (pollution) or protecting individuals from behaviours that could harm themselves (unhealthy lifestyles), it is vital that government is able to enact policies that change these behaviours, without imposing undue or disproportionate burdens on individuals or sections of society.

Think Global (DEA 2011: 2) claims that legislation is a 'shove' approach because 'penalty drives the shift in behaviour'. It is also an expensive option, in the sustainability context. Acknowledging the impact of unsustainable habits is vital because '95% of our behaviour is governed by the "automatic mind"', and so, people might perhaps harm nature without even realising it' (Eppel et al. 2013: 33). However, change does not come easily and certain barriers are in place to 'help' people stick to their unsustainable lifestyles, like: 'habitual actions, financial constraints, societal expectations or norms, life and family commitments or simply a lack of access to the facilities needed to enable positive action' (Collier et al. 2010: 3). Hence, addressing these barriers require significant resources over an extended time span so, innovative policy-making approaches are vital to driving sustainable change.

At present, direct regulation for environmental protection is not favoured by the government (Roberts 2010). People do not like being told 'what to do' hence, the 'UK policy makers have tended to prefer to encourage self-regulatory activities, for example, the use of codes of conduct, minimum standards or voluntary agreements that individuals or organisations can sign up to' (Lucas et al. 2008: 457). Still, Crompton (2008: 9) suggested there is room for improvement:

Recommendations may focus on 'choice-editing' (change the legislation such that consumers are no longer offered the choice of less-efficient white goods, for example), or increased taxation on environmentally damaging practices (increase the vehicle excise duty on less-efficient cars, for example).

Financial incentives and disincentives are permitted by legislation, but the precise mechanics of their design and implementation fall under regulation. Hence, a person acts as required when being financially incentivised but, she does not directly consider the importance of sustainability (Dobson 2011). Many people respond positively to incentives and disincentives to get the monetary benefit promised (the reward) or to avoid suffering the financial burden of acting unsustainably (the punishment). When saving money is a priority, financial instruments can motivate a person to act in the 'right' way.

Consequently, policymakers take advantage of people's financial needs to influence them to adopt behaviours that support political aims and objectives (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002: 250). A financial disincentive which drastically changed people's behaviour is the congestion charge in Central London (Connelly et al. 2012: 202). If drivers enter the congestion charge zone on weekdays between 7:00 and 18:00, they must pay a £11.50 daily charge (Transport for London 2017). The congestion charge was introduced in February 2003 and was successful in minimising congestion, reducing pollution in the city centre, and providing financial support to London's transport system (Litman 2011). The downside of this disincentive is that car use will be reduced in Central London only on weekdays between 7:00 and 18:00, and only as long as the congestion charge is in place.

Nonetheless, we should not fail to consider the power of habit. Perhaps, if people are influenced by incentives for long enough, their behaviour might become habitual, and when these are removed, they will keep on acting in the 'right' way. However, carrot and stick strategies are highly sensitive to particular actions and contexts. Further research is needed to evaluate if the already implemented campaigns and projects (which made use of incentives) helped individuals to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. Until then, incentives and disincentives should be employed together with other behavioural change instruments to make sure people get into the habit of acting pro-environmentally in the long term (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002: 249).

In strengthening people's connection to the natural world, policymakers have the capacity to change the status quo of society; yet to be implemented, pro-environmental initiatives demand substantial investments and a broad timeframe. In striving to do so and to deal with the unprecedented environmental crisis, they have acknowledged the need to shift their attention from government to governance. The latter as Connelly et al. (2012 cited in Pierre and Stoker 2000: 32) explain, 'refers to the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred. The essence of governance is its focus on governing mechanisms which do not rest on recourse to the authority and sanctions of government'. As a consequence, the political direction and control exercised by the UK Government have switched to network-based decision-making, and the boundaries between private and public actors have lessened, which in turn has resulted in innovative policy-making approaches for behavioural change.

The government has supported more flexible forms of regulation and has empowered civil society to participate actively in environmental protection with the help of task-specific institutions and organisations. As a result, the governmental approaches to encouraging pro-environmental behaviours have become more efficient 'by public acceptance of, or even demand for, these measures' (Crompton 2008: 25). Hence, UK policymakers have developed plans of action that are in many cases not based on directly controlling individuals as regulation does, but give them the freedom to act sustainably. In the last years, the awareness and concern for environmental protection have increased, so current policy-making strategies include the provision of information, educational initiatives, and support offered to community groups to develop and implement green campaigns. Thus, changing people's behaviour calls for a broad range of approaches to address harmful actions, from laws and regulations to social marketing strategies such as nudging and Defra's segmentation model (discussed below).

To sum up, legislation is a valuable top-down approach. However, in the sustainability context, it needs to be used in conjunction with other behavioural change instruments. Policymakers cannot be expected to develop the most effective instrument to address all environmental problems at once, but rather their focus should be on offering the 'best policy package for a particular purpose, activity to be controlled, and actor' (Dietz and Stern 2002: 11). As such, effective policy-making is about formulating approaches 'dependent on reflecting, reinforcing and shaping attitudes, motivations and norms within a community' (Collier et al. 2010: 4). Social marketing which manipulates people's context - 'the environment within which we make decisions and respond to cues' - and

guides them towards making the 'right' decision, is one such alternative to the legislative approach (Dolan et al. 2010: 8).

2.2. Social marketing in the context of environmental protection

At the moment, social marketing is the most popular approach used by the UK Government to stimulate behavioural change. The UK population responds better to social marketing strategies than to regulations or information provision hence; investments were made to design "small steps", often in the expectation that these will lead individuals to engage in more significant' sustainable practices (Crompton 2008: 14). There are two social marketing approaches worthy of discussion here: the nudge approach and the segmentation model developed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra 2008). However, first, we will define the concept of social marketing to get a better understanding of its relevance to our enquiry.

Social marketing uses commercial marketing knowledge to 'transform society for the greater good', by exploring people's lifestyles, targeting representative audiences and creating practical strategies for behavioural change which encourage specific habits (Saunders et al. 2015: 166). Social marketing is considered a cost-effective alternative to influencing human behaviour because it is applied to specific individual actions, which offer better control over the initiatives to be implemented (Lefebvre 2013). However, the flipside is that social marketing can have limited impact and so, social marketers need to ensure continuous customer engagement so that the target population continues to take the 'right' actions in the long term. In the sustainability context, policymakers have shown

particular interest in 'simple and painless steps' to reduce the carbon footprint of the UK population, which promise a smooth transition towards a greener lifestyle (Crompton 2008: 14). Social marketing is a convenient option because it treats 'climate-friendly activity as a brand that can be sold' and addresses harmful habits without moving away from the consumerist mindset (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 9).

Defra makes use of two instruments in environmental policy-making. On the one hand, it employs MINDSPACE (Dolan et al. 2010) which is 'a quick checklist of those key influences on behaviour that need to be understood and acted upon' (Collier et al. 2010: 40). This is practised by the Behavioural Insights Team (also known as the Nudge Unit) in the design of green nudges and related policies. The Behavioural Insights Team is now independent of the UK Government. It is a so-called a 'social purpose company'; but it remains owned in part by the Cabinet Office, along with employees and Nesta - an 'innovation foundation'. On the other hand, Defra uses the so-called 4Es mapping tool and the segmentation model (Defra 2008) to provide valuable insights to policymakers to create specific plans of actions and implement behavioural change interventions using a segmentation strategy.

Both the nudge approach and Defra's segmentation model isolate 'different sectors of the target audience according to the motivations presumed to underlie [people's] willingness to undertake behavioural change' (Crompton 2008: 5). Crucially, however, while they aim to change or encourage certain habits, these social marketing strategies do not influence people's beliefs and attitudes and do not build their knowledge. They, therefore, fail to encourage a value-based discussion about nature conservation. On the contrary, social

marketing is said to weaken an individual's awareness of the duties towards the natural world. As Crompton (2008: 5) argues, 'the evidence (...) suggests that [social marketing] approaches may actually serve to defer, or even undermine, prospects for the more far-reaching and systemic behavioural changes that are needed'. Having discussed social marketing in general, the chapter will now explore the nudge approach and Defra's segmentation model developed by the UK Government.

2.2.1. The nudge

An innovative approach to influencing pro-environmental behaviour in the UK is nudging. This approach is based on the so-called 'dual process theory' that focused on how people act. More specifically it centres on the question of how conscious people are in their decision making. Put simply it starts from the questions: 'How much of your behaviour is actually caused by conscious decision making followed by an experience of control? If you don't control your actions, then who does?' (Jespersen and Hansen 2012). According to the dual process theory, people could act in a certain way without being totally conscious of the action they take (Evans and Frankish 2009). Hence, the dual process theory explains that the human brain works as a dual-system, which commands two types of actions: automatic actions and reflective actions. By functioning simultaneously in two different manners, the actions we take are directed by different sections of the brain: the automatic system and the reflective system. These systems control 'different processes, different ways of handling information and forming responses' and are opposed (Jespersen and Hansen 2012).

The nudge approach was developed based on this dual process theory and proposes that there is a way of reducing the errors and mistakes caused by people's automatic actions. Furthermore, advocates of nudging argue that in general, people do not make choices that will necessarily improve their lifestyle in the long-term (Thaler and Sunstein 2009). In the sustainability context, nudges could be created to influence an individual to make the 'right' decisions, as the UK population got into the 'automatic habit' of acting unsustainably. Also, choice architects state that the existing value-action gap in environmental protection could be tightened with the help of nudging so, people will 'choose something better without thinking about it' (Jespersen and Hansen 2012).

Therefore, nudging is considered an 'expect error' approach, dividing people into 'econs' and 'humans' (Thaler and Sunstein 2009: 7). Econs are the smart individuals who know how to make the best choices for themselves, whereas, 'humans' are the naïve ones, who need to be nudged to make the 'right' decisions. Accordingly, choice architects design and rearrange contexts to ensure that 'humans' do not make the wrong decisions due to lack of attention or unconscious behaviour. The artificially created settings are called 'default choices' and define a desirable behaviour from the government's perspective (Thaler and Sunstein 2009).

The nudge approach is considered to be more libertarian in comparison to the regulations set by decision-makers (Thaler and Sunstein 2009: 193). Supporters of nudging are against dis/incentives in policy-making because these 'force' individuals to make choices using punishments and rewards (Dolan et al. 2010: 8). Choice architects design nudges, which are said to influence, but not limit free choice. However, this is a rather contested

argument as choice architects offer 'default options' which do influence free choice, and so in practice, people are directed to take action, most often without realising it, rather than being able to choose freely what is best for them.

In 2010, the UK Government set up the Behavioural Insights Team (also known as the Nudge Unit), whose mission was to use the scientific knowledge from behavioural economics in the design and implementation of British public policies. The Nudge Unit serves the UK Government's objective to develop 'intelligent ways to encourage, support and enable people to make better choices for themselves' (Cabinet Office Behavioural Insights Team 2011). The nudges used in the UK are not meant to affect the current lifestyle of the whole population drastically, but rather to directly address the naïve category (of 'humans') and reshape their context of decision-making (Dolan et al. 2010: 8). For instance, the fuel consumption label is a nudge designed to encourage people to buy vehicles with high fuel economy and low CO₂ emissions. The label is colour-coded using a red to green scale, similar to the energy-efficiency rating system applied to 'white goods' (i.e. fridges, washing machines and other large kitchen appliances). Though, this nudge that addresses the invisible human impact on the environment, the buyer will gain an understanding of the CO₂ emissions figures of the vehicle and will be able to measure her carbon footprint resulting from transport.

Other examples of nudging are more complex. For example, the loft insulation initiative proposed by the UK Government show that people do not always respond to simple financial incentives and that more advanced approaches are needed (Department of Energy and Climate Change 2013). The main objective was to reduce the energy

consumption (and hence energy waste) of British households (around 9 million homes in the UK were considered to have poor loft insulation) by offering people financial help when they signed up to the Green Deal energy efficiency scheme. However, adopting a simple financial approach to convincing people of the benefits of loft insulation (the Green Deal loan and cutting energy bills) resulted in an unexpected lack of response. The 'hassle factor' (the stress of clearing their lofts) was the reason people showed signs of resistance to the initiative. Therefore, the Nudge Unit created a nudge that persuaded people to insulate their lofts by providing an additional subsidised 'loft clearance' service, in which a partner (B&Q) offered professional assistance to participating households to manage their stored items and sent the unwanted ones to Cancer Research charity shops. People were three times more likely to get involved in the programme with this help, but the costs to the government and individual households increased (Benedictus 2013).

This example suggests that nudging does not always work out as planned and it underlines many of the problems inherent in nudging. In the first instance this example, along with others, casts doubt on the choice architects' claim that nudging is a 'low-cost and low-pain' approach to changing people's behaviour (Dolan et al. 2010). On the one hand, it would not be cost-effective to put in place nudges to prevent all unsustainable actions a person might take on a daily basis. For example, while supporters of nudging, would argue that, if we want people to recycle, we should ensure that the surrounding environment directs them towards disposing of their waste in the recycling bin, it would, in reality, be difficult to set up recycling bins outdoors to cover all public places. Indeed, it has been observed that even in closed spaces (at work) people find it difficult to recycle (McDonald 2011). On the other hand, as long as the strategy to change unsustainable

practices is low-pain, people will not assume responsibility to protect the natural environment, which requires significant lifestyle changes. Nudging is low-pain because it avoids a discussion about norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character for environmental protection and does not concentrate on working with people's attitudes which lead to harmful actions.

A second criticism of nudging is that the approach manipulates people's choice (Dobson 2011) and that this is not without problems. Proponents of nudging are openly aware of this – indeed an effective nudge is one that impacts on a person's behaviour without her being aware of it - and acknowledge that nudging could change people's behaviour to suit a party's interests. Thaler and Sunstein (2009: 104) recognise that 'as alternatives become more numerous and more complex, choice architects have more to think about, and more work to do and are much more likely to influence choices (for better or for worse)'. But they go on to argue that 'as choices become more numerous, though, good choice architecture will provide structure, and structure will affect outcomes' (Thaler and Sunstein 2009: 104). In that sense then they state that the benefits (or good outcomes) outweigh the risks and they further point out that government, as well as public and private institutions, already influence the choices of the population in the name of society's common good (Thaler and Sunstein 2009: 11).

There is thus an ethical conflict that arises in the implementation of nudges, including green ones. That is, even though choice architects argue that they work to protect the natural environment using nudges, manipulating people's behaviour at a specific moment in time, in the name of sustainability is not ethically acceptable. Supporters of nudging

should take responsibility for the moral implications of the approach and acknowledge that nudging people's behaviour for environmental protection is not appropriate in helping them adopt a sustainable lifestyle in the long term.

In sum, we recognise that the UK Government's role is to serve the public interest in making sure the majority of people take actions that will not affect others and the natural world. However, the governmental strategy is based on easy and fast solutions to a very complex and long-term issue, namely anthropogenic climate change and its threats posed to the Earth, as a whole. Choice architects are spending considerable resources designing artificial contexts that 'command' people to automatically take the 'right' actions and yet these initiatives are unlikely to have a significant impact in influencing pro-environmental behaviour. Furthermore, as well as being nudged into more sustainable lifestyles, people are also encouraged to increase their consumption of goods and services, which in turn end up harming the environment. As such, the UK population is exposed to conflicting values. There is no such thing as a value-free governmental tool to change people's behaviour. Hence, we state that all approaches discussed here, reinforce or inspire certain kinds of values of the population. However, to avoid working with people's attitudes and by ensuring that any lifestyle change is 'low-pain', our reaction time to tackling anthropogenic climate change will prove to be extremely slow. In the following section, we will be looking at Defra's segmentation model used to stimulate behavioural change and we will evaluate its practicality in the sustainability context.

2.2.2. Defra's segmentation model

As discussed above, nudges tailor the context of decision-making, guide individuals to act sustainably and make lifestyle changes easier. In addition to nudges, governments can make use of segmentation models that divide a population into target audiences based on 'service usage, buying behaviour, lifestyle, location and so on' – in order to bring effective change and manage resources (Barnett and Mahony 2011: 12). Segmentation initiatives involve looking at population profiles, on the premises that 'not all individuals will respond favourably to interventions or communications that have been designed for the "statistical everyman"' (Poortinga and Darnton 2016: 221). Such models separate people into distinct groups to create tailored approaches 'designed to fit around individuals' existing lifestyles', that will motivate them to adopt specific behaviours (Poortinga and Darnton 2016: 222). In general, a broader segmentation consists of different areas of expertise to cover a wide spectrum of audiences. However, a limited segmentation model based on 'a small set of profiling variables and/or focused on a single topic or domain, (...) may lead to poorly differentiated and unidimensional models' (Poortinga and Darnton 2016: 222). At times, segmentation might seem discriminatory being 'oriented by the imperative to divide a population up and to differentially supply different segments' however, the aim is 'to recognise diversity in order to enhance inclusiveness' (Barnett and Mahony 2011: 11). Thus, segmentation is considered a useful approach for policymakers because it addresses particular publics but, thorough research is needed to develop a strong model to influence pro-environmental action. The drawback of segmentation approaches is the lack of insight into people's behaviour, as these are not so much concerned with working with motivation for environmental protection in the long term.

Next, we move on from a general discussion of segmentation to now looking at segmentation in the sustainability context. Defra's segmentation model used by the UK Government aims to 'enable citizen-focused policy and communications activity that is targeted, (...) and delivered more effectively' (Defra 2011c: 4). This segmentation approach is based on a report entitled *An Environmental Behaviours Strategy for Defra* (December 2006) and the *2007 Defra Attitudes and Behaviours Survey*. This research work revealed 'the scale of the challenge, current practice and understanding; explored a possible conceptual framework for a more structured approach; identified (...) a possible set of headline behaviours; initiated work on segmentation and considered a range of policy actions' (Defra 2008: 13). Over the years, Defra changed its focus to sustainable living, observing 'behaviours in their lifestyle context; starting where people are and understanding the way people live' (Eppel et al. 2013: 32). *The Sustainable Lifestyles Framework* (Defra 2011c) is the updated version of the 2008 framework (Defra 2008), which 'outlined a new set of key behaviours that were taken to constitute sustainable lifestyles, offered key insights on why some people act and why others might not, and presented a range of "best practice" approaches to influence sustainable behaviour' (Eppel et al. 2013: 31). The *triangle of change* is a concept promoted by Defra to explain that 'multiple players need to be engaged in any activity that aims to shift large-scale social behaviours such as those that would lead to a more sustainable lifestyle' (Eppel et al. 2013: 32). Hence, Defra's segmentation model was extensively used by the UK Government departments, by NGOs in the implementation of a variety of initiatives and by academia to undertake further research on influencing behavioural change.

Defra's segmentation model is an innovative approach to exploring specific needs and interests, which in turn influence the character and conduct of different audience segments. It divides the UK population into different categories based on individual ability and willingness to act pro-environmentally while engaging people of all social strata (Defra 2008). The focus was not 'on moving people between segments' but rather on reaching people from a variety of backgrounds using tailored and targeted initiatives to motivate behavioural change (Collier et al. 2010: 16). In brief, the UK Government was interested in using market segmentation 'alongside existing public sector and commercial models to increase our collective understanding of, critically, whom we can motivate to live a greener life and how we could do this' (Defra 2008: 41). Based on the 2008 framework for pro-environmental behaviours and the recommendations of two research groups (the Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group at Surrey University and the Sustainable Practices Research Group at Manchester University), Defra offered:

'advice and support to a range of priority projects where there was a strong consumer dimension, including the Act on CO₂ campaign, energy and water efficiency, the food chain programme, personal carbon trading, incentives for waste minimisation and recycling, product road maps and sustainable tourism' (Defra 2008: 12).

Policymakers use Defra's segmentation to tailor interventions in 'five key behavioural areas (food, energy, transport, leisure and tourism, and finance) in order to understand the acceptability of the various goals and how feasible people believed them to be' (Defra 2008: 33). Hence, Defra (2008: 33) looked at people's potential for change based on their *ability* and *willingness* to act pro-environmentally. For instance, a person's ability to

recycle is influenced by the recycling facilities available to her, at a given moment. Likewise, regular earnings and current financial situation impact the capacity to act sustainably. The willingness to act sustainably refers to internal motivational factors, which enable action or provide the necessary reasons for a lack of action. Here, Defra (2008: 34) points to 'societal pressures (norms)' as triggers of human motivation to act sustainably.

On the basis of people's ability and willingness to act, Defra constructed a matrix (running from low to high ability to act, and low to high willingness to act) and identified twelve behavioural goals for sustainability (see Figure 2.1.). The high ability and willingness to act quadrant includes 'easy' behavioural goals (use more efficient vehicles, eat more food that is locally in season, be more responsible in water management, increase recycling, manage energy better and waste less food) that 'are not dependent on access to services external to the home and have no negative cost implications (they are usually likely to save the household money)' (Defra 2008: 34).

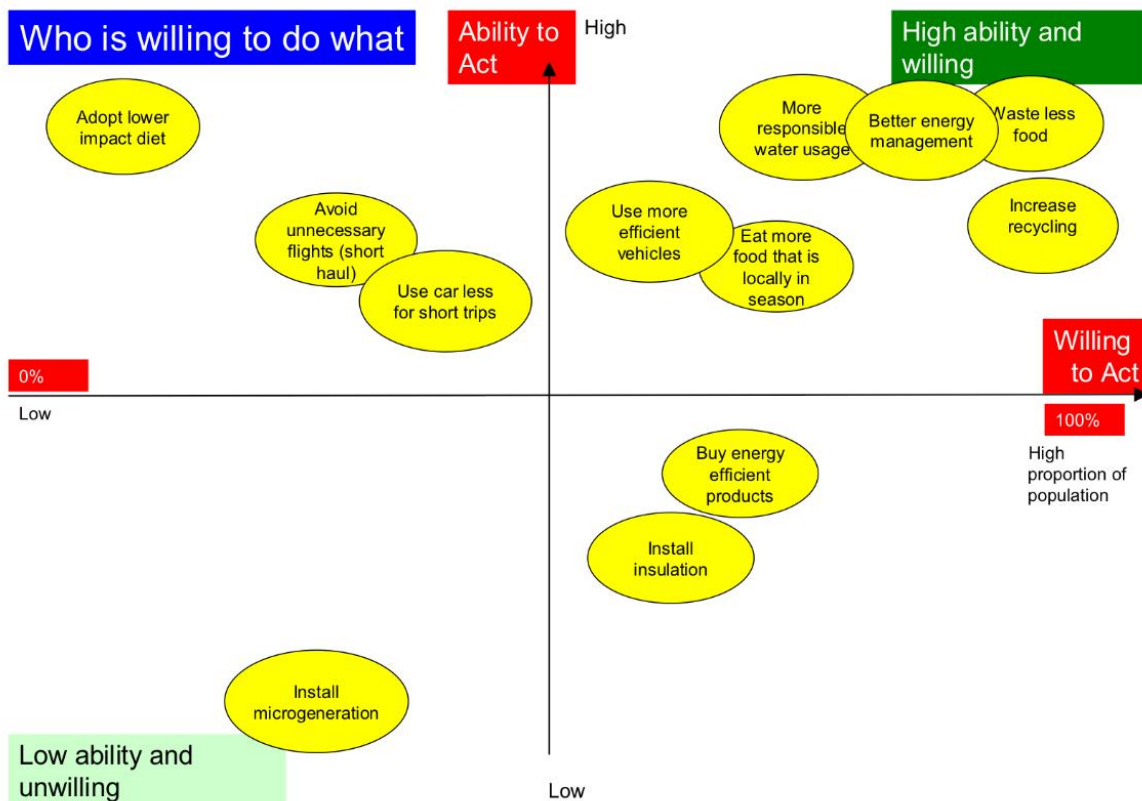


Figure 2. 1. People’s willingness to act, against ability (Defra 2008: 7)

There are also more challenging behavioural goals, which depend on people’s ability to act and require additional effort (willingness) to be achieved. These are therefore in the other three quadrants. Install microgeneration, install insulation and buy energy efficient products behaviours are found in the lower part of Figure 2.1. and therefore show a low ability to act. Use the car less for short trips, avoid unnecessary flights, and adopt lower impact diet behaviours are found in the top left quadrant of the matrix and indicate a low willingness to act but a high ability to do so. These complex behavioural goals should also be satisfied if environmental protection is to be increased. However, external help and support need to be provided to people by the UK Government and policymakers to work towards achieving these goals.

The matrix and the behaviour goals mentioned above go onto inform Defra's (2008: 8) segmentation model, which separates the British population into seven segments with different potential for changing their harmful habits and varying willingness to take pro-environmental action. The segmented groups are approached separately because they do not respond to the same motivational factors, do not have similar needs and interests and therefore have distinct behaviours. The seven segments have been termed *Positive greens*, *Waste watchers*, *Concerned consumers*, *Sideline supporters*, *Cautious participants*, *Stalled starters* and *Honestly disengaged*, and as Collier et al. (2010: 16) explain 'each profile includes information about motivations and barriers, knowledge and engagement with the environment, current environmental behaviours in the home (including purchasing and travel) and media usage and lifestyle information'.

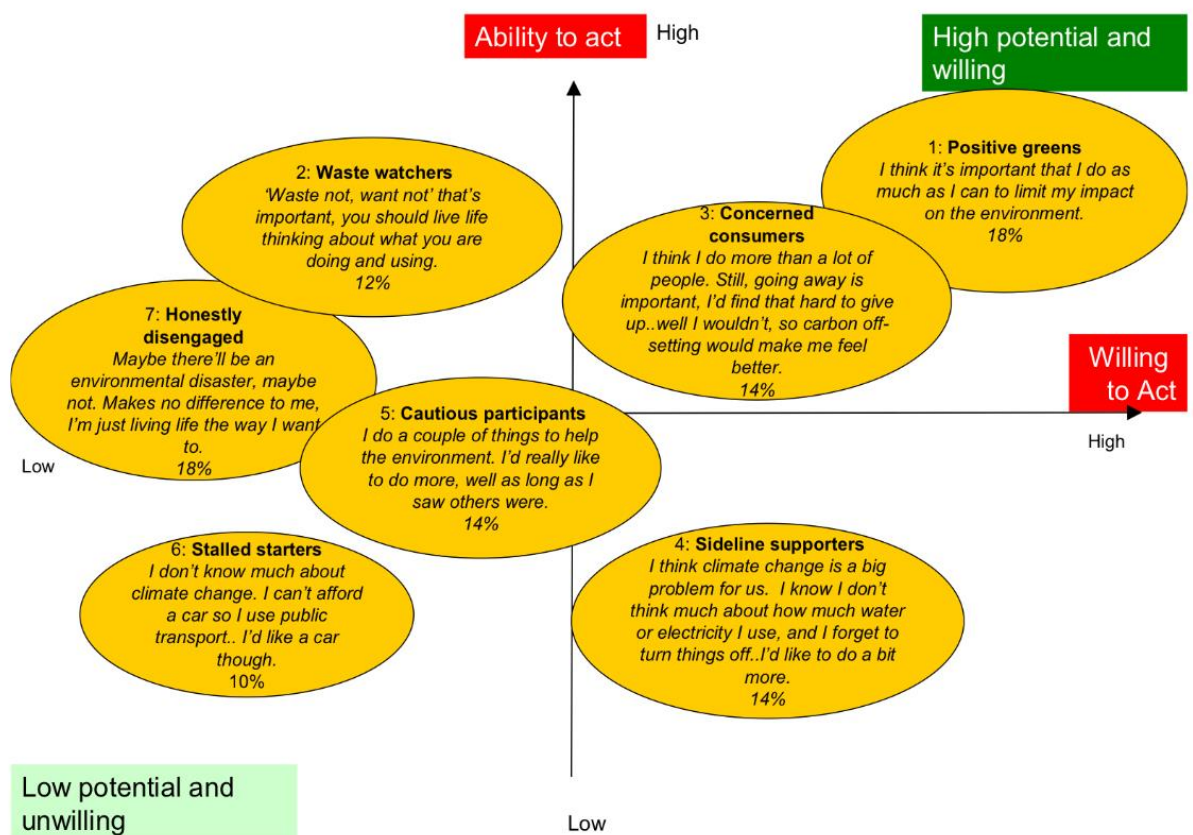


Figure 2. 2. The seven population segments (Defra 2008: 8)

Figure 2.2. illustrates the seven population segments, their different positions in regards to environmental protection and their ability and willingness to act sustainably. Defra (2008: 8) argues that Positive greens (segment 1), Waste watchers (segment 2) and Concerned consumers (segment 3) have a high ability to take pro-environmental action. However, Waste watchers (segment 2) will show a lack of willingness to act sustainably, while Positive greens and Concerned consumers show a high level of willingness. By contrast, Sideline Supporters (segment 4) are willing 'to do a bit more', but they lack the ability to act pro-environmentally, as they are just starting to engage in green initiatives. Next, Cautious participants (segment 5) are placed at the centre of the diagram (with a relative ability and willingness to act sustainably) because they are motivated by seeing other people work towards their goals but if they do not have role models, they will show a lack of ability and willingness to take action. Lastly, Stalled starters (segment 6) and Honestly disengaged (segment 7) show a low willingness to act although the latter are actually seen to have a relative ability to be more sustainable. However, due to internal motivational factors (i.e. ignorance, scepticism), the Honestly disengaged are not likely to take pro-environmental action.

As unsustainable behaviours affect a broad range of domains, Defra's segmentation model was designed to be used 'across all the environmental sectors, including climate change, air quality, water quality, waste, biodiversity and protection of natural resources, taking account of people's global footprint' (Defra 2008: 3). Hence, the department developed the 4Es mapping tool to design tailored 'interventions' (see Figure 2.3.) for each segmentation group in order to *enable, encourage, engage* and *exemplify* pro-

environmental behaviours (Darnton 2008: 17). As Figure 2.3. shows, enabling initiatives ‘make it easier’ for people to act sustainably (i.e. by removing barriers and providing the necessary facilities), while encouraging initiatives ‘give the right signals’ using incentives and disincentives to motivate behavioural change (Defra 2011c: 31). Engagement strategies ‘get people involved’ in community action, while ‘shared responsibility’ initiatives offer examples of environmental commitment (Defra 2011c: 31). According to Darnton (2008: 17), Defra’s 4Es model ‘builds on social marketing and offers a checklist for policy makers to help ensure that they use a balanced “package of measures” to achieve their behaviour change objective’. Thus, the UK Government, businesses and civil society were advised to collaborate for environmental protection and implement ‘a mix of [4Es] interventions’ in order to catalyse change and help people adopt more sustainable lifestyles (Defra 2011c: 30).

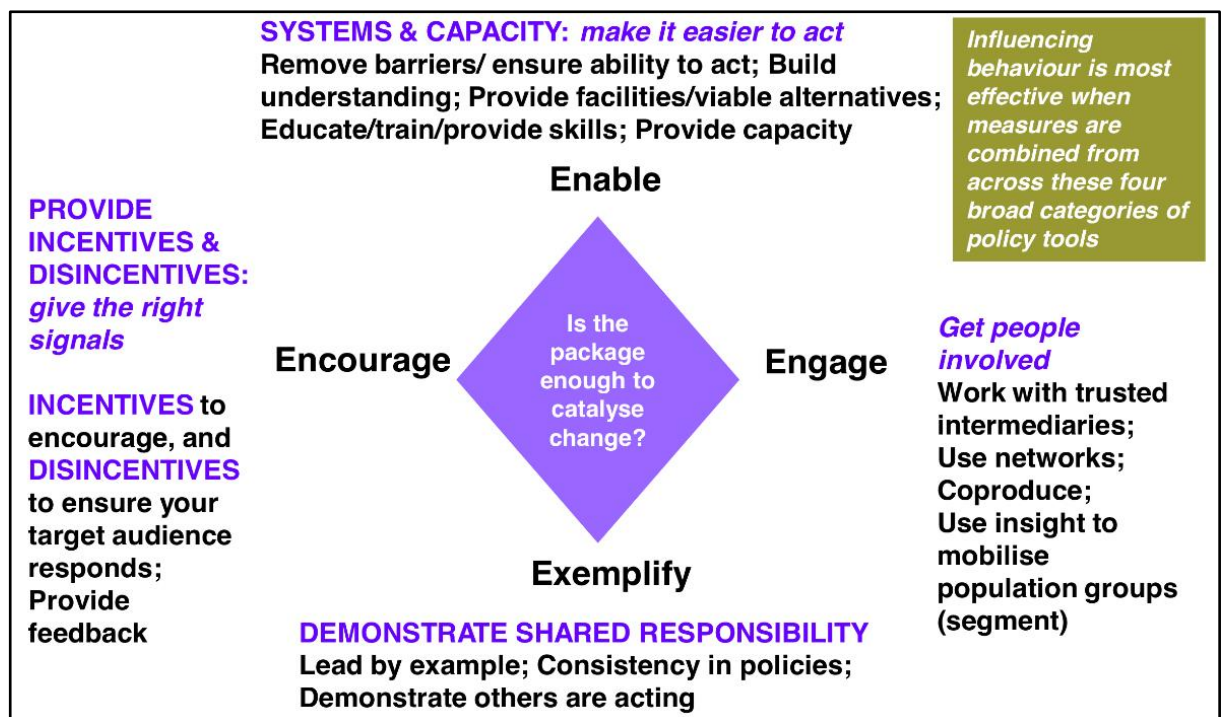


Figure 2. 3. The 4Es mapping tool (Defra 2011c: 31)

In 2008, Defra launched the Greener Living Fund (GLF) and awarded £6 million in grants to eight delivery partners (civil society organisations) that used the department's framework for pro-environmental behaviours and promoted behaviour goals for sustainable living. *Student Switch Off* (SSO) is a successful GLF campaign launched as a pilot project in 2006 and implemented by the National Union of Students in 2007. As described by Eppel et al. (2013: 35), SSO is 'an inter-dormitory energy competition championed by Eco-Power Rangers, (...) encouraging university students in halls of residence to become energy efficient' and is considered successful in engaging the public and promoting greener living, using a mixed strategy based on the 4Es mapping tool. To date, the NUS continues to run the SSO: in the 2017/18 academic year, the campaign 'achieved a 6.8% reduction in electricity usage on average across all the participating universities – keeping over 1,000 tonnes of CO₂ out of the atmosphere' (Student Switch Off 2018).

As a consequence of this and other successful initiatives implemented through the GLF, Defra further refined the segmentation model by matching its interventions to the seven population segments and suggesting which of the 4Es interventions were most effective for each segment (see Figure 2.3. and Figure 2.4.). In Figure 2.4., Defra (2008: 10) displayed its segmented groups according to their potential to do more and ability to act. We observe that the seven population segments are spread over three main quadrants. Positive greens (segment 1), Concerned consumers (segment 3) and Sideline supporters (segment 4) are found in the top right quadrant, showing a positive potential to do more and willingness to act (Defra 2008: 10). Positive greens are engaged in environmental

initiatives and are permanently preoccupied to reduce their ecological footprint. Sideline supporters just started taking environmental action but, they have the potential to do more in the future. Concerned consumers live an eco-friendly lifestyle although, Defra's research findings indicate they have a relative willingness to act. In order to motivate these three segmented groups (Positive greens, Concerned consumers and Sideline supporters) to adopt more sustainable habits, policymakers are advised to develop enabling and engaging interventions based on people's needs and interests.

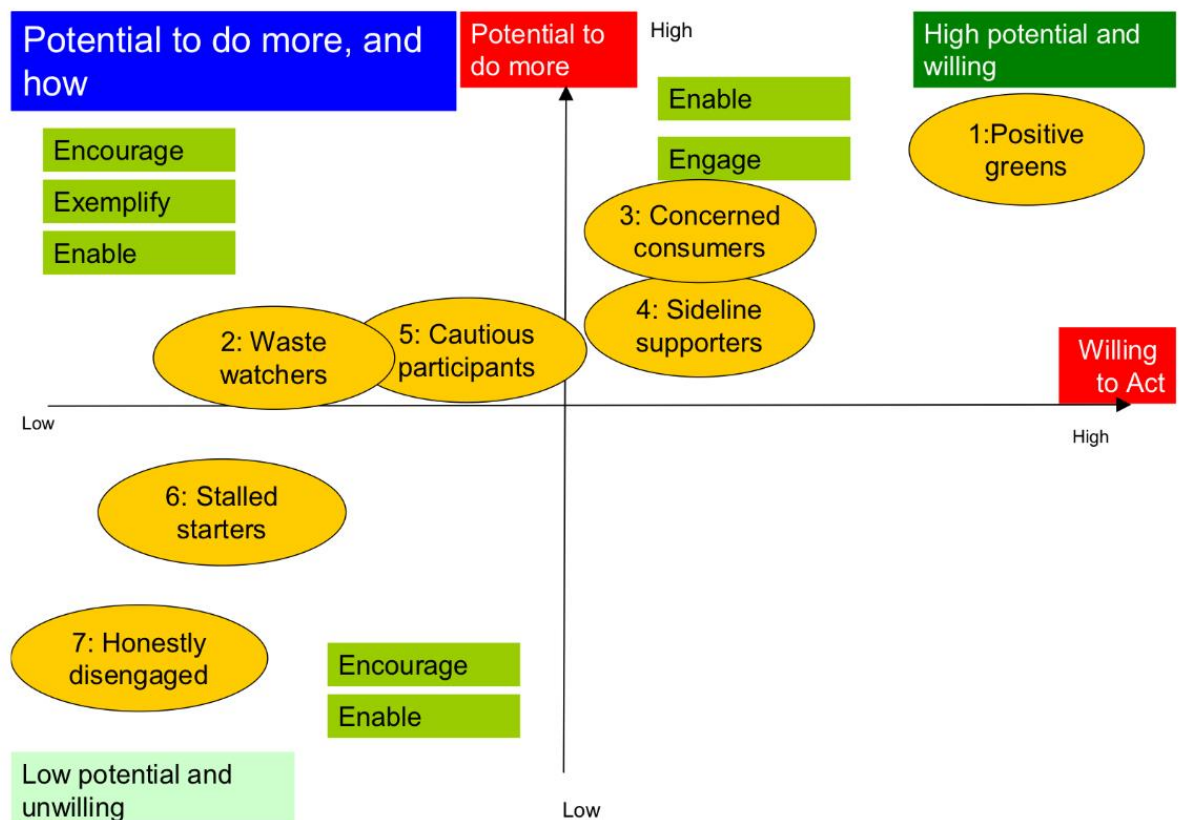


Figure 2. 4. Defra's segmentation model (2008: 10)

Waste watchers (segment 2) and Cautious participants (segment 5) are less willing to act sustainably yet, Defra's (2008: 10) argues that they have a relative potential to do more. Segment 2 is interested in reducing its waste, but expect authorities to take the necessary

action to find efficient solutions to the current environmental problems faced locally. Cautious participants wait for others to act pro-environmentally and so, require help and support to act. In these cases, Defra (2008: 11) argues that policymakers should design strategies that enable, encourage and exemplify pro-environmental behaviour to convince these two segmented groups to change their current lifestyles. Lastly, Stalled starters (segment 6) and Honestly disengaged (segment 7) are not open to adopting greener habits, showing a low potential and willingness to act sustainably. On the one hand, they argue that their income does not support an eco-friendly lifestyle while on the other, they do not consider themselves affected by environmental degradation or global warming and therefore reject anthropogenic climate change. Therefore, policymakers are advised to enable and encourage Stalled starters and Honestly disengaged to acquire pro-environmental behaviours.

It is expected that influencing Positive greens to act more sustainably will create a snowball effect. Defra (2008: 11) noted that Positive greens' drive to be innovators and leaders might, in turn, motivate Concerned consumers and Sideline supporters also to take pro-environmental action. Moreover, Cautious participants will also become motivated to adopt a sustainable lifestyle by observing the segmented groups from above. However, this infectious behaviour is not likely to trickle down to Stalled starters or Honestly disengaged because these groups show a low potential for change.

There are arguably two significant weaknesses with this segmentation model. In the first instance, as Barnett and Mahony (2011: 4) note, 'there is a tension in using segmentation methods to divide publics up into distinct groups in the name of delivering "public value",

which is meant to be inclusive, collectively shared, or universal'. Indeed, Defra's segmentation model is explicitly hierarchical with the Positive greens placed at the top and the Honestly disengaged positioned at the bottom (see Figure 2.4). This runs the risks of seeing this last segment - the Honestly disengaged - as a lost cause, in terms of being able to influence them to take environmental action. Defra (2008: 45)'s very own characterisation of this group suggests as much:

This group's ecological worldview is predominantly shaped by a lack of interest and concern. However, members of this group are also sceptical about the current environmental threat (half think it has been exaggerated). They are nearly as likely as [Stalled starters] to deny that their behaviour contributes to climate change and more likely than most to think the problem will be solved without people needing to make changes to their lifestyles. (...) They do not seek excuses for their lifestyles; they are only slightly more likely than average to say that it is too much effort or too hard to find the time. (...) Notably, they are the least likely to feel guilty about harming the environment.

Writing this group (and any others) off poses considerable problems because it creates divisions in the face of a problem that is relevant to all, and that required action from all. The position of the most distant segmented groups (Positive greens and Honestly disengaged) caught our eye because these represent two opposite personality types. We agree that people are different in terms of their needs and interests and so, the designed interventions should be tailored accordingly. However, we oppose the initiative of separating people into categories because on the one hand, assigning individuals to

Defra's segmented groups would be difficult in community settings and on the other, global warming and current environmental threats concerns us all, and the most effective way of responding is doing so together. As such, our contention is that promoting intrinsic values associated with concern about 'bigger-than-self problems' and cultivating a sense of moral responsibility towards nature could bring people together to protect the environment (see Chapter 3).

A second weakness with Defra's segmentation model is that, as its critics point out, 'despite the broad-spectrum influence of the model on policy, its main weakness is its lack of direct impact on any one specific policy' (Darnton 2013: 1). This is most likely the result of significant gaps or limitations inherent in the model. Moreover, the segmentation is based on a list of pro-environmental behaviours without grounding these to corresponding attitudes for nature conservation. The seven profiles are presented in the 2008 Defra framework but, there is no clear recruitment guidelines to support work with the segmented groups or detailed instructions regarding how to engage them in future initiatives. As Poortinga and Darnton (2016: 222) argue, 'while the model has made policy-makers aware of the need to design tailored campaigns, there is only limited information available about its rationale and development, making it difficult to determine in what way the different segments differ from one another and thus how they should be approached to achieve the greatest behavioural change'. In addition to this lack of information, Defra (2008, 2011) endorses specific pro-environmental behaviours that are considered 'normal' but, in reality these are not sensible to people's current lifestyles and the stress associated with changing habits. Therefore, the very effectiveness of this

approach to motivate people into acting in a pro-environmental way in the long term is seriously called into question.

In short, Defra's segmentation model does not look to address harmful behaviours but rather, proposes 'interventions' to work around these. Interestingly enough, perhaps partly in reflection of these weaknesses, it appears that there is no interest within Defra to develop the segmentation model further. Indeed, Defra reported that 'the Department does not undertake direct engagement activities with the wider public on the subject of sustainable lifestyles anymore. Given current budgetary constraints, it is hard to justify putting more resource into the model for the sake of stakeholder users alone' (Darnton 2013: 2).

Critics of social marketing argue that besides dividing the UK population into groups to enable better reach, the approach 'neither attempts to combine the results of individual changes, nor targets changes which have a strategic - i.e. game or system-changing - effect' (Rose 2008: 3). In other words, the sense of control offered by social marketing to address specific harmful actions at the individual level does not necessarily guarantee long-term solutions to the multifaceted anthropogenic climate change. Saunders et al. (2015: 165) suggest that social marketing should expand its reach, to enable 'individual and collective ideas and actions [to work] in the pursuit of effective, efficient, equitable, fair and sustained social transformation'.

In sum, we recognise the valuable lessons offered by social marketing in supporting a more sustainable future: the acknowledgement that needs and interests influence

behavioural change, 'the need to tailor messages to particular audiences, the importance of social context, and the importance of making change easy wherever possible' (Crompton 2008: 25). However, the developed strategies should also consider people's values which in turn motivate pro-environmental behaviour to 'collectively enable a set of opportunities or substantial freedoms that individuals and collectives may choose to act on' for the common good of society (Saunders et al. 2015: 166).

2.3. An 'optimal mix' of governmental approaches to influencing pro-environmental behaviours

Even though the UK Government put real effort into encouraging environmental protection, more effective strategies are still sought to encourage the population to adopt sustainable lifestyles for the future. Looking at the governmental approaches presented above, we acknowledge the difficulty of reaching every individual and making sustainability a personal concern. Nonetheless, people make decisions every minute of the day so, the government has a responsibility to provide the context for pro-environmental action and at the same time, highlight the benefits of nature conservation. In this section, we argue that laws and regulations (including financial incentives and disincentives), and social marketing and segmentation strategies complement one another so an 'optimal mix' of these three would better motivate the UK population to act pro-environmentally for the future (DEA 2011: 4).

Laws and regulations are effective tools to be used in driving behavioural change: 'a moment's self-examination will reveal how susceptible we are to inducements and

punishments that focus on the money in our pockets' (Dobson 2007: 277). Thus, the legislative approach makes people aware of the costs involved in harming nature and gives more visibility to anthropogenic climate change. However, this approach does not consider the moral aspects and benefits of environmental protection. This situation is summed up well by Adam Corner who argued in a 2013 Guardian article entitled 'Morality is missing from the debate about sustainable behaviour':

If children were taught that they would receive a pound coin every time they resisted physically hurting another child, they would not learn that hurting others was wrong – they would learn that restraining themselves was profitable. But it is precisely this logic that runs through major government initiatives such as the Green Deal. Saving energy is presented not as the right thing to do, but as a way of saving money.

All initiatives addressing people as 'self-interested rational actors' (laws and regulations, including financial incentives and disincentives) do have a part to play, but it is clear that they have their problems and limitations, not least because they do not address the complex nature of human behaviour. At the same time, the UK Government should also encourage 'discursive, elaborative processes [which] are a vital element in behaviour change – in particular in negotiating new social norms and "unfreezing" habitual behaviours' (Jackson 2005: 133).

Similarly, there are problems with the nudging. As we have seen nudges do not offer an 'opportunity for "social learning" (...), so there is no possibility – by definition – of learning what pro-environmental behaviour is, and why it is a good thing' (Dobson 2011: 8).

Indeed, advocates of nudging even acknowledge that ‘people don’t actually have to do the right thing for the right reasons’ (Crompton 2008: 5). As a result, social marketing promotes sustainable living ‘for reasons of social status or financial self-interest, rather than environmental benefit’, thereby encouraging green consumption (Crompton 2008: 5). As they operate at the pre-rational level, nudges motivate specific choices of the target audience without involving people in the process of behavioural change.

Nonetheless, because nudges are designed to trigger the ‘right’ decisions, irrespective whether the individual appreciates, or learns about why it is the right decision, which they can ‘led to someone making a commitment that translates into longer-lasting change’ (Dolan et al. 2012: 274). This is a central part in Thaler and Sunstein (2009) argument: nudging and choice architecture help people see the broader picture of consumer choice. So, just as it should include laws and regulations, an optimal mix of governmental approaches to influencing pro-environmental action should also consist of nudges to steer people towards different patterns of behaviour and expand their capacity to protect the environment.

Social marketing seems to be an attractive approach to policymakers and marketing advisers in government because it focuses on ‘the motivations and barriers of a specific set of behaviours that can then be used to design a more effective intervention’ (Poortinga and Darnton 2016: 229). We have seen this above with reference to Defra’s segmentation model, which identified different groups of people and focused on their motivations and abilities to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. Yet we also pointed to the

limitations of this approach, namely the lack of information about why people behave the way they do, and about how and why behaviour changes. As Rose (2012: 4) notes:

Most decisions are based on reflexive, intuitive or emotional reasoning, not on analytical, effortful or reflective reasoning, (...) [which] means that the [Defra's] assumptions made about 'ability' and even 'willingness' to take action are largely based on inferences made by the researchers, and do not reflect the potential to get people to change behaviour.

Despite the substantial limitations and lack of effectiveness of the segmentation model approach, as with the last two approaches, there are nonetheless some useful things to take form it. Most significantly in developing this segmentation model, the UK Government and policymakers shifted their attention from individual action to 'communities [in order to] identify the issues they face and collaboratively design solutions' for nature conservation (Defra 2011: 30).

Ultimately then, an optimal mix of governmental approaches to influencing pro-environmental behaviours would include all three of the approaches discussed above: laws and regulations, including financial incentives and disincentives, nudging, and segmentation. As Connelly et al. (2012: 201) argue:

Each policy instruments have its strengths and weaknesses and, used in appropriate combination, different instruments can be complementary. Sensible policy in respect of the environment will, therefore, rely not on

one mechanism to the exclusion of all others, but on a mixture depending on the conditions.

Such an optimal mix of approaches would also increase the possibility that all three groups of actors that each occupy a corner of the 'triangle of change' - i.e. government, businesses, and citizens – work together towards a more sustainable future. As Compton (2008: 9) explains:

Adequate responses to today's environmental challenges will only emerge through concerted change among government, business and citizens (in the case of the latter, as members of their communities, as voters, and as consumers). (...) The response of government is constrained by both the appetites and demands of voters and the business lobby; the business response is constrained by both consumer choice and the regulatory framework, and the action of citizens is constrained by both the purchasing options that are open to them and the regulatory framework within which they live. Simultaneously, of course, none of these actors need acquiesce passively to the constraints imposed on them – all also bear a leadership responsibility.

Namely, further work across the triangle of change is required in order to protect the environment and deliver substantial behavioural change. Strictly speaking, the time arrived to support more effective citizen engagement and participation (through better information provision, access to environmental education and funding of collective initiatives) and to help people embrace environmental protection for a better world.

But thus far, the UK Government and policymakers focused on dealing with the effects, rather than the causes of unsustainable practices - people's consumerist lifestyle.

Moreover, Bell and Dobson (2006: 4) argued that the current environmental policies are mainly 'based on theories that have individuals acting out of self-interest. However, we all know that some of us, some of the time, do things because we think they are the right thing to do'. As a result of investigating the approaches discussed above, we had come to the conclusion that people act by chance not choice and often they have not fully understood why a particular behaviour is the right one.

So, given all this, we need to start addressing the causes of anthropogenic climate change, by working with the motivations that drive behavioural change, do this collectively and consider the moral aspects of environmental protection in order to make sense why a more sustainable future is imperative. Citizen engagement and participation in nature conservation at the community level is said to 'offer effective avenues for exploring pro-environmental and pro-social behavioural change' (Jackson 2005: 133). Eppel et al. (2013: 39) pointed out that 'people have a strong need both to feel part of a movement and to see others acting, too' so, what others are doing is key. An active community will impact positively different population categories, which will also be encouraged (by 'influencers' or catalytic individuals) to get more involved to protect the environment. Subsequently, we propose an alternative way to motivate pro-environmental behaviours by working directly with people of all social strata and empowering them to define the meanings of nature conservation, in their community setting (see Chapter 4). We will explore people's potential to be virtuous, to become environmental citizens by choice, rather than by chance. In the following section, we will look at community involvement as a method of

helping groups of people nourish social values and attitudes towards sustainability, for a shared benefit which is, nature conservation.

2.4. From information provision for behavioural change to community involvement

One could argue that a straightforward route to motivating people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles would be first to communicate to them what environmental degradation and nature conservation are, secondly, help them understand the change that needs to be made and lastly, show them the most efficient ways to act pro-environmentally. It should be that simple. Unfortunately, not everyone has access to the necessary information to stop harmful habits or is part of a context where environmental protection is the top priority. Thus, we argue that besides information provision (an out of favour strategy in the UK policy-making), people should have access to environmental education and should have the opportunity to participate in collective initiatives aimed at adopting more sustainable lifestyles and taking the 'right' decisions for nature conservation.

Individuals need specialised skills to internalise the information provided about anthropogenic climate change and to appreciate the benefits of sustainability, as information alone has little or no influence on human behaviour. Information gaps impact people's ability and willingness to act pro-environmentally so, all behavioural change strategies should provide high-quality information (Esty 2004). As Collier et al. (2010: 12) pointed out:

Communication may help reduce the cognitive barriers as (...) consumers are unable to process all of the complex information necessary to make a 'rational' decision, providing information that is more easily used in individual decision making can help influence behaviours.

Information provision has been used extensively as a component part in providing the necessary conditions and creating the favourable context for pro-environmental action. However, the implementation of green campaigns generally has 'a negligible effect' on people's awareness and current lifestyles so, provision of information should be backed by environmental education and citizen engagement and participation (Lucas et al. 2008: 457). For instance, if we want to increase people's recycling behaviour, then households should be presented with easy-to-understand information about existing recycling facilities/opportunities and should also be taught about the benefits of pro-environmental action in the community. Altogether, information provision is 'intended to change behaviour by "changing minds"' and in conjunction with environmental education could help people develop their potential to act sustainably (Dolan et al. 2010: 8). Having access to environmental education, people are encouraged to consider the impact of their conduct in society and the need to take immediate action in order to avoid dangerous climate change (United Nations 2015).

Moreover, collectives can be provided with the opportunities to acquire greener habits, make lifestyle changes and receive constructive feedback as a response to harmful behaviours. Environmental protection courses and training can help individuals become aware of the interdependent relationship between human well-being and the natural

world. People tend to acknowledge the long-term benefits of adopting a sustainable lifestyle only when they recognise the collective duty towards environmental protection and the moral responsibility they have for the consequences of their day-to-day actions (Bell and Dobson 2006).

In the context of sustainability, cultural and social norms are essential to influencing behavioural change because people observe 'what others do and use their perceptions of norms as a standard against which to compare their own behaviours' (Dolan et al. 2012: 268). The normative account consists of the 'behavioural expectations, or rules, within a society or group, or alternatively a standard, customary, or ideal form of behaviour to which individuals in a social group try to conform' (Dolan et al. 2012: 268).

Correspondingly, if the standards followed by a group of people can create a positive feedback loop in behaviours, these may also motivate communities to act pro-environmentally. In addition to these norms, social capital and place attachment play an important role in collective approaches to environmental protection. As Poortinga and Darnton (2016: 223) point out, these factors 'contribute to the resilience of communities and their overall capacity to endure in the face of adversity'. Community involvement in nature conservation, therefore, presents the opportunity to develop a shared set of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and agree on a common approach – hence building on and further strengthening social capital – and doing so in a way that is appropriate to the specific setting (see section 4.3.).

Participative strategies to environmental protection are considered 'more effective in driving change than targeting the behaviour of all individuals directly' because these

encourage 'change agents' to review their harmful habits and adopt more sustainable lifestyle for the sake of serving the broader community (Lucas et al. 2008: 459). When groups of people collaborate for nature conservation, opportunities for exchange of opinions are created. By encouraging people to build an emotional connection with nature and their community, 'the shift in behaviour is long-lasting and more pervasive because they have also shifted their attitudes and/or values' (DEA 2011: 3). Therefore, a community involvement strategy would help people discuss common beliefs and attitudes and assess 'the benefits of, shifting behaviours towards sustainability' (DEA 2011: 2). Still, collective behavioural change initiatives or 'think' approaches require 'existing structures and networks to create opportunities for effective deliberative engagement', because of high expenses and low political priority (DEA 2011: 3).

Given the potential power of community involvement strategies for nature conservation, we sought to develop a behavioural change approach to motivate pro-environmental action in a community setting. According to Lucas et al. (2008: 464), 'target audiences are more likely to adapt their practices in line with a policy when they have been involved in its formulation'. Thus, we decided to invite groups of people to participate in several discussions and to go onto creating a moral code consisting of duties and responsibilities for environmental protection in their community (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 4). We did this by recruiting people from two very different groups - Positive greens and Honestly disengaged (see section 2.2.2) - thereby acknowledging that people vary in terms of their needs and interests and recognising that communicated messages should be tailored accordingly. At the same time though, in light of our strong reservations about separating or segregating people (see above), we sought to demonstrate how these two very

different groups can collaborate and join forces to protect the environment. This approach is thus firmly rooted in bringing people together (as communities) and promoting awareness of the contribution every person can make to ensure a more sustainable future. To that end, nurturing the attitude of respect for nature and cultivating a sense of moral responsibility at the community level (see Chapter 4), have the potential for more robust and enduring changes in behaviour than other motivations, based on laws and regulations (including financial incentives and disincentives), social marketing and segmentation strategies. This conclusion, if substantiated, will be of both theoretical and policy-related interest.

2.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined a range of governmental approaches and instruments used in recent years to influence pro-environmental behaviours in the United Kingdom. More specifically, it has explored laws and regulations, including financial incentives and disincentives, as well as social marketing for behavioural change in the sustainability context. Then, we discussed an optimal mix of governmental approaches to influencing pro-environmental behaviours to ensure a more sustainable future. Even with an optimal mix, there are still deficiencies so, we proposed a collaborative alternative to generating behavioural change in a community setting to show that there is a potential for long-term strategies to motivate groups of people to work together for environmental protection.

Nowadays, the impact of anthropogenic climate change can be seen everywhere around us. Still, the UK Government avoids making a connection between environmental

degradation and people's collective duty to protect the natural world. It is more cost-effective to influence people to take the 'right' actions working with their short-term motivations, than helping them adopt long-term habits. As a result, the governmental approaches discussed above might perhaps weaken people's sense of moral responsibility for environmental protection. If a person does not understand and assume the behavioural changes required, she will continue to harm nature every time she is not 'offered' a sustainable choice. 'People can easily blame others and will make excuses for not acting' hence, the government has a facilitation role to regulate negative behaviour and stimulate action for sustainability at all levels (Eppel et al. 2013: 39).

At the moment, the UK Government is changing the behaviours of 'self-interested actors' with the use of laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing. We argue that a mixture of governmental approaches and instruments in combination with better information provision, access to environmental education and funding of collective initiatives would be a stronger stimulus to motivate behavioural change. However, there is little interest to bring to attention the interdependent relationship between people, and between people and the natural environment. In Chapter 3, the re-examination of this relationship will open a discussion about attitudes to motivate a sense of moral responsibility towards nature and to strengthen people's 'willingness (...) to suffer inconvenience and difficulty' when acting pro-environmentally (Crompton 2008: 6).

Ultimately, we propose a collective alternative to change harmful behaviours using citizen engagement and participation. Our strategy is to make it easier for people to adopt more

sustainable lifestyles together as a group and at the same time, encourage them to support each other throughout the change process. We believe that the active involvement of people in community initiatives is moving towards environmental citizenship; 'a shift from the [state/government] and market to civil society as the origin and legitimating source of policy' (Dobson 2011: 11). Shortly after groups of people acknowledge their dependence on nature, they would also feel empowered to question the government's action plans and pressure decision-makers to implement more effective policies for their future well-being and environmental protection.

3. Value-based strategies to fostering pro-environmental attitudes

Previously, we looked at the UK Government's approach to influencing behavioural change and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of using laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing in environmental policy and decision making. We noted that (external) behaviour is a consequence of the totality of internal attitudes that determine a person's actions and habits. Accordingly, a more effective approach to ensuring a sustainable future would be to start working with people, because 'changes in attitude will lead to changes in behaviour' (Dobson 2007: 278). Ultimately, we argue that a collaborative alternative would make it easier for people to act together for nature conservation at the local level and at the same time, encourage mutual support in the long term.

As our attitudes are typically reflected in everyday behaviour, we decided to explore in more detail attitude change strategies for nature conservation. This chapter will provide a study of intrinsic values and socio-cultural frames as a framework for developing a shared morality strategy to fostering pro-environmental attitudes. In the first section of Chapter 3, we will explore consumerism and its impact on the environment. We will maintain that, in the mass consumerist culture, people are led to see nature as an unlimited resource at human discretion. Then, we will talk about the intrinsic and extrinsic values that influence a person's attitudes, and we will present Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values as an example of a value-based strategy to motivate engagement in environmental protection. In the second section, we will argue in favour of a reframed environmental narrative to

overcome climate scepticism and inspire more sustainable lifestyles. In the third section, we will put people at the heart of a sustainable future while talking about an active model of citizenship (the foundation of our proposed narrative) and discussing the rights and duties of global citizens. Also, we will bring to attention matters of justice and the negative consequences suffered by both humans and non-human things due to the accelerated deterioration in the Earth's climate system. Finally, in the fourth section, we will briefly introduce our alternative strategy to citizenship education for stimulating groups of people to adopt eco-friendly practices in the long term. In the chapter to follow, we will explore the role of moral motivation in stimulating attitude change, and we will point out the collective duty of moral agents to protect the natural world.

3.1. The problems of consumerism

We begin our enquiry by discussing materialism and over-consumption in relation to environmental degradation and anthropogenic climate change, and we will also look at some consequences of encouraging people to satisfy their self-interest. Nowadays, people are promised 'liberation (...) from the pains and confinements of a recalcitrant reality - hunger, illness, cold, ignorance, immobility' in exchange for making consumption their way of life (Borgmann 2000: 419). Thus, consumerism is rooted in a person's desire to build self-identity and to improve the quality of life. To clarify, we are not touching on life-sustaining consumption, which we depend on to survive. In this section, we are mainly focusing on excessive consumption and 'the drive to consume ever more goods and services; a need that may emanate from basic human propensities, (...) which is

exploited and exacerbated by highly refined influencing techniques developed by the marketing industry' (Crompton 2008: 16).

Excessive consumption is said to weaken the interdependent relationship between people, and between people and the environment. Nowadays, decision-makers, businesses and media are referring generically to the UK population using the term consumers to activate 'a consumption mind-set in [their] audience' (Bauer et al. 2012: 518). The 'consumer' term changes how people see themselves, their duties and responsibilities towards nature and provides a fixed focus, which is 'to acquire products and services that will confer social status' (Crompton 2008: 8). Bauer et al.'s (2012: 522) research findings show that a 'consumer identity did not unite—it divided, (...) [working] against positive, cooperative engagement with other people'. Thus, if people are encouraged to act in their self-interest and are repeatedly told that everyone around them is selfish, they will stop considering the harm produced to others and the environment. Bauer et al. (2012: 522) demonstrated that 'the consumer framing resulted in lower feelings of personal responsibility for dealing with the resource dilemma, markedly lower trust in the other parties, and a significantly lower tendency to view the others as partners in facing' and finding solutions to shared problems.

Modern technology has an essential role to play in stimulating and supporting excessive consumption; 'the good detached itself from the context of its production and it became instantly and easily available. Consumption became unencumbered enjoyment' (Borgmann 2000: 420). Consequently, people have become detached from reality and developed consumption behaviours and habits that are unsustainable in the long term.

The price to pay for the pleasures of over-consumption is an endless dissatisfaction with one's self, as Borgmann (2000: 421) notes:

Limitless wants and insatiable acquisitiveness are natural facts only in the unnatural setting of overabundance. The natural setting kept human appetites within bounds. But these are parasitic pleasures. Their strength depends on the contrast of burdens and limits. (...) The newly acquired devices fade into the context of what we take for granted.

In the context of anthropogenic climate change, governments, businesses, and media are responsible 'not just for their "material impacts" (what they achieve "on the ground"), but also for the effect they have on dominant cultural values' (Crompton 2010: 39). By promoting materialism and the desire for security, conformity, and self-enhancement, decision-makers are reinforcing unsustainability and are encouraging people to care less about others. Green consumption still promotes consumer spending as the 'engine' of economic growth, and so, we argue that this strategy cannot be an effective way to support nature conservation. Crompton (2008: 9) states that 'consumerism and sustainability are ultimately inimical' and the current environmental challenges we face could only be addressed at their source while investigating the underlying motivations for consumerism. Alternatively, we consider that value-based approaches help people understand that their 'preoccupation with material objects as mechanisms (...) to establish meaning necessarily entails that [they] will continually consume more stuff' and more will never be enough (Crompton 2008: 17). Next, we will look at the attitude-behaviour gap and go beyond the analysis of people's harmful behaviours to search for sets of values that could motivate pro-environmental action.

3.1.1. Values influencing pro-environmental behaviours (rather than vice-versa)

We learnt that there is 'no necessary correlation between individuals holding a particular attitude towards a piece of behaviour, and actually engaging in that behaviour'

(Crompton 2008: 27). However, we argue that people are more willing to adopt pro-environmental behaviours if their attitudes are based on intrinsic sets of values. Hence, the attitude-behaviour gap is to be addressed by working with people at a deeper level, the level of values for nature conservation.

In Chapter 2, we mentioned that human behaviour is the sum of actions and habits, determined by a person's internal attitudes. As follows, attitudes reflect the response to surroundings, experience and observation and are shaped by our beliefs, moral judgements and values. Schwartz (2012: 16) adds that attitudes are 'the basis for our evaluations' and help us make out the difference between what is valuable and invaluable. For this reason, if pro-environmental attitudes are backed up by intrinsic sets of values, we state that there is a better chance for people to adopt sustainable lifestyles in the long term. Hence, we will look at values as motivational triggers because these are 'more central to the self, transcend objects and situations, and determine attitudes and behaviour' (Stets and Biga 2003: 400). This critical thinking exercise will facilitate a better understanding of extrinsic and intrinsic sets of values, how high priority values come to dominate human behaviour, and the way shared values impact the well-being of people in communities.

According to Schwartz (1992), values are behavioural criteria set to influence people's attitudes, actions, and habits. These behavioural criteria inform our decisions, but also

make us question the surrounding world; 'people decide what is good or bad, justified or illegitimate, worth doing or avoiding, based on possible consequences for their cherished values' (Schwartz 2012: 4). Thus, a set of values is an essential instrument for realising personal ambitions and enhancing collaboration within a community of interest. In the sustainability context, we argue that values and behaviour are 'intimately connected' however, there is a distinction to make between extrinsic and intrinsic values, with divergent impacts on human action (Crompton 2010).

In general, the human behaviour could be influenced by any of the two mentioned categories of values (extrinsic and intrinsic), according to people's life goals. On the one hand, extrinsic values are centred on external approval or rewards offered by material goods, financial success, physical attractiveness, image, and social recognition (Holmes et al. 2011). Crompton (2008: 31) notes that the pursuit of extrinsic goals 'does not lead directly to the satisfaction of innate psychological needs (such as belonging) – rather, the satisfaction they confer is contingent upon the responses of others'. By activating extrinsic values in society, policymakers can 'inhibit individuals from developing intrinsic, non-materialist motives' and their 'reliance on extrinsic incentives (...) can crowd out pre-existing intrinsic attachments' to nature conservation (Markowitz and Shariff 2012: 246). As seen in Chapter 2, the current governmental approaches used to influence pro-environmental behaviours are strengthening people's extrinsic values and locking them in unsustainable consumption patterns. In contrast, intrinsic values focus on more inherently rewarding pursuits like 'political engagement, concern about social justice, environmentally-friendly behaviours, and lower levels of prejudice' (Holmes et al. 2011: 24). Crompton (2010) also argues that intrinsic values help people enlarge their vision and

guide them towards finding solutions to 'bigger-than-self problems'. So, an intrinsically motivated person would be interested in ensuring the well-being of her community, caring about others and protecting the environment.

Our dominant set of values (either extrinsic or intrinsic) is the one which is constantly activated inside the family (micro context). However, Holmes et al. (2011: 27) stressed that 'education, the media, and social pressures are likely to influence the kinds of values seen as relevant to particular situations — and the normalisation of consumer culture will shape social norms and expected behaviours'. Consequently, even though people's attitudes, actions and habits are said to be motivated by the most preferred set of values, environmental protection might perhaps require a stronger motivation to overcome the attitude-behaviour gap. Thus, we will further investigate Schwartz's (1992) Theory of Basic Values and the Common Cause initiative to find specific values, which could be culturally universal and could also stimulate pro-environmental behaviour.

3.1.2. Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values

Schwartz (1992) looked at the nature of value types, explored different aspects that connect or separate sets of values, and focused on ten basic values said to influence people's behaviour. He then proposed a theory stating that 'values form a circular structure that reflects the motivations each value expresses. This circular structure (see Figure 3.1.) that captures the conflicts and compatibility among the ten values is apparently culturally universal' (Schwartz 2012: 2). The theory of basic values was

grounded in the research findings of Schwartz's Value Survey and the Portrait Values Questionnaire collected from eighty-two countries.

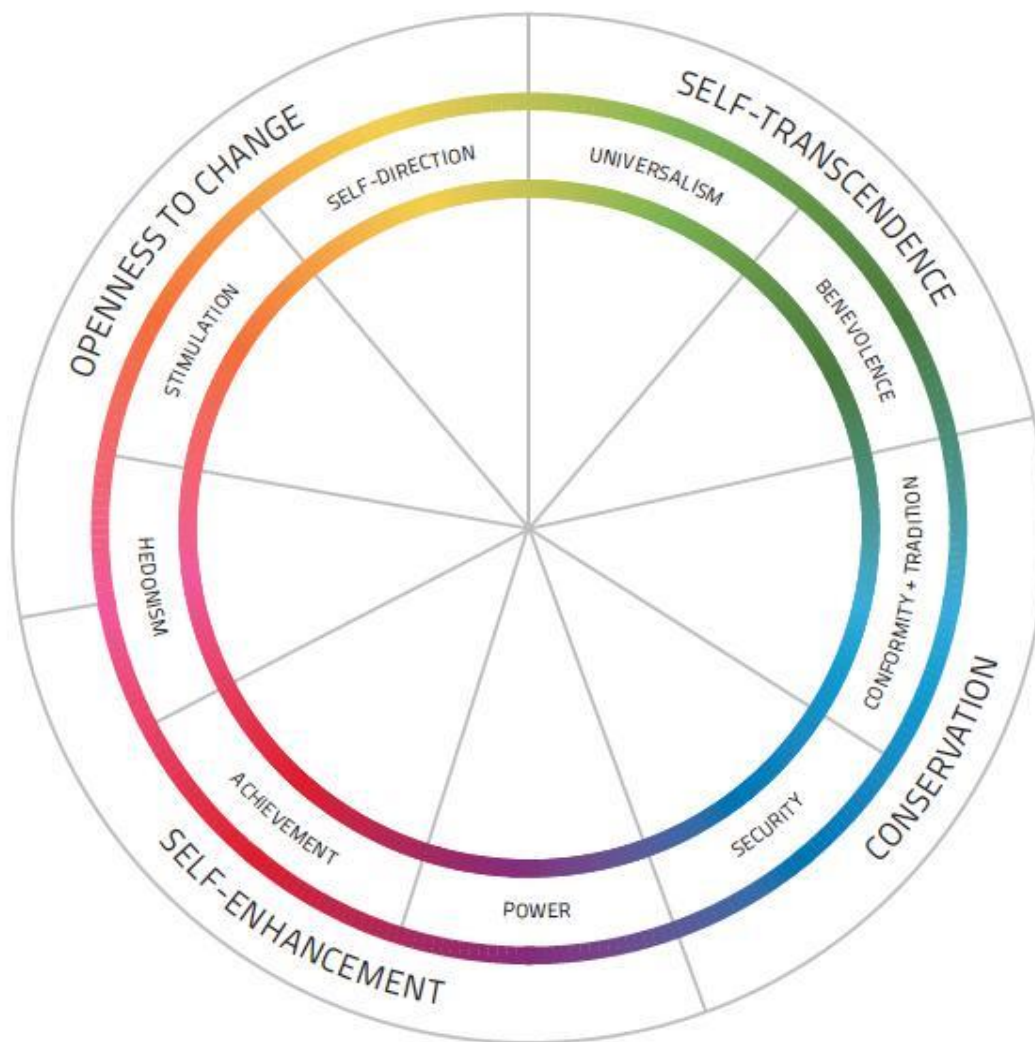


Figure 3. 1. Schwartz's value circumplex (Holmes et al. 2011: 16)

Figure 3.1. illustrates the theoretical model of the ten values types said to motivate behaviour, organised in four quadrants: self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement and, openness to change (Schwartz 2012: 9). Moreover, Figure 3.2. and Figure 3.3. classify the ten sets of basic values; being distinctively coloured to highlight

their location in the value circumplex (see Figure 3.1.) and to help draw connections and incompatibilities between them (Holmes et al. 2011: 14 - 15).



Figure 3. 2. Schwartz's sets of basic values (1) (Holmes et al. 2011: 14)



Figure 3. 3. Schwartz' sets of basic values (2) (Holmes et al. 2011: 15)

These sets of basic values (see Figure 3.2. and Figure 3.3.) influence people's attitudes, actions and habits based on their significance and priority. Every person would designate some sets of values to be more important to them than others. Our experience, observations, and people around us contribute to building our character and facilitate the activation of specific sets of values which, in turn, motivate the pursuit of life goals. The media, institutions and the effects of policies, exposure to commercial marketing, are some examples of cultural and social determinants that play an important role in promoting specific values over others. So, our lack of commitment to other sets would determine a weak inclination to be influenced by these less-active values.

The value circumplex (see Figure 3.1.) links the ten sets of basic values in a continuous sequence, showing that 'the closer any two values in either direction around the circle, the more similar their underlying motivations; the more distant, the more antagonistic their motivations' (Schwartz 2012: 10). Here, Schwartz's conflict of motivations corresponds to the discordance between extrinsic and intrinsic values we looked at in section 3.1.1. According to him (Schwartz 1992), a person motivated by extrinsic/self-enhancement sets of values will be less influenced by the values placed on the opposite side of the circumplex (intrinsic/self-transcendence sets of values). In Figure 3.1., the self-transcendence – self-enhancement link 'captures the conflict between values that emphasize concern for the welfare and interests of others (universalism, benevolence) and values that emphasize the pursuit of one's own interests (...) (power, achievement)' (Schwartz 2012: 8). Additionally, the openness to change – conservation link 'captures the conflict between values that emphasize (...) readiness for change (self-direction, stimulation) and values that emphasize order, (...) preservation of the past, and resistance to change (security, conformity, tradition)' (Schwartz 2012: 8). In the sustainability context, a person who shows 'appreciation for nature' (a universalism value), might also be interested in 'cooperative and supportive relations' with others (a benevolence value). However, the same person is less likely to have the need to 'control people and resources', as this extrinsic goal would conflict with her dominant sets of values (which are intrinsic).

Furthermore, Schwartz (2012) puts forward a cross-cultural hierarchical order of the ten basic values, arranged according to the average value priorities of the social groups

studied. He notes that ‘across societies, (...) there is a surprising consensus regarding the hierarchical order of the values. Across representative samples, using different instruments, the importance ranks for the ten values are quite similar’ (Schwartz 2012: 14). Benevolence (ranked 1st), universalism (2nd), and self-direction (3rd) sets of values were ranked as high priority across the culturally diverse groups, and stimulation (9th) and power (10th) were considered low priority sets of values³. Contrastingly, his empirical tests also showed significant discrepancies in the value priorities of individuals, when compared to the value priorities of groups. Thus, Schwartz (2012: 14) concludes that groups of people ranked the importance of the ten values similarly because of ‘the adaptive functions of values in maintaining societies and (...) our common human nature’.

Hence, the set of benevolence values was ranked first, as these values lay at the heart of ‘positive, cooperative social relations in the family, the main setting for initial and continuing value acquisition’ (Schwartz 2012: 15). The set of universalism values was ranked second and ‘also contribute to positive social relations. [These values] are functionally important primarily when group members must relate to those with whom they do not readily identify, in schools, workplaces’ (Schwartz 2012: 15). The set of self-direction values was ranked third and was said to ‘foster creativity, motivate innovation, and promote coping with challenges. Behaviour based on these values is intrinsically motivated. It satisfies individual needs without harming others’ (Schwartz 2012: 15).

Though, the set of stimulation values was considered low priority values (ranked ninth) in

³ In the same cross-cultural hierarchical order, security values were ranked fourth, conformity values were ranked fifth, hedonism values were ranked sixth, achievement values were ranked seventh and tradition values were ranked eighth, across the representative samples. Due to word limitations, we were not able to provide a more detailed discussion of these values but, Figure 3.2. and Figure 3.3. offer brief descriptions of Schwartz’s sets of basic values.

the social groups studied. These values motivate 'independence of thought, action, and feelings and readiness for change' but come into conflict with high priority values encouraged in group settings (Schwartz 2012: 8). Lastly, the set of power values was ranked tenth because 'pursuing [these values] may harm or exploit others and damage social relations' (Schwartz 2012: 15). In sum, the existence of a cross-cultural values hierarchy shows that there is a high level of consensus regarding the importance of intrinsic goals; most groups consistently showing that concern for others, appreciation of nature and thinking for themselves are more important values than gaining wealth, image, and power.

Consequently, Schwartz's theoretical advances became highly relevant to our enquiry as these offered a strong case for developing an alternative strategy for fostering pro-environmental attitudes in group settings. Thus, his empirical tests inspire our research hypotheses as we stated that certain 'aspects of human nature and of social functioning that shape individual value priorities are widely shared across cultures' (Schwartz 2012: 17). As Schwartz (2012: 14) explains:

Values serve as internalized guides for individuals; they relieve the group of the necessity for constant social control. (...) People invoke values to define particular behaviors as socially appropriate, to justify their demands on others, and to elicit desired behaviors. Socializers [and social control agents] seek, consciously or not, to instill values that promote group survival and prosperity.

As culturally diverse groups seemed to agree regarding the high priority of benevolence, universalism, and self-direction values, we are in favour of using these sets to strengthen and to build people' sense of community in the sustainability context. Hence, we decided to look for already-implemented examples of value-based strategies, which use Schwartz's theoretical advancements and empirical tests. For example, the Common Cause Foundation is a network of people working to re-balance cultural values in order to 'build a more sustainable, equitable and democratic world, (...) [and] an empowered, connected and durable movement of citizens' (PIRC 2015a).

In 2012, thirteen UK conservation organisations - including World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-UK), the John Muir Award, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) - joined forces in the Common Cause for Nature project (Blackmore et al. 2013). According to The Public Interest Research Centre's (PIRC) web communications, the project involved 'an innovative linguistic analysis of six months of external communications of [these thirteen] organisations (...) supplemented by interviews, surveys and workshop discussion with those in the conservation sector' (PIRC 2013). Their findings and results were published in the Common Cause for Nature report, which discussed the values and frames used at the moment in conservation campaigns and projects, and also provided recommendations to strengthen corresponding values 'that surveys show most citizens, across most nations, hold to be paramount' (Common Cause Foundation 2018).

In addition, the Common Cause Foundation held an impressive number of workshops across the country and internationally for campaigners, community organisers, civil

servants, fundraisers, educators, social entrepreneurs, activists, and funders, interested in 'understanding the effects of our cultural values [and frames] on how we process information and act upon big issues' (Common Cause Foundation 2018). They also released a variety of guidelines, handbooks, toolkits, and briefings for relevant actors to drive attitude change towards nature conservation. Investigating the successful implementation of the Common Cause for Nature project, we started wondering if a 'common cause' approach would help cultivate people's sense of moral responsibility towards nature? We will explore this question in Chapter 4 when we investigate the role of beliefs, moral judgements, and the attitude of respect for nature in motivating behavioural change in community settings.

Up until now, we learnt that the current governmental approaches to influencing pro-environmental behaviour have a negative impact on people's attitudes, encouraging them to pursue extrinsic goals and promoting unsustainable lifestyles. However, Schwartz stressed the role of values in motivating people to stick to group norms to ensure their well-being in a stable and peaceful society. Hence, our values also reinforce specific attitudes, actions, and habits as socially appropriate. The benefits of agreeing upon a cross-cultural value hierarchy provide a better understanding of the ways in which values influence the development of our society and help people achieve their purpose. It follows that a person's well-being might perhaps be dependent on a collaborative environment, where she is accepted as part of a group in return for her dedication to a common good. In this context, the shared sets of values help establish connections between members of the community and provide them with the necessary reasons to offer support to one another.

Consequently, we argue that enhancing high priority sets of values like benevolence, universalism, and self-direction values, is the key to a better understanding of people's duties and responsibilities as citizens, not consumers. In the following section, we state that a person's action frames also play an essential role in activating the right sets of values, changing existing habits, and taking pro-environmental action.

3.2. Using frames to nurture the 'right' sets of values

Our dominant sets of values inform the way we see and make sense of the world. Cultural and social frames determine the depths of our understanding and the boundaries we set (consciously or unconsciously) for ourselves. Hence, we define frames as 'mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality – and sometimes to create what we take to be reality' (Lakoff 2006: 25) and present the advantages of framing in motivating behavioural change. We argue that frames could be effective tools for fostering pro-environmental attitudes, strengthening people's sets of intrinsic values and encouraging their identities as citizens (rather than consumers). Sadly, the UK Government and other actors (businesses, media and NGOs) use framing in their public policies, campaigns and projects to promote excessive consumerism (see section 2.2.). Instead, we state the urgency of a reframed narrative to facilitate public engagement for nature conservation and stimulate people to make positive lifestyle changes for the future.

Before all else, we will make a distinction between frames and values: 'frames offer a broader perspective than values, while including them. Whereas values arise in response

to the questions “what do I think is important?” or “what do I think is right and wrong?”, frames embed values in the question “how do I understand the world?” (Crompton 2010: 46). Lakoff (2010b: 71) claimed that 'all thinking and talking involves "framing" (...) [and] many frame-circuits have direct connections to the emotional regions of the brain'. A person's cultural and social frames are stored in the long-term memory, shaping her perceptions and activating 'a collection of associations (ideas, memories, emotions and values) that accompany a given concept' (Sanderson 2014). Accordingly, these mental structures are deeply ingrained, as part of a system of behaviour defaults to be accessed when interpreting new information. As Rose (2014: 6) explained:

Many frames are triggered visually, and if text is involved, we read them and instantly convert them into a mental image. This process happens faster than our conscious thinking processes, and we draw conclusions (form opinions, take actions etc.) which our conscious brain then rationalises.

Language is an essential tool in constructing frames; 'the words we use have meaning for us because they are linked to both our experience of the world and to the way that we conceptualise it' (Crompton 2010: 40). So, a person's conceptualisations are not random, but rather precisely determined within existing cultural and social frames. Frame semantics and language use help us make sense of common words and metaphors used by people to communicate their opinions and interact with the world. Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 116) state that language provides 'data that can lead to general principles of understanding (...) [which] are often metaphoric in nature'. As well, frames are not static

and fixed but adapted 'through repeated exposure to what we hear, read and experience' (Darnton and Kirk 2011: 67).

There are two categories of frames: surface frames and deep frames. According to Darnton and Kirk (2011: 75), surface frames set 'the context for what a situation or discourse is about – effectively it names the subject matter, and at the same time provides an angle for viewing it'. On the other hand, deep frames set 'the subject in a moral context, or ground it within a worldview. (...) [These] are usually taken for granted within the discourse or experience' (Darnton and Kirk 2011: 75). Moreover, Holmes et al. (2011: 36) note that 'deeper-rooted [frames], broader in scope, (...) often incorporate social or political ideals — such as equality between people, for authority, or personal freedom — strongly connected to our values'. Thus, deep frames represent 'one's overall "common sense"'; a sound basis of meaning to support her dominant sets of values and surface frames (Lakoff 2006: 29). In this enquiry, we are particularly interested in the capacity of deep frames to motivate pro-environmental attitudes and influence people's conceptualisations and values in community settings.

Life in today's society and the experience of institutions and public policies communicate duties and responsibilities to the population while activated frames shape people's thinking and behaviour. Decision-makers learn to use deep framing, accessing people's sets of values to influence attitude change in the context of current political and economic trends. Crompton (2010: 58) points out that as 'deep frames help to embed particular values culturally, the processes by which they come to dominate should be of intense interest'. The public is advised to become mindful of the messages directed at

them and question the language used by journalists, politicians, and campaigners to communicate information (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). As Crompton (2010: 58) states:

Today, many organisations deploy an understanding of framing in ways that are far from transparent and (because of the way in which frames operate largely at an unconscious level) sometimes seem ethically dubious.

We state that the government, businesses, media and NGOs should be held responsible for activating harmful frames in people's minds as a result of implemented policies, exposure to commercial marketing or advertising campaigns undertaken (see section 2.2.). The above actors target easy and fast strategies to address harmful behaviours and at the same time, encourage people to become superficial, ignorant, and solitary. In the sustainability context, Holmes et al. (2011: 46) advise 'not lose sight of the big picture, and a vision of long-term, systemic change, with a clear understanding of the values that will underpin it'. In the next section, we will look at the public concern and response to climate change action in the UK and identify effective ways to reframe the current narrative to make environmental protection more engaging and accessible in community settings.

3.2.1. Climate scepticism and contradictory communications

There are people who agree the environment is threatened through resource overuse and pollution while others disagree that human beings are in any way responsible for environmental degradation and global warming (Franzen and Meyer 2010). So, we

decided to explore the narrative behind nature conservation to identify the most common surface and deep frames promoted in the UK. Getting a better understanding of these frames will offer essential insights into the current narrative and the sets of values activated in the public. Here, we will analyse prominent discourses evidenced in popular media coverage of climate change said to impact people's attitudes and behaviours, as well as the UK's cultural and social norms.

In the last two decades, scepticism and uncertainty about the possible threats of climate change have increased in Europe, and in particular the UK (Whitmarsh 2011; Corner, Whitmarsh and Xenias 2012; Franzen and Vogl 2013; van der Linden et al. 2015). As Poortinga et al. (2011: 1020) note:

[Among the British public,] a sizeable minority expressed uncertainty about whether climate change is really happening; and even among those who think that the world's climate is changing a majority agrees that they are uncertain what the effects of climate change will be.

Public scepticism is challenged by 97% of climate scientists, who agree that human activity is contributing to climate change (Maibach, Myers and Leiserowitz 2014).

However, natural and social sciences researchers use the scientific language in climate change communications, which turn to be inadequate to influencing people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles because the impacts of climate change, 'the long-time lag and great geographical gap between cause and effect' are invisible (Christie 2010: 16). Corner, Whitmarsh and Xenias (2012: 465) argue that climate scepticism among the general public should not only 'be reduced to an assessment of the climate science— [but] also

warrants a psychological explanation'. In recent years, a big decline in environmental concern was noted as a result of 'reports of scientific misconduct, inaccuracies, and exaggerations, [which] introduced more confusion into the debate' (Franzen and Vogl 2013: 1007). In this context, the UK population became more reluctant to support climate change adaptation and mitigation and less likely to adopt sustainable lifestyles in the long term.

Nowadays, the most accessible sources of information about climate change are journalists, politicians, and campaigners. Even if scientists are better trusted, the public cannot often expose 'professional deniers [with] impressive backgrounds in academia and public life (...) [and their] message of complacency that [we] are happy to hear' (Marshall 2010: 37). People also rely on sources of information at hand, like friends, colleagues, neighbours, and family members. As Marshall (2010: 37) explained, a person's social networks will influence her attitudes about climate change:

If the people around us accept the scientific consensus and are taking action to reduce their impacts, then accepting climate change is not just the easiest option but also brings the rewards of social validation.

Unfortunately, climate scepticism in community settings might perhaps influence people's habits and behaviours negatively. In addition, contradictory communications are said to be 'highly damaging to public understanding, trust and sense of personal capacity to act' (Christie 2010: 16). Further, we will look at dominant climate change communications in the UK, identifying any mixed messages and exploring how these influence people's value systems and attitudes.

Just like a decade ago, the British discourse about climate change remained ‘a very noisy and messy language landscape (...), with advocates apparently arguing among themselves in the battle for consensus’, as described by Ereaut and Segnit (2006: 10). The mixed information confused the UK public and made people question the scientific evidence of humanity’s impact on the planet. Yet, the period of disputation and uncertainty in climate change communications has not come to an end, which impacts the implementation of adaptation and mitigation initiatives, both locally and globally.

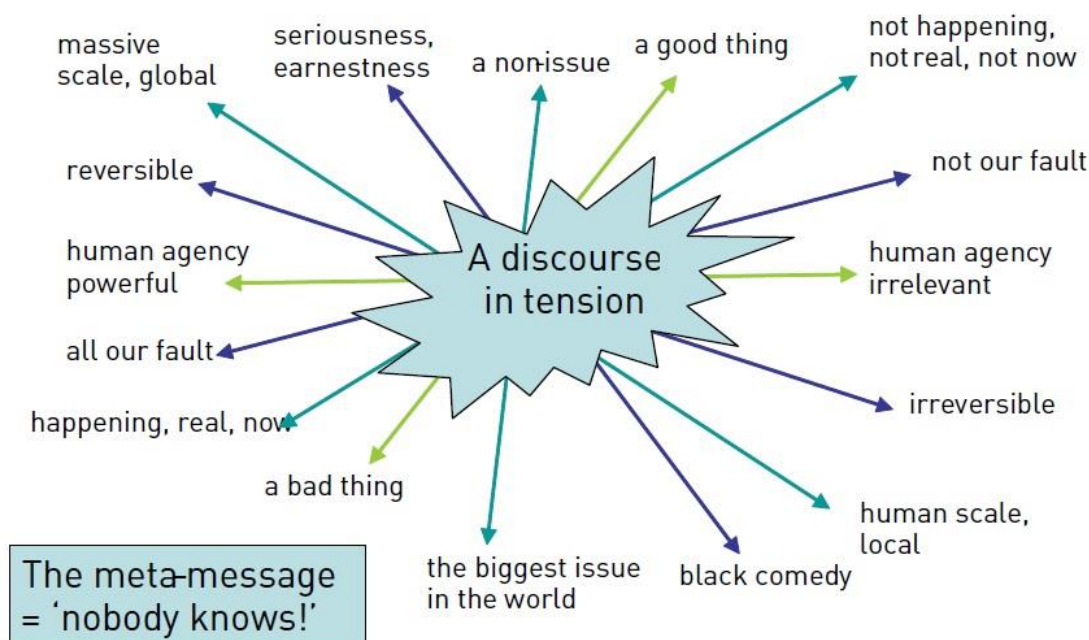


Figure 3. 4. Opposing messages in climate change communications (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 10)

Figure 3.4. illustrates the variety of linguistic repertoires which constitute ‘different ways of thinking and talking and (...) different versions of what might be considered “common sense”’ in the climate change debate (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 7). We identified three types of linguistic repertoires still used in communications, in the UK context:

There is an 'alarmist' repertoire, which is fundamentally pessimistic (...), as well as two groups of 'optimistic' repertoires – one that includes repertoires that assume 'it'll be alright' and a more pragmatic set of repertoires that assume 'it'll be alright as long as we do something' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 12).

First, the alarmist repertoire depicts climate change as a catastrophic phenomenon, outside human control; employing 'a quasi-religious register of death and doom, and [a] language of acceleration and irreversibility' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 7). Alarmist communications aim to make people aware of the severity of global warming risks, but these shock tactics induce fear, anxiety and apathy in the target audience (Whitmarsh 2011). The public is paralysed by an alarmist repertoire because 'the problem is just too big for [them] to take on' and the possibility of real action is excluded (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 14). Second, the optimistic repertoire ('it'll be alright') dismisses the alarmist repertoire and appeals to people's 'common sense'; climate change is 'a thing so large and fantastic that it cannot be true' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 14). 'It'll be alright' repertoire speaks for 'the sane majority' and rejects the scientific argument of human-caused global warming. This repertoire works to preserve the status quo, 'looking backwards to yesterday, which was better, and [disliking] anything new or different (...) [which] threatens [people] identity, belonging, security and safety' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 14). And third, the pragmatic optimistic repertoire ('it'll be alright as long as we **do** something') encourages people to address the possible impacts of climate change by making small modifications to their current lifestyle. The language of the pragmatic optimistic repertoire is 'one of ease, convenience and effortless agency (...); the problem

with it is that it easily lapses into (...) the routine, the boring and the too-easily ignorable' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 20). In the last few decades, the UK Government and other actors (businesses, media and NGOs) mixed the above repertoires all together and there was no consistency maintained in the climate change story: 'global crisis or UK-centric opportunity; enlightened self-interest or a need for altruism; immense economic opportunity or potential economic collapse' (Christie 2010: 17). Consequently, the overwhelming variety of communicated messages further widened the attitude-behaviour gap associated with nature conservation.

At present, the alarmist and the pragmatic optimistic repertoires are often used alongside each other by journalists, politicians, and campaigners in climate change communications.

As Ereaut and Segnit (2006: 25) clarified:

In bringing together these two repertoires without reconciling them, these [communications] feed a notion of asymmetry in human agency with regards to climate change. The result is a belief that individuals are responsible for causing climate change, but are really powerless to negate it.

Hence, these opposed repertoires hold the climate change discourse in tension, 'juxtaposing the apocalyptic and the mundane', creating further confusion and alienating the UK public from the natural world (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 25). People probably asked themselves: 'if things are as bad as they are said to be, where are the emergency measures?' and noted that we are encouraged to consume ever more goods and services with consequent environmental detriment (Christie 2010: 20). Whitmarsh (2011: 698)

explained that climate scepticism 'may be interpreted as a mechanism of denial to cope with an internal discrepancy at an individual level between the demands to engage with climate change' and the experience of limitations to act pro-environmentally.

Technological progress is expected to keep global warming under control, and we are asked to trust our inventive genius in tackling climate change. However, we consider that promoting the technological opportunity alone is misleading and likely to be counterproductive, as this type of discourse encourages the UK public to be complacent in the face of the dangers of climate change.

Mixed messages about climate change may slow down the development of a more sustainable world, if we do not acknowledge that 'there is an environment frame, and (...) politics, people, health, economy, our reliance on nature is not in it' (Lakoff 2010a: 15).

Unfortunately, people do not have many opportunities to talk openly and ask further questions about climate change so, contradictory facts and information will influence their dominant sets of values and attitudes. Unbiased experts and trusted sources of information are needed to reconcile the above repertoires and address public scepticism (Broome 2012). Hence, effective communications are imperative in the sustainability context to 'move people from accepting the reality [of climate change] to acting, both in pressuring their governments and in their personal lives' (Bain et al. 2016: 154).

Altogether, journalists, politicians, and campaigners are asked to take responsibility for the use of competing repertoires and scientists should learn to be persuasive and to use imagery, conceptual frames and metaphors in their climate change communications.

As a result, we support alternative communication strategies which frame pro-environmental action as building a better society. The following co-benefits of addressing climate change: increasing consideration for others and community functioning are said to encourage both believers and deniers (greens and non-greens) to get involved in nature conservation (Bain et al. 2012). So, behavioural change for environmental protection would not rely only on effective communications, but also on the invaluable contribution people have in their communities.

3.2.2. Framing environmental protection effectively

Earlier, we looked at climate change communications in the UK context, and we identified the dominant repertoires aiming to influence people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. We will further examine the current environmental narrative and identify extrinsic and intrinsic frames said to cultivate people's dominant sets of values. Ultimately, we will explore frame semantics and language use for more effective communications in order to introduce an improved narrative having better chances to motivate pro-environmental attitudes.

In the UK, the current environmental narrative is based on popular sets of values and frames activated in the British society. We argue that the studied narrative promotes the idea that human beings are separate from the natural world and dominant over it. 'The environment' is portrayed as 'a resource for short-term private enrichment' and consumption; a commodity that present people cannot afford to conserve for the well-being of the generations to come (Lakoff 2010a: 13). The expression 'protecting the

environment’ was highly criticised by Lakoff (2010a: 12) because it fosters people’s ignorance and superficiality towards nature conservation:

We are part of nature, (...) we are nurtured by it, (...) we owe our very existence to it, and it is our actions that are threatening what gives us, and everything else, life.

The UK Government, businesses, and media also refer to the natural environment as a distinct area of life from human existence, ‘not [linked] to everyday issues (...), and a luxury in difficult times’ (Lakoff 2010a: 13). Table 3.5. illustrates the use of language and frames in communications and provides us with vital insights to explain people’s lack of motivation to act pro-environmentally in the long term.

Extrinsic frames reinforce self-enhancement sets of values such as power, wealth, self-interest and security (see section 3.1.2.)	
Transactions and consumers	Commercial relationships and the public, as ‘consumers’
Utility and commodity	Money is the main focus - as a means of valuation, or to enact change
Defender and threat	Powerful defenders are protecting weak victims from threats

Table 3. 5. Extrinsic frames used in British communications about climate change
(Blackmore et al. 2013: 64)

An inadequate narrative creates further difficulties, as journalists, politicians, and campaigners will continue to nurture the unhealthy kind of frames, and in turn, individuals will not be motivated to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. In consequence,

people’s unwillingness to acknowledge the interdependent relationship with the natural world is raising significant moral and ethical issues, as the destructive exploitation of the environment is encouraged to continue. The studied narrative also fails to capture important connections between the environment and the other domains, vital to human life on Earth: security, health, food, economics, energy, and trade. A long-term commitment is needed to fix inadequate narratives and discourage extrinsic frames said to inhibit environmental concern, once these become part of the popular discourse.

Conversely, we argue that the use of intrinsic framing to communicate the reality of climate change is more likely to support collective engagement and encourage the political involvement of individuals in environmental protection. Table 3.6. recommends a variety of intrinsic frames based on social, spiritual and aesthetic benefits to acting pro-environmentally.

Intrinsic frames reinforce self-transcendence sets of values such as connecting with other peoples, with nature, and joint action (see section 3.1.2.).	
Connection with nature	Shared experiences and connection to the natural world.
Nature is beautiful	The beauty of the natural world
Discovery and exploration	Exploring nature and the outdoors
Working together	Joint action and community co-operation

Table 3. 6. An example of intrinsic frames to be used for more effective climate change communications (Blackmore et al. 2013: 64)

In contrast with extrinsic frames that focus on immediate and material conservation goals, intrinsic sets of values support 'a society that is more compassionate, more connected to nature, and more motivated to protect our environment' (Blackmore et al. 2013: 146). Bain et al. (2012: 600) state that both believers and deniers (greens and non-greens) are more likely 'to engage in pro-environmental action where they think climate change action would result in people becoming more moral, interpersonally warm and competent, and where action would lead to greater societal development or reduced societal dysfunction'. Thus, a reframed narrative would inspire the public to adopt intrinsic sets of values by working together and enhancing social cooperation for nature conservation in community settings.

According to Bain et al. (2012: 602), the co-benefits of climate change action for society are likely to motivate pro-environmental attitudes, regardless of a person's viewpoints, backgrounds, and life experiences; a shared concern 'may help circumvent ideological believer/denier labels in the service of common goals'. So, community functioning is a strong motivational factor in fostering public engagement, when 'climate change action can contribute to a more benevolent (caring and moral)' society (Bain et al. 2016: 154). As a result, framing environmental protection effectively means to go beyond climate change communications to promote the co-benefits of more sustainable lifestyles in relation to the social concerns of the public. In this context, we state that both greens and non-greens would be more likely to engage in environmental citizenship, identified 'as an important behaviour in addressing climate change (...), and contributing to public pressure for political action' (Bain et al. 2012: 600).

In sum, we looked at the current narrative to foster pro-environmental attitudes and explored effective frames to strengthen people's sets of intrinsic values and their identities as citizens. As public scepticism increased in the last decade, we analysed prominent repertoires identified in popular UK media coverage of possible impacts of global warming. Our findings suggested that repertoires and deep framing are the main tools used by journalists, politicians, and campaigners to access people's feelings to engage or move them away from environmental protection. Unfortunately, past efforts and current strategies to increase climate change response have left the UK population confused, alienated or downright antagonistic by contradictory communications, mixed messages, and modest political action.

As a result, we stressed the necessity of a clearer environmental narrative - nature conservation, as an engaging and accessible initiative for people - using better communications, cultivating benevolence and universalism values and frames, as well as adopting more sustainable lifestyles in the long term. In the next section, we will propose a reframed narrative, making use of intrinsic frames to foster people's dominant sets of values and drive attitude change for environmental protection. As part of the new narrative, nature conservation becomes a collective duty to ensure a flourishing future for the Earth, to include considerations of individual responsibility and stewardship. For this reason, the concept of diverse citizenship will be the foundation of our proposed narrative, focusing our attention on positive change for better community functioning and supporting people's shared interests said to motivate pro-environmental action.

3.3. People at the heart of a sustainable future

Here, we advance a reframed narrative that depicts environmental protection as a personal responsibility at home and a duty of citizens in community settings. The concept of citizenship is the foundation of our proposed narrative. Accordingly, the use of intrinsic values and frames is advised to foster environmental concern and to support better community functioning. Ultimately, we will focus on the ethics behind shaping values and frames at the socio-cultural level, and the interests of decision-makers and other actors to influence dominant beliefs in society.

As people lost touch with the natural world, we should try to ‘repair’ existing frames to be able to address alienation and effectively communicate the ‘complex truth of climate change (...), so that the truth can be understood’ (Lakoff 2010b: 73). As Hackmann et al. (2014: 655) point out:

We now need framings that promote the social, political, economic and cultural nature of climate change, and prioritize people’s beliefs and values, their behaviours, practices and the institutions that guide them.

The proposed narrative frames environmental protection through a social lens (in practice, a movement of active citizens) and encourages commitment to a common cause. Ereaut and Segnit (2006: 28) explain that ‘desired climate friendly behaviours need to be made to feel simply like “the kinds of things that people like us do”’ to motivate both believers and deniers (greens and non-greens) to get involved in nature conservation. Thus, the reframed narrative would target groups of people bound by shared values and actions - ‘people like us’. In our enquiry, people are placed at the heart

of a sustainable future, as we work locally to nurture an attitude of respect for nature and to cultivate a sense of moral responsibility for tackling anthropogenic climate change (see section 4.3.). There is no other way, 'society will have to either deliberately seek out, or be involuntarily subjected to, profound societal transformation' to adapt to/ mitigate the inevitable consequences of environmental degradation and global warming (Hackmann et al. 2014: 654).

Therefore, we argue that sustainable lifestyles cannot be inspired by communications alone so, the concept of citizenship looks promising in articulating what individuals might do to help nature conservation. Climate change communications and participatory meetings should be used in tandem to build a greener future and empower a movement of active citizens. In the sustainability context, we support a culture of engagement in which citizens are 'part of the collaborative decision-making processes, and they grow and struggle together in the process of personal transformation, as they develop a collective sense of the ideals towards which they wish to aspire' (Crompton 2010: 56). Consequently, we looked to offer people an opportunity to express their shared interests and to provide a safe context to impact their communities positively (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 5).

Contrary to popular belief, human beings are not 'utility maximising machines in the traditional economic mould' (Darnton and Kirk 2011: 72) instead we have natural empathetic dispositions and cooperative instincts (Tomasello 2009). Sadly, people learn to inhibit these tendencies as a result of cultural messages ('human beings are self-interested') and socialisation into group norms (Tomasello 2009). To a large extent,

collaboration and engagement determine human well-being: ‘individuals often find personal happiness, health, and life satisfaction (...) by investing in efforts to connect with and benefit their communities’ (Bauer et al. 2012: 522). More specifically, Crompton et al. (2010: 49) note:

Our social and environmental identities are bound up in a web of relationships, an ecosystem of the people and places that tell us who we are, and many of us report feeling most alive when we are aware of a profound psychological or spiritual connection to other people, other living things, and the wider world.

The proposed narrative is an acknowledgement of our common humanity, that ‘people, by and large, are compassionate, social creatures’ (Sanderson 2014). We learnt that across various cultures and regions, individuals rate self-transcendence and openness to change sets of values (e.g. responsibility, helpfulness and being part of nature) to be the most important in ensuring human well-being and environmental protection (see section 3.1.2). However, at the societal level, people feel that self-enhancement sets of values (e.g. achievement, power and security) are prioritised, being activated by many institutions and journalists, politicians and campaigners (Bernard et al. 2006). As the evidence suggests, the above discrepancy between what people value, and what they think other people in their society value could explain alienation and public scepticism about climate change. Thus, we were determined to test people’s empathetic dispositions and cooperative instincts in the sustainability context, and analyse how these impact values, frames and social norms (see Chapter 5).

We decided to leave behind people's private sphere and became more interested in nurturing a community mindset for nature conservation. Hence, we focused on a common cause (environmental activism) in community settings, rather than working to reduce carbon footprints, one household at a time. As Booth (2009: 69) points out:

Activism has appeal as a way of engaging meaningfully in society and forging new relationships and identities that enhance wellbeing. (...)
Serious lifestyle reforms are likely to flow from activist commitments.

We state that promoting values of care and cultivating a sense of moral responsibility towards nature could motivate community members to offer support to one another in acting pro-environmentally (Bain et al. 2013). So, our focus would be limited to community settings and existing social networks that allow us to facilitate active discussions and participatory meetings for collective engagement and more sustainable communities. Indeed, once a group of people acknowledged its impacts on others and the environment, it will be ready to address climate scepticism and work to have its values 'echoed outside of the community, in the civic institutions: the education system, media and politics' (Sanderson 2014).

In consequence, the reframed narrative is determined by a system of frames designed to activate people's empathetic dispositions and cooperative instincts. Moreover, we support a movement of active citizens with an idealistic goal (developing a shared morality for environmental protection in community settings - see Chapter 4) because 'idealism mobilizes. And it throws a light on, and presents a counterweight to, moral compromise' (Lakoff 2010b: 80). In other words, we state that people with essential roles

and responsibilities could bring about significant change by building political pressure through citizen engagement and by acting in the public interest (Crompton 2010). Next, we will discuss the concept of citizenship and its connection to community involvement in bringing about attitude change for a sustainable future.

3.3.1. Diverse citizenship for greener societies

In this section, we talk about citizenship (as the foundation of our proposed narrative) and consider the rights and duties of citizens in the sustainability context. We use the concept of diverse citizenship to support our strategy for tackling climate change: the development of a shared morality in community settings. Lastly, we argue that the concept of citizenship helps us introduce a progressive moral system for nature conservation to be refined and validated in the chapters to come.

The possible impacts of climate change make us wonder what kind of world we want to live in and what it will take to get there. The concept of citizenship helps us articulate a practical way of cultivating intrinsic values and frames for nature conservation while focusing on positive change for better community functioning (Latta 2007). Hence, the proposed narrative is expected to drive attitude change as environmental protection is said to be the collective duty of citizens (Dobson 2007). There is no universal language to define the concept of citizenship in the sustainability context (Bell and Dobson 2006) but ‘in the broadest possible compass such citizenship will/can/may surely have something to do with the relationship between individuals and the common good [sustainable development]’ (Dobson 2007: 280). Though, Bell (2013: 356) points out that the practical

ideal of environmental citizenship is 'morally and politically suspect: (...) [being] complicit in the neoliberal agenda of privatizing and individualizing responsibility for environmental problems that can only be solved by collective political, and ultimately state, action'. We took note of this observation however due to space limitations, we are not going into a deeper discussion of the tradition, successes and failures of the various kinds of environment-related citizenship (Dobson 2003; Bell 2005b ; Bell and Dobson 2006; Dobson 2010; Dobson 2011; Bell 2013; Hobson 2013). Here, we present our particular interpretation of diverse citizenship for fostering people's awareness of nature conservation and increasing engagement in community settings.

Neither a liberal or republican approach captured our practical ideal of citizenship in the sustainability context: 'a cooperative relationship (...) between equals exercising power together (...) oriented towards securing the enjoyment of public or civic goods, whether through (creative) use of the options available to them, or by employing strategies of negotiation or non-violent confrontation in order to (...) secure various common goods' (Tully 2014: 229). Thus, the concept of citizenship, as we interpret it, is similar to Tully's (2014: 229) diverse citizenship that 'does not require a particular institutional setting, and which may cross territorial boundaries, but which takes place in the context of relations of governance'. If we work to build dialogue between citizens and to focus on local, community-based identities and nature connectedness, people will gain confidence to demand a say in the practices of governance to which they are subject (Barry 2006). Thus, diverse citizenship allows the development of a shared source of moral authority in community settings so, the rights, duties and virtues of citizens are not dictated by the

institutions of the modern constitutional state, but they are ultimately derived from citizen-driven considerations of justice (Tully 2014).

Previously, we argued that intrinsic values and frames could determine consistency across a variety of environmentally friendly behaviours (see sections 3.1. and 3.2.). According to Schwartz (2012), high priority sets of values like benevolence, universalism, and self-direction, are the ones to stimulate virtuous citizens to protect the environment. Also, cultural and social frames designed to promote social participation and integration can work towards motivating 'a certain concern for others, an awareness of our human commonality' (Byers 2005). Therefore, we state that common-interest frames would encourage citizens to debate, act, protest, demand in the public sphere and would point out that private actions could affect public well-being (Dobson 2007: 280). In this sense, common-interest frames for nature conservation would support the development of citizenship identities for better cooperation and meeting the challenges of climate change (van Steenbergen 1994).

We argue that a sustainable future depends upon recognising diverse forms of citizenship with global reach to sustain 'the exchanges and interdependencies - including shared economic, environmental and security vulnerabilities - among the political entities and peoples of Planet Earth' (Byers 2005). The exposure to the wider world further shapes our identity - we are becoming global citizens (van Steenbergen 1994). Hence, the increasing interactions at the global level and the effects of globalisation demand 'unity in diversity' to be able to acknowledge our common humanity and dependence on nature.

Environmental degradation and global warming transcend political and geographic borders, as consumerist lifestyles are pushing the Earth beyond its natural boundaries. For better or for worse, globalisation gave birth to global citizens who can 'explore' the whole world at the click of the mouse. However, at the same time, the world shrank as people acknowledged that whatever changes they would like to effect in society has to begin with them getting involved in their local community settings (van Steenbergen 1994). On this account, diverse citizenship in the sustainability context would acknowledge cultural, ethnic and religious diversity around the world ('think globally') but would be centred around the local community ('act locally') to support affiliations, identities and loyalties to push for more pro-environmental action (Piper 2003). Furthermore, putting citizenship in a global perspective would activate intrinsic sets of values and frames in people's minds like 'the promotion of human honour and dignity, understanding, amity, cooperation, trustworthiness, compassion and the desire to serve' the common good (Bahá'í International Community 1993).

At this point in our enquiry, we stumbled across Byers' (2005) interpretation of global citizenship, which identified the most important citizens' rights in a global context:

Global citizenship empowers individual human beings to participate in decisions concerning their lives, including the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions in which they live. It includes the right to vote, to express opinions and associate with others, and to enjoy a decent and dignified quality of life. It is expressed through engagement in the various communities of which the individual is a part, at the local, national and global level. And it includes the right to

challenge authority and existing power structures - to think, argue and act - with the intent of changing the world.

Ultimately, we agreed that nature is ‘the “provider of [our] basic needs”’ hence, a greener world needs engaged citizens thinking globally and acting locally, ‘concerned about sustainability and, especially, about reducing or limiting their impact on the environment’ (Bell 2013: 347). According to Tully (2014: 37), we become citizens by acknowledging our civic duties; ‘in virtue of actual participation in civic activities’. All citizens have the duty to protect nature and ‘the environmental rights of distant strangers (as well as those people living in [the] local environment) by addressing harmful behaviour in the private sphere, as well as actively seeking to promote just environmental laws in the public sphere’ (Bell 2013: 354). Once people understand their rights and take responsibility for their duties (as citizens of the world), other learning opportunities would be available to enable them to adopt and live up to a more demanding environmental morality (van Steenbergen 1994).

3.3.2. The impacts of unsustainable lifestyles on people and nature

Earlier, we stated that a sustainable future depends upon embracing diverse citizenship with a broader worldview, accepting our common humanity and acknowledging our dependence on nature. Hence, we argue that nature conservation is in fact, both a human right and the collective duty of global citizens with consideration of individual responsibility and stewardship. Coming up, we call attention to matters of justice and the

negative consequences suffered by people and other beings due to the accelerated deterioration in the Earth's climate system.

We cannot be genuinely concerned about nature conservation but avoid by all means to have a normative debate about how people ought to behave (Jamieson 2010a). As Gardiner (2006: 398) states, 'we cannot get very far in discussing why climate change is a problem without invoking ethical considerations' regarding the environmental impacts of consumerist lifestyles, moral responsibility towards future generations and other species, and a just distribution of the costs of mitigation and adaptation (Arnold 2011; Shockley 2017). Thus, we will present the potential risks of climate change, and then talk about the responsibility of human beings not to affect the balance of the planetary climate system. As well, we will discuss matters of justice shaping attitudes at the socio-cultural level, and we will look at optimal conditions for the mutual flourishing of global citizens in community settings.

Anthropogenic climate change is a fundamental ethical challenge for humanity so, we argue that considerations of justice should be at the centre of the debate on nature conservation (Schlosberg 2003; Bell 2010). As Figueroa and Mills (2001: 427) note, environmental justice 'refers to the conceptual connections and causal relationships between environmental issues and social justice'. In the sustainability context, matters of justice concern 'the distribution of benefits and burdens among humans and fair participation for humans in decision making about how those benefits and burdens are distributed' (Bell 2017: 276). Other applications of justice consider treating all people fairly and equally, taking responsibility for the disruption of the functioning of living

systems and correcting the damages produced by anthropogenic climate change (Caney 2010; Broome 2012; Schlosberg 2013; Bell 2017).

There is reasonable certainty that anthropogenic climate change will cost lives directly and will cause great suffering (Bell 2010; Shue 2010). The accelerated deterioration in the Earth's climate system determines the following unfavourable changes: 'significant increases in droughts, floods, and coastal flooding; more severe weather events; loss of fisheries; widespread species extinctions; and widespread migration away from low-lying coastal regions' (Arnold 2011: 9). The World Health Organization (2017) predicted that, between 2030 and 2050, climate change would cause approximately 250000 additional deaths per year, from malaria, diarrhoeal disease, heat exposure and childhood undernutrition. Some population groups are especially vulnerable: children, women, older people and the poor. People living in megacities, small island nations and coastal regions, mountains, and polar regions will be affected (Bell 2004b) and 'population displacement could increase tensions and potentially the risks of conflict' (World Health Organization 2017). All the above draw attention to significant questions of morality like 'how we ought to live, what kinds of societies we want, and how we relate to nature and other forms of life' and so, these impacts of climate change should be seriously acknowledged (Jamieson 1992: 147).

In Chapter 2, we talked about the responsibility of prominent causal actors (state institutions, corporations, and supra-state political institutions) in addressing the causes and effects of environmental degradation and anthropogenic climate change. However here, we will only focus on considerations of justice regarding the ecological footprint of

individuals. Anthropogenic climate change is considered a tragedy of the commons (Shockley 2017) because the harms and suffering caused are ‘the consequence of the cumulative actions of many agents. One agent’s actions would not be enough’ to affect the planetary climate system (Bell 2010: 428). As Marshall (2010: 37) notes, most people ‘entered in good faith into a social contract that if they are honest and hardworking, they are entitled to the rewards of increasing affluence and mobility. It is not surprising that they react aggressively when this is challenged’. Strictly speaking, no one wants to experience the possible impacts of climate change so, would prefer everyone to reduce environmental impact. However, if costs fall largely on future generations, many might perhaps free ride on the actions of others and enjoy the short-term benefits of consumerist lifestyles (Gardiner 2004). Hence, the unjustifiable lack of action is criticised as (moral) corruption because the complexity of climate change ‘provides each generation with the cover under which it can seem to be taking the issue seriously (...) when really it is simply exploiting its temporal position’ (Gardiner 2006: 408). Sadly, environmental degradation and global warming are rapidly advancing phenomena so, ‘in failing to act appropriately, the current generation does not simply pass an existing problem along to future people, rather it adds to it, making the problem worse’ (Gardiner 2006: 405). Soon after, any subsequent generation decides whether or not to limit its ecological footprint, in accordance with the choice made by the ones who came before them (Shue 2010; Broome 2012).

By any means, the consumerist lifestyles enjoyed by people in the developed countries and considered normal everywhere, ‘likely will be, in the full course of human history, an outstanding aberration’ (Thompson 2010: 45). At present, the well-being of societies and

people's 'modern way of life, from abundant food to the ubiquity of plastics, from cheap and abundant energy to apparently endless economic growth' are completely dependent on burning fossil fuels and emitting large quantities of CO₂ in the atmosphere (Thompson 2010: 45). For this reason, Thompson (2010: 46) predicted that 'this energy orgy will be relatively abrupt' and our world will need to regain 'some kind of equilibrium', as human beings are exploiting the Earth beyond its regeneration limit. The involvement of developed countries in the accelerated deterioration of the planetary climate system makes them morally responsible for correcting their environmental injustices and paying to tackle anthropogenic climate change (Caney 2006; Caney 2009; Jamieson 2010a; Broome 2012). As evidence began to show that industrial activity had dangerous consequences, developed countries had not embrace 'a conservative or even cautious policy of cutting back greenhouse-gas emissions or at least slowing their rate of increase' (Shue 1999: 536). For this reason, Shue (1999: 535) argues that developed countries should take the lead and support the additional costs of addressing environmental degradation and global warming:

In the process, the industrial activities and accompanying lifestyles of the developed countries have inflicted major global damage upon the earth's atmosphere. Meanwhile, the environmental damage caused by the process has been incurred by everyone. The rich countries have profited to the extent of the excess of the benefits gained by them over the costs incurred by everyone through environmental damage done by them, and ought in future to bear extra burdens in dealing with the damage they have done.

Only recently, a multilateral agreement (the 2015 Paris Agreement) on a global climate regime has been reached being 'applicable to all parties, setting forth provisions on financing, technology, and capacity-building, and also creating a transparent and verifiable vigilance mechanism for mitigation and adaptation actions' (Santos 2017). The agreement sets cooperation and equity policies for both developed and developing nations and establishes distinct responsibilities and capabilities to support a fair distribution of costs (Santos 2017). The Paris Agreement is legally binding in regard to the review and the assessment of duties. However, any equity and justice scopes are limited as the agreement does not add binding emission targets or binding financial commitments beyond those already set by the UNFCCC (United Nations 2015).

A while ago, Jamieson (1992: 149) warned us about 'the possibility that the global environment may be destroyed, yet no one will be responsible'. So as to avoid a tragic situation, our value system must constantly be updated to keep up with the moral problems raised by anthropogenic climate change. Nowadays, people need further support to learn that nature conservation is in fact, our human right (both international and intergenerational) and simultaneously, our collective duty at the local level (Bell 2005b). A more sustainable lifestyle would involve drastically cutting back on luxuries like fast fashion, meat consumption and travel (Shue 2010); in other words, human beings are expected to refit themselves to live in an unfamiliar society. Thompson (2010: 50) predicted that global citizens would 'need imaginative excellence in the conception of new cultural patterns, new human forms of life that will allow us to live well on a planet that may be quite unlike the one under which human civilization has developed and all

life on Earth is adapted'. Have human beings evolved to be so adaptive? One can only hope.

These profound lifestyle changes 'forced' on people by anthropogenic climate change make everybody feel anxious because of a sense of culpability and the awareness of our moral responsibility to do something about it (Shockley 2017). As Thompson (2009: 96) explains:

At least part of the intuition of moral horror that we feel about anthropogenic global climate change is existential angst over the burden of this responsibility. (...) Our anxiety, I believe, is over our loss of innocence. We don't fear the end of the natural world; we fear responsibility for the natural world.

Consequently, we are in need of a new conception of living well which is 'against despair, even in the face of a well-justified despair' that is, anthropogenic climate change (Thompson 2010: 49). Thus, we endorse *radical hope* as an empowering response to changing times, 'a product of imaginative excellence that allows courage to be manifest in situations where one has an outdated conception of living well' (Thompson 2010: 50).

Human beings are challenged to come up with innovative solutions and be committed to secure a more sustainable future which exceeds their present capacity to envision it. To achieve such a great purpose, we need to stay hopeful that 'people would be able to "get the good back"—not only would they survive the destruction of their traditional forms of life but they would return again to flourish in the presently unimaginable new world' (Thompson 2010: 49). Namely, the virtue of radical hope is essentially 'the hope for

revival' (Lear 2006: 95). As a result, we were inspired by radical hope (as 'a product of imaginative excellence') when motivating people to be courageous in the face of uncertainty, restoring their confidence that 'an inadequate grasp of the good should not lead one to believing it is not to be hoped for' (Thompson 2010: 49).

Accordingly, the environmental-related citizenship discussed above calls for a commitment to justice, a conception of radical hope and the acknowledgement of the interdependent relationship human beings have with nature (Broome 2012). People are expected to take responsibility for a leadership role in ensuring the good of all Earth's entities. As Thompson (2012: 215) notes:

Human beings are now managers of the planet in the sense that collectively our actions determine the basic conditions for the existence of all life on Earth. (...) Satisfying well the demands of [this] role will require human beings to develop suitable and correspondingly new traits of character among which, I argue, is a special virtue of responsibility.

Namely, our responsibility to protect the other species, ecosystems, and even the Earth itself can be translated as 'a duty of respect for nature' (van Steenbergen 1994; Jamieson 2010b). In the following section, we will argue that an effective strategy for nature conservation would inspire respect for nature and could motivate groups of individuals to abandon their consumerist practices in community settings. We will also bring to attention the opportunities for reciprocal learning and social cohesion as a consequence of people embracing the collective duty to secure a more sustainable future.

3.4. A normative strategy for citizen engagement and participation

Earlier, we examined the concept of diverse citizenship and the optimal conditions for the mutual flourishing of global citizens and concluded that ‘human beings now shoulder the responsibility of planetary management’ (Thompson 2009: 97). Here, we will briefly introduce our normative strategy for citizen engagement and participation (to be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4) designed to generate respect for nature and to encourage people to adopt pro-environmental behaviours in the long term.

Essentially, citizenship education is a method of ‘disciplining the population to internalize a set of rules for behaviour – to become self-governing’ and aware of the human impact in society (MacGregor 2006: 108). In the sustainability context, citizenship education could be used more widely to support the development of knowledge, skill, and character by promoting the rights and duties of citizens, connecting to our common humanity, and encouraging the development of shared norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character in community settings. The subject of citizenship education for environmental protection is vastly explored in the literature (Hungerford and Volk 1990; Bonnett 1999; Flew 2000; Dobson 2003; Neal and Palmer 2003; Bell 2004a; Bell 2005a; Bell and Dobson 2006) however, we decided (due to word limitations) not to engage in examining the possible uses of citizenship in educating people to act sustainably. Instead, in this thesis, we offer an alternative approach to citizenship education for nature conservation: organising civic spaces of joint practices at the local level to share experiences and opinions and facilitate interdisciplinary, hands-on learning and pro-environmental action.

As we pushed the Earth into the Anthropocene, normative strategies are desperately needed to ensure people acknowledge that environmental protection is in fact, the collective duty of citizens. Consequently, we decided to advance a practical tool for engagement and participation of citizens with the help of shared values, beliefs and attitudes and supporting identity formation in community settings. Using the power of open, reciprocal, and critical dialogues, we argue that groups of people could define a shared morality for environmental protection in their community settings (see Chapter 4). Unlike other behavioural change strategies (examined in Chapter 2), the exercise of defining a shared morality asks citizens, community groups and other possible local actors (city councils, businesses, media and NGOs) to work together and listen to each other in order to develop effective action plans for nature conservation.

The increasing social interactions at the global level and the adverse effects of globalisation demand a progressive moral system for environmental protection and value-based strategies to inspire a definite moral purpose and an explicit drive for justice (Bell 2017). We want citizens ‘to pay attention to [environmental] problems, acknowledge their roles in contributing to them, [and to be] willing to cooperate’ in order to ensure the good of both humans and non-human things on Earth (Kawall 2012: 232). According to Connelly (2006: 59), people should be steered away from attaining moral perfection for nature conservation and rather be encouraged to undertake collective action:

We might not be able to agree on a strong conception of the (...) good, but we might plausibly be able to agree on at least some of the necessary preconditions for human existence, within which individuals and societies freely develop their own conceptions of the good.

Thus, moral agents should be offered a safe context 'to eliminate the possibility of free riding and so make genuine cooperation the rational strategy at the individual as well as collective level' (Gardiner 2006: 401).

Accordingly, we studied the concept of social influence within community settings 'through which intragroup discussion creates a sense of group identity' (Postmes et al. 2005: 1) and motivates attitude change. Civic spaces and empowered networks could be used as non-violent and creative contexts of negotiation to help people overcome their differences (Kennedy 2011). All collectives that speak a local language and support community initiatives could provide favourable circumstances for nurturing citizen identities and the attitude of respect for nature (see section 4.3.). As Postmes et al. (2005: 34) point out:

It is precisely because individuals actively engage with each other that a small group of unconnected individuals can be transformed into an entity capable of taking a collective stance and undertaking collective action. Equally, it can be said that it is precisely because of shared group membership and social identity that people can fulfil their potentials as individuals and establish their own identity.

Citizens can only benefit from a civic space of shared practices in nature conservation, '[opened] to the ongoing questioning, negotiation and transformation of those who are subject to and affected by them' (Tully 2014: 95). Thus, the existing local cooperatives, NGOs, networks and social movements could provide the necessary sources and

resources to support citizens' mobilisation in community settings. Moreover, community-based groups could be linked together in global networks of citizens with better capacities to have a significant impact on individual lives and ensure greener societies (Schlosberg 2003). These global networks of citizens could be a non-violent alternative to protests and boycotts; using negotiation, persuasion, and pressure to hold actors responsible for environmental degradation and anthropogenic climate change (Tully 2014).

3.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter made the case that working with intrinsic values and socio-cultural frames is a better strategy to fostering pro-environmental attitudes than the UK Government's approach to influencing behaviours using laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing. While studying the most significant challenges to nature conservation (consumerist lifestyles, climate scepticism and contradictory communications), we considered a reframed narrative to facilitate citizen engagement and participation, making environmental protection more appealing and accessible to all. Furthermore, we found diverse citizenship to constitute a possible basis from which said attitude change might evolve and global citizens might adopt more sustainable practices, at the local level. We also explored citizen-driven considerations of justice and engaged in a normative debate about people's responsibility to ensure the good of both humans and non-human things on Earth. Ultimately, we proposed a collaborative alternative to citizenship education in stimulating groups of people to work together for nature conservation in community settings. That is, we argued that a shared morality could help

improve people's moral intuition and practical reasoning and inspire citizen engagement and participation in environmental protection.

The standard of living people enjoy today is a result of the Industrial Revolution, which promoted a mass consumerism culture and encouraged the accumulation of material wealth. The current barriers towards ensuring a sustainable future (consumerist lifestyles, climate scepticism and contradictory communications) expose the gap between awareness and concern about climate change and people's willingness to engage in pro-environmental action. At present, consumerist societies give extraordinary importance to satisfying immediate needs, wants, and demands while economic discourses shape the way human beings see the world and their guiding principles in life. With this in mind, we studied different sets of intrinsic values said to stimulate attitude change for environmental protection. We also discovered that efficient frames are essential to achieving broad societal shifts, strengthening people's sets of intrinsic values and inspiring an active model of citizenship. Consequently, we stated that a normative strategy to fostering pro-environmental attitudes would help groups of people to broaden their horizons, self-regulate their harmful behaviour, and acknowledge the benefits of caring for nature.

As anthropogenic climate change transcends the geographical and political boundaries of nation-states (Jamieson 2010a), we endorsed the concept of diverse citizenship in inspiring the engagement and participation of global citizens in environmental protection. Diverse citizenship is supportive of cultural, ethnic and religious diversity at the global level but also focuses on the local community to encourage affiliations, identities and

loyalties for pro-environmental action (Piper 2003). Anthropogenic climate change brought to attention questions of justice regarding the way nature ensures the satisfaction of individual needs and community functioning and at the same time, pointed out to harm caused by people's daily pursuits (Broome 2012; Bell 2017). As follows, every person should take responsibility for shaping the world in small but definite ways: 'for large changes are caused and constituted by small choices. And in the end, however things turn out, it is how we live that gives meaning and significance to our lives' (Jamieson 2007: 482).

Thus, we claimed that nature conservation is our human right and at the same time, our collective duty at the local level. According to Barry (2006: 33) 'just as in the absence of justice one has the right and duty to resist and seek to challenge injustice, equally in the absence of sustainability, one has the right and duty to challenge unsustainability'.

Therefore, respect for nature should be widely acknowledged in order to inspire people's collective duty to ensure a flourishing future for the Earth. A shared morality strategy would activate intrinsic sets of values and socio-cultural frames for citizen engagement and participation, by calling people's attention to the cumulative positive and negative impacts of individual actions, at the local level. In this way, civic spaces of shared practices help facilitate the development of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character to trigger attitude change and the involvement of global citizens in playing an active role (locally) in nature conservation.

In the chapter to follow, we will present the philosophical background to our enquiry. We will use morality as a motivational apparatus to inspire attitude change and to stimulate

group engagement and participation in community settings. We will argue that a motivational turn in environmental ethics is imperative in order to put people at the heart of a more sustainable future, to promote diverse citizenship and to encourage the development of moral character. Chapter 4 will provide further details about defining a shared morality for environmental protection to help and support people in adopting more sustainable lifestyles for the future.

4. A shared morality strategy to motivate attitude change for nature conservation

The last two chapters proposed value-based strategies to influencing pro-environmental behaviours. In this chapter we present the intellectual grounding for a shared morality strategy to fostering respect for nature. Is there a form of human flourishing to be unfolded in the context of environmental protection? Our response is a collaborative approach to facilitating moral learning and encouraging people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in community settings. Given this, we will embrace the concept of ecocentrism, we will propose our version of a moral theory of environmental ethics, and we will study the process of moral motivation from a philosophical viewpoint in order to nurture moral character and conduct and inspire people to take action for nature conservation.

Attitudes reflect a person's response to her surroundings, experience and observations; hence we will define beliefs and moral judgements as principles of behaviour, underlining duties and responsibilities towards others and nature. Since harmful behaviours are so hard to change, we will argue in favour of setting norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character to trigger attitude change and to motivate citizen engagement and participation at the local level.

In the first section of this chapter, we will explore anthropogenic climate change as a moral issue, 'a dramatic challenge to our moral consciousness' (Jamieson 2007: 475). In the second section, we will advance a moral theory of environmental ethics for attitude change. We will argue that human beings could use new conceptions of responsibility and innovative ways of developing moral character in order to learn to acknowledge

environmental harm and show respect for nature. In the third section, we will provide a brief analysis of the roles played by beliefs and moral judgements in the process of motivating action, and we will opt for an externalist position to inspiring attitude change. In addition, we will discuss learning morality in practice through community involvement in environmental protection. Finally, we will highlight the need for a motivational turn in environmental ethics supported by the expertise of ethicists and their role in ensuring a more sustainable future.

4.1. Human beings occupy no privileged place in nature

The modern human is a very recent species considering that the Earth is about 4.6 billion years old, yet the oldest fossil of Homo sapiens has been dated to approximately 315 thousand years ago, or 0.006% of the planet's life (Hublin et al. 2017). Up until the Age of Enlightenment, human beings have not significantly interfered with the natural world, and the impacts of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle 'were likely to have been relatively limited, being local in scope and modest in magnitude' (Thompson and Gardiner 2017: 1). Things changed, however, in the 17th and 18th centuries, when people became deeply engaged in the transformation of agrarian societies into industrial societies; the process also implied the alteration of the surrounding environment to satisfy human needs and interests (Merchant 1981). After WWII, in just a 50-year period, the global population of human beings doubled reaching 6.1 billion at the start of the 21st century. It is continuing to rise and is estimated to reach 9.8 billion by the year 2050 (UN DESA 2017). Accelerated population growth and related human activities have depleted nature to such an extent that the planet's operating systems and cycles are irremediably impacted. According to

Thompson and Gardiner (2017: 2), our daily lives '[effect] environmental change globally, systematically, and at a fundamental level (...) [threatening] basic planetary systems, yet [human beings] continue to accelerate rapidly into an uncertain environmental future'. The overall impacts of harmful lifestyles are so pervasive and profound that scientists proposed the 'Anthropocene' as a new epoch within the geologic time scale. Given the severity of the situation, if we are sincerely concerned about environmental protection, we cannot avoid discussing how people ought to behave (Jamieson 2010a). Hence, it is time to focus on ethical matters for nature conservation in order to facilitate a detailed investigation of values, norms, and concepts for cultivating moral character and conduct.

The world is quantum mechanical and so, 'one benefit of switching humanity to a correct perception of the world is the resulting joy of discovering the mental nature of the Universe' (Henry 2005). In the 1900's, quantum physics introduced anew the idea that 'the Universe is entirely mental' and in turn, the Earth's nonphysical and physical entities are all composed of vibrating energy - energy flows through, is contained in, produced by and responded to by everything (Henry 2005). Based on Einstein's (1905) famous equation $E = mc^2$, energy equals everything that we hear, smell, see, touch, or taste - mass and light. Hence, we live in an ocean of motion in a vibrating Universe. The concept of matter, as defined by people, does not exist and solidity is just a perception: the atom (the basic unit forming 'solid' entities) is actually a void, made up of 99.99999% emptiness (Gikandi 2008). The implication of the above information is to help us understand that we are all one, in motion and radiating energy in a vibrational Universe. Disappointingly, modern science and many researchers and educators are still hesitant to acknowledge

that everything is energy, and everything is because of energy, as 'the truth is so alien to everyday physics' (Henry 2005).

Human beings are born with the capacity to perceive energy in all its forms, but they are schooled only to acknowledge the denser energy (registered by the physical senses) believed to ensure human survival and to ignore the less dense energy deliberately. To put it simply, the Earth is a very complex matrix, an interconnected web of energy always shared with everything else (Leopold 1949). The energy which represents the building block of our planet is the same energy which composes our flesh, a chair in the house and the flowers in the garden (Gikandi 2008). The vibrating energy is continuously modifying its form hence, any change in the interconnected web of energy will ripple on and will cause endless responses as a result. For this reason, we argue that our existence, the actions we take, the thoughts and feelings we have, generate a wave of energy which ripples on forever and cause a change in the composition of the Universe. Additionally, as we are an integral part of the Universe, the generated ripple will come back to us in reaction and will change us in just the same way. Therefore, a good deed done by a person will generate a positive impact in the whole system, and this improvement in the whole system will cause back the betterment of that person. Conversely, the opposite (creating a negative impact in the Universe) can also happen. Against a Newtonian theory of science, quantum physics educates us that the world is not an assembly of material things, but fluid energy continuously modelled by the states of being of everything that it is.

Understandably, our belief-system and attitudes towards environmental protection depend on how we conceive of the relationship with the natural world and the purpose of our lives on Earth (Attfeld 1991). And so, we ask what is the value of the environment? Does it have value in itself? Alternatively, are people the ones to assign a value to the environment by assessing its material worth, its usage or its contribution to the survival of human beings? By answering these questions, we build up a more reasoned approach to nature conservation from a philosophical perspective into motivating attitude change. Before all else, we should mention that the following argumentation is ecocentric. The philosophy behind ecocentrism is in favour of the inherent worth of all things within nature because these compose mutually supportive systems of life. We see our world (from a holistic angle) as an integrated whole, and place more value on species, ecosystems, and the planet as a living organism. We argue that an individual ant has inherent worth, whether or not it has value for human beings. However, we do not claim that all things on Earth are to be valued in the same way. In our opinion, an individual ant has secondary moral significance to its species and the ecosystem it inhabits, while the latter have primary inherent worth (Frankena 1982).

Different from ecocentrism which is nature-centred, anthropocentrism argues that humans are superior species, having greater value than anything else on Earth. However, as far as our beginnings are concerned, human beings need not ignore a common origin with all things on Earth. Homo sapiens, along with other species, are an integral part of an interconnected system which ensures the healthy functioning of the planet. For this reason, our superiority is not justified; the Earth determines human lives, in the same way, and on the same terms as the existence of most non-human species (Lee 2001).

Hence, people should ensure the good of non-human things and take responsibility for the overall impact of their actions said to affect the other species, ecosystems, and the planet, as a whole. In essence, ecocentrism nurtures a sense of oneness with the other Earth's entities and prioritises the good of the whole system taken to be an ultimate end having value in itself (Baxter 2000).

Once we embrace an ecocentric philosophy, our consideration for both humans and non-human things is morally appropriate and inclusive, supporting a system of interdependent units at the global level. Indeed, morality is part of our humanity, expressed in the value to preserve stability, integrity, and equilibrium on Earth. According to Dower (1994: 155), morality influences 'people's lives both (primarily) as part of their field of significance, but also as something out there, which, whether they realise it or not, has effects on their life'. The ethical treatment of the environment requires human beings to make decisions and show concern and awareness of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and practices for a more sustainable society (Dower 1994). Consequently, an initiative to exploit nature for the benefit of human beings could be judged as immoral.

The apparent domination people have over the Earth is dangerous and has led to the emergence of climate change, as nature does not represent an object of use at the discretion of humans. Instead, the environment comprises a tightly woven web to provide the necessary conditions to make the Earth habitable, without which basic survival is unachievable. As explained by Bell (2017: 283):

A conception of the environment as property owned by humans – either individually or in communities – is another reflection of the hubristic

assumption that humans can control the environment. [...] However, we have seen that the systemic, complex, and dynamic character of the environment makes it implausible to assume that we can control the environment.

Since the dawn of time, life on Earth developed and maintained itself independently of Homo sapiens (Lee 2001). From an evolutionary viewpoint, human beings are 'a recent arrival on our planet, a newcomer to an order of life that had been established for hundreds of millions of years before we came into existence' (Taylor 2011: 102). The necessary conditions for human survival on Earth were a consequence of a well-established 'system of relations among species that made for mutual adaptation and interdependence, allowed for genetic transmission and change, and operated according to the laws of natural selection' (Taylor 2011: 102). To hold people are a 'special object of creation' is ignoring that humankind is determined by a stable Earth system, not the other way around. What is more, modern humans are quite vulnerable to ecological disturbances, being unable to support themselves without the aid of the natural order of life. If humans were to become extinct 'not only would the Earth's Community of Life continue to exist but, in all probability, its well-being would be enhanced. Our presence, in short, is not needed' (Taylor 2011: 115). In this light, claiming human superiority over non-human things is a failure to recognise the limitations of our species, and this is indeed a sign of arrogance. There are no reasonable grounds for thinking that the needs and interests of Homo sapiens count more than the ones of other species, ecosystems and the planet, as a whole (Sterba 1994). Put simply, human beings occupy no privileged place in

nature; they are merely inhabitants of the Earth who justify their dominance over nature by virtue of their humanity and a biased position of superiority.

It is up to human beings to choose the purpose of their lives, either to respect the good of all things or to continue to radically transform the surface of the planet. Hence, our free will and autonomy are said to be both a blessing and a curse because:

We have the capacity to make our environment a place of beauty and security, but we also have the capacity to make it a place of ugliness and danger. [...] Our free will and autonomy only mean that whether we use our powers for the realization of our values or for self-destructive ends is entirely up to us (Taylor 2011: 103).

It is only by seeing themselves as a necessary component of nature, along with the other non-human things, that people will appreciate their dependence on something greater, a global system striving for balance. As the human population is on the rise, 'maintaining a balanced coexistence with the biotic communities of many diverse ecosystems all over the surface of the Earth, is necessary for optimum, biologically healthy human life' (Taylor 2011: 103). The premise of our argumentation is that people are gifted living creatures, aiming to be good, able to engage in moral self-improvement and 'capable of moral repair and change in behavior' (Norlock 2010: 34). In the sustainability context, the adverse effects of climate change demand a progressive moral system for nature conservation and innovative strategies to inspire a definite moral purpose and an explicit drive for justice. Thus, cultivating moral character and broadening moral concern over anthropogenic climate change could offer us exciting opportunities for engagement and the mutual flourishing of global citizens (see section 3.3.1.).

Consequently, we chose ecocentrism to represent the framework for our investigation into nurturing moral character and stimulating emphatic concern for environmental protection. Nature is not a thing to be consumed and exploited; it is indeed shared, and a more sustainable world is expected to ensure the good of both humans and non-human entities on Earth. We argue that by adopting an attitude of respect and specific obligations and limitations to their lifestyle, people will make a moral commitment to avoid irreparable disruption to the physical environment. Therefore, by the end of this chapter, we will propose a pledge-based strategy (a normative tool for attitude change) to be used to shape the interdependent relationship between human beings, the Earth and its nonhuman contents. Before that, in the next section, we will explore the role played by moral agents in tackling anthropogenic climate change, focusing on new conceptions of responsibility and innovative ways of developing moral character.

4.2. A moral theory proposal for attitude change

Attitudes are manifestations of our experience, typically reflected in our behaviour. By developing moral character, people calibrate their system of beliefs to a collective standard. As we are interested in addressing unsustainable lifestyles and learning morality in practice, we advance a moral theory of environmental ethics for attitude change. Using moral motivation, we will work to cultivate the attitude of respect for nature in tackling anthropogenic climate change and ensuring a more sustainable future.

In this enquiry, we argue in favour of a moderate ethic to safeguard the planet's ecological equilibrium and motivate people to act pro-environmentally. The Earth is a great living system and so, Homo sapiens, like any other species existing on this planet, should respect the ways of nature and let nature follow its course without any human interference (Leopold 1949). By having a mental image of the Earth as a great living system, people can expand their moral awareness beyond human needs and interests to include the other species, ecosystems, and the planet as a whole. People feel the authority of morality in their actions differently. Any definition of morality mainly depends on people's perception of the duties and responsibilities they have towards other people and the surrounding environment. Therefore, to motivate agents to follow norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and adopt more sustainable lifestyles, we decided to propose an ecocentric theory for attitude change. According to Taylor (2011: 9), the discipline of environmental ethics can help us make sense of the interdependent connection between human beings and nature: 'Put briefly, it is an attempt to establish the rational grounds for a system of moral principles by which human treatment of natural ecosystems and their wild communities of life ought to be guided'.

Indeed, if people develop a collective awareness of sustainability (with the use of environmental ethics), then they will be able to understand anthropogenic climate change better and decide the best ways to address it. An adequate theory of environmental ethics will help communicate what is expected of moral agents concerning nature conservation. In Chapter 3, we argued that a shared morality could help improve people's moral reasoning and stimulate community involvement for sustainability. Taking

a step forward, we will advance a moral theory in environmental ethics aimed at promoting respect for nature as a morally fitting attitude to help us nurture people's sense of moral responsibility and stress our collective duty towards environmental protection. The proposed theory is meant to create a robust framework for the right kinds of beliefs in support of ecological stability and integrity. Here, we employ a philosophical perspective to nature conservation which is 'openly normative, it contains both norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses concerning' the ethical principles to govern people's actions (Naess 1973: 99). That is, our moral theory in environmental ethics is an attempt to clarify the place of human civilisation on Earth and to recommend moral constraints to people's conduct in nature, shaping moral characters to fit the natural order of the planet.

The concept of ecocentrism presented above informs the theory of environmental ethics to be unfolded here. In other words, the moral principles governing our ecocentric theory maintain that human beings have duties and responsibilities towards the planet as a whole because its very structure and functioning make known to us the interdependent relationship we have with the natural world (Baxter 2000). We drew on Taylor's theory of environmental ethics (2011) as a guiding model for developing a strategy to motivate attitude change for nature conservation. While investigating Taylor's biocentric outlook on nature, we identified the three main components of his theory: a system of beliefs; a set of moral norms, rules, and standards; and a moral attitude of respect for nature. In pages that follow, we will refer to these components as we work to propose an ecocentric theory of environmental ethics focused on supporting the development of moral character and on motivating a sense of moral responsibility for nature conservation in

practical life. We are interested in finding efficient ways to cultivate an attitude of respect for nature and to encourage people to adopt pro-environmental lifestyles showing equal consideration for all life on Earth.

4.2.1. A system of beliefs in support of nature conservation

In the last century, the spread of human population and advanced technology disrupted the ecological and evolutionary processes of nature in profound ways. To do nothing, when we know that *Homo sapiens* are responsible for these impacts, is a conscious decision that brings about and even accelerates significant changes in the Earth's biosphere (Frankena 1982). Therefore, the first element of our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics is a system of beliefs acquired in accordance to a coherent understanding of the order of nature and a reassessment of the place of human beings on Earth. When embracing a nature-centred perspective on the world, we acknowledge that *Homo sapiens* are part of nature and recognise the existing moral connections between all species, ecosystems and the planet. As Taylor (2011: 44) further explains:

One becomes aware that, like all other living things on our planet, one's very existence depends on the fundamental soundness and integrity of the biological system of nature. When one looks at this domain of life in its totality, one sees it to be a complex and unified web of interdependent parts.

Based on the above relationship of interdependence, we argue that people are under a moral obligation to recognise the inherent worth of all things on Earth and so they also

owe specific duties and responsibilities to the natural world, not only to their fellow humans. The discipline of environmental ethics supports our argument for introducing stricter principles of character and conduct because the current rules governing people's morality prioritise human needs and interests to the disadvantage of an entire living system that is, our planet (Frankena 1982). In the foreword to his book *A Sand County Almanac* (1949: viii), Aldo Leopold declares that people 'abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect'. Given this, our proposed moral theory of environmental ethics is developed in the spirit of love and respect for nature, maintaining that the Earth is a community of interdependent elements.

Anthropogenic climate change poses moral questions to be addressed by the discipline of environmental ethics because 'how humans should live with other species, and even whether humans should live at all, are matters that require the making of normative and evaluative judgments' (Taylor 2011: 50). At an intuitive level, anthropogenic climate change does not register as a moral imperative because it does not present the main characteristics of a paradigm moral problem. Unfortunately, the human system of moral judgement is not set up 'to identify climate change — a complex, large-scale and unintentionally caused phenomenon — as an important moral imperative' (Markowitz and Shariff 2012: 243). Thus, climate change is 'a perfect moral storm' due to a complex convergence of global, intergenerational and theoretical factors that affect people's ability to behave ethically and make them extremely vulnerable to moral corruption (Gardiner 2011a). According to Jamieson (2007: 475), a paradigm moral problem is 'one in which an individual acting intentionally harms another individual; both the individuals and

the harm are identifiable; and the individuals and the harm are closely related in time and space'. In the context of anthropogenic climate change, we get a diffuse group of present people 'setting in motion forces that will harm a diffuse group of future people' (Jamieson 2007: 476) and the harm caused cannot be precisely calculated but only roughly estimated (see section 3.3.2.). Moreover, the struggle to 'identify the agents and the victims or the causal nexus that obtains between them; (...) [makes] difficult for the network of moral concepts (for example, responsibility, blame, and so forth) to gain traction' (Jamieson 2010b: 436). Consequently, climate change is rarely conceptualised as a moral issue and people 'feel complacent in delaying immediate – and costly – ameliorative action' (Markowitz and Shariff 2012: 243). Due to word limitations, we cannot investigate any further people's concept of morality and how they perceive, explain or evaluate moral actions. Instead, taking into account some distinctive features of climate change said to pose behavioural challenges, we decided to focus on building moral character to stimulate people's understanding of the phenomenon as a moral imperative.

The effects of human intervention in nature are of a more significant impact than evolutionary changes the planet is used to and can adapt to, creating chain reactions of unprecedented violence, rapidity, and scope hardly possible to foresee (Leopold 1949). Anthropogenic climate change indicates that human beings need to be reminded that they are not alone on Earth, as they are sharing the planet ecosystems with other 8.7 million forms of life (Mora et al. 2011). Acknowledging these simple facts will, in turn, motivate people to expand their circle of concern to include entities with a good of their own and which contribute to Earth's ecological order (Frankena 1982). In other words, we

argue in favour of ensuring a balance of needs and interests between all species by letting Homo sapiens 'pursue their individual interests and the cultural ways of life they have adopted while at the same time allowing many biotic communities in a great variety of natural ecosystems to carry on their existence without interference' (Taylor 2011: 309). We are referring to an ecological conscience that, if well-nurtured, could stimulate people's consideration for ensuring the well-being of the planet and preserving its regenerative capacity.

All species on Earth make use of some amount of the planetary resources and Homo sapiens is no exception (Carson 2000). However, people take for themselves much more than they need for basic survival and in consequence the supply to be drawn upon is reduced for the other species. According to Taylor (2011:257), human beings use methods of exploitation and subjugation to ensure they thrive as a species:

The clash between nature and civilization reaches its most extreme form in the total transformation of the natural world that takes place in modern industrialized nations. (...) Given the rise of advanced technology, an economy dependent on and geared for high-level consumption, and the human population explosion, what is left of the natural world is quickly disappearing.

By now it is well known that the exploitative attitude in the name of advancement is and has always been the leading attitude taken by Homo sapiens in regard to the surrounding environment. The 'progress' of human civilisation was achieved by an active effort to

conquer the Earth and making sure nature is tamed to the service of people. As Taylor (2011: 95) points out:

The exploitative attitude is taken whenever nature is thought of as nothing more than a vast repository of resources, both physical and biological, to be developed, used, and consumed by humans for human ends. It is there for our sake, not for the sake of other creatures; we have exclusive entitlement to it as an instrument for our own use.

An attitude of respect is incompatible with an exploitative attitude towards the surrounding environment because the latter treats the other species, ecosystems and the entire planet, as means to human well-being (Carson 2000; Jamieson 2010b). These entities have worth insofar as they can be consumed and controlled by people.

Nevertheless, it is not morally right to consider that what serves the good of *Homo sapiens* exclusively, justifies any poor treatment of non-human things on Earth (Frankena 1982). To that end, the attitude of respect for nature would encourage people to see non-human things as possessors of inherent worth and would facilitate people's commitment to environmental protection.

The Earth's ecological equilibrium is maintained by the interdependent connections among all species-populations and the preservation of the integrity and stability of the biotic community. According to Taylor (2011: 310), an ethically ideal world is 'a place where the good of nonhumans can be realized along with the (partly controlled) fulfilment of human values'. Indeed, if *Homo sapiens* stop interfering with or manipulating nature, the species would die out. Hence, people need to ensure their

survival but at the same time to show genuine respect for the natural world, being considerate of the sake of the other species, ecosystems and the planet, and not only of the benefit of humans alone. To equitably share the Earth with non-humans, people are expected to acknowledge that climate change is human-caused and to accept specific duties and responsibilities to limit their population growth and the advancement of new technology (Thompson 2010).

There is a distinction to make between moral agents (most human beings) who have duties and responsibilities and can discern right from wrong and moral subjects to whom duties and responsibilities are owed and can be treated rightly or wrongly (Attfield 1991). As moral agents, people can deliberately set goals for themselves and 'determine in advance of an act, to some extent, what consequences it might produce, whether it would harm the self only or others as well and in what way' (Lee 2001: 491). These aptitudes consist of what we call the human capacity for morality:

[The ability for moral enquiry and concern] can lead to the realisation that humankind may have direct duties to non-human others which act as moral constraints upon its activities and their impact on the ecological homes and niches of non-human others (Lee 2001: 491).

Such extraordinary aptitudes come with duties and responsibilities towards the other species, ecosystems and the planet, as human beings can be held accountable for what they do.

People can be considered moral agents only in relation to moral subjects which can be harmed or benefited. We shall argue that the Earth is a unified moral subject, a living

'organism' with a good of its own and that all entities existing on our planet are also moral subjects because everything is energy; therefore, we are all one within a vibrating universe. To justify the above argument, we previously showed that quantum physics offers the scientific evidence for the absolute truth that everything is energy, everything is producing an effect in everything, and nothing is existing or taking place in a void (Einstein 1905). Thus, the difference between animate and inanimate, conscious and unconscious, physical and non-physical entities is, in fact, the rate of vibration of (their) energy. If people accept the Earth is a unified moral subject, then we will be able to achieve true progress and change for the better. We will become mindful of the fact that human beings are not living in isolation and everything we think, say and do affect us and our relationship to all that surrounds us. Paying attention to the energetic interplay between human beings and nature and embracing the 'everything is energy' mantra could help us commit to a sustainable lifestyle being respectful of the other species, ecosystems and the Earth and causing no further harm.

Moreover, we argue in favour of the concept of oneness and the interconnection of all energy, for the reason that the idea that 'we are all one' emerged while investigating the energetic essence of the Earth. Nothing separates people from nature so, the disconnection we might feel towards the surrounding environment is indeed a limitation of human perception (Gikandi 2008). Nonetheless, we are all one, the same vibrational energy, individuated in a variety of forms changing in all respects. These forms can look and behave differently; they are moral subjects with inherent worth and represent vital components to life on Earth. Individuation has many dimensions but, it does not determine the separation of parts from the whole: 'think of the world as dimensions or

facets of the same ONE, not as separate things' (Gikandi 2008: 189). Thus, seeing ourselves as **one** vibrating energy could motivate us to respect the good of non-humans and could also stimulate us to act from a position of oneness, being more appreciative and take better care of our planet.

Given this, our ecocentric theory in environmental ethics will maintain that the Earth is a unified moral subject, an internally ordered whole whose good should be given moral concern and consideration. However, due to society's human-centred outlook on nature, some will find this theory unacceptable (Frankena 1982). Why should people consider all things to be moral subjects, without clearly separating between animate and inanimate, conscious and unconscious, physical and non-physical entities? Because 'we are all one' and the Earth, as a unified moral subject can be treated rightly or wrongly by moral agents. Therefore, we hold that moral agents have specific duties and responsibilities to fulfil their obligations to all Earth's entities, having the status of moral subjects.

Moreover, the preservation and protection of the good of moral subjects should be recognised as respect for nature and given great moral weight by all agents as a matter of moral principle.

In the last pages, we have therefore presented the framework for a system of beliefs for nature conservation, the first element to support our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics. To adopt a moral theory is to acquire a particular worldview with a direct impact on practical life (Attfield 1991). It is indeed, an ethical ideal of some sort because such a belief-system determines specific attitudes, which are then expressed in normative principles that guide a moral agent's behaviour. Since people are vibrational beings

comprised of energy, we argue that the collective human consciousness is responsible for the current state of the world. The critical global issues faced at the moment (i.e. anthropogenic climate change, poverty, famine, habitat and biodiversity loss, water scarcity, plastic pollution) are characteristic of the world we live in, as these are explicit representations of the state of humanity (Jamieson 1992). An ecocentric theory of environmental ethics aims to inspire a system of beliefs capable of reminding moral agents of their duties and responsibilities and moral connections to everything that is so that to ensure a flourishing future for the Earth.

In the next section, we will discuss about norms, principles and standards informed by the system of beliefs presented above and we will argue in favour of a moral order for environmental protection. Then, in section 4.3, we will show how this initiative will function normatively, looking for efficient ways of cultivating an ecocentric system of beliefs and nurturing people's moral character to embrace the attitude of respect for nature and practise it accordingly.

4.2.2. The practice of virtue

In this section, we will discuss about building moral character and using virtues in the development of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character to help adjust people's lifestyles to the order of nature. The human brain is an electromagnetic processing tool with no fixed boundaries so, the actions people take, the thoughts and feelings they have, affect the world people live in and all their experience. Hence, we carry a tremendous amount of moral responsibility on the shoulders for our everyday

existence. Morality, according to Fried (1978: 27), 'is about the good and the right way of being in the world as human beings' hence, the practice of virtue provides the means to build confidence, to eliminate doubt and to improve decision-making.

How should we behave? Are there any moral guidelines that human beings should follow in relation to the natural world? In the sustainability context, norms, principles, and standards are needed to 'normatively govern the character and conduct of moral agents insofar as they [wish to adopt] the attitude of respect for nature and accordingly are disposed to give concrete expression to it in their practical, everyday living' (Taylor 2011: 59). Hence, we propose that the second element of our theory of environmental ethics to be a set of norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character, cultivated using an ecocentric system of beliefs and the practice of virtue. Accordingly, we shall investigate norms of right conduct and the impact of virtues in building a morally good character to encourage the development of a diverse range of environmentally sensitive dispositions.

We previously maintained that people are not entitled to act in nature just as they please because they have duties and obligations towards moral subjects. Moral agents are centres of autonomous choice with the capacity of self-governance, which permits them to set goals and to shape their future. On that account, the human mind has the capabilities of accountability, deliberation, free will, and practical reason. According to Taylor (2011: 14), these influence the formation of the following distinct abilities: 'the ability to form judgments about right and wrong; the ability to engage in moral deliberation, that is, to consider and weigh moral reasons for and against various courses

of conduct open to choice; the ability to make decisions on the basis of those reasons; the ability to exercise the necessary resolve and willpower to carry out those decisions; and the capacity to hold oneself answerable to others for failing to carry them out'. In consequence, Homo sapiens are self-aware beings, who think, feel and act in the light of a sense of personal identity and perceive life as a unified whole. Moral agents come to adopt particular lifestyles, shaping their existence according to their needs and interests and imagining possible futures which could bring them overall well-being and happiness (Lee 2001).

However, we cannot help but ask the question: if people were gifted with such intelligent minds and exceptional capacities, how come the most significant achievements of humanity were obtained at the expense of nature? Population growth amplified by overconsumption is the root cause of the sixth great mass extinction we are currently experiencing (Ceballos et al. 2017). The rate of species extinction in the last century has been up to 100 times higher than it would have been without the human impact that has led to anthropogenic climate change, habitat loss and degradation, invasive species, overexploitation, pollution and wildlife disease (Monastersky 2014; Ceballos et al. 2017). The above abilities exclusively possessed by people demonstrate the human capability for morality. Nevertheless, the current extinction pace is allowed to continue and 'all signs point to ever more powerful assaults on biodiversity in the next two decades, painting a dismal picture of the future of life, including human life' (Ceballos et al. 2017: E6095). There is just a short window of opportunity (approximately three human lifetimes) to prevent the sixth mass great extinction before the permanent loss of species, along with our own (Ceballos et al. 2015).

These considerations bring our attention to the importance of nature conservation, the necessity of nurturing environmental awareness and the duties and responsibilities of diverse citizenship for greener societies (see section 3.3.1.). Respectively, an ecocentric system of beliefs together with relevant norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character would support a progressive moral system to stimulate human flourishing and ensure a more sustainable future. We argue that to motivate attitude change is to encourage a moral order aimed at improving human treatment of the natural world and placing specific constraints upon the conduct of moral agents (Meyer 2017). According to Connelly (2006: 49), virtuous citizens are expected to ‘internalize the purpose and value of good environmental practices, and their obedience will thus transcend mere compliance, going beyond it toward autonomous virtuous activity’. Given this, we will further investigate the concept of a morally good character and the practicality of virtues in encouraging an ethic of excellence in the Anthropocene.

Here, a brief discussion of the practice of virtue will provide a framework for our enquiry into building moral character and motivating attitude change for nature conservation. In Chapter 3, we maintained that people ought to be committed managers of the Earth (see section 3.3.2.) hence, by developing virtues of stewardship we make sure moral agents perform the role of environmental stewards well (Thompson 2012). Moral character is defined by the developed capacity and dispositions to reason about what decision one ought or ought not to make when ‘there is a tendency for one to become confused or irrational due to the influence of one’s nonmoral interests, wants, needs, and emotions

(including one's wishes, hopes, and fears)' (Taylor 2011: 86). Virtue is the excellence of moral character to avoid confusion of mind and to always do the right thing for the right reason in the right situations (Connelly 2006). As virtues are corrective of general human tendencies, we should identify those predispositions that work against environmental protection in order to address any deficiency of motivation. The practicality of virtue is to address the weakness of will and distorted thinking, by nurturing environmentally sensitive dispositions and developing the willpower to act with the aim of fulfilling one's duties and responsibilities.

In our enquiry, we argue that people should strive for self-improvement by developing the necessary virtues to enable them to act excellently and nurture a morally good character. According to Connelly (2006: 71), 'virtue is about doing those things that we should all do and yet that we can easily forget to do'. At the intersection between character and conduct, virtues determine a state of being supportive of an integrated moral self with the intention to do good, the commitment to abide by norms, principles and standards and the motivation for action. The idea behind using virtues for attitude change in nature conservation is for the practice of virtue to become embedded in our second nature and an integral part of human flourishing (Thompson 2010). In this section, we do not aim to provide an exhaustive list of virtues for environmental protection, but we argue for the practicality of these excellences of character and pinpoint what some of them could be. We take on board Connelly's (2006: 52) advice to not shy away from engaging in conceptual innovation and from encouraging environmentally sensitive dispositions in order 'to bring the virtues up to date and make them relevant to environmental concerns; revaluing and perhaps reversing certain virtues and vices; and

identifying or creating new virtues and vices appropriate to our current concerns'. To identify the most important virtues for nature conservation, we drew on Taylor's (2011: 212-213) standards of character said to stimulate moral awareness and empathic concern and to enable the attitude of respect for nature, as illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

STANDARDS OF CHARACTER	
General virtues	Special virtues
Benevolence	Considerateness
Caring	Equity
Compassion	Fairness
Conscientiousness	Impartiality
Courage	Regard
Disinterestedness	Trustworthiness
Integrity	
Patience	
Perseverance	
Steadfastness-in-duty	
Sympathy	
Temperance/Self-control	

Table 4. 1. – Standards of character (Taylor 2011: 212-213)

Virtues of the above kind could establish the emotive and value foundation for all decisions indicating an attitude of respect for nature and could represent the motivation for people's moral commitment towards environmental protection. In the sustainability context, we have the available resources to stimulate the practice of virtue but 'our real

challenge (...) is the practical one of nurturing the seedings of already existing consciousness into new forms of ecological citizenship' (Connelly 2006: 50).

The ethical ideal of possessing a morally good character represents a normative guide to practical life because 'virtues are private responsibilities, their possession is a public good, and their development and reinforcement is a public as well as private duty' (Connelly 2006: 66). When a person becomes aware of certain vices (morally undesirable traits of character), she has a duty to address these through the development of equivalent virtues and improvement of strength of will. According to Taylor (2011: 214), 'the obligatoriness of virtue stems from the conjunction of our duty to comply with valid rules of conduct and the need for virtue in having such compliance become an invariable part of our practical life'. However, while virtues establish moral requirements regarding the conduct of people, they do not dictate what actions moral agents must take here and now. Moral agents are the ones to decide what they ought or ought not to do, having in mind those properties of actions that virtues highlight to be morally relevant.

How can moral agents be drawn into developing a morally good nature? Virtue cannot be theorised into experience; a person needs to participate in the practice of virtue to discover its benefits and rewards. In view of this, we argue that the use of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character could stimulate virtuous behaviour and nurture the disposition to act excellently. As Taylor (2011: 258) notes:

By imposing constraints on our own lifestyles and cultural practices, we who are moral agents have the capacity to replace the chaos of a world torn to pieces by human greed and voraciousness with a well-ordered

moral universe in which both respect for wild creatures and respect for persons are given a place.

The moral principles governing any set of norms, principles, and standards to embody respect for nature will indicate the duties and responsibilities of moral agents and guide them in the performance of actions (see section 4.2.3.). Hence, we argue that a moral set of norms, principles, and standards for nature conservation would offer guidance in practical life, serving as a reference tool to be used by moral agents to evaluate their conduct and to make decisions causing no further harm to moral subjects. Therefore, a proposal of norms, principles, and standards is justified because it will stimulate fundamental traits of moral character and will encourage the practice of virtue.

Overall, we have focused our attention on moral growth and moral repair using the practice of virtue, acknowledging that agents are not perfect beings; they make mistakes, but at the same time, they are capable of self-improvement, correcting their conduct and aiming to be good. Understandably, an agent cannot become a whole moral being in the ideal sense but 'pursuing the gradual realization of the ideal [is] judged to be worthy of their best efforts because the ethical ideal itself represents a summum bonum (the greatest good)' (Taylor 2011: 311). In our enquiry, the normative function of such an ideal is to promote an ecocentric theory of environmental ethics and encourage people to develop moral concern and strength of will to act pro-environmentally.

The second element of our theory of environmental ethics is a moral set of norms, principles and standards to be developed as part of an ecocentric system of beliefs and

relevant virtue training. As previously stated, we are particularly interested in the development of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character as an efficient strategy to motivate pro-environmental action in community settings. The position defended in this section is that virtues are practically efficacious in promoting diverse citizenship for greener societies and for motivating attitude change (see section 3.3.1.). In section 4.4., we will provide a thorough argumentation about employing norms, principles, and standards for a morally upright life and translating these into a moral code for citizen engagement and participation in environmental protection at the local level. In the next section, we will explain the meanings of an attitude of respect for nature, and we will discuss its relation to the other two elements (a system of beliefs and norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character) of our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics.

4.2.3. The attitude of respect for nature

Previously, we focused on building moral character inspiring environmentally sensitive dispositions and providing moral agents with the strength of will to follow their duties and responsibilities. In this section, we aim to define an attitude of respect for nature, as the third element of our theory of environmental ethics backed by an ecocentric system of beliefs and norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character. Therefore, we will investigate the idea of harm in the context of supporting the attitude of respect for nature, we will discuss the concept of moral responsibility, and we will argue in favour of the collective duty to ensure a flourishing future for the Earth.

As mentioned earlier, our planet is a single unified whole comprised of a vast complex of interdependent entities, species and ecosystems. However, people still think that their individual emissions of greenhouse gases have ‘a negligible effect because they are so minute in comparison to emissions around the world’ even though these actually produce serious harm (Broome 2012: 74). From an ecocentric perspective, planetary entities are not isolated but are linked to each other in such a way that if one is harmed, a significant adjustment will take place in the natural order of the Earth. To define harm is to understand the good of a moral subject in terms of benefit and damage. What is good for a moral subject is anything that advocates or protects its good and in like manner, what is bad for a moral subject is anything that affects or harms its good. The well-being of moral subjects can be enhanced or worsened by human intervention. To a great extent, people place restrictions on the freedom of moral subjects by either directly enforcing constraints upon them or by making changes to their surrounding environment that affect their existence. Based on the capacity to discern right from wrong, moral agents are accountable for their everyday behaviour, as they have duties and responsibilities not to cause unjustified harm.

Discussing harm in the context of anthropogenic climate change brings to attention matters of justice and the severe consequences suffered by both moral agents and moral subjects (Bell 2010; Shue 2010). The accelerated deterioration in the Earth’s climate system due to anthropogenic climate change has already generated ‘very significant harms, including degraded ecosystems, mass species extinctions, and considerable amounts of human injustices’ (Thompson 2010: 51). In this enquiry, we are interested in activating specific moral intuitions in favour of nature conservation and in clearly

communicating that unsustainable actions cause serious harm not only locally, but also regionally, nationally and even globally. We define harm as the killing of a moral agent or moral subject, destroying a species-population or a biotic community, as well as an agent's act that is detrimental to the well-being of an entity with a good of its own, a species, an ecosystem or the planet, as a whole. In the climate change context, harms are not always clearly determined and are 'often the result of aggregate effects of the actions of sometimes random, sometimes formal collectives' (Norlock 2010: 33). No matter the guilty party, we argue that when causing harm, people are responsible for recognizing it and, depending on the damage that has occurred, they are expected 'to [clean] it, [fix] it, [replace] it, or [provide] some accommodation for the loss' (Shockley 2017: 265). Making reference to the virtues of equity and fairness, moral agents should provide compensation or reparation for the harms they caused and should work to restore the balance of justice by making amends for any wrongdoings.

It is imperative to address anthropogenic climate change as a severe moral issue because so far, people have failed individually and collectively to make significant adjustments to their lifestyle in order to eliminate the harm caused to themselves, the other species, ecosystems and the Earth, as a whole. By placing constraints on human activity and even prohibiting specific practices, we would be able to support environmental protection and to prevent unjustified harm (Meyer 2017). According to Shockley (2017: 272), 'if one can do something to prevent a harm from occurring then one has a prima facie reason to do that thing'; a moral agent has the duty to find efficient ways of minimising/reducing any possible harm. Even though 'the probability of successful intervention is low, one has a responsibility to pursue it'. To ensure human beings acknowledge their duties and

responsibilities to tackle anthropogenic climate change, we argue in favour of an attitude of respect for nature as the only suitable, fitting moral attitude to take at this moment in time.

The attitude of respect for nature is supported by our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics, is informed by a nature-centred system of beliefs and could be adopted with the help of norms, principles, and standards for a morally upright life. As Leopold (1949: 203) noted, ‘an ethical relation to land [cannot] exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value (...) in the philosophical sense’. To adopt the attitude of respect for nature is to regard moral subjects as ends in themselves and as having inherent worth; their good is deserving of moral concern and consideration on the part of all agents. Hence, an attitude of respect would motivate the choice to act or refrain from acting in nature’s best interests and would ensure the necessary dispositions to inform the character and conduct of moral agents. To support such an attitude, we argue that people should be encouraged to care for others and nature and to take responsibility for environmental protection. As Jamieson (2010b: 442) points out:

Nature provides the background against which we live our lives, thus providing us with an important source of meaning. This, it might be claimed, is sufficient for supposing that we have a duty to respect nature. For when we fail to respect nature, we lose an important source of meaning in our lives.

As a result, we argue that cultivating the virtue of respect for nature is essential not only to understanding our own agency but also to redefining the interdependent relationship between *Homo sapiens* and nature. To embody an attitude of respect for nature in

character and conduct is to acknowledge the inherent worth of all planetary entities and be willing to act sustainably, 'thus enabling the goodness of nature to have a substantive role in human flourishing' (Thompson 2012: 218). As a moral attitude, respect for nature should not be considered a matter of personal devotion but a commitment to acknowledge one's duties and responsibilities. According to Taylor (2011: 87), a moral agent's character and conduct 'express [the] attitude to the extent that, in all situations of choice to which the rules of the ethics of respect for nature apply, the person consistently exemplifies those virtues that enable him or her to deliberate correctly about what action ought to be done and to carry out the decision resulting from that deliberation'. To give concrete embodiment to the attitude of respect for nature, people will engage in practices that are aimed at concrete ways of preserving the surrounding environment and of ensuring a harm-free existence for moral subjects.

The ethical challenge faced by moral agents in the context of climate change is the difficulty to acknowledge one's moral responsibility towards environmental protection, and in consequence, unsustainable actions end up affecting the balance of justice between humanity and nature. As human activity is increasingly harming the planet, the relationship people have with nature is one of domination, rather than one of respect for nature (Jamieson 2010b). Anthropogenic climate change is pressuring people to rethink their accounts of responsibility and to change their current ways of thinking about nature by recognising the interdependent connections they have with it. Standard conceptions of responsibility state that 'harms and their causes are individual, that they can readily be identified, and that they are local in space and time' (Jamieson 1992: 148). However, climate change is a collective-action phenomenon which does not fit the above criteria.

Here, we advance a conception of responsibility which is forward-looking and outcome-oriented, rooted in diverse citizenship and holding members accountable for their contribution to environmental degradation in community settings. We are not looking to assign blame and guilt for the harmful impacts of anthropogenic climate change but to take the opportunity to cultivate a sense of moral responsibility towards environmental protection and help people build the confidence to embrace change. As Shockley (2017: 270) argues:

A broadened notion of responsibility, one focused less on what we have done and more on what we might do, allows individuals to be more centrally involved in changing the institutions and background conditions that make climate change so problematic. Thinking of responsibility in terms of how we can positively influence current and future conditions, rather than the past actions that have given us our responsibilities, provides a better way of understanding our individual moral responsibility for complex environmental problems like climate change.

In the context of anthropogenic climate change, developing a sense of moral responsibility towards environmental protection could temper the troublesome tendencies of Homo sapiens, and contribute to the flourishing of all Earth's entities. The conception of moral responsibility we are here advocating is a commitment to address the normative demands on conduct informed by humanity's role as planetary stewards and to follow the moral principles set up to ensure the good of all Earth's entities. As Thompson (2012: 215) notes:

Human beings are now managers of the planet in the sense that collectively our actions determine the basic conditions for the existence of all life on Earth. (...)

Satisfying well the demands of this role will require human beings to develop suitable and correspondingly new traits of character among which, I argue, is a special virtue of responsibility.

Moral responsibility is the disposition to show concern and consideration for the other, where the opposite (a lack of a sense of responsibility) would be judged as a moral failure. We argue that moral responsibility is an excellent condition of character to be adopted by people, involving features like accountability, dependability, and common sense in a context where immediate action on nature conservation is required (Jamieson 2010b). By acknowledging their stewardship duty, moral agents will feel responsible for ensuring a sustainable future for all planetary entities.

Individuals are not alone in this: one cannot be charged with securing the basic conditions of life on Earth by herself. Rather, our common humanity is the foundation for nurturing a shared sense of moral responsibility; and so, 'the corresponding excellence of character presents a standard against which anyone, as a member of humanity, can be morally assessed' (Thompson 2012: 217). In the sustainability context, moral responsibility is measured in accordance with the individual and collective contributions people can make for nature conservation and the circumstances that they have the opportunity to influence (Norlock 2010). Moral agents cannot escape the responsibility for the things they can change for the better, just because their impact is believed to be minimal.

According to Shockley (2017: 269), 'it is a mistake to think our responsibilities are dissolved simply because we are faced with a collective action problem or because we cannot evade the complex institutional intermediaries between our actions and an indirectly and diffused set of harmful consequences'. In tackling anthropogenic climate

change, there is a lot everyone can do; people might choose not to take action but, they cannot argue against their moral responsibility to act pro-environmentally. Moral responsibility takes hold only when there is an acknowledgement of the causal influence of humans on environmental degradation, and people accept the normative demands of their stewardship duty for a more sustainable future. Human beings are both individually and collectively responsible for anthropogenic climate change, an unfortunate tragedy of the commons which is the result of aggregate harms and collectivisation issues. As Thompson (2012: 211) puts it, 'responsibility for [the impacts of environmental degradation] does not belong strictly to some individuals or some collectives: humans have a shared moral responsibility for global climate change'. Hence, people are expected to adjust their character and conduct and to invest more time and effort in meeting a very substantial moral responsibility (Shockley 2017).

A revision of everyday understandings of collective duty is also necessary so that people recognise the obligations to address human-caused climate change. Once we acknowledge that anthropogenic climate change is a moral problem, 'obligations are seen (...) as forming a dense web of connections that link us in our myriad roles and identities to (...) the world [and] it becomes clear that virtually everything we do is morally valenced' (Jamieson 2010a: 277). The collective duty of moral agents is to restore the balance of justice between *Homo sapiens*, as a species and the rest of planetary entities. The other species, ecosystems and the Earth as a whole have been wronged and unjustly treated to facilitate the progress of the human race, and the balance of justice is therefore tilted in favour of moral subjects (Frankena 1982; Attfield 1991). Thus, people are not only morally responsible but have also the collective duty towards nature to re-

establish the balance of justice by placing constraints on human activity and even prohibiting certain practices, making reparation and offering compensation for the harms caused.

In order to address the disconnection from nature, we looked for practical ways to motivate people to assume responsibility for anthropogenic climate change and to emphasise our collective duty to ensure a more sustainable future. In consequence, we argue that moral responsibility can be cultivated as a skill. Human beings do not have any trained skills for translating information about climate change into specific actions or responsibly managing natural resources. In this enquiry, we focused on a shared morality strategy to motivate attitude change and looked to propose social practices capable of nurturing a sense of moral responsibility, underlining people's collective duty towards environmental protection. Furthermore, we advanced a moral theory in environmental ethics grounded on respect for nature as a morally fitting attitude, a system of beliefs in support of nature conservation and the practice of virtue used to develop moral character.

This completes the section of an ecocentric theory proposal for attitude change, and we shall now focus on finding the effective means to motivate people to embody respect for nature in practical life. The next section will examine the practical implementation of our moral theory in environmental ethics and how respect for nature can be expressed in the conduct and character of moral agents. In addition, the debate over moral motivation and its behavioural influence in the discipline of environmental ethics will permit us to explore further the influential roles of beliefs and moral judgements in motivating respect for

nature, in generating attitude change and in encouraging people to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in the long-term.

4.3. Moral learning, from theory to practice

Previously, we presented the three elements (a system of beliefs, a set of moral norms, principles, and standards and the attitude of respect for nature) of our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics in support of moral character development. It is now time to explore how the attitude of respect for nature can be embodied in a person's attitudes and everyday actions. A discussion about moral motivation and its influence on behaviour is imperative when we are looking to nurture a sense of moral responsibility towards nature. Here, we will present a moral motivation viewpoint, we explain why we opted for an externalist perspective, and we argue in favour of a shared morality strategy to generate attitude change.

The domain of moral ethics 'relies strongly on the notion of "obligation", a term that implies an expectation of obedience to a moral authority' (Booth 2009: 56); but looking at the slow pace of tackling anthropogenic climate change, environmental ethics is in need of an urgent reform focused on motivation for moral action. Motivation is complex and plural, consisting of both conscious and unconscious mechanisms and influencing the interdependent connections between character and conduct (Booth 2009). To put our moral theory for attitude change to the test, we will be exploring the process of motivation from a philosophical perspective, and we will investigate the mental states said to stimulate moral action.

In brief, we argue that beliefs and moral judgements impact attitudes, attitudes motivate actions, repeated actions become habits, and together these mental states form one's overall behaviour (see Figure 4.2.).

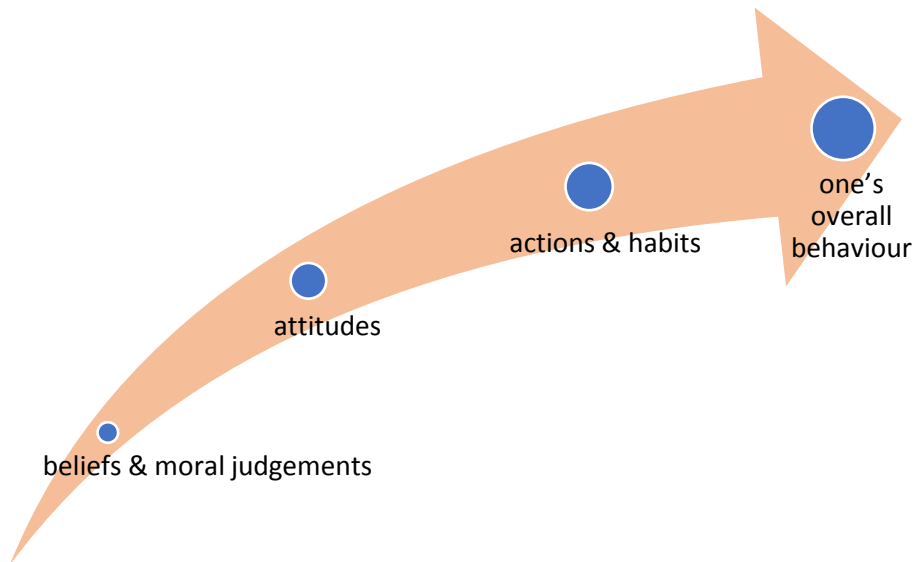


Figure 4.2. Mental states shaping a person's overall behaviour

According to Figure 4.2., a person's attitudes reflect the set of beliefs and moral judgements that govern her existence, her understanding of the world and echo her roles, duties and responsibilities in society. An attitude of respect for nature is linked to moral intuition and practical reasoning in supporting people to decide upon reasons for action or to abstain from acting. An action is morally justified when there are no contrary reasons for what ought to be done. At the same time, an action is morally unjustified when there are no strong attitudes in its support, or when beliefs and moral judgements counterbalance all given reasons.

To avoid confusion in this enquiry, we must explain our interpretation of beliefs and moral judgements. Beliefs determine right from wrong; they are the principles set to

govern character and conduct and help moral agents reflect on their rights, obligations and the purpose of life. Beliefs do not promote our needs and interests, yet these mental states offer guidance in the pursuit of the truth and bring us closer to others with similar viewpoints. On the other hand, moral judgements are universal opinions, intrinsically motivating beliefs which find their origin in a standard of morality. Moral judgements are more objective than simple beliefs and indicate what people ought to do, being shared by both individuals and collectives. Our interest in the study of these mental states comes from their tendency to drive moral action because a person is likely to behave in a specific manner based on her principles of character (Dancy 1993; 2004).

Thus, we explored the distinction between non-cognitivism and cognitivism (Brink 1989; Dancy 1993; Smith 1994). A non-cognitivist theory argues that moral statements are neither true nor false. According to non-cognitivism, when a person articulates moral sentences, she is not expressing states of mind in the form of beliefs. Instead she is verbalising non-cognitive attitudes like desires. Cognitivism is the denial of non-cognitivism. Hence, cognitivism notes that moral statements express beliefs, and these can be judged as true or false. Furthermore, we investigated the internalism-externalism debate and various interpretations of both positions to understand the process of moral motivation better, as described by philosophers (Hume 1975, 1978; Goodpaster 1976; Williams 1981; Brink 1989; Dancy 1993, 2004; Smith 1994). Hume's (internalist) theory of motivation consists of two mental states, beliefs and desires which motivate human action. According to Humeanism, the difference between beliefs and desires is that 'beliefs are supposed to fit the world; they have the mind-to-world direction of fit. [And] desires try to get the world to fit them when it doesn't need to; they have the world-to-

mind direction of fit' (Dancy 1993: 3). Humean beliefs are contingent; they are the product of the influences that the world has upon us. These mental states could motivate only in the presence of a designated desire by acquiring its motivational capacity and when moral agents have the disposition to take action (Hume 1978). By contrast, Dancy (1993: 33) detaches himself from Humeanism by proposing an externalist theory, stating that beliefs 'stand both as representations of the world and as reasons to change that world' and exercise the necessary motivational influence to drive moral action, without the need of an additional desire. A person who acts in accordance to her beliefs (and respectively, her moral judgements) will take into consideration a standard of morality and will find the strength to give order to their thought and conduct to satisfy normative demands (Dancy 1993; 2004).

In the sustainability context, the internalist-externalist divide is clarified by Gardiner (2011b: 42), as follows:

If we think that the problem is that people are not motivated to act by the fact that climate change is a moral problem, this creates trouble for our moral concepts under internalism that it need not under externalism. Under internalism, a lack of motivating reasons suggests a lack of appropriate justification. But this is not so under externalism. On that view, we might genuinely appreciate the moral severity of the problem, and so the justifying reasons, and yet still not be motivated to act. Perhaps we are simply not interested in responding to such justifications. This might show that there is something wrong with us (our motivations), but not with morality (our moral concepts). Perhaps

we are just bad or imperfect moral agents. This need not imply that we need a conceptual paradigm shift, only that we ought to be morally better than we (currently) are.

In accordance with externalism, a lack of motivation is due to our motives rather than our ethical concepts, and so people reach an intrinsically motivating state when there is an acknowledgement of the impact of everyday actions on nature (Brink 1989; 1997).

Whether one is an internalist or externalist does not imply that a particular normative theory is excluded – be that consequentialism, virtue ethics or deontology. But, if one wants to look at moral judgements as possible motivations for action, then one cannot be an externalist in the standard sense – one needs to be either an internalist or an externalist who believes that moral judgements have some motivational role (even if moral judgements are not sufficient to motivate one to act). This latter position is the one that we take in this enquiry. In our quest to nurture a shared morality, we will use the practical character of moral judgements, as they imply a firm conviction which cannot be ignored, and the possibility of using external motivators to generate pro-environmental action.

Consequently, we decided to adopt the cognitivist externalist perspective, which is open to a reconciliation of the internalism-externalism debate and can justify human motivation as influenced by external factors (Williams 1981; Brink 1989; Dancy 1993; Smith 1994). This externalist position in the theory of moral motivation is likely to increase people's awareness and concern for nature conservation, based on the formation of moral judgements (Brink 1989; 1997). Thus, the activation of moral

judgements takes place in an intrinsically motivating state which results in a behavioural demand for immediate action in accordance with one's principles of character. Weakness of will can also influence a person's motivation for action and trigger a response against her beliefs and moral judgements. If we accept the existence of a mental state of this sort, we acknowledge that intrinsically motivating states 'may fail to motivate under conditions of extreme exhaustion, serious depression, or overwhelming contrary impulses' (Shafer-Landau 2003: 147).

Nonetheless, moral judgements can be used as incentives for action, and this is an efficient track to follow in motivating respect for nature and generating attitude change. By exploring the motivational power of moral judgements, we will learn how to support people in developing a sense of moral responsibility, and we will take the opportunity to propose a shared morality strategy in community settings. If we think of morality as a skill that can be acquired, then we will have a starting framework for the development of character and conduct for nature conservation. By employing Dancy's externalist argumentation and by having grounds to claim that moral judgements reliably motivate, we are ready to use moral motivation practices for attitude change. To that end, we propose a shared morality strategy to be defined with the help of moral judgements and also of the possibility of working with external factors to generate enough motivation for action (see Chapter 5). Thus, we state that a shared morality has the potential to motivate individuals and collectives, irrespective of the particular normative theory they adopt and, hence, maximise the impact needed for nature conservation.

Our proposed ecocentric theory suggests a nature-centred approach to be followed in environmental ethics, connecting motivational strategies to moral action in order to make people aware of the importance of their contribution to a common environmental good. In the process of nurturing an attitude of respect for nature, we start from the point of accepting that people can be influenced by external motivational factors which could facilitate the formation of moral judgements and could support the development of norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character. Here, our scope is to provide moral agents with the opportunity to cultivate a sense of moral responsibility towards nature, by ensuring they get a better understanding of the real meanings of stewardship in the context of anthropogenic climate change. In the pursuit of a common environmental good, we argue that people are not 'passive automata. [...] They have an active part to play in defining, redefining, and changing their identities' (Postmes et al. 2005: 34). Moral agents have the ability to set goals serving their purposes (among which, not causing unjustified harm and showing an attitude of respect for nature) and can learn to self-manage by prioritising their activity. They can decide for themselves what ends to seek in life and chose the most desirable means to those ends.

In our daily life, we are not provided with any official guidelines to explain what is expected of us in relation to environmental protection; the majority of people are not aware of the duties and obligations they have as global citizens. Therefore, individuals have the moral responsibility to engage in ethical enquiry in order to determine their guiding principles in life, to secure the interdependent connections human beings have with the natural world and to uncover their motivations to take pro-environmental action. To make people aware of the wider consequences of their individual behaviour,

we argue that every single action taken is meaningful, as it could positively or negatively affect the world we all live in. In the sustainability context, the recognition of human culpability for triggering climate change has ‘moral and emotional import, influencing our basic capacities for believing cooperative action and environmental repair are even possible’ (Norlock 2009: 30). In this enquiry, we support activism for moral learning because citizen engagement and participation in nature conservation facilitates the development of appropriate ways of thinking and doing, and activates dispositions of character for acting, especially acting with others to achieve common goals. As Connelly (2006: 69) notes:

The encouragement of voluntary action, through encouragement and facilitation, is therefore vital. The principle shades into a form of induction. Through action, participation, and engagement, people become inducted into a way of living and doing that begins to settle into a virtuous groove. In the first instance, it perhaps matters little what the motive was; the point is that actions having been embarked on have a way of becoming the focus of reflection and thought. This can then lead (just as action according to incentives can) to other environmental virtuous actions.

Since virtue ‘cannot be theorized into being; one must participate in a practice to discover’ the opportunities of reciprocal learning and social cohesion which emerge as a consequence of people embracing the collective duty to secure a more sustainable future (Connelly 2006: 67). Activism for environmental protection could be considered a collective duty inasmuch as humans are social beings and are part of a variety of groups –

families, communities, society, and humanity. According to Booth (2009: 69), 'one's moral duty as an individual is to limit one's own harm to nature, [and] as a member of various human communities (...) [one's moral duty] is to contribute to limiting the collective footprint and harm to nature'. Seeing that tackling climate change will only be efficacious en masse, activism for change is said to ensure a flourishing future for the Earth by motivating both individuals and collectives to adopt norms, principles, and standards for a morally upright life (Booth 2009). Through social networks, ideas, behaviours and practices can spread, and people can see themselves and their fellow citizens as being capable of collective engagement and willing to make change happen (Norlock 2010).

Here, we are investigating an efficient track to help people realise that the moral judgements we might generally share have positive implications in tackling anthropogenic climate change and its impacts. We discuss duties and responsibilities within a collective, making use of the contribution individuals can have in their groups and in working together to achieve a common environmental good. As Connelly (2006: 51) explains:

This common good (...) needs to be further developed and specified. It is also important to remember that the conception of the good is not a pre-given entity but something itself in the process of being defined, molded, and brought into being. One of the key virtues will thus need to be the virtue of deliberating on what the sustainable common environmental good itself is.

A shared morality developed by groups of people is meant to activate relevant moral judgements for nature conservation and to generate strong reasons to take action which can only be ignored at the cost of cognitive dissonance. The possibility of a shared

morality offers us the favourable circumstances for moral learning through citizen engagement and participation and for supporting identity formation in community settings. We aim to nurture intrinsic values and frames (see section 3.2.) and to inspire 'normal, natural and right' actions, by changing 'the issue, so it becomes something [people] willingly pick up, because it means something valuable in their own terms' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006: 28). We trust that transformational change for nature conservation can happen through the reinforcement of the moral judgements which community groups and social networks already hold. Our intuition is that a shared morality exists between people who belong to the same community settings and that individuals are capable of finding common grounds to adopt more sustainable lifestyles, as part of a collective. According to Jamieson (2007: 480), we should 'acknowledge the complex relationships that exist between our character as individuals and the communities into which we are born. Institutional structures deeply affect what kind of people we will be, but what kind of people we are also have profound effects on the nature of our society'. Therefore, a shared morality strategy brings attention to the cumulative impacts of individual actions, by facilitating civic spaces of shared practices and the involvement of citizens in playing an active role (locally) in environmental protection.

In community settings, duties and responsibilities extend beyond the private sphere so, in this enquiry, we saw an opportunity in making public a set of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character 'since breaking the commitment will lead to significant reputational damage' (Dolan et al. 2012: 271). Hence, we plan to explore group behaviour and then test different approaches for attitude change to reveal people's moral reasoning

by asking, experimenting and observing. In particular, we will investigate the beliefs, moral judgements and values of individuals in community settings, and then we will analyse the overlapping aspects that correspond to the group, as a whole. In Chapter 5, we will present details of the research methodology employed in developing a shared morality strategy to stimulate pro-environmental action at the local level.

Rather than imposing a substantive morality for environmental protection, our shared morality strategy is meant to encourage groups of people to come together to develop a structure of moral principles in the form of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character. By adopting these principles for nature conservation in community settings, individuals will commit to expressing the attitude of respect for nature in their character and everyday conduct. Additionally, the narrative of a shared morality is further shaped by a system of frames designed to activate people's empathetic dispositions and cooperative instincts. The strategy includes a variety of methods to increase individuals' affinity for the community in order to reduce interpersonal distance, address social discounting and diminish anthropocentric biases (see section 5.2.). To that end, a shared morality encourages openness and positiveness between moral agents by extending the 'open hand, which says "I trust you and come in peace, please reciprocate"' (Tully 2014: 67) and stimulates community effort to secure a more sustainable future.

Moral actions should instinctively flow from the attitude of respect for nature, as people subscribe to certain norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that are aligned to a shared morality developed by the collective. All norms, principles of conduct and standards of character are behavioural expectations having a substantial

impact on people living in society. These offer morally relevant considerations for citizens to take into account when deciding what they ought or ought not to do; the mechanism of operation is simple: social approbation for the right actions and social disapproval for the wrong actions (Leopold 1949). If a person conforms to the norm, it indicates that her beliefs and moral judgements are in alignment with the required standard and reflects her inclinations to self-discipline and a sense of belonging to a community.

For these reasons, we decided to investigate the possibility of developing a moral code for environmental protection (as a community initiative) in the form of a written guide to promote the ecocentric outlook and encourage people to adopt the attitude of respect for nature. A shared morality strategy should generate attitude change with the help of the moral code, as collectives get a better understanding of others' contribution to environmental protection and 'use their perceptions of norms as a standard against which to compare their own behaviours' (Dolan et al. 2012: 268). By translating the abstract identity of groups in concrete norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character, we argue that local moral codes can be followed by moral agents to adopt more sustainable lifestyles in the long term. Ultimately, respecting a publicly recognised moral code and undertaking action in accordance to it may also improve human well-being, as these practices nurture a feeling of being part of a community which cares for its citizens and the environment. Also, we claim that morality fosters authority, and that makes following the moral code easier. The institution of morality in our case becomes the moral code as an instrument accepted by the collective.

A moral code developed at the community level will have the potential to give concrete meaning to the attitude of respect for nature and will identify action steps to be taken by the group in order to ensure more sustainable lifestyles for the future. As Taylor (2011: 169) puts it:

It is, indeed, a test of the sincerity and depth of one's moral commitment in taking that attitude [of respect for nature] whether one acknowledges the ethical requirements imposed by those standards and rules and holds oneself responsible for abiding by them.

In practice, the norms, principles and standards incorporated into the moral code will be non-obligatory and non-enforceable to stimulate people to act justly and to take responsibility for their harmful lifestyles, without fear of ultimate accountability or future punishment (Connelly 2006). Even so, the moral code would be a behaviour regulator by its validly binding pledges, as people get engaged in in-group negotiation and set community-level resolutions for nature conservation. In this respect then, we will pay attention to the ways people make promises to their fellow citizens so as to explore the impacts of cultivating perceived similarity, a shared identity and setting superordinate aims to motivate pro-environmental behaviours (Markowitz and Shariff 2012).

In short, we have presented an ecocentric theory of environmental ethics promoting the attitude of respect for nature and further showed that it could benefit both moral agents and moral subjects. Additionally, we have proposed a collaborative approach to developing a shared morality to protect the natural environment and to motivate groups of people to work together in community settings. Nevertheless, we also acknowledge

that the acquisition of a shared morality can only come through an act of self-determination and by subscribing to normative principles set to guide behaviour; as people have duties and responsibilities which concern not only their personal circumstances but also the world they share with others.

4.4. Concluding remarks

As human population size and growth increase consumption, global injustice and economic inequity, avoiding a sixth mass extinction will demand rapid, intensified efforts for nature conservation (Ceballos et al. 2017). In the quest to offer resolutions, we have used morality as a motivational apparatus to inspire attitude change and to influence group behaviour in community settings. At the same time, the chapter has presented the philosophical background to our enquiry: morality helps people differentiate between right and wrong - it is the discipline that can determine our understanding of nature and the place of human beings in the universe. According to Booth (2009: 72), the motivational power of morality 'depends not only (and perhaps not primarily) on its philosophical soundness, but also on how well it meshes with experience'. Alternative solutions to tackling anthropogenic climate change are desperately needed so, we have turned to the domain of environmental ethics to find effective ways to foster the attitude of respect for nature.

A motivational turn in environmental ethics is imperative in order to put people at the heart of a more sustainable future, promote diverse citizenship and encourage moral learning in community settings. The significant change we need 'will not be achieved by

individuals acting voluntarily, but by collective activism achieving political reforms that compel or facilitate responsible lifestyles. So, environmental ethics needs to focus moral demands on the sorts of activities usually regarded as supererogatory—beyond duty’ (Booth 2009: 69). At present, the practice of morality in motivating pro-environmental action is still limited, requiring a shift of focus from the moral obligation to the development of motivational capacities for nature conservation. The idea is to start promoting moral character as normal and present moral agents with ethical expectations and normative demands so that ‘moral conduct would more regularly be rational, given the ends we actually have’ (Railton 1986: 203). In that regard, the expertise of ethicists is required to expose climate change as a moral problem and humanity’s greatest challenge, persuading people to act with urgency (Jamieson 2007). These qualified experts in human flourishing and living a good life could support individuals to acquire the attitude of respect for nature, to embrace active models of citizenship, and to inspire groups of people in taking pro-environmental action in community settings.

Anthropogenic climate change is a painful indication that Homo sapiens do not consider themselves as part of nature but set themselves above it. To sustain human prosperity in the future, people are considered to have the most significant moral value, and so the doctrine of fundamental dominance is justified. Evidently, it is from a human viewpoint that human abilities are taken as the standard of judgement; ‘all we need to do is to look at the capacities of animals and plants from the standpoint of their good to find a contrary judgement of superiority’ (Taylor 2011: 130). In this enquiry, we have adopted an ecocentric outlook leading us to argue in favour of the attitude of respect for nature, with the implication that other species, ecosystems and the Earth as a whole have

inherent worth and deserve moral consideration. The preservation of the aggregate has higher priority, independent of its contribution to human well-being.

Given this, we have presented our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics focused on supporting the development of moral character and conduct with three main components: a system of beliefs; a set of moral norms, principles, and standards; and a moral attitude of respect for nature. The proposed ecocentric theory is meant to motivate attitude change and alter the moral landscape for the better. All instances in which human practices cause unjustified harm call for a form of compensation to restore the balance of justice between humanity and nature. According to Shockley (2017: 272), 'as individuals, we can and should do more to ensure that the harm is prevented or minimised. We can compel our governments to generate both policies that reduce or eliminate emissions more generally and policies that help us adapt to a changing world'. Thus, we have argued that moral agents have a collective duty to secure a more sustainable future and we have attributed such a moral responsibility to humanity, as a whole.

In this new world environment, we have noted that moral learning will permit people to flourish while being responsible for the well-functioning of the Earth, as a whole. To put our ecocentric theory of environmental ethics into practice, we further discussed the roles of beliefs and moral judgements in motivating moral awareness and empathic concern, and we proposed a shared morality strategy aimed at nurturing moral conduct. In order to help and support collectives develop a shared morality, we adopted an externalist position in the theory of moral motivation. Moral judgements combined with

external motivational factors can be effective instruments in boosting people's motivation to care more about nature and take pro-environmental action at the community level. In addition, we have argued that respect for nature is an essential attitude to a structure of moral principles that determine conscious living in relation to nature.

To this end, we have therefore proposed a practical model of citizen engagement and participation that consists of defining a shared morality, developing a moral code for environmental protection, and supporting identity formation in community settings. Using a pledge-based exercise to stimulate pro-environmental behaviour, we plan to nurture (shared) moral judgements and shape attitudes in group contexts. The moral code will embody the attitude of respect for nature and will help people agree upon norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and set up common objectives for nature conservation in practical life. In the next chapter, we will offer a detailed presentation of the research methodology for our shared morality strategy.

The shared morality strategy advanced here could be a key solution to solving the value-action gap, offering a straightforward approach to nurturing an attitude of respect for nature at the community level. Using open dialogues and in-group negotiations, we argue that small groups could define a shared morality for environmental protection and motivate people to take pro-environmental action in the long term. The reason behind developing such a research methodology is to give people the chance to be part of a moral learning context where an ecocentric theory of environmental ethics is used to acquire the extra skills necessary for tackling anthropogenic climate change. If our research findings are upheld, we will have discovered an efficient strategy of inspiring

attitude change and of promoting a philosophical method to be used extensively in nature conservation.

5. Developing a case study research design to define a shared morality for environmental protection in a community setting

So far, we have examined governmental approaches designed to influence people to act pro-environmentally and have asked if these are powerful enough to encourage individuals to adopt sustainable habits in the medium and long term (see Chapter 2). We argued in Chapter 3 that alternative solutions are needed and that these would involve nurturing respect for nature and promoting a reframed narrative to facilitate citizen engagement and participation, making environmental protection more appealing and accessible to all. Lastly, Chapter 4 explored the idea of a shared morality in community settings and proposed a pledge-based exercise (a moral code to be written by a collective) to stimulate attitude change for nature conservation on a university campus.

This chapter will present the research design of the study, will discuss the sampling strategies employed, and will explore the chosen methods (a focus group, a questionnaire, a series of interviews, and a debriefing session) in order to address the research questions of the study. The enquiry will also include a brief section on the researcher's reflections on the implementation of the methodology and will then conclude with a discussion of the ethical issues considered in our qualitative study. At the end of the eight-month research study, the main result we looked forward to was the final version of the moral code for environmental protection on the university campus, developed by green and non-green participants. At their request, the developed document will be sent to the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University and the Students' Union

representatives for review and implementation. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character developed in the moral code and the changes recommended by the research participants to promote a more sustainable student lifestyle will be examined in more detail in the following chapter (Chapter 6).

Before presenting the methods used, and the reasons for selecting them, it is useful to restate the research questions to remind ourselves of what the goals of the study were, and to be able to link the different questions with the various methods used. The questions to be explored by the methods were:

- What are the differences between the internal motivations (beliefs, values, and attitudes) of greens and non-greens to act pro-environmentally? Are they so different from one another?
- Can we change harmful behaviour towards nature by asking people to cooperate for the well-being of their shared environmental context (i.e. Keele University campus)?
- Is there a shared morality to help motivate pro-environmental behaviour?
- Should the student community adhere to a moral code to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus? Why?
- What would be the norms, principles of conduct, and standards of moral character for nature conservation on Keele University campus, that students should take into consideration in their daily life?

5.1. Research design

The research study used the Keele student community as its core. The decision to focus on a student community was taken because it enabled the study to explore its questions with a vast spectrum of individuals of different ages, cultures, religions, traditions, social backgrounds and nationalities. The one aspect they had in common was they all studied at Keele University. Most of the participants lived in halls of residence on campus for at least one year of their studies, and even when they were based elsewhere, they were visiting the campus regularly. The University was their 'home away from home' so, the closeness the participants felt with the campus very much shaped their way of looking at it, and how they valued it. For these reasons, the community and the cohesion were likely to make for a good testing ground to try to foster a shared sense of responsibility towards nature.

University students are a very suitable group with whom to explore the issues in which this study is interested. In the first instance, they represent a sizeable part of the population. According to a report published by the UK Department for Business, Innovation & Skills in 2015, approximately 47% of learners in England, Wales and Scotland went to university in the 2013/14 academic year (Department for Business, Innovation & Skills 2015). Secondly, university students are part of an academic community that promotes knowledge sharing, and that fosters personal and professional development. They are encouraged and expected to become independent learners by the end of their degree and are trained to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to use in the job market, being prepared to become 'change makers' in society. Thirdly, and related to the last point, students, in general, tend to display a high willingness and ability to act pro-

environmentally and to adopt more sustainable lifestyles for the future. This makes them an excellent group to work with in order to develop values-based approaches to nature conservation because targeting students with interventions is relatively straightforward. Lastly, students are a flexible group, in terms of their availability to participate in research studies, and are enthusiastic about contributing to the advancement of knowledge.

5.1.1. A case study research design

As stated in Chapter 1, the current enquiry presents a critical social science perspective to people's empowerment for environmental protection and does this by way of a case study research design. Within this design, there are also some cross-sectional elements, as will be explained below.

Our case study research design was based on 'the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case' (Bryman 2015: 687) – the Keele student community was the focus. We investigated student behaviour towards nature on a university campus and gained insight into the willingness of people to adopt a sustainable lifestyle in the near future. In addition, we were interested in exploring whether a shared morality for environmental protection exists in the student community and in asking *how* this could be brought into use. These objectives very much reflect Yin's explanation of what case studies are for, namely instances 'when "how" or "why" questions are being posed, the investigator has little control over events, and the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context' (2009: 2).

It is important to emphasise that the aim here is not to understand the Keele student community per se. Rather, the Keele student community is deemed to be representative of other student communities, and it is used here as an instrumental case study, chosen 'to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalisation' (Stake 2005: 445). The issue in question is whether and how people can be encouraged to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle, and the aim is indeed the development of theory.

According to De Vaus (2001: 5), *theory building* is 'a process in which research begins with observations and uses inductive reasoning to derive a theory from these observations'. Here our observations very much inform our theory, but we did not start making these observations with a blank page. Rather, the research was shaped by the knowledge gained and the lessons learned as a result of the work undertaken in the previous chapters, which analysed the UK public policy aimed at influencing pro-environmental behaviours (Chapter 2), studied value-based strategies to fostering attitudes for nature conservation (Chapter 3), and advanced a shared morality strategy for environmental protection in community settings (Chapter 4). This work thus enabled the development of what Yin (2014: 40) calls 'theoretical propositions [that] will later play a critical role in helping [the researcher] generalize the lessons learned from [her] case study'.

Here, we should also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this type of research design. Above all, the advantage of using a case study was that it helped us build an in-depth understanding of student behaviour towards nature, in an academic community. Moreover, it also facilitated the investigation and then, comparison of the green and non-green student groups; the sample being 'a highly specific population' (Neuman 2010:

267). Accordingly, we employed a complex strategy of data collection to extract the relevant patterns that might indicate the existence of shared morality and then, build a theory using our case study. As Yin (2009: 2) advised: 'In case studies, the richness of the phenomenon and the extensiveness of the real-life context require case study investigators to cope with a technically distinctive situation: there will be many more variables of interest than data points. In response, an essential tactic is to use multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion'.

Consequently, the research design permitted the collection of rich data (using 'multiple sources of evidence' – i.e. triangulation) about our case 'within its real-world context' (Yin 2014: 16) in order to analyse people's relationship with the environment on a university campus. Lastly, the case study allowed us to undertake a detailed analysis of the practicability of a shared morality for environmental protection in a community setting to generate a theory that could instigate future research in this direction.

Of course, a potential issue of working with university students was that of selection bias – that is, the sample of respondents from whom that data was collected is not representative of the wider population. However, this is only a problem if broad representativeness is an explicit goal of any study, and it was not here. Instead, our enquiry aimed to focus on a university campus and to explore how the student community may be supported to become more sustainable in the long term. Nearly 60 students got involved in the study, and these included undergraduates and postgraduates, people of varying ages, of different nationalities and from different

cultures. Hence, the recruited participants were representative of the community under investigation.

At the same time, we acknowledge that case studies do not usually allow for the findings and results to be generalised (Yin 2014: 20). However, when this criticism is made, we must distinguish between statistical generalisation and analytic generalisation. As Yin explains (2014: 21), 'case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, (...) does not represent a 'sample', and in doing case study research, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to extrapolate probabilities (statistical generalizations)'. Consequently, case studies are indeed poor at providing statistical generalisations because a 'case or cases are not "sampling units" and also will be too small in number to serve as an adequately sized sample to represent any larger population' (Yin 2014: 20). However, they are good at theoretical generalisations, as case studies could provide us with the relevant information about a specific theory and its worth, and indicate whether it needs refining.

Thus, we engaged in analytic generalisation, by proposing an alternative approach to cultivating a sense of moral responsibility towards nature, showing that a shared morality on a university campus could motivate students to adopt long-lasting sustainable behaviour. It was never stated that the outcome of the current study would be universal to the general population (see Chapter 1) – i.e. we are not arguing that all people will come to the same views about the ability to cooperate in the development of a moral code for environmental protection in every community. Rather, the focus of the study is

on a student community – and one considered to share many characteristics of other universities – and on developing strategies to encourage pro-environmental behaviour in that specific context.

Moreover, the capacity to relate our findings and results to the broader student community was increased by the fact that the instrumental case study was investigated using a triangulation strategy of data collection. As Silverman (2013: 156) states, ‘the relative flexibility of qualitative research can improve the generalizability of our findings’ by giving the researcher the chance to review and expand her data collection strategy at any stage during the study, based on the data gathered so far and on the data still needed. As will be explained in detail below, this enquiry made use of four different methods – deployed in a specific order – to gather, and then triangulate, its data.

While the overall enquiry can appropriately be described as an instrumental case study, within this overall framework certain elements of the investigation took on a cross-sectional design. According to Bryman (2015: 53), a cross-sectional approach ‘entails the collection of data on a sample of cases and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables (...), which are then examined to detect patterns of association’. This is relevant to the study, as a core part of our analysis examined the differences in beliefs and moral judgements of two groups of research participants – greens and non-greens (see below).

5.1.2. Green and non-green students: sampling of research participants

As Flick (2014a: 178) reminds us, 'sampling decisions cannot be made in isolation' and instead our research questions should dictate the sampling method that we employed. The research design of this enquiry involved a specific sampling strategy 'to ensure that [we] gain access to as wide a range of individuals relevant to [our] research questions as possible, so that many different participant perspectives and ranges of activity are the focus of attention' (Bryman 2015: 408). As previously stated, we decided to work with green and non-green students, comparing and contrasting their beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes in regard to the existence of a shared morality for environmental protection in the Keele community.

As we explored in Chapter 2, in its segmentation model, Defra categorised the UK public into seven different groups/population segments, with the two most 'extreme' categories being 'Positive greens' and 'Honestly disengaged'. We decided to draw on this categorisation and to recruit participants who fitted into each of these two segments, based on their own self-declared beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards environmental protection. However, we chose not to openly use these terms when recruiting the participants so as to avoid any judgements or biases that might be linked to them. Moreover, we also concluded that it would be best to refrain from using the terms further as students would find it difficult to declare their membership to a specific segmented group due to the vague descriptions provided by Defra (2008).

As a result, we recruited our research participants based on their willingness and potential to take pro-environmental action. More specifically, self-defined *green students*

displayed a high willingness and potential to act for nature conservation at university, while self-defined *non-green students* declared a reduced willingness and low potential to act. The 'green' and 'non-green' terms were used to define the two opposite profiles, as students could easily relate to them and at the same time, it gave us the opportunity to study the different meanings of 'being green' in the student community. The selected groups of participants were expected to have conflicting beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards environmental protection and to contrast in regard to their contribution to the well-being of the student community.

It would have been difficult to work with a probability sample because there is not any record of green or non-green students and their sustainable/unsustainable lifestyles at Keele. Robson and McCartan (2016: 279) explain that 'in probability sampling, it is possible to specify the probability that any person (...) will be included in the sample.' This is clearly not an option in this case, and so the strategy used here is instead a 'non-probability' sampling one. Moreover, it is a purposive one. As Johnson et al. (2008: 225) argue, 'with a purposive sample a researcher exercises considerable discretion over what observations to study, because the goal is typically to study a diverse and usually limited number of observations rather than to analyse a sample representative of a larger target population'. As will be explained below, four different research methods were used in this enquiry. The precise details of the purposive sampling strategies adopted for each of these four research activities and the details on how participants were recruited for each will be discussed in detail below.

Research participants who self-identified as greens or non-greens were recruited mostly online. We had access to 4,747 student members of a closed Facebook group (Keele University Freshers' 2015/2016 - Official Group) as well as another 3,138 postgraduate student subscribers of the Keele Postgraduate Association mailing list. Additionally, we were able to secure the funding to offer small incentives (veg boxes and lunch invitations) to the research participants, and so Keele students had an extra motivation to take part in the study.

The sample size was not fixed beforehand (at the start of the research study), but instead, it was decided upon at each step of the way. That is, the preliminary analysis of the data collected from each research activity informed the sample size for the next research activity. Thus, we opted for a contingent sampling approach because 'the criteria for sampling units of analysis [evolved] over the course of the research. The research questions again [guided] the sampling of participants, but the relevant sampling criteria [shifted] over the course of the research as the research questions [changed] or [multiplied]' (Bryman 2015: 410). The flexible sampling procedure made the recruitment of research participants more effective and offered us greater control over the collected data.

The total number of student participants recruited was 57, with almost half of them involved in more than one of the research activities. Indeed, if every instance of involvement were counted separately across all four activities implemented, there would be 81 units of involvement. We considered this sample size to be appropriate as it

approached saturation – i.e. the point at which ‘fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties’ (Creswell 2014: 248).

Having described the research design of the study and discussed the advantages of adopting an instrumental case study design, as well as acknowledging the limitations, and having outlined the sampling strategy and the main ways in which participants were recruited, we can now turn to report the methods used, and the process of data collection.

5.2. Research methods

The precise research methods used in this study will be discussed in depth in the following pages. Before that, however, it is important to spend a little time exploring the different traditions that exist in social research and explaining where and how this project fits in with them. This will also allow us to consider the place and the advantages of using mixed methods in our enquiry.

Today, it seems that the disagreements that traditionally fuelled the ongoing debates between supporters of quantitative and qualitative research have calmed down.

However, this is a fairly recent phenomenon. Not long ago, a social researcher would need to decide on what side of the quantitative-qualitative ‘divide’ her research would stand. The quantitative side was inspired by the natural sciences and maintained that the social world could be examined using the same tools like those of physics, chemistry and biology. Hence, quantitative advocates see added value in evaluating social research

based on measurement criteria, testing theories by mimicking the natural science approach to data collection and analysis and keeping distance from the subject of research (in this way, employing an objectivist perspective to their understanding of the social world) (Neuman 2010). The critique brought to quantitative research was that ‘the dead hand of numbers and statistics was no way to understand anything worthwhile about people and their problems’ (Robson and McCartan 2016: 18). By contrast, the qualitative side argued that society is a human creation and that a totally distinct approach to social research was necessary to explore it. Hence, a special feature of qualitative research became evident, as Bryman (2015: 33) highlighted, the ‘view of social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individuals’ creation’. Consequently, qualitative research attracts its supporters by engaging with data in the form of words rather than numbers, producing theories to help researchers interpret and construct the meanings of social reality (Neuman 2010). With the evolution of the debate, and with acknowledgement of the advantages and limitations of both approaches, nowadays, social researchers are encouraged, when relevant, to use research methods that mix features of quantitative and qualitative research to their advantage enabling them to produce a stronger piece of research that may contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

Given the philosophical foundations of this enquiry and its adoption of a critical social science perspective, this work is very much qualitative, but it has a small element of quantitative research in it too. We used a mix of different research methods (a focus group, a questionnaire, a series of interviews and a debriefing session) to maximise our access to the chosen sample (and implicitly, obtain data saturation in the process of data

collection) and to implement a complex data analysis strategy that would attest the trustworthiness of our findings. The researcher did not work with much hard data (only in the questionnaire), but she preferred soft data in the form of people's beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes for environmental protection. More specifically, the opinions of green students were investigated in the focus group, while those of non-green students were explored through a questionnaire and in a series of interviews. The beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes of both greens and non-greens were further examined in the final debriefing session which brought both groups together. The research design had an additional sequential component (characteristic to mixed methods research), which permitted us to gather the data serially. When the first research activity ended, we looked at our data and based on a preliminary analysis, we designed the next activity to follow, and so on until the last stage of fieldwork. In other words, we engaged in 'an evolving process in that the researcher usually begins with an initial sample and gradually adds to the sample as benefits the research questions' (Bryman 2015: 410).

Anticipating the challenge we would face in arguing for the existence of a shared morality (as an abstract concept) and then practising it, we decided to use *methodological triangulation*. The advantage of mixing different research methods in the way we had is that it enabled us to engage in triangulation to collect data 'at a variety of times, in different locations and from a range of persons and collectivities' (Gilbert and Stoneman 2015: 579). More specifically, we applied triangulation in the process of data collection to get a detailed observation of the 'different levels of the "same" problem, the levels being' (Flick 2014a: 188): 1 – greens' subjective perspective of the student duties and responsibilities towards environmental protection on the university campus (the focus

group); 2 – non-greens' unsustainable practices and subjective perspective of the student duties and responsibilities (the questionnaire); 3 – non-greens' ability and willingness to consider changing their unsustainable practices (the series of interviews); 4 – greens and non-greens working together to define a shared morality towards environmental protection in the student community (the debriefing session). According to Flick (2014a: 190), triangulation enhances the quality of results, being 'a strategy for a more comprehensive understanding and a challenge to look for more and better explanations' to the research enquiry.

As a result, the decision to triangulate our methods permitted us to develop a complex sampling strategy but at the same time, implied our engagement in an assiduous process of data analysis. Nonetheless, these assumed responsibilities enriched our research design, by making it unique (a case study with cross-sectional design elements, and a sequential component) and producing 'knowledge on different levels, which means insights that go beyond the knowledge made possible by one approach and thus contribute to promoting quality in research' (Flick 2014a: 184). The posed challenges of the triangulation technique involved additional resources needed in undertaking multiple research activities: extra effort and work, time limitations, lack of funding, a demanding ethical clearance procedure, a complex sampling strategy and advanced data collection and analysis knowledge. Gilbert and Stoneman (2015: 132) brought to attention the importance of being a skilful researcher when managing a complex data collection strategy:

Simply managing the data in a mixed method project provides a challenge to the organisational and intellectual skills of the researcher.

We could say: twice the methods, twice the analytic notes, and (often) twice the data. As with single method projects, researchers need a strategy for managing raw data, transcribed or coded data, analytic logs and notes on findings. And practical decisions must be made as to how the findings from each method are presented.

Consequently, a data management strategy was put in place to analyse the data collected in the fieldwork (see section 5.3.), as we anticipated that a large variety of information would be gathered by the end of the data collection stage.

Having discussed the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research and the use of mixed methods and methodological triangulation, it is now time to review the first of the four activities implemented. The following sections will be structured in chronological order by the activities undertaken in the research study. That is, we will discuss each of the four activities in turn: the focus group with greens, the questionnaire and the interviews with non-greens, and the debriefing session with both.

5.2.1. The focus group with green students

The first research activity was the focus group with green students. This sought to find out the perspectives of environmental enthusiasts in relation to student duties and responsibilities for nature conservation and to explore their general opinion about the existence of a shared morality in the student community. The desired result of the activity was the construction of a list of *norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character for environmental protection*, which would consist of the values and

motivations greens have for taking care of nature on Keele campus. This initial list developed by the focus group participants would prove to be crucial for the research study, as these represented the framework for the following three stages of the data collection.

i) Planning

The focus group was an appropriate method to use in defining a shared morality in the student community and developing the initial version of the moral code, as 'the amount and range of data is increased by collecting from several people at the same time' (Robson and McCartan 2016: 299). A focus group is typically an engaging activity, helping participants to embrace group collaboration and supporting them to get involved in the group discussion. The 'group dynamic' was expected to shape individual beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards nature conservation in the community setting (here, the Keele University campus). In this respect, it was essential that the group reached consensus and came to an agreement when discussing the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character of this initial moral code.

A foreseen weakness in organising the focus group was a possible tension between participants and the attempt to impose personal opinions on others (Morgan and Scannell 1998). To explore the existence of shared morality, we sought to find a safe context where people felt comfortable to talk about their personal beliefs and to work together for the well-being of their community. Thus, we decided to undertake the fieldwork at Keele University and invited students to a discussion about environmental protection and student lifestyles in a quiet room on the University campus. To prevent any hostility, a

facilitator should ensure that the conversations ran smoothly and are conducted in a friendly fashion. In this case, the researcher had many years of teaching experience as well as expertise working in the NGO sector with small and large groups, especially with young people; so, she felt confident in facilitating discussions and in mediating any conflicts or misunderstandings that might have occurred. Another possible flaw of focus groups could be their outcomes, which are said to be 'difficult to generalize as they cannot be regarded as representative of the wider population' (Robson and McCartan 2016: 300). We have never promised we wanted to generalise our findings to the general population still, valuable lessons could be learnt from this enquiry. Using a variety of research methods to collect data offered us a large volume of data to be analysed and so, we managed to obtain meaningful results that could apply to other types of collectives (see Chapter 6). Lastly, we were also acutely aware of the role the focus group (and the initial moral code developed from it) played in the whole enquiry, and of the risks associated with placing so much importance on one research method, being so crucial to the rest of the study. To overcome any potential liability, we established clear objectives to be achieved by the end of the research activity, explained the role of the focus group to participants and directed the held conversations in order to provide focused data (Morgan and Scannel 1998).

In the recruitment of focus group participants, we used non-probability sampling and a mix of purposive and snowball sampling. The chosen strategy was purposive because in the selection of the first two green participants (prominent environmentalists at Keele) we needed to get access to 'a highly specific population' (Neuman 2010: 267). After that, we asked the first two to recommend other students who are well known on Keele

campus for their contribution to environmental protection who we could invite to join the focus group. In other words, we continued the process with snowball sampling, aiming to recruit outstanding environmental champions ('a relatively select, rare, or difficult-to-locate population') to invite them to discuss the existence of a shared morality in the student community (Johnson et al. 2008: 226). The non-random character of participants did not impede the current study, as we were not interested in a sample that might be deemed 'representative'. We reached nine green students (via Keele University webmail service provider - Google Gmail and the Facebook closed group - Keele University Freshers' 2015/2016 - Official Group) and invited them to become participants in the research study (see Appendix A2). The research participants were Keele students, continuing their studies in the 2015-16 academic year and having a notable involvement in campus-based environmental initiatives (i.e. Green Week 2015, Keele Sustainable Bungalow, Student Eats Project, Think Green Student Society). An information sheet (see Appendix A6) was administered to the recruited students, stating the purpose of the study and the benefits and possible disadvantages of taking part in it.

The plan was to begin the focus group with an introductory session, and then the facilitator would ask a couple of transition questions to help people feel more comfortable talking to each other and familiarise themselves with the subject of discussion. In the second part of the research activity, participants would address the key questions and would get involved in a group exercise, brainstorming norms, principles of conduct, and standards of moral character for environmental protection on the university campus. The focus group was meant to end with an overall discussion of the initial moral

code developed by the group. Then the researcher would encourage participants to write any remaining thoughts on a feedback form.

ii) Execution of the focus group

Of the nine students invited, seven greens joined the focus group which took place in May 2015. There was a balance in the group in terms of age, gender, nationality and religious belief. We planned to ask participants seven questions (see Appendix B1) to learn more about how Keele students view their role and impact on the university campus and to explore the motivational factors which encouraged them to adopt pro-environmental behaviours. In the event, one question went unasked. This was the question that asked: *Should the student community adhere to a moral code to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus? Why?* The reason this question went unasked was that the facilitator observed that, from the beginning of the research activity, participants had been arguing for the necessity of 'a set of examples or main rules' (in other words, a moral code) to help the student body engage with environmental protection. There was, therefore, no need to ask the question because participants were already saying that they wanted a guide (on how to be more sustainable, and implicitly on how to cultivate a sense of moral responsibility towards nature) addressed at the student body. Moreover, they agreed to work together on a moral code for environmental protection on Keele University campus and started the brainstorming immediately. As one focus group participant explained:

We usually read articles, we come across different statistics and say: *Oh, that is not good! We should do something!* However, today we were analysing what we can do in our context, as students, where we stand

now and what our scopes are. (...) Also, we looked at some of the limitations. (...) We all advocated that we have to be more proactive so, I would personally go back and think of all my involvement in [student] societies (or whatever it might be), how can I collaborate or incorporate the environment into it. And actually, do some actions (FGP1).

The norms, principles of conduct and standards of the initial moral code were written one by one on the flip chart paper, starting with the green standards which required less effort from students (*Recycle what you can. Reuse. Reduce.*) and continuing with others which demanded a more significant investment of time to follow them (*Becoming a champion of change* and/or *Becoming familiar with the practices and rules in place at Keele*). At the end of the brainstorming activity, the facilitator invited participants to read the written moral code together and make sure this was clear and directed to a student audience.

The focus group lasted for two hours, during which participants felt comfortable to share their beliefs and attitudes towards nature conservation in a student-friendly learning environment. At the end of the research activity, the students were invited to participate in a debriefing session seven months later, in November 2015. The debriefing session would aim to bring greens and non-greens together to present the early findings of the multiple research activities and to discuss their collaborative experience for environmental protection in the research study (see below for more on the debriefing session).

iii) Data gathered from the focus group

The focus group represented the starting point of our investigation into green students' perceived connection with nature. It was an opportunity to explore the beliefs, moral judgements, attitudes and external motivational factors that might perhaps help the student body as a whole act more sustainably in the near future.

In addition, we gathered the necessary data to open the discussion about the existence of a shared morality in the student community, and we asked participants to come up with a list of norms, principles of conduct and standards which expressed their reasons for taking care of the natural environment on Keele campus. We made sure to capture the thoughts, opinions, and ideas of all members of the group using different data recording tools (audio recording, written flip chart sheets and feedback forms) and a note-taker was asked to write down real-time observations during the focus group (as the researcher had a facilitator role in the research activity). All the data collected (including the initial draft of the moral code) was inputted into a new Nvivo 10 project (a Computer Assisted/Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software or CAQDAS) ready to be analysed and then used in the development of the next research activity - the Keele non-green students' questionnaire (section 5.3. below will discuss the data analysis strategy in more detail).

The focus group was thus organised to ask if green students believe in the existence of a shared morality on Keele campus and to learn valuable lessons that may strengthen the University's sustainability initiatives, encouraging students to adopt a pro-environmental behaviour. As argued in the previous chapters, people do consider moral responsibility an essential virtue for environmental protection, and the student response in the focus

group supported our argument. Based on the data collected in the focus group and the initial version of the moral code, a questionnaire was then designed to get a better understanding of the non-greens' beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards environmental protection and to see if they would also find a moral code useful in stimulating the student body to act sustainably. It is to this Keele non-green students' questionnaire that we now turn.

5.2.2. The questionnaire completed by non-green students

In the second stage of fieldwork, we developed an online questionnaire using the data collected from the focus group (in particular, the initial version of the moral code drafted in the focus group) as well as information from Defra's (2008) Honestly Disengaged segmented profile (see Chapter 2). This questionnaire was directed at self-identified non-green students.

i) Planning

A questionnaire was the most appropriate research method to follow the focus group because it helped us gather significant data on unsustainable student practices and non-greens' perspective of student duties towards nature on the university campus. Above all, we considered the 'speed of data collection' and the possibility of keeping in touch with participants for 'follow-up contact to maximize response rates' as two essential strengths of using a survey in the process of data collection (Robson and McCartan 2016: 256). At Keele, all students have free Internet access on campus, in the student accommodation and the libraries. Therefore administrative issues in relation to completing an online

questionnaire were minimum. We anticipated problems in regard to filling in the questionnaire due to a slow computer or any browser incompatibilities. However, students have IT assistance and access to 243 desktops computers (and 24-hour access to 70 desktops computers) in Keele libraries so, the matters mentioned above could be quickly addressed.

To avoid high rates of non-response and non-completion attributed to 'an increased reluctance among the population to participate in surveys' (Johnson et al. 2008: 307) we designed a 'thought-provoking' questionnaire with a clear structure, that was 'self-explanatory as there [was] no interviewer to explain instructions or questions' (Robson and McCartan 2016: 255). Nonetheless, a contact address (on the first page of the questionnaire) was provided for respondents in case they wished to ask further questions or express any concerns to the researcher or her supervisor.

A mix of purposive and sequential samples was used to invite both undergraduate and postgraduate students to complete the questionnaire. The sample was purposive in that it was made up of people who self-identified as non-greens; it was sequential because we continued 'to gather cases until the amount of new information ends or a certain diversity of cases is reached. The principle is to gather cases until we reach a saturation point' (Neuman 2010: 270). Participants were recruited through a closed social media group (the Keele University Freshers' 2015/2016 - Official Group) as well as through University email lists. The invitation to complete the questionnaire was sent in August 2015 and targeted students who would be continuing their studies in the 2015-16 academic year who had expressed no real interest in getting involved in pro-environmental initiatives at

Keele (see Appendix A3). Incentives were used to encourage participation in the survey: by taking part, there was an opportunity to win veg boxes and a free lunch. We chose these incentives because *Keele Food Co-op: Vegbox & Fruitbox* is a student project implemented by Keele Think: Green student society, which promotes conscious consumption of fairtrade and organic produce. The respondents were informed beforehand about the wider benefits of completing the questionnaire that will allow them to get a better understanding of the personal values and attitudes in relation to nature conservation and see more clearly the position they hold in the environmental protection debate.

Being aware of the issues concerning confidentiality that the online environment could raise (see section 5.4. where we discuss research ethics in more detail), we made sure to use a safe online survey software, recommended by our supervisors. As Google is the webmail service provider of Keele University, the institution offered us specialised training in how to securely use the Google Drive and its educational tools. Thus, the questionnaire was created using Google Forms, an online survey software. This was a low-cost method of data collection because it is free of charge and the researcher can generate an instant summary (written transcription) of all participant responses (Gilbert and Stoneman 2015: 245). Also, it was an effective tool to use because a Google form can be promoted on a Facebook group as well as on University email lists to recruit participants.

The questionnaire asked a total of 36 questions (see Appendix B2) and took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The researcher used the initial moral code to

phrase the questions and organise them thematically. The themes of the questions took the following order: informed consent; general questions; the non-green student profile; student behaviour on Keele campus; personal attitudes; and personal beliefs and values towards environmental protection at Keele. The role of these themes was to group questions and answers in order to get a clearer picture of the non-green student lifestyle at Keele and determine the root cause of self-confessed unsustainable actions by linking them to a person's beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards nature.

Consequently, we asked non-greens a number of 'specific' questions to follow up the discussion we had in the focus group about the existence of a shared morality in the student community and the practicability of deploying a moral code on the university campus. One question (Question 14 – see Appendix B2) asked respondents to state what population segment they considered themselves to be part of. This was asked to evaluate the effectiveness of Defra's (2008) segmented approach to influencing the UK population to adopt pro-environmental behaviours. To analyse student knowledge about the most frequently used environmental concepts, we asked non-greens to estimate their confidence in understanding and explaining to others the meaning of the following words: environmental protection, nature conservation, sustainable development, climate change, environmental citizenship and environmental justice (Question 19 – see Appendix B2). We also enquired non-greens if they ever thought of themselves as 'a champion for change' which was something the green students had written into the initial moral code (Question 26 – see Appendix B2), and we enquired about how willing they would be to engage with environmental initiatives and projects implemented at Keele (Question 27 – see Appendix B2). Additionally, we listed 29 PIRC (2015b) values related to environmental

protection and asked non-greens which of these they considered the most relevant in influencing their attitude and behaviour towards nature on Keele campus (Question 31 – see Appendix B2). We also included a statement that was made in the focus group, namely ‘we all have joint responsibility for our communities’ (Focus Group Participant 6) and asked the students to reflect how they felt about it (Question 33 – see Appendix B2). We also enquired about whether they considered the well-being of the student community to be dependent on nature (Question 34 – see Appendix B2). Lastly, the respondents were asked if having a moral code to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community would adhere, would be a good idea (Question 35 – see Appendix B2). This was done to investigate non-greens’ opinions about being provided with guidance to develop a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

To make sure respondents will offer us data of the highest quality, we used a variety of response formats, as most appropriate to the different questions asked (Gilbert and Stoneman 2015: 245). More specifically, we included the following response formats: checkboxes, scale 1-5, multiple choice, grid and paragraph text; these helped us get speed, clarity in participant response and more accurate data. However, the disadvantage of using a variety of response categories in the questionnaire was the large amount of data collected in different formats, which added extra time pressures on the researcher during the analysis.

ii) Execution of the questionnaire

The questionnaire data was collected between August and September 2015, when we received 49 (more than the set target of 35) student responses. As the promotion of the

survey took place during the summer vacation when students were no longer at university, we made sure to send three reminders to the student body via email and on social media. Reading the respondents' comments in regards to the questionnaire administration, we noted that most questions worked and were well-understood. Respondents appeared happy with the questionnaire and comments included: 'Thank you for giving me the opportunity to re-evaluate my actions and thoughts on the natural environment of Keele University and its surrounding grounds' (Questionnaire Participant 30).

When examining the responses to the questionnaire, we concluded that data saturation had been reached as we did not need a sample that might be deemed 'representative' but rather we were looking to collect non-greens' first thoughts about the existence of a shared morality on the university campus (Bryman 2015). A second aim of the questionnaire was to allow the selection of 20 students (who were willing to be further involved in the research study) to participate in the third stage of fieldwork, namely the interviews with non-greens, which would be based on the most intriguing answers provided in the questionnaire.

iii) Data gathered from the questionnaire

As mentioned earlier, Google Forms permitted us to generate a summary (written transcription) of all participant responses. This data was then introduced into 'The shared morality strategy' Nvivo 10 project and would be analysed together with the data from the focus group. As such, the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software was a

valuable resource because it let us gather a variety of data formats (i.e. audio recordings, word documents, excel spreadsheets, images) in one place (Silverman 2013: 269).

Analysing the data collected in the questionnaire, the non-green response (63% of the questionnaire participants) in regards to the future development and implementation of a moral code in the student community was positive. Thus, we went ahead to develop the question set for the next research activity. Just as the focus group data was used to design the questionnaire, the data from the questionnaire was used to develop the third research activity of this project, namely the interviews with non-green participants. These interviews aimed to consider some of the issues contained in the questionnaire in more depth, including in particular non-greens' willingness to re-consider unsustainable practices by discussing what would motivate them to take pro-environmental action in the near future.

5.2.3. Interviews with non-green students

Following the focus group and the implementation of the questionnaire, the third phase of data collection was marked by a series of interviews with non-green students. Thus, we invited non-greens to discuss a number of issues around the topic of a sustainable lifestyle on the university campus and explored whether they would consider adopting a pro-environmental behaviour for the sake of the student community.

i) Planning

As we decided to build our enquiry on a case study of Keele students, we thought that an appropriate research method to collect data at that stage was the semi-structured interview. The interview represented the most appropriate strategy to 'encompass the *hows* of people's lives (the constructive work involved in producing order in everyday life) as well as the traditional *whats* (the activities of everyday life)' (Fontana and Frey 2005: 698), as we explored non-greens' belief in the existence of a shared morality in a one-to-one dialogue. The semi-structured interview permitted us to investigate the declared unwillingness of non-greens to live more sustainably and ask them what motivates their resistance towards engaging with environmental protection initiatives on the university campus. Hence, the research method eased in-depth conversations with the interviewees, facilitating a retrospective inspection of the answers they previously provided in the questionnaire.

The success of the semi-structured interview relied upon the researcher's ability to achieve a balance between specificity, focusing the discussion around a sense of moral responsibility towards nature, and using the interview to get a broader overview of the non-green position. Therefore, we did not strictly follow the interview guide but ensured a fruitful dialogue with the interviewee that permitted us to collect relevant data to answer the research questions (Fontana and Frey 2005: 708).

Once again, for this activity, we made use of purposive sampling to recruit the non-green interview participants. More specifically, in September 2015 we approached 20 of the 49 non-greens who had completed the questionnaire. We selected these 20 research

participants because they had given interesting answers in the questionnaire, and they had said they were willing to be contacted for more research. In this regard, our sample was purposive, and it allowed 'us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature of the process in which we [were] interested' (Silverman 2013: 148). After the non-green students accepted the invitation to take part in the interview (see Appendix A4), all aspects that might influence people's willingness to participate or that might prompt concerns were addressed in the information sheet provided (see Appendix A7).

The objective of the interview stage was to investigate the beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes of non-greens towards nature in detail, and discuss a possible shift of the student body (supported by green participants) to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle on Keele campus. The interviews with non-green students were particularly relevant in exploring whether the UK Government approach discussed in Chapter 2 (based on the idea that people have variable willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally) is effective in terms of public engagement when people do not self-identify with a specific Defra's population segment.

Each interview with non-green students lasted approximately 45 minutes, during which time the researcher asked 17 central questions (see Appendix B3). The question set was based on the same thematic structure used in the questionnaire to further build on our understanding of non-green unsustainable behaviour in the student community. In the interview, the researcher also included verbatim quotations from questionnaire respondents to ensure the discussion was focused. Throughout she also encouraged interviewees to express their ideas and opinions.

Consequently, the researcher asked the interview participants why they decided to fill in the questionnaire (Question 2 – see Appendix B3) and if they thought there is a stereotype related to ‘being green’ in the student community (Question 3 – see Appendix B3). A series of questions then addressed the coercion felt by non-greens to change their lifestyle (Question 4 – see Appendix B3), ‘the trappings of modern life’, and the significant amount of effort invested in acting sustainably (Question 5 – see Appendix B3), which seems to divert people’s attention from the impact of harmful actions on Keele campus (Question 12 – see Appendix B3). As the questionnaire responses showed a lack of confidence in understanding and explaining the meaning of environmental citizenship and environmental justice to others, we also checked non-greens’ knowledge of these concepts (Question 10 – see Appendix B3).

Given the beliefs and attitudes expressed about their non-green status, interviewees were asked if they considered themselves to be part of a Defra population segment (Question 8 – see Appendix B3). Additionally, we shared the most popular six values (said to influence pro-environmental behaviour) according to the questionnaire responses: being healthy; responsibility; cleanliness; being part of nature; helpfulness; and enjoying life, and asked non-greens to explain the connection of these values to protecting the natural environment at Keele (Question 15 – see Appendix B3). Here, visual aids⁴ were used to explain the population categories developed by Defra (the segmentation model) and to help interview participants get a concrete representation of the most common

⁴ The visual aids are included in Appendix B: The resources used in the research activities, under Appendix B3: The interviews (with non-green students) question set.

values - PIRC' (2015b) values deck - that are said to influence people's character and conduct. We also enquired what kind of initiatives would motivate the interview participants to get involved in environmental protection (Question 6 – see Appendix B3) and whether they were willing to change their lifestyle whilst at Keele (Question 7 – see Appendix B3). We asked these questions to investigate why 75% of non-greens (according to the questionnaire responses) do not see themselves as champions of change (Question 13 – see Appendix B3). Then, to evaluate students' positive and negative comments in regard to cultivating a sense of moral responsibility towards nature at Keele, non-greens were asked if they thought students have a collective duty to ensure the well-being of the community (Question 11 – see Appendix B3) and if implementing a moral code for environmental protection on the university campus is a good idea (Question 16 – see Appendix B3). At the end of the research activity, all participants were invited to fill in a feedback form to note any changes (if any) that might have taken place regarding their beliefs and attitudes as a result of the interview discussion.

ii) Execution of the interviews

After sending three rounds of invitations to non-greens via email and ensuring that participation was balanced in terms of race, gender, religion, age, national or ethnic origin, the interview stage was scheduled to take place in September - October 2015. The final number of interviewed students was 16, less than the set target of 20. After 16 interviews had been conducted, it was felt that enough data had been gathered and there was, therefore, no need to organise any more interviews.

The one-to-one semi-structured interviews provided the necessary space to discuss ‘all aspects and topics relevant to the research question’, and the researcher was able to adjust the method at any particular time in order to ‘cover the topical range (contained in the interview guide) by introducing new topics or initiating changes in the topic’ (Flick 2014a: 213). The question set was formulated effectively, and in the feedback forms research participants stated that the interview was, in fact, an ‘informative experience’. Indeed, one interviewee reported that ‘the interview was conducted professionally, but also provided a comfortable environment to express opinions. The use of quotes from the previous questionnaire helped stimulate the discussion and also provided an alternative view I may not have considered initially’ (Interview Participant 1). Overall, we noted that the majority of non-green participants were willing to engage in an active dialogue about how acting unsustainably impacts the wider community and about the opportunity to set potential avenues for action in the near future. One participant reported that participating in the interview ‘helped me think more about my personal impact and engagement with environmental issues’ and said ‘I will certainly act on more of the things I said I wanted to’ (Interview Participant 15).

At the end of the research activity, each interviewee was offered a veg box for the time and effort invested in the interview as well as a lunch invitation to stimulate their possible involvement in the following research activity, namely the debriefing session.

iii) Data gathered from the interviews

The interview stage permitted us to gather significant data in relation to non-greens’ beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards environmental protection on the

university campus and get a better understanding of the required approach to encourage them to act sustainably in the near future.

The interviews were audio-recorded on a digital recorder and the completed feedback forms were kept for the process of data analysis. The data gathered (in both audio and written format) was then inputted into 'The shared morality strategy' Nvivo 10 project, to be interpreted together with the data already collected from the focus group and the questionnaire. The Nvivo 10 software offered us the option to transcribe the interviews inside the already created project and also allowed us to code the interviews using the coding developed from the data that had been added previously. The analysis of the data collected from the focus group, the questionnaire and the interviews then encouraged us to bring green and non-green students together, face-to-face in the final stage of the research study: the debriefing session. In this last research activity, we created the favourable context for both groups to listen to each other when discussing a 'standard of acceptable behaviour' towards nature and we investigated whether students would manage to work together on an improved set of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character to be followed on the university campus.

5.2.4. The debriefing session with green and non-green students

In the last stage of fieldwork, we organised a debriefing session which brought both green and non-green students together to discuss the similarities and differences in belief of the existence of a shared morality in the community setting. The aim was to communicate and discuss the initial findings from the three previous research activities – the focus

group, the questionnaire, and the series of interviews – and to invite both green and non-green groups to collaborate in developing an improved moral code for environmental protection on the university campus, relevant to the entire student body.

i) Planning

In the debriefing session, we were interested in observing the ‘dynamic and social negotiations of individual views (...) as an essential element for understanding social constructions of reality’ (Flick 2014a: 249) and in examining whether a consensus regarding the responsibility to protect the natural environment could be reached in a community setting. We also sought to obtain respondents’ validation that the preliminary findings of the data analysis corresponded to the opinions they shared in the previous research activities (Silverman 2013: 288). So, a group discussion was the most appropriate data gathering strategy because it encouraged student involvement and gave us the opportunity to work with the research participants in a familiar social context, the university campus (Flick 2014a).

We looked to implement a research activity that could capture the shared opinions of a diverse group of people representing their community. The debriefing session allowed an exchange of views between greens and non-greens in regards to Keele students’ lifestyle, encouraging the response of the group ‘concerning views that are not correct, not socially shared, or extreme’ and stimulating ‘common processes of problem solving’ (Flick 2014a: 244). In addition, the group discussion allowed us to witness ‘how opinions are created and above all changed, asserted, or suppressed in social exchange’ (Flick 2014a: 249).

Meaningful interaction between people is, as Blumer (1969: 41) argued, the main strength of the research activity:

A small number of individuals, brought together as a discussion or resource group, is more valuable many times over than any representative sample. Such a group, discussing collectively their sphere of life and probing into it as they meet one another's disagreements, will do more to lift the veils covering the sphere of life than any other device that I know of.

In this case, every green and non-green student participated in defining a shared morality on the university campus, and everyone considered the value of each other's contribution. Sometimes disagreeing with them, but embracing it as part of the group's opinion and shaping the group's overall position.

It was important in this research activity that the researcher kept in mind that the aims of the group discussion centred on the exchange of views, the sharing of opinions, and on how participants interacted and negotiated, and that she also explained this to the participants early on. As Flick emphasises (2014a: 250), a group discussion is 'strongly oriented on conflict, argumentation, and diversity (...) with the aims of making the data more substantial and of revealing implicit or unconscious parts of participants' relation to the topic of research or the issue of the discussion'. The facilitator will tend to question participants' opinions about a matter of subjective importance for each member of the group, which might cause additional problems if the discussion and the group dynamic are not handled professionally. However, here, the researcher implemented this research

method effectively, facilitating student engagement and participation in the group discussion.

As already mentioned, the debriefing session involved both green and non-green students. The green students were those who had taken part in the first research activity (the focus group), and the non-green students were those who had participated in the interviews. A letter of invitation (see Appendix A5) and an information sheet (see Appendix A8) were emailed to the students, and a free lunch on Keele campus was advertised to encourage them to get involved in this last stage of fieldwork. As before then, our sample was purposive. We recruited green and non-green students based on their previous participation in the research study and looked to explore in more detail the beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes of both groups (Stake 2005: 451).

The main objectives (see Appendix B4) of the debriefing session were to communicate the outcomes of the fieldwork carried out so far to green and non-green students (Objective A) and then to invite them to work together on an improved moral code for environmental protection on the university campus (Objective B). The initial findings showed that people are open to finding effective ways of collaborating for the well-being of the community. To foster this, we provided a safe and non-judgemental context for both greens and non-greens to share their student experience, to listen to each other, and to note any changes in attitude (if any) that occurred as a result of participating in the research study.

In the debriefing session, the researcher acted as a facilitator, and a note-taker was invited to observe the group dynamic and record what had been discussed. The primary task of the researcher was to facilitate and encourage discussion, and both the researcher and the note-taker made sure not to intervene in the group's deliberations. There were no prompts by the researcher to keep discussions focused on the agenda of the research activity. Rather the discussion was allowed to progress as the students wished. The only intervention that the facilitator made was to ensure, in an impartial manner, that no one person dominated the discussion. Indeed, one disadvantage of a group discussion can be that some participants might feel that an individual is trying to impose her beliefs and attitudes on the others (Silverman 2013).

ii) Execution of the debriefing session

When we decided to organise a debriefing session to bring greens and non-greens together to work on the improved moral code, we were aware of the difficulty of finding a suitable date and time to bring all students together. Two weeks before the debriefing session, we emailed the letter of invitation to the research participants, and a week later we sent another reminder and took the opportunity to ask students if there were any questions ahead of the group discussion. In the end, nine students took part in the debriefing session out of the 27 invited participants. We were satisfied with the 34% student turnout in the final stage of data collection since the invited greens were involved in the research study over an eight-month period and all non-greens had already participated at two previous research activities; we appreciated that students were busy.

The debriefing session represented a trust-building exercise to encourage the green and non-green groups to collaborate for environmental protection on the university campus and the sake of their student community. The two-hour activity took place on Keele campus in November 2015, once we ensured balanced participation of both student groups. The researcher started the group discussion by explaining to participants the whole process of data collection and that the debriefing session was the last stage of the eight-month fieldwork. In the second part of the research activity, green and non-green students were presented with the preliminary outcomes of the data analysis and valuable information related to students' motivation to act more sustainably on the university campus. The presentation of findings was meant to raise participants' awareness of the needs and desires of the other group, helping non-greens to understand the benefits of a sustainable lifestyle and, at the same time, getting greens to recognise the challenge of adopting pro-environmental habits. In addition, the researcher asked the students if having a moral code to protect the natural environment at Keele is a good idea (Question 3 – see Appendix B4). The same question had been asked previously in the focus group, the questionnaire, and the interviews, however, in the debriefing session, the researcher sought to observe and analyse the way both groups responded to the question in the presence of one another. In the third part of the research activity, green and non-green participants took part in a group exercise to improve the initial moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus (developed by the green students in the focus group).

The ultimate aim was to send the final version of the moral code to the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University and the Students' Union for review and implementation (Question 4 –

see Appendix B4). In the group discussion, some non-greens disagreed with others on the ground that green participants might attempt to impose their personal opinions on them. In response to these concerns, green participants pointed out the important role each student plays on Keele campus and the difference a more sustainable lifestyle can make in ensuring the well-being of the student community, as a whole. As one green participant said: 'Do whatever you can to protect the environment. Every simple action will make a positive difference' (Debriefing Session Participant 5). As a consequence of being exposed to a positive initiative and finding themselves in a safe context, all research participants gradually engaged in the discussion about improving the initial moral code to target the entire student body. As one debriefing session participant noted: 'The only way we can make change happen is together, through dialogue and action' (Debriefing Session Participant 7). Once everyone agreed on an improved version of the code, the researcher and the participants discussed the most efficient ways to implement the moral code. At the end of the debriefing session, the green and non-green students were asked to record any unexpressed opinions in the feedback form and to document the outcome of their contribution in the research study by writing a testimonial.

In the testimonials, the green and non-green students recorded their reactions to being involved in the project, what they thought of their experience of it, what they found useful, whether they thought their attitudes towards engaging in pro-environmental initiatives had changed over the course of the project, and whether they would recommend this type of activity to others. Thus, one debriefing session participant wrote:

At the end of the study, I feel that I have learnt more about being green.

I am more aware than ever of my actions, and I am very proud of that. I

found the research study very interesting and relevant; its structure and organisation were excellent. I feel as though I was able to relay my point across clearly and felt free to do so. The presentation of preliminary findings (...) was very useful and allowed us all to gain an insight into other people's perspectives, being put together clearly for all to understand (Debriefing Session Participant 4).

Offering students the opportunity to write a testimonial also strengthened the credibility of the research study. In enabling them to record their thoughts about their experiences and in encouraging them to evaluate the project, it gave them some ownership of the research and increased the likelihood that they felt the enquiry had been conducted in a trustworthy manner.

iii) Data gathered from the debriefing session

The contribution of green and non-green students in the debriefing session showed the motivational power of a community mindset to encourage people to act together for the common good. Meanwhile, we met the variation criteria required by the cross-sectional elements of the research design, by exploring the differences of opinion among the members of the two groups and showing that their contradictions did not stop them from defining a shared morality for environmental protection on Keele campus.

The main result of the research activity was the improved moral code, collaboratively developed by green and non-green students. When the fieldwork ended, the researcher created the third and final version of the moral code, improving its layout and organising

it according to the pledges made by the research participants to protect the natural environment on the university campus (see Appendix B5). In addition, both greens and non-greens supported the initiative of sending the final moral code to the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University and the Students' Union for consideration.

The debriefing session was audio-recorded on a digital recorder, and the note-taker took records of what the participants discussed and how the group interacted. We gathered additional data in the form of flip chart notes, the improved version of the moral code (as it stood at the end of the debriefing session), filled in feedback forms and participant testimonials. After this, the collected data was uploaded to 'The shared morality strategy' Nvivo 10 project to be analysed together with the data from the focus group, the data from the interviews, and the results of the questionnaire.

In sum, the whole purpose of the eight-month data collection process was to obtain more information about green and non-green lifestyles in the student community and to determine if a shared morality for environmental protection could be developed on the university campus. The next section will discuss the data analysis strategy, which provided valuable insights about behavioural change in community settings and confirmed that collective engagement and participation could play a vital role in motivating individuals to acquire a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

5.3. The data analysis strategy

At the end of fieldwork, all data gathered in the research activities (the focus group, the questionnaire, the interviews, and the debriefing session) was inputted into 'The shared morality strategy' Nvivo 10 project. As mentioned previously, the data had been collected in a variety of formats: audio recordings and transcripts (from the focus group, the interviews, and the debriefing session), a google forms spreadsheet containing 49 questionnaire responses, note-takers' observation sheets, flip chart notes, participant testimonials and written feedback forms. Hence, the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) helped us manage the data set in order to gain a sense of control over the collected data and make it easier to navigate through different data formats. Bryman (2015: 603) does warn that 'the fragmentation process of coding text into chunks that are then retrieved and put together into groups of related fragments' can result in losing the data's context. However, the researcher received specialised training in the use of Nvivo 10 and so learnt to control the functions of the computer software effectively so as to minimise the problem Bryman identifies. Thus, the software was used in a way that supports qualitative research and the researcher, rather than the software, was in control of the coding (Flick 2014b).

Using Nvivo 10 thus facilitated the process of coding, enabled a faster interpretation of the data, and simplified the reporting procedure. However, a limitation of the software is that 'it is only a tool for facilitating analysis and interpretation, which needs to be guided by a method' (Flick 2014a: 473). Consequently, we adopted thematic analysis as a method that suited our case study research design. This is 'a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the

effects of a range of discourses operating within the society' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 81).

We chose thematic analysis because of its flexible approach to handling the data collected; the method can 'usefully summarise key features of a large body of data, and/or offer a "thick description" of the data set' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 97).

Additionally, the researcher was able to compare and contrast the beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes of the green and non-green groups using the thematic method of data analysis. Ultimately, this would generate relevant findings and results that would enable better strategies of attitude change for nature conservation.

Nonetheless, the limitation of thematic analysis could be its presentation as an easy-to-use approach to researchers hence, an intensive investigation of the collected data is required to achieve rigour and robustness in the data analysis. There is a lack of significant literature on thematic analysis compared to other methods of data analysis, which may influence researchers to feel insecure about how to conduct this method. While thematic analysis is regarded as a flexible method, this flexibility can turn into inconsistency and incoherence in the development of themes from the data collected (Nowell et al. 2017).

Our process of data analysis involved a series of steps informed by Kelle's (2000) computer-assisted analysis and Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases of thematic analysis, which helped us find, investigate and document patterns (themes) within the collected data. The sequential element of the research design required us to partially analyse the collected data after each activity implemented hence, we were already familiar with a significant amount of the data at the end of fieldwork. After the last research activity, we

generated initial codes and created a code diagram using Nvivo 10 Models. Next, we began coding the data with the predefined code scheme, and '[compared] text segments to which the same codes have been attached' in order to develop categories of codes (Kelle 2000: 295). Here, we explored 'the possible links and connections between concepts and/or how the concepts vary in terms of features of the [case]' (Bryman 2015: 588). Meanwhile, we wrote memos and annotations about specific parts of the collected data and then, linked them to the code diagram, as a way of documenting the process of data analysis. As Bryman (2015: 577) explains:

One aid to the generation of concepts and categories is the memo. (...) [Memos] serve as reminders about what is meant by the terms being used and provide the building blocks for a certain amount of reflection. Memos are potentially very useful to researchers in helping them to crystallize ideas and not to lose track of the thinking on various topics.

Lastly, we searched for themes by analysing in detail the data coded under the developed categories and generating a 'thematic map' as 'an overall conceptualization of the data patterns, and the relationship between them' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 89). Our enquiry was inductive. That is, the themes emerged from the data. The focus on 'the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations – and ideologies – that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 84) generated 'data-driven' themes and informed the constructionist orientation of the research study. As Neuman (2010: 102) reminds us, this is 'an orientation towards social reality that assumes the beliefs and meaning that people create and use fundamentally shape what reality is for them'.

Even though we used an inductive data analysis strategy, based on the research work done for the literature review chapters, we nonetheless expected certain themes to emerge. The identified themes (a low carbon student lifestyle, being environmentally conscious, education for sustainability, and the well-being of the student community) were most evident in the initial and improved versions of the moral code written by the research participants. We examined and then interpreted the above themes by comparing and contrasting them across greens and non-greens. This was crucial because as Flick (2014a: 379) argues, 'interpretation is the core activity of qualitative data analysis for understanding or explaining what is in the data – whether explicitly mentioned or implicitly there to be elaborated. (...) Interpretation means to understand the internal logic of an excerpt of the data or to put it into context'. The interpretation phase built our overall 'understanding of [the collected] data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus' (Bryman 2015: 584). As a result, we produced the report of the data analysis and documented our findings and results:

The task of the write-up of a thematic analysis (...) is to tell the complicated story of your data in a way which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of your analysis. It is important that the analysis (the write-up of it, including data extracts) provides a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story that data tell - within and across themes (Braun and Clarke 2006: 93).

This last stage was fundamental to this enquiry because the report of the data analysis and the documented findings and results supported the development and deployment of a shared morality for environmental protection.

In sum, the CAQDAS allowed the storage of the data set in a single place (in the same Nvivo 10 project) and enhanced the process of coding, offering essential functions to develop concepts, shape ideas and reflect upon our research findings and results. The method of analysis also helped us identify the themes within the data, and then permitted a 'comparison of groups' – green versus non-green students – to explore their contrasting beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes towards nature on the university campus (Flick 2014b). Finally, the data analysis strategy aimed 'to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 85). This allowed us to determine whether a sense of moral responsibility towards nature could be cultivated in the student community.

5.4. Research ethics

When undertaking research with human participants, it is of utmost importance to consider any possible ethical issues that might arise. In this study, there were no real discernible risks involved in taking part in the research activities, and all participants were treated equally and with respect. Our enquiry involved a wide variety of people sharing their experience, opinions and attitudes about environmental protection on the university campus, and we did not discriminate between them in any way. The research study was designed to encourage the participation of both green and non-green students while

protecting their welfare and avoiding situations that would create susceptibility to harm or coercion.

We went through an ethical approval procedure to be allowed to start the fieldwork, which involved making a written application to Keele University's Ethical Review Panel. In this application we explained that we would assume the responsibility of recruiting our participants, we outlined the measures put in place to ensure participant safety, and we explained how we would respect the integrity of participants (Silverman 2013: 159). We also would ensure that all collected data is stored securely, and we underlined our commitment to safeguarding participants' confidentiality. After it had considered our application, we received approval from the Ethical Review Panel to start out fieldwork (see Appendix A1).

At the start of the research activities, we appropriately briefed participants about what was involved in the activity, how data would be handled, and how their identity would be protected. We did this verbally, and we also provided written information sheets. We did this in advance of participants deciding whether to give their consent to take part and have their data used. In this way, we followed Bryman's advice (2015: 129) that 'prospective research participants should be given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate in a study'. Once participants had voluntarily indicated that they did wish to take part in the research activities, we asked them to sign the relevant consent forms (see Appendix A9, Appendix A10 and Appendix A11).

The confidentiality of participants was maintained; the recorded information and written materials produced in the research activities were used only for analysis, and no one except the researcher and her supervisors could access them. Confidentiality was further protected by the way the collected data was stored: electronic data and hard copies of documentation containing personally identifiable information were kept secure. By signing a non-disclosure statement, participants agreed not to disclose any information pertaining to who was part of the research activities, what points were discussed, and what views were aired (see Appendix A9, Appendix A10 and Appendix A11). However, anonymity could not be given to participants since others in the room (i.e. the researcher, and in the case of the focus group and the debriefing session the other participants too) would know what individual people said. In these instances, participants were ensured that their identity would remain confidential. We also reminded all students that they could withdraw from the research study at any point and if they wished to do this, all data materials and documents provided by and attributable to them would be destroyed. By taking all these measures, the researcher did her utmost to safeguard the confidentiality of all participants.

In summary, considering the ethical issues when we prepare to undertake a research study, means thinking far in advance about the values that we stand for as researchers and ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research (Bryman 2015). Unethical conducted studies could harm the participants seriously and so, it is our responsibility to anticipate implicit risks in order to minimise them and guarantee a pleasant experience for the people involved in the research activities. A high-quality study requires researchers to

promote transparency, protect the integrity of all participants and to consider ethical issues and obligations in research.

5.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined the case study research design (with cross-sectional elements and sequential features) employed in exploring the existence of a shared morality for environmental protection in a small community. We have discussed the sampling approach used in the recruitment of green and non-green students, and have presented the research activities that were conducted –a focus group, a questionnaire, multiple interviews, and a debriefing session. Furthermore, the data analysis strategy has been explained, and attention has been given to the ethical considerations relevant to the study. The most valuable outcome of the eight-month fieldwork was the moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus developed collaboratively by the green and non-green participants. At the students' request, this instrument will be sent to the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University and the Students' Union for review and implementation.

In general, trying to define a shared morality in a community setting is not an objective that is easily reached because the concept is an abstract one. Moreover, there was only limited time in which to complete the fieldwork and only so many participants could be recruited to the research study. Despite these obstacles and caveats, however, the research activities and the resulting moral code that the participants developed showed a group of people being able to work together to define a shared morality for environmental protection in their community. In this sense, then, the research study

established that a sense of moral responsibility can be cultivated. In the face-to-face discussions and group exercises, we managed to debunk the common misconception that ‘people do not care’ and we also saw that a group of people belonging to the same community could be motivated to move towards a more sustainable lifestyle in a relatively short period of time (i.e. the eight-month fieldwork period).

The reason behind choosing a case study, which employed a mix of research methods of data collection, was to maximise the likelihood that a diverse group of students could work together aiming to ensure nature conservation on the university campus. We focused on the impact of the Keele community on the environment to persuade the student body that the suggested lifestyle changes are possible and manageable. Even though the study focused on Keele, its outcomes are generalisable beyond the individual institution. That is, other universities could implement a similar shared morality strategy, as long as they support the initiative and take the responsibility of providing the necessary resources and infrastructure for their students to adopt and maintain pro-environmental behaviours in the long term. In this way then, the approach taken here could be adopted as an example of good practice and the ‘Keele model’ could be promoted across British universities.

The next chapter – Chapter 6 – will present the results of the detailed data analysis, and in so doing will help us provide answers to our research questions. Also, we will discuss the pledges of the moral code and propose four levels of action to be considered by students when adopting a more sustainable lifestyle. Finally, we will address how the

moral code can be brought into use, making a case for cultivating students' moral responsibility and the attitude of respect for nature in academia.

6. What is the secret ingredient for taking environmental action? A shared morality in the (student) community

So far, this thesis has argued that the instruments used by the UK Government to motivate people to act in a more pro-environmentally way (such as laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing) are not effective in the long term because they do not tackle the cause of the problem and instead only address the consequences (see Chapter 2). Given this, alternative approaches have been investigated. In particular, Chapter 3 explored value-based solutions to nurturing respect for nature and proposed a reframed narrative to stimulate citizen engagement and participation in environmental protection. Chapter 4 further introduced a shared morality strategy and considered the philosophical basis for developing a moral code to inspire attitude change for nature conservation in a community setting.

Using the design and methods outlined in Chapter 5, we will now focus on the overall research question of the thesis of whether a shared morality can be developed and how it can be deployed in the context of environmental protection. Drawing on the results of the focus group, the questionnaire, the interviews and the debriefing session, the chapter explores whether a shared moral code can be developed, what one would look like if it could be developed, how useful such a code could be, and how effective it might be.

Rather than discussing the findings from each of the research activities in turn (i.e. the results of the focus group, those of the questionnaire, of the interviews, and the

debriefing session), this chapter is structured in a thematic fashion, with each of its six sections informing the next. The first section considers whether the research participants thought that a shared morality is a good approach for cultivating student responsibility towards nature. The second section explores whether a moral code could be developed. The third section explains the development of the moral code. The fourth section examines the pledges of the moral code. The fifth section discusses the extent to which participants differ in their opinions about the existence of shared morality and the purpose of a moral code. And the sixth section of the chapter suggests practical ways to bring the moral code into use. The chapter closes with the main points raised, reflects on the overall impact of the research study and stresses that university involvement in influencing students to act pro-environmentally is key.

We will see that the results and findings shed light on what is meant by a shared morality and provide a fresh way of looking at people's behaviour when taking care of nature. In the research study, we investigated whether our target group – a random sample of Keele students – could find common ground (and manage to develop a moral code from scratch) to take action for environmental protection in a shared context (the Keele University campus). At the same time, the project explored whether research participants could find the motivation to participate in a medium-term research study (which lasted eight months), adopting and re-enacting their moral judgements and values to protect the environment. A shared morality (developed by 'individuals with cooperative value orientation') has been considered beneficial in motivating people (Nordlund and Garvill 2002) to get involved in environmental protection because it has been argued that it triggers a medium-term disposition to be environmentally conscious and take action.

6.1. Is a shared morality an effective way of cultivating responsibility towards nature?

All four research activities, in their various ways, explored whether participants thought that a shared morality is an effective way of cultivating responsibility towards nature. In the focus group, green participants started mentioning the existence of a shared morality in the student community while discussing the responsibility to protect the natural environment on Keele campus. In the questionnaire and interviews, the majority of non-green students provided a positive response in relation to a moral code that would act 'as a guideline' to develop and to sustain responsible behaviour towards nature in the community setting. And lastly, the debriefing session brought green and non-green students together to discuss environmental responsibility in the community, and define a shared morality of the student body by developing the improved version of the moral code for environmental protection at Keele.

In the process of exploring whether a shared morality might be an effective way of cultivating responsibility towards nature, four main points emerged, namely: i) a desire for the environmental debate to be framed in a more optimistic fashion; ii) a lack of response on the part of students towards the government's green policies and towards the university's incentives to encourage sustainable behaviour; iii) a shared morality strategy to activate people's own role in protecting the environment; and iv) the importance of the community in supporting eco-friendly action.

Firstly, we observed a craving for optimism in the pro-environmental discourse of both environmental enthusiasts and people who are not directly involved in nature conservation initiatives. Chapter 2 showed that some scientists, policymakers and

campaigners working in the field of influencing pro-environmental behaviours maintain that unsustainable 'challenges can be met through marginal lifestyle changes. (...) Yet, we live at a time when we need urgent and ambitious changes' (Thøgersen and Crompton 2009). The pressure of these kinds of pronouncements, the pessimistic or negative tone of much media coverage, and the supposed lack of concern that many have about their behaviour was noted in the interviews with non-green students. As one interview participant stated:

I think sometimes it might be a bit demoralising to the whole thing. (...) When it comes to environmental change, as in the case of any change, I think there is a whole feeling of being incredibly small; a feeling of being very small in the grand scheme. But then again, I wish that that would change, I wish I can feel that me just sorting the rubbish out would actually make a massive difference. I don't know whether there is or not. Probably not. But I would like to think it would. But then again, I can be cynical and think it is pointless. It is already too late. It has already gone too far (IP6)⁵.

It was evident that non-green students were open to and encouraged by adopting a positive attitude, listening to others, and showing openness towards the challenges faced.

One debriefing session participant explained:

⁵ Throughout the chapter the following abbreviations are used: FGPx, QPx, IPx and DSPx. These refer to quotes from focus group participants, questionnaire participants, interview participants, and debriefing session participants. X represents the individual number allocated to each research study participant.

I just think it is important to do what we can. (...) We do live in a neo-liberal society. We are in a very developed nation, and these things are not always environmentally sustainable. But Western neo-liberal society lets us choose how to consume in the way that we do. It is not about punishing people who want to fly away to Mauritius on holiday necessarily; it is about doing our day-to-day actions where we can think about what we are doing. We might think: (...) *I will try to shop locally. I will try and see if I can survive off that.* And by doing that it is often cheaper, and it is often better for you. (...) It is about a sort of balance, thinking about what can we do, how can we do it and how can we do it feasibly (DSP1).

The research participants (especially the non-green students) confessed that they felt overwhelmed in dealing with the environmental problems highlighted by the green students on Keele campus (e.g. waste disposal, reducing consumption, lack of recycling). Moreover, they thought that the feeling of guilt involved in acknowledging unsustainable behaviour and pointing fingers at people who do not embrace the environmental protection cause seemed to discourage students from making the change towards a greener lifestyle.

Secondly, the research activities indicated that students were not responsive to the Government's or the University's approaches to influencing people's behaviour towards environmental protection. Chapter 2 discussed the UK Government reports *A Framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours* (2008) and *The Sustainable Lifestyles Framework*

(2011c) and highlighted the government's tendency to focus on specific behaviours, and the practice of classifying the UK population in groups in order to develop dedicated policies based on people's ability and willingness to act pro-environmentally. But this current project's research revealed that such strategies did not resonate with the participants.

Rather, the findings indicate that the UK Government would be better advised to promote a context to help people of all social strata to act sustainably in the medium and long term and to bring people together, celebrating their similarities, rather than dividing them into categories that they do not actually feel part of. When asked what Defra population segment he considered himself to be part of, one of the non-green participants responded:

The trouble is (...) an awful lot of the [Defra] labels almost have a negative connotation to them, like Stalled starters, Honestly disengaged, Cautious participants. (...) You have got Concerned consumers and Positive greens. Then people who might genuinely want to do more, but they don't know how, they're called either Stalled starters or Cautious participants, as if there's somehow some negative connotations for them not being educated into what to do (IP4).

The research revealed that, in addition to arousing such negative connotations, respondents found it difficult to relate to the Defra's segmentation model. Indeed, the majority of non-green questionnaire and interview respondents could not place

themselves in one of Defra's segments (see Chapter 2) and so, preferred to indicate two or more profiles that would represent their lifestyle.

Furthermore, we should not take for granted the power of universities in influencing students' behaviour (Corcoran and Wals 2004). If we are specifically looking at a campus university, then the setting tends to bring people closer together and sustains the culture of a student community. The majority of research participants talked about the importance of living on a green campus and the physical and mental benefits they get when being surrounded by nature: 'Feeling close to nature is important in a society that detaches itself from the natural and focuses on the artificial or technological. Engaging with nature is a way of getting back to our roots; it is a very human need' (QP34).

In this sense, academia (or at least campus universities) might well be able to address the lack of context conducive to taking environmental action, which is something the governmental approaches overlook. At university, (young) people come together and become part of a community, a learning community where they work to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for pursuing their future career. More than one third (34.7%) of questionnaire respondents considered that the value of 'being part of nature' influences their behaviour and attitudes towards the natural environment on the university campus. Universities have rules in place to manage academic affairs. However, they also have the opportunity to help students become aware of environmental protection and educate them accordingly. For their part, students trust the university in helping them develop personally and professionally, and are open to new initiatives. As

such, academia represents a potential context in which to learn to actively become more sustainable (Cotton and Alcock 2013).

The third point to come out of the exploration of whether a shared morality is an effective approach for environmental protection concerned people's roles and responsibilities. All research participants (even the self-defined non-green students) said that they cared about nature, and explained that when they act unsustainably, they do so because, at that moment, they do not see the impact of their actions on the environment and others around them. This suggests that some people do not see themselves as 'part of nature' in their daily life, and are not aware that their behaviour could have negative consequences for the environment. Indeed, the participants themselves explained that they certainly do not want to harm nature on purpose.

The focus group participants believed that it is possible to change student behaviour towards nature by using a shared morality strategy and asking people to cooperate for the well-being of their shared environmental context (i.e. Keele University campus).

Well, this is the point: identifying your role, what you should do. Identify your stand: *Who are you? What should you do?* And you could realise that one impact is better than nothing. One step forward is much better than being frozen or taking a step backwards. (...) I am saying that we are all responsible in a way or another (...) based on [our] own status or position. (...) It is identifying each person's capabilities to do things, to contribute to environmental protection (FGP7).

In turn, if people do not realise the harm they are doing when on their own, by being part of a community setting, they are more likely to acknowledge their unsustainable habits and then refrain from taking certain actions. Hence, encouraging students to assume responsibility for their daily actions could begin with them realising their overall impact on the natural environment and understanding that each person can make a contribution to their community. A shared morality strategy would encourage people to 'identify their role' and help nurture a sense of moral responsibility towards nature, as a group. The debriefing session brought both groups (green and non-green students) together to talk about the differences between their motivations (values, moral judgements and attitudes) and their overall disposition to take care of nature and asked whether the student community should adhere to a moral code to protect the environment on Keele University campus. The response of participants was positive, and everyone agreed to then work on an improved draft of the moral code that had been developed by the green students, and for this code to be rolled out to the entire student community. As a debriefing session participant noted: '[The moral code] is more of a nice way of saying: *Think about what is happening and think about these values that you might not have considered before. Consider them; they might be useful. You might like them*' (DSP1).

The fourth point to come from exploring the possibility of developing a shared morality to care for nature was the importance of community. Encouraging people to work together, as a group or community, rather than on their own, is more likely to result in success. That is, people are more likely to adopt a sustainable lifestyle if they come together and develop a shared morality, than they would be on their own. As a questionnaire participant stated: 'I am choosing collective work because the results from my own

experience in climate change research have shown that's the only way to go forward all together and tackle the problem' (QP36).

It was also evident from the research activities that discussing people's values and responsibilities in relation to nature, working as a group and adopting a shared morality strategy to protecting the environment fuelled people's motivations. It seemed more natural to help people understand the impact they have on their surrounding environment using a shared morality, rather than looking at the global picture of anthropogenic climate change and informing people that they need to consider changing their lifestyle immediately.

However, it should be acknowledged that people face a number of obstacles when expected to make changes in all the major areas of their life. Being environmentally friendly could impact a person's health, finances, career, physical environment and leisure time. On this subject, one debriefing session participant confessed:

The challenge of change, if you are as non-green as I am, to become green, mentally, it seems as a big deal. You have to start considering your water use, you have to consider your electricity use and things that you might consider you actually have to rethink and think about the consequences. So, the challenge of change for someone like me is quite a drastic one. I do recycle but not to an extent where I think about every single thing I put in the bin. *Can that be recycled? Let's check it and see.*

I do not think about that. So, to mentally go over my habits is quite a big deal (...) and I think it should not be brushed aside like: *You need to, just*

do it! It is not an easy thing! It is quite a hard thing to overcome things you've been doing for 20 years. It is a big deal! So, the challenge of change I think needs to be acknowledged, that it could be quite a big one (DSP6).

In the research study, the group of participants established a comfort zone where everyone felt safe to express what they thought and felt without being judged. For instance, when some participants confessed they were frustrated by the current resistance green students face on Keele campus, the others were supportive and encouraged them to concentrate on the positives and acknowledge the contribution the student community made with the initiatives that had already been implemented. Hence, by seeing herself as part of a community, an individual will better understand her contribution to the well-being of others and the natural environment. In a group, people will be able to provide help and support to each other and learn together to adopt more sustainable habits because 'people need company' (Baumeister and Leary 1995) when they engage in nature conservation and take pro-environmental action.

Thus far, we made a case for a shared morality and presented the reasons behind arguing that it would be an effective strategy to influencing pro-environmental behaviour. The main outcome of the research study - the moral code developed by both green and non-green students - would be an innovative educational document, being the first of its kind. It would set a precedent and demonstrate that a group of people can define a shared morality for themselves and their community.

6.2. Can a moral code be developed?

Having explored whether a shared morality is an effective strategy of cultivating an attitude of respect for nature, and having concluded that it indeed is, we should now ask whether a moral code can be developed. The question '*Do you think that having a moral code (set of moral norms) to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community adheres to, is a good idea?*' was explored both in the focus group and the debriefing session, and our answer is clearly 'yes'. The research participants thought that a moral code is something that would be possible to create, and that would be workable and ultimately successful in encouraging the student community to be pro-environmentally friendly.

We started working with the concept of moral responsibility in the focus group (with greens) by asking whether the student body would comply to a moral code for environmental protection on the university campus and also explored the reasons why such a moral code should be developed. The research participants considered the idea of a moral code relevant because, until that moment, they had been talking about values and their belief system in an abstract manner. In the same way, almost two thirds (63%) of questionnaire participants (non-green students) thought that having a moral code (set of norms, principles of conduct, and standards of moral character) for environmental protection at Keele was a positive initiative. In the following research activities, a variety of opinions were shared towards developing the moral code and the majority of participants acknowledged the importance of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character in bringing the student community closer to nature. The research participants argued that a moral code would guide students to adopt pro-environmental

behaviours about which they do not have too much knowledge or the necessary skills to acquire them:

We should all take responsibility for the environment. If there is a set standard of acceptable behaviour, this means more people are likely to adhere to it, and those who [don't] (...) are more likely to be reprimanded or face the contempt of the community. This will hopefully mean everyone will take more responsibility for the environment (QP2).

The research participants mentioned three main reasons why they thought that a moral code should be developed in the student community. The first reason why developing a moral code was considered to be a good idea was because such a tool would help translate abstract beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes into concrete actions. The research participants stated that 'a moral code would set a standard of minimum activity for environmental protection' (QP15) on the university campus and would 'advertise sustainable ways of life and generally set a good example' (QP12). Furthermore, a moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus would provide the necessary 'knowledge of the wider impact of our existence' (QP37) but to do so, it 'needs to create a habit and emotional attachment to action' (QP22). Consequently, at the interview stage with non-green students, one participant remarked:

[Having a moral code] sounds like a good idea (...) especially if you are asking [students] to come up with it themselves. (...) I think calling it a moral code actually might be quite useful because it doesn't just make it like *terms and conditions*. It is moral, morally you've got to abide by this, but if you choose not to, that is your thing. (...) I think that if someone is

already engaged with those sorts of ideas, it might give them that little bit of push to do something (IP16).

In the research activities, we observed students' awareness of the current environmental problems faced both locally and globally, and their overall willingness to create a more concrete action plan, starting with the development of a moral code. Hence, the moral code for environmental protection on the university campus would help people translate their ideals into practice.

A second reason to support the development of a moral code is because it narrows down the reach and makes environmental protection more manageable in a local context. The research participants approached the challenge of creating a moral code by thinking about what it means to show respect for nature, what their duties and responsibilities are in practical terms, and what taking care of the surrounding environment would involve, in the student community. Hence, people would be encouraged to do more than 'the "minimal required"', as the moral code will work as a student guideline for nature conservation and will provide 'a basis for (...) their behaviour' (QP15). The majority of research participants (green and non-green) agreed that there is a need for collective work on campus and argued that a moral code would set out the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character of a shared morality, which would then help the student community be aware of nature conservation issues and become more proactive. Consequently, research participants would need to narrow their overall reach to the local level (the university campus) and to acknowledge other people's needs and interests in order to be able to arrive at a consensus for nature conservation.

The third reason to develop a moral code was students having far more things in common than they have differences. We observed that participants connected easily with each other when talking about environmental protection in the research activities, and when sharing the impressions they got when they first set foot on the Keele campus. The students tried to imagine what the others were describing as the beauty (from their point of view) of the university campus and immediately discovered that all of them had something in common which was their appreciation of nature. This point was also made in the questionnaire responses where one participant said: 'Becoming familiar with Keele sustainable culture is important to me because I have a lot of respect for the natural environment and initiatives that are led by Keele to protect the environment. We only have one campus and we need to take care of it' (QP30). Research participants were enthusiastic to share their experience of studying and working at a green university, and the whole group agreed about the health benefits (both physical and mental) of living on Keele campus. As one research participant noted:

Keele is blessed with one of the most stunning campuses in the country. It being in such a beautiful state definitely affects people. I know mental health groups that walk through it to promote calmness and meditation. It helps bind the Keele community beyond the academic world. Having such an amazing campus makes you proud. I love showing off when friends and family come; it moves Keele from a place to something I want to be a part of. It shows a community that cares and a place I want to be involved in (QP2).

In general, both greens and non-greens took pride in studying at Keele and so, they acknowledged their joint responsibility for their community. By getting the chance to talk about their life on campus and listening to other personal experiences, the research participants agreed that what all of them have in common are in fact the student experiences lived on the university campus. In this sense, one non-green student participant argues:

I think [that '*We all have joint responsibility for our communities.*'] is a very fair statement, and reminds us all that we are in this together, as a community. All members of the student body should feel a responsibility to the campus, as we spend a lot of our time on it, so we should all acknowledge that and do our part to preserve its natural beauty (QP30).

This sense of community and pride and a shared sense of moral responsibility for environmental protection played a crucial role in the development of the moral code. Indeed, when the researcher communicated the 'moral code challenge' and asked the participants to write down what norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character they thought should be included in the code, people showed their willingness to cooperate in order to achieve a long-awaited practical result of ongoing discussions in relation to nature conservation on Keele campus.

The outcome of the research activities established that a moral code for environmental protection could be developed (entirely by students for the community) in order to define a shared morality in practice. Thus, the purpose of a moral code would be to define a

shared morality in the student community and guide students towards becoming morally responsible and more environmentally aware. The developed moral code would appeal to a broad audience, encouraging all students to consider some of the common behaviours that are harmful to nature and the student body, as a whole. Indeed, the advantage of implementing a moral code in an academic context is the wide variety of individuals who belong to different cultures and systems of beliefs, who are genuinely interested in learning and growing their knowledge and skills further in the same place, at university.

6.3. The development of the moral code

The moral code was developed in three stages. The initial draft was written by a group of green students who participated in a focus group in May 2015. The improved draft was further developed in November 2015 by green and non-green students working together in a debriefing session. And at the end of fieldwork, the researcher produced a third version of the moral code as a result of the data analysis. The final version of the moral code is presented in Appendix B5. Each research activity that contributed to the development of the moral code will now be presented in turn; we will discuss what came out of the different activities and we will examine our findings and results.

The process of creating the moral code began with a focus group, where green participants brainstormed what norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character to include in the initial version of the code in order to encourage environmental protection on the university campus. The research activity was a student-led one, and so the researcher let the students structure the moral code as they wished so that it was

relevant to the entire community. The researcher did not impose or even suggest any pledges for inclusion into the code to the students, but let them develop their own.

In the focus group, the green participants were given the opportunity to discuss in general terms what student responsibility for nature conservation is and how it is interpreted in practice by looking at overall student behaviour on Keele campus. The researcher asked how they felt about the following statement: *Every student has the responsibility to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus* (Question 5 – see Appendix B1). One focus group participant responded:

Each of us value things differently. It can be because of our life experience, because of our belief, because of our values. (...) Some of us care a lot about the environment; maybe because we are made aware we should value it more. Some of us not so much. So, I think along with awareness there have to be some incentives schemes: *If you do this, actually you are gaining in this way*. In that way, responsibility can be implemented in practice, and people can actually then act responsibly because they have an incentive and they know what is the consequence of acting responsibly (FGP1).

From this quote, and similar remarks from other participants, it seemed clear that students involved in the research study were aware that people feel differently about their duties and responsibilities to protect the environment. Hence, they argued that the student body would be more likely to engage in nature conservation if the university

offered practical guidance (i.e. a moral code) to highlight the benefits of a sustainable student lifestyle.

To make sure that the student community would consider a moral code and would take responsibility for its continuous improvement, the research participants decided that the set of norms, rules of conduct and standards of moral character needed to be as general as possible and, at the same time, easily accepted by others. In the focus group, the question *'What would be the moral norms for protecting the natural environment on Keele University campus that students should take into consideration in the daily life?'* was asked and a group representative approached the flip chart to start writing down any norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character suggested by the students (Question 7 – see Appendix B1). The brainstormed list was a result of the introductory discussions held in the focus group (see Appendix B1), which steered the group dynamic towards cooperation and achievement of the set goal. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character contained in the initial version of the moral code were common sense in nature, and included themes such as: *gain more environmental knowledge, get to know the practices and rules in place at university, get engaged with environmental initiatives, and become a champion of change*. However, they were also practical in the sense that the code user was provided with prompts to become more environmentally friendly, such as *adopt recycle/reuse/reduce practices, use public transportation, make charity donations, and participate in the sustainability induction organised by the University*.

In order to start analysing the set of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character developed in the focus group, we also needed the non-green students' opinion regarding the initial draft because the purpose of the moral code was to address the student body, as a whole. Thus, the *Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire* was a method (see Appendix B2) to further refine the initial version of the code and to overcome any resentment or concerns from non-green students about being presented with an already-written moral code. As one questionnaire participant noted: 'I fear that this would be encroaching on student's personal freedoms to make choices about their own life or the world around them. By enforcing a code, it becomes something to oppose and may actually have a negative effect on the natural environment' (QP20). Given these feelings, the researcher examined the completed questionnaires and invited questionnaire respondents to the third activity of the research study: the interview stage with non-greens. Doing this allowed the researcher to ask a number of clarifying questions about the whole student body's shared morality and to talk directly to the non-greens, so as to hear their opinions about the development of a moral code for environmental protection on the university campus (see Appendix B3).

Additionally, we decided to inquire into what values influence students' behaviour towards nature in the community setting, as we drew upon the conclusions from Chapter 3. A set of 29 values (PIRC 2015b) were therefore included in the questionnaire and interviews, and non-green students were asked to indicate the specific values they considered the most relevant in motivating their character and conduct on the university campus (see Question 31 – see Appendix B2 and Question 15 – see Appendix B3). As seen in Figure 6.1., the questionnaire responses showed that the top six values that students

hold in relation to nature were: being healthy; taking responsibility; cleanliness, neatness and tidiness; being part of or fitting into nature; working for the welfare of nature and others (termed 'helpfulness'); and enjoying life. Non-greens were then asked why they chose these specific ones. Here one respondent explained that: '[the values chosen] fit with my overarching sense of life goals' (QP19) and 'explain (...) the ways I am seeing the world' (QP36). Others considered the chosen values to be 'qualities': 'If you have those qualities, I think you'd be more responsible towards the environment' (QP36) and reflected on them, as a source of motivation for environmental action. Thus, the answers provided in relation to the six values that influence student pro-environmental behaviour showed, in the first instance, that there is a sense of moral responsibility (in the broad sense) for nature conservation on the university campus. These answers also then allowed for the substance of this shared morality to be explored.

Then, at the interview stage, the researcher sought to get a better understanding of the ways in which students relate to the most used environmental concepts and how they evaluate their daily actions based on these. She also asked the non-green interview participants how the top six values to come out of the questionnaire influenced their behaviour towards protecting the environment. This was done in a bid to explore whether the initial draft of the moral code would have the potential to reach a wider audience – more specifically, the non-greens.

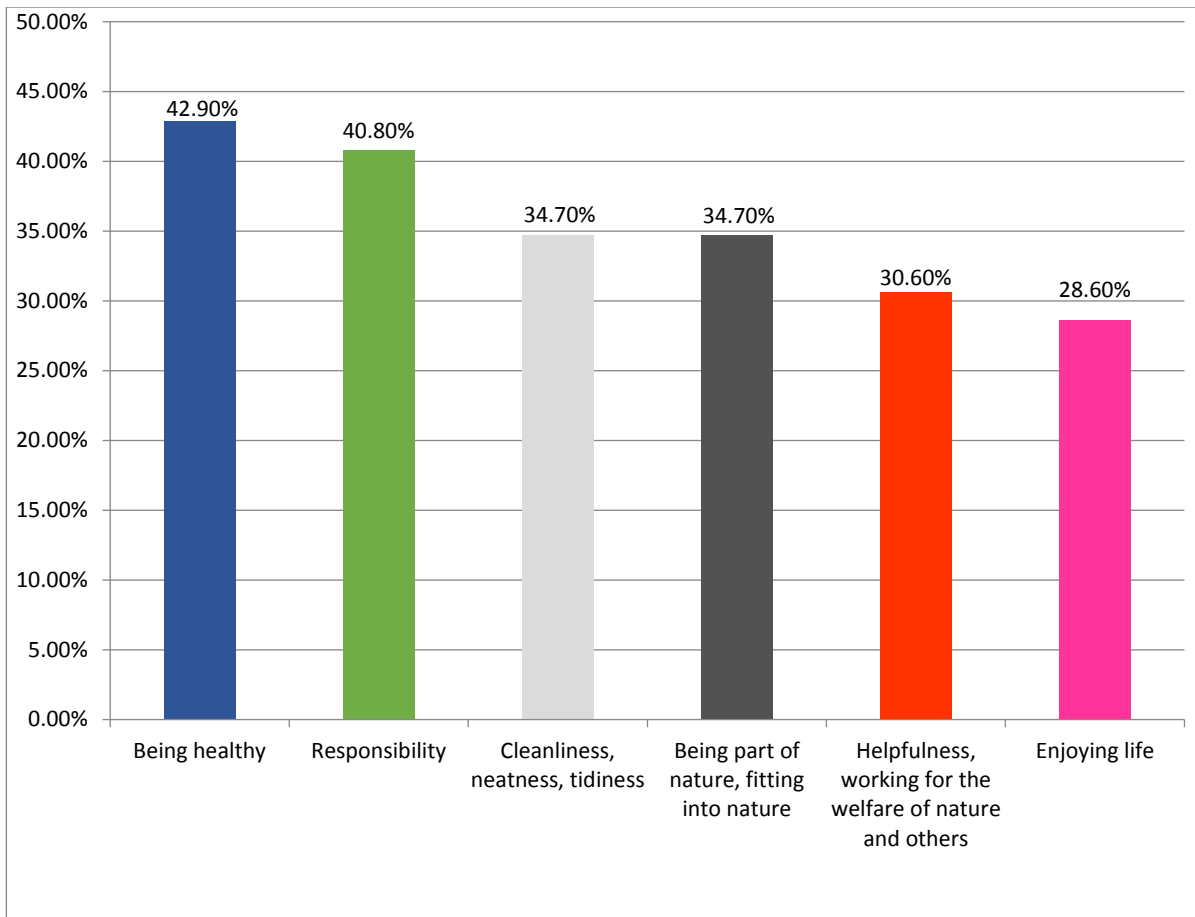


Figure 6. 1. Top six values that influence student pro-environmental behaviour on Keele campus

Source: The Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire, Keele University May 2015 (n = 49) (see Appendix B2)

In the final research activity, both groups were brought together for a debriefing session to be presented the preliminary outcomes of the data analysis and additional findings related to the existent value-action gap in environmental protection in the academic community. In addition, the non-green students (who had previously been involved in the research as questionnaire respondents and interview participants) were invited to join green students (who had taken part in the focus group) with the aim of improving the

initial moral code and perfecting it to be accepted by the student body, as a whole (see Appendix B4).

At that time, research participants showed a real interest in talking about student responsibility in general and the collective duty to protect the environment at Keele. Moreover, both greens and non-greens made a case for the benefits of a shared morality for nature conservation on the university campus and recognised the student community's dependence on the environment:

[The moral code] is a community thing. The effects of having lots of litter at Keele or global warming generally will affect us as a community. So, the values need to be decided communally, rather than individually. (...) It helps people understand what the values of the student body are. (...) As a student community, I think we need to have some sort of values about the environment. Just to say: *These are our values as an institution*. (...) That is the thing about having values. Values are open. Rules are closed. If you have: *As an institution, we believe in sustainability*. That is very broad. It is broad enough to encompass everything, but it is still a statement about environmental values (DSP1).

This quote is an illustration of the added value, as seen by students, of the moral code and highlights the necessity to work for environmental protection together, as a community. Hence, the moral code's main purpose is to stand for a shared morality on the university campus, which would help engage students to act pro-environmentally in the long term.

Non-green students were favourable to the idea of developing a moral code once they realised it would not be too encroaching on their lifestyles. The facilitator presented them with a slide containing the initial version of the moral code developed by green students, and the non-greens were surprised to discover that it was in fact not as 'strict' as they have imagined beforehand. The last activity of the debriefing session divided participants into mixed groups to work on improving the initial draft of the moral code. Each group was asked to rethink three to four pledges provided in order to increase the likelihood that these would apply to the entire student community. The improved list of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that participants worked on in the groups were then presented to the others and were further refined in order to meet the purpose and reach the target audience of the moral code.

The research participants were careful not to be too demanding of the student audience when improving the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and took into consideration the fact that some people might not have the possibility to act pro-environmentally due to personal circumstances like financial hardship, mental health problems, disability and living context. This was reflected in one of the pledges of the code:

6. We will try to recognise we are in a privileged position as students to take environmental action and encourage others to do the same to help those who do not have the privilege that we have (see Appendix B5).

To encourage the student body to consider adopting the moral code, the research participants wished to add a preamble to state their commitment towards doing their best to follow the code and promote it further in the student community. In order to inspire other students to accept the moral code, the research participants debated on what 'action verb' to use at the beginning of each moral norm. 'We will try to' seemed to be the most appropriate expression that would respect the rights of students and not impose any restrictions on their current lifestyle.

The phrasing of [the moral code] needs to be (...) instead of Reduce resource use. We will try to reduce resource use. (...) It is less coming across like *This is what you should do!* and it is more like *This is what we try to do and we would like you to come and join us*. So, it is immediately read as more of an opportunity, more of a pleasant opportunity to engage in, rather than reading an order or a rule. (...) I quite like that idea, because again you start with that preamble and you are like: *This is not an instruction leaflet; this is just an awareness opportunity* (DSP2). Just to make it look more like a value system, rather than a rulebook (DSP1).

It might be argued that 'We will try to' is not a strong action-verb or expression. It was clear that both student groups were more willing to respond to positive, encouraging public engagement initiatives (Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole and Whitmarsh 2007). By contrast, research participants were more likely to ignore/resist the norms, principles of behaviour and standards of moral character imposing strict changes on their current lifestyle or triggering sentiments of guilt and frustration. As one debriefing session

participant noted: 'It is a set of values to aspire to (...), I think. You know, we are all human, we cannot do everything 100% all the time, but this is what we are aiming for' (DSP3).

Besides the six most cited values that came from the questionnaire research and that were further discussed in the interviews, two additional motivational determinants for adopting a more sustainable lifestyle at Keele emerged as important in the debriefing session: community spirit and the University's commitment to sustainability. Both green and non-green students acknowledged community spirit and students' need to belong (Baumeister and Leary 1995) in becoming collectively involved in environmental protection. Therefore, when working on the improved draft of the moral code in the debriefing session, students included the role of community on Keele campus and more generally in academia. They did this because empowering the sense of community has the potential to bolster environmental protection discourse and increase support for related initiatives, making these more easily embraced by students (Alshuwaikhat and Abubakar 2008). The research participants also asked for the University's commitment to sustainability to be included in the improved version of the moral code, and they wrote down norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character which emphasised the capacity of the institution to influence pro-environmental behaviour. Moreover, it was argued that academia has the necessary resources to provide the context for sustainability education and to help (young) people understand the benefits of taking care of nature, for their own well-being and future generations (Corcoran and Wals 2004).

At the end of the research activities, the researcher produced the final version of the moral code focussing on the prevalent topics in the improved document and the ways in which the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character were grouped together by participants. The norms, principles and standards naturally came together into thematic groups (further refined using the qualitative data analysis software, Nvivo 10), which allowed four main pledges to be extracted. The four pledges of the moral code are: i) *adopt a low carbon student lifestyle*, ii) *be environmentally conscious*, iii) *educate ourselves for sustainability*, and iv) *ensure the well-being of the student community* (see Appendix B5). These will be discussed in more detail in section 6.4.

The final version of the moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus is the most important result of this research study. The document (see Appendix B5) is an innovative contribution to the field of environmental politics and governance because a group of research participants being part of the same community setting, reached a consensus to create and to develop a moral code for a more sustainable future.

6.4. The four pledges of the moral code and different action levels

Having explored whether a shared morality is a good approach to cultivating a sense of responsibility towards nature, having examined whether a moral code can be developed, and having explained the process of developing such a code, it is now appropriate to discuss in some detail what the main pledges of the moral code are, and how these pledges emerged.

The final version of the moral code was structured on the basis of the four pledges (adopt a low carbon student lifestyle, be environmentally conscious, educate ourselves for sustainability, and ensure the well-being of the student community) to help the reader make good use of the student-led code design. The four pledges identified above also represent four stages of pro-environmental action in the student community. As such, the final version of the moral code is a self-assessment tool that people can use to evaluate their current behaviour and then decide (depending on the norms, principles and standards they already follow 'naturally') what type of environmental actor they are (a novice, an apprentice, an adept, or a master) on the university campus.

The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character developed by the research participants were grouped together into four different levels of action based on the effort and time needed to follow them. For instance, *an environmental apprentice* (the second category of actor) is likely more involved in nature conservation in the student community by adopting a low carbon student lifestyle (Pledge I) and being environmentally conscious (Pledge II) than an *environmental novice*, but this person would need to be genuinely interested in education of sustainability (Pledge III) in order to become an environmental adept. Hence, if a person considers herself to be an environmental apprentice, it means that she already respects the majority of the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character at action level 1 and 2. In addition, she would seek to become informed about the next steps in order to reach action level 3 – i.e. becoming an environmental adept, who engages in green initiatives and inspires others to see the benefits of environmental protection in the community setting.

Thus, the four levels of possible environmental action that a Keele student could take, that were advanced in the final version of the moral code are the following:

Pledge I - action level 1 for *environmental novices*.

The environmental novices would start with simple actions looking to adopt a low carbon student lifestyle. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that environmental novices are encouraged to take into consideration are related to reducing the consumption of resources, recycling practices, using green means of transportation and donating goods (see Appendix B5). The list of norms, principles and standards therefore is:

1. Reduce resource use.
2. Reuse and recycle what we can.
3. Use public transport/green transport/car share schemes.
4. Donate what we can, be it: money, food, clothes and time.

Pledge II - action level 2 for *environmental apprentices*.

The apprentices would be environmentally conscious and preoccupied with finding the best ways of reducing their impact on nature. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that environmental apprentices are asked to follow are: to become better informed; to take responsibility for the consequences of their student lifestyle; and to become aware that they have the privilege, as university students, to make change happen towards environmental protection (see Appendix B5). The list of norms, principles and standards therefore is:

5. Think about the consequences of our actions and become better informed about environmental protection.
6. Recognise we are in a privileged position as students to take environmental action and encourage others to do the same, in order to help those who do not have the privilege that we have.

Pledge III - action level 3 for *environmental adepts*.

The environmental adepts would be interested in education for sustainability in order to develop the knowledge and skills to take action in the student community. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that environmental adepts would consider concern opportunities to engage with environmental protection at university and to train themselves to become more sustainability aware (see Appendix B5). The list of norms, principles and standards therefore is:

7. Familiarize ourselves and engage with the University's environmental culture and practices, through learning resources and initiatives.
8. Attend the University' sustainability induction.

Pledge IV - action level 4 for *environmental masters*.

The environmental masters would contribute actively to the well-being of the student community and become involved in environmental initiatives on the university campus. The norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character that environmental masters would adopt relate to promoting collective work for environmental protection and to assuming a change-agent role in order to guide others to take pro-environmental

action and embrace a sustainable lifestyle (see Appendix B5). The specific list of norms, principles and standards therefore is:

9. Work together, collectively (rather than individually) for environmental protection.
10. Be environmental advocates and advise others on how to be more sustainable.
11. Be change agents, supporters or examples of sustainability.

The moral code for environmental protection on the Keele campus is a discretionary self-assessment instrument. Thus, the levels of action and the types of environmental actor proposed are not intended to limit people's behaviour or sort them into categories, but rather they are there to offer guidance to the student body in cultivating a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

All in all, the levels of action outlined above, and the different types of environmental actor (novice, apprentice, adept and master) suggest that there will likely be disparities in the extent to which and the ways in which different people believe in and are prepared to commit to a shared morality. As such then, it is interesting to explore whether, in the research activities that led to the development of this moral code, there were any significant differences in the attitudes and motivations of the green students and the non-green students. The next section will, therefore, turn to examine this issue.

6.5. Green and non-green students: differences and similarities in belief of the existence of a shared morality

In Chapter 2, we presented the current governmental strategies designed to influence people to adopt a sustainable lifestyle, and we discovered that the lack of predictability of human behaviour raised difficulties in coming up with the most effective outcomes for the medium and long term. In Chapter 4, we turned to discuss an alternative, namely the existence of shared morality, as an innovative strategy of engaging people of all social strata to take care of their surrounding environment.

This enquiry acknowledged that people are not the same and it is likely that there will be variations in their willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally. In particular, with regard to the research participants in this study, they might not share the same values, might have different opinions, might not be of the same age group, and might be part of different cultures. At the same time, however, the students do have some things in common. They all share the same environment (the Keele campus) where they live, work and/or study together, and are all part of the student community (students automatically become members of the Student Union and the Postgraduate Association when they enrol at Keele University). In that sense then, there is a shared interest to take care of a shared community setting.

Given this, we will explore the differences and similarities of opinion in regard to a shared morality and the purpose of a moral code amongst green and non-green students in order to show that people with contrasting belief systems can collaborate and achieve a shared goal. At the beginning of fieldwork, we expected green and non-green students to behave

and think differently. We predicted that greens would show a tendency to blame non-greens for lack of commitment and their unsustainable behaviour on the university campus and that non-greens would display no interest in getting involved in the research study, and not being willing to adopt a sustainable lifestyle in the near future.

The research activities revealed four ways in which green and non-green students differed in their attitudes towards engaging in pro-environmental behaviour. Moreover, in turn, these differences might make collaboration for environmental protection on the university campus difficult. These differences were: i) the fear of being judged causing non-greens' resistance against green initiatives; ii) the difficulty of defining environmental citizenship and environmental justice; iii) the level of effort put into acting sustainably; and iv) students' environmental responsibility - the collective duty against personal convenience.

The first matter on which non-green and green students differed significantly centred on the formers' fear of being judged for acting unsustainably on the university campus, which fuelled their overall resistance to pro-environmental initiatives. Working with non-green students during the research study was challenging at times due to their initial opposition to discussing environmental protection on the university campus and their fear of being criticised by green students for the unsustainable choices they made. The issue was evident in the Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire when 36.7% of the respondents identified themselves somewhere between being 'green' and 'non-green'. While they might indeed be located halfway between the two options, this answer could

also show that respondents are unsure of their position in the environmental debate, or do not want to assume any position.

In the same way, the non-green participants took a defensive position in the presence of the green students in the debriefing session the moment they heard the question '*Do you think that having a moral code to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community adheres to, is a good idea?*'. And this was the case, even though they have been asked the same question before in the questionnaire and interviews. They expressed concerns about the limits that any moral code would put on their daily life and overall comfort. For instance, one member of the non-green group worried that:

I quite agree that it is nice to have a shared morality. (...) [Although] a formal set moral code, as a guideline, (...) can lead to a separation between those who might want to follow the code passionately and think that everybody should follow it passionately, and those who came from a home that was not particularly green and they do not see the point. It will encourage (young) people (...) to see difference as a particularly bad thing. And with a set of rules and morals that they feel legitimise their views, (...) they might see as their duty to always persecute those who do not follow. And even if they do not intend to, those people might feel persecuted, if it is in a formal setting. In an informal setting, perhaps not so much (DSP2).

However, once the greens explained that the role of the moral code is not to criticise people or condemn non-green behaviour and that they were asking for the non-greens'

help in developing a moral code for environmental protection that would involve the entire student community, non-greens ceased being defensive and showed themselves happy to collaborate.

The second issue on which green and non-green students showed a different attitude towards taking care of nature on the university campus was in relation to their overall environmental knowledge. This is of importance because a person's understanding of what environmental protection is might impact their behaviour and the actions they take on a daily basis. More specifically, we discovered that the difficulty non-greens had in explaining the meanings of environmental citizenship and environmental justice influenced their understanding of the impacts of anthropogenic climate change and led to a lack of motivation to join green initiatives in the student community.

The analysis of the data from the focus group (the first research activity) showed that there was a multitude of ways in which students referred to green concepts. Therefore, the questionnaire presented an opportunity to further explore students' understanding of various concepts including: environmental protection, nature conservation, sustainable development, climate change, environmental citizenship and environmental justice. The questionnaire results showed that the most-often used green terms were known by the majority of respondents, underlining their confidence in understanding and explaining them to others. For instance, 59.2% of respondents said they were confident or very confident in knowing the meaning of environmental protection; 61.2% said the same about nature conservation; 63.3% about sustainable development; and 71.4% about climate change. By contrast, other concepts were not so well understood. Only 30.6% of

respondents felt confident or very confident about their understanding of the concept of environmental citizenship, and only 24.5% reported being confident or very confident about what environmental justice means. On these, one non-green interview participant confessed: 'I don't really know, if I'm being honest. (...) I'm not aware of what these [environmental citizenship and environmental justice] terms mean, maybe I am aware of the concepts, but I do not know the actual terminology for what they mean' (IP6).

In addition, we noticed non-greens' low willingness to contribute to the well-being of the student community and support a just society, in which environmental benefits and burdens are distributed fairly. As one non-green participant stated in an interview:

Environmental justice, I don't really know anything about it and environmental citizenship, I have an idea of what I think it is, but I don't think it would be particularly what they're aiming at with that. So, in my opinion, environmental citizenship is more like people coming together and doing things for the environment, as a collective and making yourself an environmental citizen. That is what I'd think it would be but I wouldn't know if that is 100% right or what the whole package of it, that might be only a little small thing (IP15).

Our findings suggest that environmental citizenship and environmental justice need to be clearly defined and explained in order to start addressing the lack of understanding of ethical issues in environmental protection (Dobson 2010). These concepts define the connection individuals have with nature, in terms of actions which 'should' be taken and the personal impact on the environment. In comparison to the other green terms

mentioned previously (which are more general and describe the world as it is), environmental citizenship and environmental justice make reference to the duties and responsibilities people have towards the natural environment. These concepts have not been widely referred to in the process of designing policies and influencing human behaviour because they are too close to a person's beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes (see Chapter 2, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4). However, environmental citizenship and environmental justice were central in this study and also informed some of the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character written by the research participants. For example, students included the norm *Think about the consequences of your actions* in the initial version of the moral code, to encourage the students to reduce their carbon footprint on Keele campus. This norm clearly has environmental citizenship and environmental justice at its heart.

These points imply that the emergence of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character was dependent on the personal interpretation each research participant had of the green concepts. Understanding the definitions of environmental citizenship and environmental justice and agreeing on a 'shared' meaning of these concepts in the student community would help people make sense of the contributions necessary to protect the environment at Keele.

The third difference between greens and non-greens was observed in the level of effort put into acting sustainably. The majority of green participants perceived sustainability as embedded in the university culture, and considered the well-being of the student community dependent on the environment. From the first research activity, greens were

results-oriented and took the initiative to develop the moral code with the aim to encourage fellow students to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. The greens' mindset about nature conservation seemed to be motivated by the idea that a clean and sustainable university campus 'can help a clear and respectful mind to develop' (QP30). They appreciate the natural environment at Keele and make sure not to take its beauty for granted, by investing their time and effort in the implementation of green campaigns, projects and activities on the university campus. The research participants also mentioned that taking pro-environmental action was very rewarding on a personal level; doing the 'right' thing was a source of motivation to keep their moral commitment towards protecting the environment and giving them the necessary energy to become more involved.

By contrast, non-green students pointed to the trappings of modern life as a cause of their unsustainable actions and argued that this does not permit them to adopt a less harmful lifestyle. Participants said that they would get more involved in green initiatives if these had 'little impact' on their lives and 'if participation is quick and easy'. Moreover, they argued that environmental protection is a time-consuming matter, which requires a great amount of effort to deal with: 'I am willing to do a small bit, but the amount of things going on can feel a bit overwhelming' (QP35).

There seems to be a value-action gap for non-greens, which could be explained, on the one hand, by the difficulty of coping with the need to become more sustainable and not to harm nature, and on the other hand, by the real effort to get out of their comfort zone

in order to assume the challenge of change. As one debriefing session participant confessed:

I think I set a very high standard for myself in everything I do, so I am always more aware of what I am failing to do instead of what I am getting right. I do some 'green' things, but I never feel like it is enough. Also, I am aware of having a conflicting way of thinking about the environment. I won't drop litter (like a crisp packet) in the street, because I think: *If we all did that, we'd soon be buried under mountains of crisp packets!* But I don't seem to be able to apply the same logic to a single pro-environmental action that I might take. I can't see my choice to reuse or recycle a household container (*if everyone recycled these items...*) as building up to a positive impact on the environment in the same way. So, I feel that whatever we are doing, it is all too little, too late, unless we make drastic changes to our totally unsustainable lifestyle. And some of those changes might be outside our control (DSP3).

In general, non-green participants appeared to feel more comfortable discussing common behaviour towards nature on the university campus than looking at their daily habits in particular and deciding whether they need to consider any changes for the sake of their community. Hence, our findings suggest that non-greens will not put more effort into acting sustainably as long as they underestimate the impact of their everyday actions on the surrounding environment and that they will rule out making any lifestyle changes if these become inconvenient.

A fourth and final difference between green and non-green participants concerned their attitudes towards students' responsibility to protect the environment on Keele campus. While green students showed themselves very willing and would love to be more involved with initiatives implemented at Keele, non-green students declared they were less prepared to adopt more sustainable habits and so would not assume the responsibility for the consequences of their behaviour. There were a few cases when interview respondents admitted that being unsustainable is more convenient:

I think (...) it goes both ways, if I'm provided with the opportunity to be more sustainable or more aware of my own impact on the environment, I will be. Provide me with things that are the opposite and are blinding me to that, and they're convenient, then I'm going to end up using them because I'm human and I have time constraints. And if something (...) is quick and easy, and cheaper, I'll be honest, financially, most will go down that route. It becomes quite selfish at that point I guess, so that is something for me to think about (IP16).

On numerous occasions in the research study, non-green students confessed that once they become aware and accept the consequences of unsustainable behaviour, it is a constant struggle for them to balance the lifestyle they are comfortable with and the green responsibilities they 'need' to assume. As one questionnaire participant stated:

I am conscious of an internal conflict. (...) I grew up in an over-cluttered home and saw my parents in their old age unable to part with anything, even when no longer useful to them. As a young adult, I fought against this trend and was getting better at discarding things I didn't want. Until

my kids started school and got onto the eco-bandwagon, coming home from school with mantras like *Reuse, Reduce, Recycle* and would catch me about to put some packaging in the bin and say, *Oh, Mum, don't throw that away, someone could use it!*

I do what I can - I try to avoid food waste, I reuse/reduce/recycle as far as possible, but I am human, and I find it hard to exclude myself completely from the trappings of modern life. (...) So yes, I sometimes buy a new pair of shoes when I still have some in the wardrobe that are wearable, but won't match my outfit and I feel guilty. But I do also sometimes choose to deny myself a treat, and give the money to a charity instead. I am still struggling to balance hoarding and wasting, 30 years on (QP49).

It might be argued that personal convenience prevents non-greens from adopting a more sustainable behaviour in the near future because they equate consumption with comfort. In our case, non-green students found it hard to contemplate using fewer resources or giving up their current habits because they felt this might be detrimental to their comfortable lifestyle (Barr, Gilg and Shaw 2011). This, in turn, raises a question as to whether becoming more sustainable is related to the challenge of change or whether it is about reducing our levels of consumption. Therefore, when discussing people's duties and responsibilities towards the natural world, we need to help non-greens understand that unless the whole community acts sustainably, their own personal comfort will also be

affected. Hence, the non-greens own comfort and convenience might be best protected if they joined green students to support nature conservation on the university campus.

While the discussion above has shown that green and non-green students differed in respect to a number of issues, they also agreed on many areas once they came together in the final research activity (the debriefing session). In this study, we aimed to put a human face on environmental protection in the student community and to examine if non-greens could be persuaded to start acting sustainably by their fellow students. And in this respect, the development of the moral code showed that people with opposite beliefs and attitudes could indeed work collaboratively, thereby challenging the misconceptions that made students separate themselves into greens and non-greens (even though they are all part of the same student community). As one debriefing session participant noted: 'When you first told me about your research, I did think non-green students do not really care and I had some preconceptions, which were bad and wrong. And now, it is nice to meet people and humanise different people and their value structure which aren't that different from mine, I don't think' (DSP1). Consequently, both student groups were more cooperative and willing to listen to what the others were saying when they became aware of the similarities in belief of the existence of a shared morality for nature conservation on the university campus.

During analysis of the data, three fundamental similarities in the opinions of green and non-green students on developing a moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus were observed: i) the commitment to make eco-friendly lifestyle changes in the

near future; ii) the increased student involvement in defining a shared morality; and iii) the disposition to work collaboratively to improve community well-being.

The first similarity among green and non-green students was their commitment to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle, thereby putting responsibility before their personal convenience. It was important for non-greens to question what 'being green' means in terms of the duties and the responsibilities for nature conservation in the student community and the current study gave them this opportunity. There was little to no difference in the opinion of greens and non-greens concerning the student body's obligation to take care of the environment. On the contrary, the two groups even shared many student experiences on the Keele campus that involved getting into contact with nature. As such, the student community mindset offered the participants a common ground for working together in the debriefing session. Working directly with green participants, non-greens felt closer to the environmental protection cause and became aware of their duties and responsibilities, as students, living on Keele campus:

I found that the research study (...) asked numerous insightful questions that actually contributed to my own interpretation of what it is to be a 'green' student. (...) I found that since taking the [Keele Non-Green Students'] Questionnaire, I have begun to become more conscious of my own actions on the environment (IP6).

Moreover, non-green participants argued that, through being involved in it, this research study 'activated' their character and conduct and motivated them to follow their morality in the shared environmental context. As one interview participant noted:

My contribution to this research study resulted in me thinking more deeply about my own views on environmental protection, and in what ways I impact the environment, both on a daily and long-term basis. I thought about why I am not involved in environmental protection and realised that I have no good reason. I do recycle, but that is the extent of my contribution. I plan to make a conscious effort from now on to think about how my actions may impact the environment, and how I may alter my lifestyle in order to reduce my impact (IP14).

Indeed, the very development of the moral code made participants accountable for their commitment to making lifestyle changes and, in the case of non-greens, it helped them face their fear of being judged for their choices as they assumed their collective duty to protect the environment on Keele campus.

A second point of similarity was an increase in both groups' involvement in the development of the moral code, once greens and non-greens had had the chance to talk and listen to each other. The discussion in Chapter 2 suggested that governmental approaches to environmental protection appear to rest on the premise that individuals have no real interest in changing their behaviour and so, artificial tools are needed to influence and convince people to act sustainably. Indeed, McKenzie-Mohr argued that the lack of success of many pro-environmental initiatives and governmental approaches could be explained by the 'little attention [that] has been paid to ensuring that psychological expertise regarding behaviour change in general, and fostering sustainable behaviour in particular, is shared with program planners' (2000: 552).

In the current study, it was evident that the common belief that 'students do not care' is unfounded. The data collected at the end of the research activities showed that students have the motivation and are willing to commit to making the necessary lifestyle changes. So, it is not a matter of trying to convince non-green students that environmental protection is vital in the student community. Instead, they need to be empowered to make change happen, and encouraged to see that every little action matters both locally and globally (Dobson 2010).

In this regard, it seems that Keele students are doing more to protect the environment than might even be expected of them, as also communicated by the Keele University Sustainability Report (2013), even though they are already very busy studying and often working to earn money. Indeed, many are asking for opportunities for occasional volunteering. As one questionnaire respondent stated:

I think [donating parts of my available student resources (i.e. money, volunteer work, goods, food) to the less privileged and local charities at Keele] is a really important thing to encourage. When I left university halls this summer, I donated all my leftover tins to the food bank. In terms of money, as a student on a budget, I do have direct debits set up to charities. I am passionate about and try to donate small amounts to other charities on campus; for example, when societies such as Oxfam make bake sales. I would love to be more involved in volunteering, but with a part-time job and a demanding course, I would like to see more opportunities for occasional volunteering (QP9).

Comments of this kind show how much both green and non-green individuals are prepared to do for their student community. This indicates that students contribute to nature conservation and are willing to invest their time in pro-environmental activities. To encourage this further, it would be beneficial to make them aware of the positive impacts they have on Keele campus and to recognise their contribution publicly, in their community. Consequently, the University should consider implementing strategic initiatives to encourage pro-environmental action, to educate students to see value in their daily actions and to provide help in evaluating one's carbon footprint correctly (Hungerford and Volk 1990).

A third similarity between greens and non-greens is that both groups agreed on the value of working together. As such, the majority of participants confirmed that there is a need for collective work when it comes to environmental protection on the university campus (Agyeman and Angus 2003). Both student groups thought that a moral code would be a powerful document because it encompasses the written norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character of a shared morality, which represents the commitment of the student community to take pro-environmental action.

Throughout the research activities, participants were asked to consider the opinions and values of others and to put themselves in other people's shoes to try to make sense of why others behave the way they do. This helped them to take a further step in the pro-environmental debate, and listen to what others have to say and to start understanding each other. The exercise did not imply that all participants agreed with each other and held the same opinions, but rather it enabled them to work together and reach a

consensus for the sake of their student community. As one focus group participant pointed out:

I consider the value that we all share is: *We all think we are serving our Mother Nature.* (...) I realise that if I do one action, like not switch on the lights until 5:00 PM, for example, I am saving this portion of money and this money could be saved for other goodwill activities. (...) [Therefore] the values [shared by the students who protect the environment on Keele University campus] could be positiveness, having strong goodwill, serving the community and serving the Earth which is the planet that we all share and live on (FGP7).

Students' disposition to work collaboratively for the well-being of nature, as a community, indicated a possible approach to closing the value-action gap in environmental protection. Collective engagement and participation can take a variety of forms from community gardening, to developing a moral code for nature conservation on the university campus. As one questionnaire participant emphasised: 'I think collective work is important because two or more minds are better than one in thinking about [environmental] impact through carrying out different schemes. Plus, more people can help to spread the word and encourage others to think about nature conservation' (QP30).

In sum, even though there were a number of differences between green and non-green students, there were also similarities. Moreover, the key to helping non-green students, and to making the code relevant to all on the university campus, is reconciling the differences between both groups, and finding the most effective strategies to galvanise

their similarities. That is to be achieved through the encouragement of the student body to develop and foster a sense of moral responsibility (a shared morality) towards nature in the student community.

The lessons from these similarities and differences are that the duties and responsibilities students are asked to take into consideration need to be connected to the negative impacts of harmful lifestyles. Ultimately, people will be more willing to act sustainably when an abstract problem (like anthropogenic climate change) is converted into a concrete matter that might affect them personally. At this point, the discussion becomes significant to their own existence and surrounding environment and so, immediate action can be taken.

6.6. Deploying a moral code relevant to all

So far, we have established that a moral code can be developed, we have explored the pledges of the moral code, and we have addressed the differences and similarities between the green participants and the non-green ones, thereby making the code relevant to the entire student community. Indeed, the primary objective of the research study was to come up with a set of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character for environmental protection on Keele campus. However, once we completed this significant challenge, the next one that awaits the student body, as two focus group participants explained, would be the deployment of the moral code:

How do we communicate [the moral code] to the students? (...) If we really want them to engage with it, it has to be *a continuous process*

[emphasis added]. If we just put it out there and expect that people will gradually look at the leaflets and start believing in [the moral code], it might not be the case. And we have to keep pushing it, so it is a continuous thing (FGP1).

Even if there are moral norms that we all agree on, they should be backed by the University administration or management. And the [moral code] should be institutionalised (...) and should not be linked only to some initiatives with a start date and an end date. It should be supported by a wider vision, facilities and tools. (...) These norms should be supported by practical steps initiated by the University itself (FGP7).

The first quote underlines that the implementation of the moral code is a *continuous process* and that the help of the University is needed in order for the code to be embraced and respected by the student body in the long term. This is not only because of the clear benefits of a shared morality in the student community and of the role the University can play in helping people adhere to the moral code, but is particularly the case given the students' dependence on the University's resources and facilities to act sustainably, something the participants in this research repeatedly pointed to.

It is therefore now time to focus on how the moral code can be deployed to all and how it can be made robust enough to influence behavioural change on the university campus. And in this, the research study once again adopted a participant-led approach and asked the students how they thought the code could be best brought into use. The participants

proposed four stages for its implementation, namely: i) make the moral code public; ii) communicate the moral code to the student body; iii) implement the moral code in the student community; and iv) ensure the appropriate infrastructure for the moral code to be followed by students in the long term.

In the first stage, the moral code would become public and readily available to students. The deployment of the moral code would start with the University recognising it as a formal document developed by the student body, thereby promoting the existence of a shared morality for environmental protection in the student community.

At the end of the fieldwork, participants asked the final version of the moral code to be sent as a formal document for review and further consideration to the University's Vice-Chancellor, the Keele Students' Union, and the Keele Postgraduate Association. They insisted that the moral code they worked on should be published and implemented in the student community. As one focus group participant stated:

If we are talking about the Keele community, we cannot neglect the fact that people in the student community come from different backgrounds. And I think there are around 100 different nationalities living together in Keele so, we cannot suppose that all people have the same awareness or the same willingness to protect the environment. So, (...) if [the community] has a clear vision about what it wants to do about the environment, it should convey it or communicate it to the students. Otherwise, they will never know (FGP7).

If the moral code is made public, then the students will have access to it, will gain a better understanding of its written norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character, and will be informed about what they can do for environmental protection on the university campus. In addition, people will be provided with practical examples to help them better adhere to the code in the student community. As one focus group participant explained:

In principle, I believe that everybody has the responsibility [to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus], but again they should have a set of examples. If you are a student, what kind of examples help you practise environmental protection? (...) [The moral code] should roughly identify what the main [environmental] rules are that they could follow on campus and in the student accommodation that would reflect their community as well (FGP7).

In all, research participants thought that the published moral code could become an appropriate guideline for what is expected of the student body in terms of nature conservation at Keele.

The second stage would be the promotion of the published moral code in order to make it well-known in the student community. The research participants suggested that the best way to communicate the moral code would be to include it in a sustainability induction at the beginning of the academic year (as part of the Welcome Week events and activities). The induction would inform students on how to become more sustainable and protect the natural environment on Keele campus. As one questionnaire participant argued: '[A

sustainability induction] should be part of the compulsory talks at the beginning of the term. (...) Sustainability should be embedded in everything, not just an “optional extra” (QP11). In addition, the moral code would be promoted in the induction and students would be encouraged to access the available online materials to help them become more familiar with the sustainability practice at Keele. During the academic year, the moral code would also be publicised on social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and on campus, by handing leaflets and flyers that would advertise current environmental campaigns, projects and activities. Lastly, students would be invited to attend University and students’ union meetings in order to engage further with green initiatives and/or work on their own campaigns for environmental protection at Keele.

The promotion phase would aim to make the moral code catch on so that following it becomes a trend in the student community. As one questionnaire respondent stated: ‘It would be nice for sustainable culture to become mainstream, to make it more accessible to other people outside of a small group of “champions for change”’ (QP5). Hence, research participants believed that if the moral code became fashionable and popular, the student body would more likely develop and maintain a sustainable culture, and become familiar with the rules and practices in place towards environmental protection on the university campus.

The third stage concerns the actual implementation of the moral code. Our review of the current governmental strategies concerning sustainability (see Chapter 2) indicates that, for initiatives to be effective, it is important for more than just the policymakers to be involved. Indeed, our findings show that people are more willing to engage with

environmental protection initiatives (Agyeman and Angus 2003) if they find themselves in a context that encourages change-making and are exposed to positive strategies that promote learning. With reference to academia, and to Keele University more specifically, at the moment the policies and practices regarding nature conservation on campus are the domain of the University and do not actively involve students. The strategies are in fact quite similar to those implemented by the UK Government and include offering a variety of incentives, nudging students' behaviour and promoting the sustainability agenda (Keele University 2013). They do not concentrate on changing behaviours in the long term.

The effect of these strategies has resulted in students being unaware of what exactly is asked of them, regarding nature conservation on the university campus. As one focus group participant argued:

So how could [the University and student community] influence people's behaviour to be pro-active towards [environmental protection]? (...) [The University and student community] should have a clear vision translated to objectives, these objectives should have plans, and these plans should be tactical and be implemented. People should be aware of what [the student community] wants to do (...) and what actions are required from the students to help Keele University to maintain these [green] values and help to reach its [environmental] goals (FGP7).

As well as highlighting the need to involve students fully in the implementation of the University's sustainability goals, participants debated what would be a compelling motivation scheme for inspiring pro-environmental behaviour on the university campus, or whether a reward and punishment approach to environmental protection would be a better approach. One participant noted:

We have been discussing a lot about creating the right incentive scheme whether as a reward or a punishment, and I would just add to it that we have to be very careful (...) because they can create a perverse effect. (...) [Students] translate [pro-environmental action] as equivalent to that reward, they do not do it for a moral ground anymore. So, (...) whenever we create an incentive we have to think clearly about what message we are sending and what that incentive is, as an action (FGP1).

The fourth and final decision of both greens and non-greens was to deploy the moral code using a strategy that would raise moral awareness and empathic concern for nature conservation and, at the same time, promote sustainable behaviour through student-friendly policies. In order to avoid disciplining people for not taking pro-environmental action, the research participants suggested that the University could send periodic reminders to positively influence the community to become more sustainable and to stick to its commitment to protect the natural environment at Keele. As one debriefing session participant argued:

There are positive ways to enforce a moral code, such as soft competitions in the accommodation blocks on campus, where there will be winners and prizes for blocks that save energy. It can have a moral

code like that and enforce it, in a positive way. And those who do not want to take part, currently they do not feel obliged to. I think it is about giving people opportunities, who are not necessarily green or environmentally aware, to become more aware, through a positive way, instead of it being always: *You must be punished because you are not following the rules!* It is more: *Here are some values and some pre-steps that we have at Keele.* (DSP1)

More specifically, the research participants suggested a number of possible initiatives (based on the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character written in the code – see Appendix B5) that would involve the support of the University, namely:

- For students to reduce resource use, the University could provide fresh (local) produce at its cafes with less packaging and/or offer variable rates of accommodation for students who are more conscious about turning off electrical appliances and lights in their rooms.
- For students to re-use and recycle what they can, the University could provide more drinking water fountains so that people can refill their bottles and make recycling bins more accessible.
- For students to make more use of green transport, the University could create safer cycling routes to travel by bike to the University.
- For students to think about the consequences of their actions and become better informed about environmental protection, the University could promote KeeleSU volunteering opportunities for cleaning up Keele woods.

- For students to familiarise themselves and engage with the sustainability culture through learning resources and initiatives, the University could produce a free DVD about protecting the environment on Keele campus.
- For students to work together, collectively (rather than individually) for environmental protection, the University could invite students to participate in sustainability meetings on a monthly basis.
- For students to be change agents, supporters or examples of sustainability, the University could offer regular prizes to Keele's greenest students.

Looking at the research participants' wide range of suggestions to positively influence their community to become more sustainable, the final version of the moral code could be effectively implemented by making it part of the students' value system; using it as a brainstorming tool that may help shape future green campaigns, projects and initiatives organised on Keele campus.

The fourth stage of the deployment of the code would involve the University developing and maintaining the appropriate infrastructure for its students and the necessary resources to respect the moral code. In addition, the academic institution could take partial responsibility for the continuous development of the moral code, based on the community effort. Indeed, universities play an essential role in this respect no least because, as we have argued, academia has the necessary resources to encourage and sustain the formation of sustainable communities and help students adopt pro-environmental behaviours to be transferred into their future careers, after graduation.

Alshuwaikhat and Abubakar (2008: 1779) provide us with a powerful statement about the role of universities in the promotion of sustainability:

Universities also make a significant contribution to the development of our society, and, therefore, have a special societal responsibility, in particular with regard to youth training and public awareness about sustainability. Therefore, universities should promote a pattern of development that would be compatible with a safe environment, biodiversity, ecological balance, and intergenerational equity. As sustainability concept is applied to universities, it should serve as a means of configuring the campus and its various activities so that the University, its members and its economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals in a very long-term.

The research participants noted that the community spirit in academia has the potential to bring the moral code into use and promote a student trend (to be green) to engage with environmental protection and related initiatives. The development of such a trend will be more likely and more effective if a collective approach is used – i.e. a shared morality strategy. As one focus group participant stated:

Part of the problem is that people (...) do not always know what they are doing is wrong. (...) They might not necessarily know what to reassess or what to research themselves. (...) I think part of [helping people adopt green behaviours] needs to be a community effort, and

people need to talk together and realise what they are doing good and what they are doing that needs improvement (FGP4).

Our findings showed that the fourth stage of deploying the moral code depends on the University recognising that cooperation and collaboration in the student community are central to the code being successful. Indeed, as we have seen in the research activities, the moral code is a way of bringing all types of people on board. As one focus group participant noted:

There will be differences of understanding of what good is, within this room there could be so many differences. I think the point where we can act together is when we have a common agreement on: *This is good. Let's work together because one person can do much (...); a group can do a lot.* So, that common ground when we find it, we should hold on to it and then forget about where it came from. (...) I do not care where it came from, I care more that we agree to let's do something (FGP1).

Comments of this nature underline just how much students care about the implementation of the developed code that stands for a shared morality in the community and how important is to them to reach a 'common agreement'. The moral code was written *by* students *for* the student community. As such, the developers were the creators and, at the same time, the audience of the moral code. The code should thus be brought into use taking into consideration the students' wish to act together and work collaboratively for environmental protection. One participant summed this up neatly by

explaining: 'Keele is a community made by the students (...) who live here and its success or failure is entirely down to us, as a collective group' (QP10).

We have argued that a sense of moral responsibility towards nature can be cultivated in the academic context by deploying a moral code developed by students for their shared community. Students can bring the moral code into use by following all of the four steps, as outlined above. However, the University's commitment to the process of implementation is vital in providing people with the necessary infrastructure to act pro-environmentally in the long term. A sustainable partnership between the academic institution and its students has the power to create a society in which new generations of people have the awareness to take care of nature and are equipped with the necessary skills to continue to be environmentally friendly, once they leave university and the student community.

6.7. Concluding remarks

This chapter has presented the shared morality strategy to be implemented in the student community, as the secret ingredient for motivating people to protect the natural environment. We asked if a shared morality could be used as a basis to start cultivating student responsibility towards nature and suggested that people are able to work collaboratively to develop a moral code for environmental protection on the university campus. Then, we explored the pledges of the moral code and showed its practicality in the community setting, as a self-assessment tool for students to evaluate their current behaviour and use it in order to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle in the near future.

Lastly, we proposed four stages through which to deploy the moral code and argued that students would follow its norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character if the code is published, promoted and built up in their value systems. Moreover, we maintained that the involvement of the university is essential to provide the fundamental infrastructure for students to be able to act sustainably and to base the deployment of the moral code on people working together for the well-being of the shared community.

The findings and conclusions of the project are very much in line with our initial expectations. That is, we were hoping that the participants would find a consensus and would agree upon a shared morality in the student community. The development of the moral code for environmental protection on Keele University campus proved to be an exciting experiment that involved eight months of research work and 57 individual attendees (with 81 attendances in one or more research activities). All these people were directly involved in the process of defining a shared morality in their student community. This very much shows that academia can offer a unique space in which to have a debate, and people of all cultures can share their values, beliefs and experiences in relation to nature conservation and talk about how best to collaborate in this endeavour (Corcoran and Wals 2004).

Given this, we should not minimise or be sceptical about the contribution that students can make to the environmental protection cause. Rather, the study has shown that, like with every other cause, successful public engagement and participation can make a real difference (Environmental Agency 2000; Defra 2011a). In this regard, academia has a role and a responsibility to educate people and empower them on the path of becoming

change-makers for the next generations to come and for protecting the well-being of nature (Alshuwaikhat and Abubakar 2008). Consequently, it is important to promote the idea of sustainable communities and groups of people engaging together for 'an alternative vision of the future that is not just a bitter necessity (...) but holds out the promise of a genuinely better life' (Roseland 2000: 126).

Looking at the UK Government policy papers (Defra 2005, 2008, 2011c) analysed in Chapter 2, we uncovered artificial designs that try to address as many people as possible, at the cost of becoming too general to reach the target population. At present, in order to address the unsustainable behaviour of a large number of people, policymakers are developing green policies that are too widespread in terms of their audience and work only in the short term. Clearly, designing policies tailored to individuals would be a Sisyphean mission for decision-makers. And it is for that very reason that the approach put forward in this thesis is so appealing because we demonstrated that groups of people themselves have the required expertise to develop norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and to implement sustainable initiatives for their own community.

The current study showed that talking to people, asking them to work together is a more effective strategy towards sustainability in the community and it could be the practical solution to ensure environmental protection in the long term. People are intelligent beings who have the capacity to be educated to take care of the environment (Environmental Agency 2000) and to understand that they need to adopt more sustainable lifestyles for the future (Barr, Gilg and Shaw 2011). This is much more likely to

be effective than moral agents being nudged and influenced to act in the 'right' way without realising it.

Crucially, the research findings have challenged convention by focusing on an alternative way of motivating pro-environmental behaviour by working directly with people and empowering them to decide what a sustainable life means for them, in the community they belong to (Alshuwaikhat and Abubakar 2008). By defining a shared morality and developing a moral code to be implemented in the community, students are more likely to consider adopting a sustainable behaviour and thus assuming their role as environmental citizens (Dobson 2010). More specifically, a personalised moral code is expected to be more effective in the student community because it is closer to students' hearts and it also considers their (specific) needs and interests.

Ultimately, the moral code for environmental protection on the university campus is not a static tool. That is, it is not only for current students, but is also for future ones.

Moreover, it should be a continuous process and should thus be updated by those future students, to make it relevant to them and to ensure their involvement in its development and deployment, through cooperation in the entire student community, as well as the Students' Union and the University. The University's involvement in this is particularly important, not least because making the moral code a formal document recognises its intrinsic value, and also signals a responsibility to cherish it, and to find the best ways to help students engage further with it.

7. Conclusion

Anthropogenic climate change is one of the most serious problems currently facing the world, and its long-term impacts are likely to be much worse than anyone has yet anticipated (Gardiner 2004). Morality, as ‘the language of care, empathy, responsibility, and duty’, is widely avoided in the discourse on tackling climate change (Jamieson 2007: 482). Rather, it seems that the advancement of technology, economics and science are often regarded as the only qualified disciplines to save mankind and the Earth from self-destruction (Jamieson 2007). Still, long-lasting change is rarely inspired by a cost-benefit analysis because addressing harmful behaviours requires a persisting transformation in the direction of a more sustainable future. Nature conservation can only happen as a result of people showing an attitude of respect for other species, ecosystems and the planet, as a whole and assuming moral responsibility for the impacts of day-to-day actions, at both an individual and a collective level.

The fundamental issue is to decide what to do under the circumstances of anthropogenic climate change, as the phenomenon ‘poses a challenge to humanity’s ability to respond’ (Gardiner 2006: 399). Any initiative to ensure a state of harmony between man and land is expected to proceed at a plodding pace, so the usual resolutions to address harmful behaviours are laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives, social marketing and educating the wider population. However, how far do these approaches take us? Not far enough. As long as the suggested solutions ‘[define] no right or wrong, [assign] no obligation, [call] for no sacrifice, [imply] no change in the current philosophy

of [our] values', no critical transformation will happen to the ways we live our lives (Leopold 1949: 207). Here, we argue that in order to motivate moral agents to adopt a sense of moral responsibility towards nature and reduce their ecological footprint, we need to focus on morality. The practice of moral discipline will help people see the inherent worth of the Earth, and anyone seriously concerned with the current state of the world will become inspired to improve their character and conduct for a morally upright life.

This thesis has sought to advance a collaborative approach to developing a shared morality for environmental protection in community settings. The first part of this conclusion reviews the contribution and the achievements of our enquiry. The second part offers answers to the questions raised in the thesis and argues in favour of a shared morality approach to motivate attitude change at the local level. The third part states the methodological challenges and research limitations we encountered in writing this thesis. The fourth part looks at the applications and implications of the research study in light of the findings and results. Here, we also suggest some recommendations to inspire citizen engagement and participation of collectives in nature conservation and to motivate the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles. The fifth part outlines possible avenues of research worthy of investigation in the future.

7.1. The contribution of our research

The study of anthropogenic climate change and its impacts are 'necessarily interdisciplinary, crossing boundaries between (at least) science, economics, law, and

international relations'; a time-consuming and intellectually demanding subject of research that not many want to engage with and prefer to let others explore (Gardiner 2004: 556). As climate change is fundamentally a moral issue, the phenomenon should be of crucial importance to philosophers. Here, we argued in favour of a motivational turn in practical philosophy to put people at the heart of a more sustainable future, to promote diverse citizenship for nature conservation and to ensure hands-on moral learning in the open society.

We invested a considerable amount of time and effort into this enquiry in order to show that a philosopher can put a shared morality into practice at the local level. As Taylor (2011: 312) advised, 'we must not confuse the difficulty of a task with its impracticability. There should be no illusions about how hard it will be for many people to change their values, their beliefs, their whole way of living if they are sincerely to adopt the attitude of respect for nature and act accordingly'. Still, our discussion demonstrated that a change in people's moral judgements and commitments is a psychological possibility and an indispensable step forward in adopting an ecocentric outlook on nature. Indeed, communities are ready to make such a change and to exercise their autonomy in decision-making to supporting its members to embrace more sustainable lifestyles in the long term. Activism and citizen engagement and participation help establish a connection between motivation and moral action, making people aware of the impact of everyday behaviours and highlighting the importance of their contribution to a common good.

Given this, the gap filled by this thesis is the definition of a line of argumentation for a collaborative methodology of motivating moral action for environmental protection at

the local level. In particular, we explored the possibility of there being a shared morality in community settings, which underpins attitudes and practices in respect to nature conservation. Our shared morality strategy shows the positive impact of human relationships, by providing a common space for people to work together and by setting shared objectives for the well-being of their community. The originality of this work consists in its contribution to motivating attitude change in environmental protection and to nurturing people's sense of moral responsibility for the good of all Earth's entities.

7.2. A reminder of the aims of the study and a brief report on its main findings

Our collaborative approach to developing a shared morality towards nature is aimed at motivating attitude change in the long run and addressing the cause of harmful behaviours. In this way, it contrasts with current governmental initiatives which are effect-oriented and focus on short-termism. As seen in Chapter 2, the UK Government has concentrated its approaches on the consequences of unsustainable practices and has influenced people to act by chance not choice, often without allowing them to understand why a particular behaviour is the right one. In this fashion, laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing need to be used together with other types of motivational strategies to ensure that individuals are committed to adopting more sustainable lifestyles for the future (see section 2.3).

At present, societal frames and existing communications influence people's competence in making moral sense of anthropogenic climate change (see section 3.1) but it seems to be the case that 'frames in society' do not correspond with what people really care about.

As a result of this disconnect, moral agents suffer alienation (see section 3.2). As Markowitz and Shariff (2012: 243) explain, ‘certain features of climate change and the ways in which it is communicated to the public interact with the human moral judgement system [and] decrease individual perceptions of the issue as a moral imperative’.

In light of this problem, our enquiry sought to focus on people’s concerns and the different meanings given to nature. In so doing, we very much acknowledged the fact that moral agents are different in terms of their needs and interests, but at the same time, we opposed the idea that they could be segregated into different population groups (see section 2.2.2). Rather, believing that a shared morality approach could be forged, we took up the challenge of exploring whether two groups that find themselves at opposite poles (greens and non-greens) could join forces in the pursuit of nature conservation in a community setting. As such, our enquiry became an exploratory case study set to make theoretical and practical contributions to our understanding in regard to a potential acquisition of a sense of moral responsibility towards nature, by looking for a shared morality at the local level.

The complexity of human behaviour represents a real problem in addressing anthropogenic climate change and renders the process of adopting sustainable lifestyles rather complicated in practice, though not impossible (Dobson 2010). As Booth (2009: 58) notes, ‘motivation is a difficult field of investigation because so many variables influence human behaviour, and because much of it is non-conscious and not easily examined’. In spite of these warnings, having explored the differences in motivation between our two groups and the resistance of non-greens to act pro-environmentally, one of our main

findings was that we learned that lack of motivation is most likely to be addressed through people listening to each other (see section 5.2.4). Indeed, we discovered that greens and non-greens are not as different from each other regarding their beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes as we thought at the beginning of fieldwork. While attitudes were hard to work with, owing to their being abstract mental states, we nonetheless found that people have the capacity to change the way they think and act because of the influence of norms, rules of conduct and standards of character promoted in community settings.

Furthermore, our findings showed that the UK Government and its policymakers do not need to fixate on separating people into segmented groups to control harmful behaviours. On the contrary, they should concentrate on bringing groups of people together (at the local level) and promoting awareness of the contribution every person can make to nature conservation (see section 6.5). To increase recognition of action on climate change, a clear link should be established between the phenomenon being human-caused and the urgency of adopting more sustainable lifestyles for the future. Given this, moral agents should be encouraged to cherish the interdependent web of connections between all Earth's entities and take responsibility for maintaining the equilibrium of the natural order (see section 4.1). In our quest to address harmful behaviours towards nature, we endorsed an active model of citizenship (diverse citizenship) and we discussed the rights and duties of global citizens (see section 3.3.1). In addition, we proposed an ecocentric theory for attitude change, arguing that greens and non-greens can find the motivation to collaborate for the well-being of their community (see section 4.2). The idea behind the research design was to find an effective way to

connect the abstract and very global climate change to people's local context. Hence, our normative approach played a critical role in rallying first the hearts of participants, and then their hands, to action.

On the whole, we noted that the majority of participants were willing to engage in an active dialogue about how acting unsustainably impacts the wider community, and how they can take the opportunity to set potential avenues for action (see section 6.1). Our results stressed the importance of human relationships in motivating the attitude of respect for nature in a group of people working together for the common good. At the end of the fieldwork, both greens and non-greens gained a broad understanding of the environmental context they share with others, became aware of the role they play in the student community, and acknowledged the impact of their everyday actions on nature. Thus, by using the right kind of motivations across communications, by challenging unhelpful frames, and by defining a shared morality in community settings, people can regain the hope that global cooperation and local engagement for environmental protection are indeed possible.

Unlike other behavioural change strategies examined in Chapter 2, the exercise of defining a shared morality asks citizens, community groups and other local actors to work together to bring about change. In Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, we provided justifications for developing a shared morality for environmental protection in community settings; a catalyst in shaping the interdependent relationship between people, and between people and nature. Our strategy generated shared beliefs, moral judgements and attitudes at the local level and strengthened people's sets of intrinsic values and identity as citizens. While

discussing the existence of a shared morality amongst themselves, the same individuals engaged in a cooperative endeavour and activated an in-group collective duty for nature conservation (van Steenbergen 1994; Shockley 2017). As a result, participants' awakening to sustainability inspired their moral appreciation of nature and further aided citizen engagement and participation in the community (see section 6.5).

In this thesis, we employed a case study research design with cross-sectional elements and sequential features to investigate if there is a shared morality to help motivate pro-environmental behaviours. The collected data and our findings were surprising in the sense that both student groups agreed on the existence of a shared morality at the local level and managed to develop the moral code for environmental protection on the university campus. During their participation in the fieldwork, greens and non-greens discussed the meanings of a sense of moral responsibility towards nature (and how it can be acquired) and discovered the potential for working in partnership with others to generate new ideas, insights and maximise citizen engagement and participation. At the local level, a motivational capacity was revealed. That is, whenever there was a conflict of values or a misunderstanding, the group managed to get back on track by providing help and support to one another (see section 6.2). Everyone's point of view was listened to, and by the end of the fieldwork, both greens and non-greens agreed to adhere to a moral code containing norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character for environmental protection on Keele University campus (see section 6.3).

In the community setting, we trusted that morality could be developed as a skill to lead people to action and to raise moral awareness of, and empathic concern for, the

resources that everyone shares and that need to be managed efficiently (see section 4.3). The barriers to pro-environmental action on the university campus were evident long before the initiation of the current study. Indeed, participants mentioned the need for putting in place a set of norms, principles and standards (see section 6.1). According to Leopold (1949: 208), 'when one asks why no rules have been written, one is told that the community is not yet ready to support them; education must precede rules'. However, participants argued that the student body should subscribe to norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character and hold itself accountable for adhering to them (see section 6.4). The hope for change rested on open-hearted dialogue and facilitating moral learning in a civic space of joint practices for people to address each other directly, to take the time to listen to experiences and opinions and to put themselves in each other's shoes. In consequence, the collective was offered the chance to develop a moral code for environmental protection; the norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character incorporated into the written code defined their shared morality. The developed moral code can be regarded as a normative tool for citizenship in the community setting, expected to improve people's moral reasoning and stimulate engagement and participation (see section 6.6).

Ultimately, our normative investigation aimed to explore behavioural expectations, norms and standards within a community, to which individuals in a social group would be motivated to conform. Can people agree on specific norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character, which are binding upon everyone alike? The answer is yes, they can. Participants made sure the written moral code addressed the current issues faced on the university campus and promoted the stewardship duty of the student body

at Keele. The final version of the moral code is structured according to the following four pledges: adopt a low carbon student lifestyle; be environmentally conscious; educate ourselves for sustainability; and ensure the well-being of the student community (see Appendix B5). Setting norms, principles and standards proved to be an empowering exercise towards social mobilisation, as individuals became oriented in the direction of supporting a consistent effort for nature conservation. More specifically, the function of the written moral code was to create peer pressure for attitude change and to motivate the implementation of effective plans of action in the community setting.

In the sustainability context, to abide by certain norms, principles of conduct and standards for moral character, is to assume the commitment to the duties and responsibilities owed to all Earth's entities, having inherent worth. As Taylor (2011: 80) explains, 'when moral agents then act in accordance with the rules and when they develop character traits that meet the standards, their conduct and character express (give concrete embodiment to) the attitude' of respect for nature. Anyone who is living, working or studying in the community will be able to access the developed moral code, to evaluate their current behaviour and to improve it, if needed. The obstacles to following the code concern mainly the struggle that individuals are likely to face when changing their harmful habits. Nevertheless, the challenge of change can be overcome by people acknowledging the moral responsibility for the impacts of everyday actions and by understanding the urgency of anthropogenic climate change.

It is essential that the University nurtures and protects a shared morality, and new generations of students should be presented with the moral code to understand its

significance and to relate to it during their time spent in the student community. Looking back at the process of developing the code, we are confident that academia has the capacity to bring people of all cultures together to innovate collaborative initiatives for nature conservation.

7.3. Methodological challenges and research limitations

Of course, there were some challenges and limitations which we encountered in the literature review, sampling, data collection and analysis stages of writing this thesis. The main limitation that could be levelled against the study is that it is a small one, based just in one community setting (at Keele University), and involving one small population with particular characteristics. Given this, yes, we can define a shared morality locally and develop a moral code on Keele campus, however, a sceptical audience will say that we cannot do it elsewhere and that universities are not representative of other settings. We have addressed this possible criticism in Chapter 5; it was never stated that our findings and results would serve the general population, but rather we have recommended that the current research to be replicated in the higher education context because its focus is to support academic communities to become more sustainable in the future. We concentrated on a student community – and one considered to share many characteristics of other universities – and on developing an effective strategy to encourage pro-environmental behaviours in that specific context. Nearly 60 students got involved in the study, and these included undergraduates and postgraduates; people of varying ages, cultures, religions, traditions, social backgrounds and nationalities. The generalisability and representativeness of our outcomes were increased by the fact that

the instrumental case study was investigated using a triangulation strategy of data collection and by combining features of both quantitative and qualitative strategies. That is, other universities could implement a similar shared morality strategy, as long as they support the initiative and are willing to bring students together to take collaborative action for nature conservation. In this way then, the approach taken here could be adopted as an example of good practice and the 'Keele model' could be promoted across British universities.

Regarding challenges we experienced, we found that working directly with human subjects was a difficult task; especially when we tried to find effective ways for them to consider changing their harmful lifestyles. As previously stated, motivation is a challenging field of examination due to the many drives influencing human behaviour, and unfortunately, there are no standard psychological models to guide a researcher in getting around its complexity. People who were resistant to our approach complained that this enquiry would lead to mind manipulation. We answered to any such accusations by arguing that there is no such thing as a value-neutral investigation, research or strategy. All communications and activities involving human subjects activate and strengthen specific beliefs, values and frames, that 'are already out there in society, and at work in how we think' (Darnton and Kirk 2011: 9). We paid careful attention not to impose in any way politically our strategy of working on a person's motivation; instead, we were interested in inspiring citizen engagement and participation and using moral motivation in practice. The unpredictability of human behaviour required us to come up with alternative approaches to motivating people by helping them to see value in acting pro-environmentally. Engaging collectives and providing them with help and support to

develop a shared morality for environmental protection at the local level was a gratifying experience; an inspiring exercise which offered us hope to believe that a more sustainable future is indeed possible.

Another challenge to our research enquiry was using the concept of shared morality in practice. There are very few studies in practical philosophy aiming to bring morality into discussion at a table of non-philosophers and to develop applied uses of it at the local level. Since the initial stages of writing the study proposal, the researcher envisioned herself discussing the existence of a shared morality with groups of people in community settings in order to demonstrate that philosophers can make a valuable contribution (outside the Ivory Tower) to tackling anthropogenic climate change. And in developing our research enquiry, we looked to propose a strategy for environmental protection deemed useful not only by academics but also by practitioners, campaigners and other change agents. Hopefully, the present thesis and the fact that all challenges and limitations were well managed will encourage other philosophers to develop further and defend the use of morality in practice in studies which propose normative approaches to environmental protection.

7.4. Implications, applications and recommendations

In the context of tackling anthropogenic climate change, we believe that nation states will remain the main actors to address the impacts of global warming and environmental degradation, to reduce the corporate dominance of economic and political landscapes, and to nurture a better association between institutions and people's duties and

responsibilities (MacGregor 2006; Shockley 2017). At the individual level, ensuring a more sustainable society for the future will continue to require laws and regulations, financial incentives and disincentives and social marketing to avoid unnecessary harms caused to others and nature. As Connelly (2006: 71) notes, ‘the environmentally conscientious will internalize this awareness and consider how best to act on it; others won't, but at least their actions will be circumscribed by the law and public policy – and the possibility of choosing the good for its own sake remains open to them’.

Looking at our findings and results, we argue with confidence that the community level is an important context to be further explored for nature conservation. Here, change can be achieved through collective activism fighting for a more sustainable future and better norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character by which the population is governed. According to Booth (2009: 69), there are ‘good reasons, normative and motivational, for including activism within the spectrum of moral duties if moral agents are characterised in terms of their various relational identities—as individuals, and as members of families, communities, society, and humanity’. Thus, this thesis supports the motivational capacity of collectives to inspire individuals and institutions to give up their bystander role, and instead, to develop the necessary competencies to deliberate, negotiate, and act for environmental protection. As Shockley (2017: 273) explains:

Many of our responsibilities are complex, requiring that we both make changes in our own behavior and agitate for changes in the policies and practices that regulate that behavior. (...) Whether or not we have an obligation to change our individual behavior and practices to reduce our emissions, we certainly have an individual moral responsibility to ensure

there are policies in place to restrict our behaviors such that the harms that result from our aggregated individual activities are minimized.

Being part of a collaborative initiative helped our participants see the support that exists out there and allowed them not to feel alone anymore in the process of adopting pro-environmental behaviours. As one participant commented, '[a moral code] helps foster that sense of community and also highlights that sense of individual responsibility; that it is everyone's responsibility. And again, I think that empowerment, if you are making someone feel like they are part of a community, they would want to keep that community going and then you can see that in the society' (IP4). Ultimately, changing harmful behaviours en masse will require collective action and open-hearted dialogue, so our strategy showed the positive impacts of cultivating perceived similarity, a shared identity and setting superordinate aims for nature conservation. More research and collective work are needed in support to individuals and institutions to acknowledge their duties and responsibilities and to make appropriate arrangements to protect the existence of all mankind, other species, ecosystems, and the Earth as a whole.

We have not looked for universal solutions to tackling anthropogenic climate change. On the contrary, we have emphasised that customised strategies are desired in community settings. In that sense, the current study sought to provide a safe environment (in academia) where individuals could come together to define a shared morality for environmental protection. It also aimed to nurture a mutual connection between university students, volunteers, researchers and nature at Keele, as well as to stimulate the university to inspire good, responsible behaviour in the collective by promoting the

development of sustainability knowledge and skills and by rewarding its exemplary citizens. In that case, the university concerned would take the responsibility to provide the necessary resources and infrastructure for its students to adopt and to maintain environmentally friendly behaviours in the long term. Therefore, the thesis in discussion promotes an innovative approach to engaging other student bodies based in the UK and could support universities in inspiring their students to become 'champions of change' for nature conservation.

A further recommendation that we advance is to give up the pessimism related to environmental protection and to stop activating the belief that individuals are powerless in making any change happen. These are the most common barriers to action.

Disengagement, hopelessness and inaction do not stimulate a life of human flourishing.

On the contrary, citizens need more reasons to believe they are capable of motivating each other, positively affecting institutions and correcting the current course of society.

Thus, people need to put their imaginative excellence to work in making sure a more sustainable future is, in fact, a real possibility which exceeds their present capacity to envision it (Thompson 2010). People's responsibility to be stewards of the planet would be to find a new conception of living well 'with less, along with the ingenuity, frugality, and restraint required to accomplish this' by acquiring the virtue of radical hope and by restoring their courage to face the unknown (Thompson 2010: 52). As Taylor (2011: 312) points out:

There should be no illusions about how hard it will be for many people to change their values, their beliefs, their whole way of living if they are

sincerely to adopt the attitude of respect for nature and act accordingly.

Psychologically, this may require a profound moral reorientation.

Human-caused climate change is not only a challenge to our morality and overall existence but also an opportunity to emancipate ourselves and become better citizens. In this study, we have focussed on cultivating moral character and conduct in order to inspire 'the hope for revival', sentiments of gratitude and pride rather than making people feel anxious, ashamed or guilty for their consumerist habits (Lear 2006: 95). Hence, we have shown the beneficial role of positive emotions in acknowledging the moral nature of the climate change issue and in nurturing people's courage to participate in collective action at the local level. Moral agents are capable of shaping the future and exerting their 'autonomy and rationality in bringing the world as it is gradually closer to the world as it ought to be' (Taylor 2011: 313).

7.5. Avenues for future academic research

In view of the implications of the outcomes of our enquiry, and the recommendations that come from it, it is clear that further research work is needed; both in strengthening the links between human-caused climate change and the harmful behaviours of moral agents, and in clearly determining what the attitude of respect for nature would imply in practice. A first avenue for further research would be to concentrate on the follow-up phase of our investigation and to examine in more detail the shared morality 'phenomenon' and evaluate the implementation of the written code of norms, principles of conduct and standards of moral character in the community setting. To respect the

promise made to the research participants, the outcome of the current study (i.e. the moral code) will be presented, after the researcher's graduation to Keele University's Vice-Chancellor, and to Keele Students' Union and Keele Postgraduate Association officers. Following this, the next stage of our enquiry would include an assessment of the research impact and the actual behavioural outcomes. This would examine whether or not the community (as a whole) became more motivated to act pro-environmentally, and whether the strategy was effective in the long term. If the shared morality approach proves successful in motivating the student community to adopt pro-environmental behaviours in the long term, then other partner universities will be more likely to replicate the study and stimulate their student body to embrace such a collaborative initiative.

A second avenue of future research relates to ethicists engaging in further theoretical exploration and making use of their expertise to propose a progressive moral system to tackle anthropogenic climate change and its impacts. It means coming up with innovative research to shape the contours of future discussions set to inspire a definite moral purpose and an explicit drive for peace, justice, and sustainability. Clearly, further investigations would do well in more extensively discussing anthropogenic climate change as a moral problem; in these critical times, we could use new conceptions of responsibility and respect for nature for the mutual flourishing of global citizens. What should not be surprising is that we still have a long way to go towards understanding how people perceive, explain or evaluate moral action for a more sustainable future. Taking into account the distinctive features of human-caused climate change, more extensive research focusing on promoting activism for environmental protection and stimulating

citizen engagement and participation at the local level would be particularly worthwhile. We are only just beginning to grasp the importance of supporting people to acknowledge the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles as a moral imperative and the benefits of moral character education. As well as shedding light on why the expertise of practical philosophers is urgently needed for sustainability, the current study also has broader implications which involve encouraging these moral experts to break out of their comfort zone and to become more involved in the community, applying their knowledge and skills in real life settings. A network of engaged ethicists could be created, and a series of debates and public events around the topic of 'philosophers in the community' could be held. These proposed activities would involve a fruitful collaboration between academia, government, businesses, NGOs, the media and community groups and would engage these actors in making positive contributions to a long-running programme of work for environmental protection.

7.6. Final remarks

Over the last few pages, we have explained how the thesis contributes to the body of knowledge on behavioural change approaches to motivating pro-environmental action, we have shown how our findings and results fill gaps in existing research and affect practice, we have considered the various implications and applications, and we have made a number of further recommendations. We have also summed up our collaborative approach to developing a shared morality for environmental protection at the local level. Hopefully, we have made it clear that philosophers have the knowledge and skills to put

morality into practice in the context of tackling anthropogenic climate change and we have made the case that their expertise is urgently needed.

Human beings are rational creatures for whom relationships are vital. Given this, they can learn to trust others and to acquire a radical hope for a world of harmony between mankind and nature. This study empowered its participants by putting the sentiments of guilt aside and everyone contributed in the collective task of defining a shared morality on the university campus: 'The only way we can make change happen is together. Through dialogue and action!' (DSP1). By accepting a nature-centred outlook and by exercising their moral intuition and practical reasoning, people can give up consumerist lifestyles and can overcome the lack of motivation to undertake pro-environmental action. As Jamieson (2007: 482) points out:

We must begin from where we are – changing ourselves, changing our leaders, and changing our institutions – but from here we can change the world. (...) For large changes are caused and constituted by small choices. And in the end, however things turn out, it is how we live that gives meaning and significance to our lives.

Once the attitude of respect for nature is acquired, and the stewardship duty is assumed, people will be ready to embrace a more demanding morality and will get inspired to live up to it.

We are not naïve: we know that the practice of biological annihilation and utter extermination of nature will continue in the future. However, we believe that people should not give up resistance and the hope for a better world. We need radical hope in

tackling human-caused climate change. This can take the form of a new type of virtue which citizens could easily attain through activism and collaborative practices, 'learning what it is to flourish while being responsible for the global biosphere through those manifold, ordinary, and everyday activities characteristic of our human form of life' (Thompson 2010: 44). By acquiring the attitude of respect for nature and by becoming planetary stewards, human beings will start relating to the planet as a 'world organism' and concentrate on flourishing as a part of it, not at the cost of it, or by enslaving it. People are brilliant beings 'at once capable of grasping the future, the abstract, the absent' (Lee 2001: 491). Hence, we just need to find the courage to believe in a life without hyper-consumption, and then we will certainly work out the ways to make it a reality.

At the start of this enquiry, we asked whether a shared morality to protect the natural environment could exist in community settings. Our findings and results have provided a hopeful, positive response to this question. By showing respect for nature and the Earth, as a whole, people are on the right path to develop strong moral character and conduct, fitted to the large-scale impacts of the Anthropocene. Our strategy for attitude change does not provide a quick fix. Rather, it sets a precedent to making use of a philosopher's expertise in nurturing a robust pro-environmental conscience in a collective, and in empowering a community to take ownership in addressing the problems they face. Ultimately, people should not confuse the hardship of the challenging mission of tackling climate change with its absolute failure hence, we urge for us all to roll up our sleeves and prepare to get our hands dirty.

Appendix A: The ethical approval documentation

Appendix A1: The approval letter from the University Ethical Review Panel

Appendix A2: The invitation letter to participate in the focus group with green students

Appendix A3: The email invitation to complete the Keele Non-Green Students'

Questionnaire

Appendix A4: The invitation letter to participate at the interviews with non-green

students

Appendix A5: The invitation letter to participate at the debriefing session with green and

non-green students

Appendix A6: Focus group information sheet

Appendix A7: Interview information sheet

Appendix A8: Debriefing session information sheet

Appendix A9: Focus group consent forms

Appendix A10: Interview consent forms

Appendix A11: Debriefing session consent forms

Appendix A1: The approval letter from the University Ethical Review Panel



Keele
University

RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES

Ref: ERP2251

20th May 2015

Lavinia Ioana Udrea

Research Institute of Social Sciences/SPIRE

Flat 5, Barnes Hall

Keele University

Dear Lavinia

Re: Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?

Thank you for submitting your revised application for review. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel. The following documents have been reviewed and approved by the panel as follows:

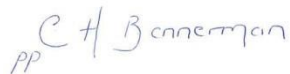
Document(s)	Version Number	Date
Summary document	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Letter of Invitation for focus group	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Letter of Invitation for semi-structured interview	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Letter of Invitation for debriefing session	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Information Sheet for focus group	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Information Sheet for semi-structured interview	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Information Sheet for debriefing session	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for focus group	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for focus group (note taker)	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for semi-structured interview	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for debriefing session	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for debriefing session (note taker)	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for the use of quotes for focus group	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for the use of quotes for semi-structured interview	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Consent Form for the use of quotes for debriefing session	Version 2	13 th May 2015
Focus Group Discussion Guide	Version 1	10 th April 2015
Schedule of research activities	Version 1	10 th April 2015

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application (15 December 2015), you must notify the Ethical Review Panel via the ERP administrator at uso.erps@keele.ac.uk stating ERP2 in the subject line of the e-mail.

If there are any other amendments to your study, you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the ERP administrator stating ERP2 in the subject line of the e-mail. This form is available via <http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics>.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via the ERP administrator on uso.erps@keele.ac.uk stating ERP2 in the subject line of the e-mail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "C H Bonnerman". To the left of the signature, the letters "PP" are written in a smaller, lighter hand.

Dr Colin Rigby

Vice Chair – Ethical Review Panel

CC: RI Manager

Supervisor

Appendix A2: The invitation letter to participate in the focus group with green students



School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

LETTER OF INVITATION

Focus group with green students

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Invitation to participate in a research study on Moral Responsibility towards Nature

You are kindly invited to take part in the research study *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?* I am a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at Keele University. The current research study I am undertaking is the fieldwork component of my PhD degree in Philosophy. The purpose of the research is to explore Keele University students' opinions and their social attitudes regarding the existence of a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

More specifically, I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group with other Keele students to discuss your experience, beliefs and points of view regarding students' behaviour towards nature and current environmental issues faced by the Keele student community. The focus group will last about an hour and a half and will be held on Keele University campus. The participant information sheet and consent forms attached provide further details about the research study.

I would be extremely grateful if you could contact me to indicate whether you are able and willing to take part in this research study. My email address is l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk, or I can be contacted by phone on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus).

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance.

Many thanks for your time and for assisting me in my research.

Yours sincerely,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A3: The e-mail invitation to complete the Keele non-green students' questionnaire

Win Prizes!!! - Complete the Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire

Lavinia Ioana Udrea <l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk>

11 August 2015 at 09:57

To: kpa@maillists.keele.ac.uk

Dear Keele students,

Are you fed up with others telling you to change your student lifestyle just because is unsustainable? Cannot stand anymore the words 'Recycle. Reduce. Reuse' at Keele? Do not want to 'Go Green'? And do not even believe in global warming or climate change?

You have the chance to express how you feel in this questionnaire (the approximate duration to complete it is 15 minutes), where you will be asked to share your opinions about Keele student lifestyle in relation to nature conservation and your values regarding the protection of the natural environment on campus.

https://docs.google.com/a/keele.ac.uk/forms/d/1P9swzmqVe7rr0B9xzMO-AqOU5i3tthtYCjXw-0tIF-0E/viewform?usp=send_form

You could also win prizes, as a thank you for taking part in the research study. All you need to do is complete all questions and provide your Keele email address at the beginning of the questionnaire. The prizes are as follows:

20 X Keele Veg Boxes

20 X Free Lunches at Keele

Who is funding and organising the research study?

The research study is organised by Lavinia Ioana Udrea and is being conducted as part of her PhD degree in Philosophy. The researcher is part-funded in her PhD studies by Keele University.

Your participation in this survey would be highly valued and greatly appreciated.

All the best,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A4: The invitation letter to participate in the interviews with non-green students



School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

LETTER OF INVITATION

The interviews with non-green students

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Invitation to participate in a research study on Moral Responsibility towards Nature

You are kindly invited to take part in the research study *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?* I am a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at Keele University. The current research study I am undertaking is the fieldwork component of my PhD degree in Philosophy. The purpose of the research is to explore Keele University students' opinions and their social attitudes regarding the existence of a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

More specifically, I would like to invite you to take part in an interview to discuss your experience, beliefs and points of view regarding students' behaviour towards nature and current environmental issues faced by the Keele student community. The interview will last about one hour and will be held on Keele University campus. The participant information sheet and consent form attached provide further details about the research study.

I would be extremely grateful if you could contact me to indicate whether you are able and willing to take part in this research study. My email address is l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk, or I can be contacted by phone on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus).

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance.

Many thanks for your time and for assisting me in my research.

Yours sincerely,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A5: The invitation letter to participate in the debriefing session with green and non-green students



Keele
University

School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

LETTER OF INVITATION

The debriefing session with green and non-green students

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Invitation to participate in a research study on Moral Responsibility towards Nature

You are kindly invited to take part in the research study *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?* I am a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at Keele University. The current research study I am undertaking is the fieldwork component of my PhD degree in Philosophy. The purpose of the research is to explore Keele University students' opinions and their social attitudes regarding the existence of a sense of moral responsibility towards nature.

More specifically, I would like to invite you to take part in a debriefing session with other Keele students to discuss your experience, beliefs and points of view regarding students' behaviour towards nature and current environmental issues faced by the Keele student community. The debriefing session will last about one hour and will be held on Keele

University campus. The participant information sheet and consent form attached provide further details about the research study.

I would be extremely grateful if you could contact me to indicate whether you are able and willing to take part in this research study. My email address is l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk, or I can be contacted by phone on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus).

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance.

Many thanks for your time and for assisting me in my research.

Yours sincerely,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A6: The information sheet of the focus group with green students



School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

INFORMATION SHEET

The focus group with green students

Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Aims of the Research

The research study aims to explore whether there is a *shared morality* that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection. The research will include a focus group and semi-structured interviews with Keele University students who display varying levels of willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally. A questionnaire will also be administered to a number of these participants in the course of the project. Finally, the research will close with a debriefing session in which the findings of the study will be communicated to all participants.

Invitation

You have already been invited to take part in this research project, and more specifically to take part in a focus group. The project is being undertaken by Lavinia Ioana Udrea, a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at

Keele University (supervised by Dr Elisabeth Carter, Prof Andrew Dobson and Dr Sorin Baiasu).

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what your participation will involve.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance.

You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student at Keele University (and will be continuing your studies for the academic year 2015-16) and have been actively involved in campus-based environmental protection initiatives. You have been invited along with eight other students to take part in the focus group that makes up this study.

Do I have to take part?

Your contribution will be valuable and will enrich the research study. However, you are free to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will

be asked to sign two consent forms. One is for you to keep and the other is for the researcher's records. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving reasons.

What will happen if I take part?

Nine Keele University students who are actively involved in environmental protection initiatives will be invited to take part in a focus group. The focus group session will last approximately one and a half hours and will take place on Keele University campus. In the focus group, participants will be asked to discuss their motivations for acting sustainably and their values regarding the protection of the natural environment. Points from the discussion will be recorded on a flip chart and/or whiteboard, and the focus group session will also be audio-recorded (see section on confidentiality below), and a note taker will be present.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

There will be no direct personal benefit to you in taking part in this study. However, there will be wider benefits in as much as participating in the focus group will allow you to meet other Keele environmental enthusiasts and thus establish possible future collaborations for Keele-based community projects. The discussions will also provide an opportunity to gain a motivational boost to continue working for environmental protection.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

There are no discernible risks involved in taking part in this project. At the most, you might disagree with other participants, or you might find that one or more participants

might attempt to impose their personal opinions on the others. The researcher will do everything in her power to ensure the discussions run smoothly and are conducted in a friendly fashion. She has wide-experience in facilitating discussions and feels confident in mediating any conflicts or misunderstandings that might occur during the focus group.

How will information about me be used?

Discussion points from the focus group will be noted, in writing, on a flip chart and/or whiteboard. A record of these points will be kept by retaining the paper sheets of the flip chart and/or by taking photos of the notes written on the whiteboard. In addition, the focus group discussion will be audio-recorded on a digital recorder, and a note taker will be present to make notes and observations during the discussion using the researcher's laptop.

The flip chart and note taker's notes, photos and digital audio recording will be analysed by the researcher as part of her PhD project. This PhD work may subsequently be presented at national and international research conferences, and/or published in academic journals.

Who will have access to information about me?

Hard copies of any material containing personally identifiable information about the participants (e.g. sheets from the flip chart) will be kept secured in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office. Electronic data (photos, digital audio recording) containing personally identifiable information about the participants will be stored on password-protected media devices to which only the researcher and her supervisors have access to.

No one other than the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the notes, photos, or audio recording of the focus groups.

Since the research activity is a focus group, the anonymity of participants cannot be guaranteed. That is, simply by being part of the focus group, each participant will know who else was present and what each person said. However, several measures will be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents. At the start of the focus group, all participants will be asked to read the 'Informed Consent' documentation and will be asked to sign a non-disclosure statement. By signing this statement, participants are agreeing not to disclose any information pertaining to who was part of the focus group, what points were discussed, and what views were aired. The confidentiality of respondents will be further safeguarded by the way the collected data will be used. The names of participants and any other possibly identifying information will not be disclosed in the write-up of the PhD or any subsequent conference papers or publications. In addition to these measures, the signed consent forms will be kept separately from the data collected from the focus group, so as to limit the ability of responses being linked to any specific individual. All materials (hard copy and electronic) and all data containing personally identifiable information about participants will be destroyed at the request of any individual participant.

By taking all these measures, the researcher will do her utmost to safeguard the confidentiality of all participants. That said, she nonetheless must work within the confines of current legislation over such matters as privacy and confidentiality, data protection and human rights. In a very small number of cases therefore (for example

where there is concern over actual or potential harm to yourself or others) offers of confidentiality may sometimes be overridden by law.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is organised by Lavinia Ioana Udrea and is being conducted as part of her PhD degree in Philosophy. The researcher is part-funded in her PhD studies by Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do her best to answer your questions. You should contact *Lavinia Ioana Udrea* on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus), or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact her supervisor, *Dr Elisabeth Carter* on 01782 734 248 or at e.carter@keele.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton

Research Governance Officer, Research & Enterprise Services. E-mail:

n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or require any further information, either now or at any time during the research study, please contact me (Lavinia Ioana Udrea) on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus) or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Kind regards,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A7: The information sheet of the interviews with non-green students



School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

INFORMATION SHEET

The interviews with non-green students

Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Aims of the Research

The research study aims to explore whether there is a *shared morality* that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection. The research will include a focus group and semi-structured interviews with Keele University students who display varying levels of willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally. A questionnaire will also be administered to a number of these participants in the course of the project. Finally, the research will close with a debriefing session in which the findings of the study will be communicated to all participants.

Invitation

You have already been invited to take part in this research project, and more specifically to take part in an interview. The project is being undertaken by Lavinia Ioana Udrea, a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy at

Keele University (supervised by Dr Elisabeth Carter, Prof Andrew Dobson and Dr Sorin Baiasu).

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what your participation will involve.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student at Keele University (and will be continuing your studies for the academic year 2015-16) and have already completed participants' selection questionnaire. You have been invited along with other 19 students to take part in individual interviews that make up this study.

Do I have to take part?

Your contribution will be valuable and will enrich the research study. However, you are free to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will

be asked to sign two consent forms. One is for you to keep and the other is for the researcher's records. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving reasons.

What will happen if I take part?

20 Keele University students who have already completed participants' selection questionnaire will be invited to take part in an individual interview. The interview will last approximately one hour and will take place on Keele University campus.

In the interview, participants will be asked to discuss about the need to make student lifestyle more sustainable and their values regarding the protection of the natural environment. The discussions will be audio-recorded (see section on confidentiality below). After the interview, participants will be asked to complete for the second time the participants' selection questionnaire (on paper) to note any changes (if any) that might have taken place regarding their beliefs and attitudes as a result of the interview discussion.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

There will be no direct personal benefit to you in taking part in this study. However, there will be wider benefits in as much as participating in the interview will allow you to get a better understanding of the personal values and attitudes in relation to environmental protection and see more clearly what position you hold in the nature conservation debate.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

There are no discernible risks involved in taking part in this study.

How will information about me be used?

The interview discussion will be audio-recorded on a digital recorder, and a record of the filled in questionnaires will be kept for data analysis to be undertaken by the researcher as part of her PhD project. This PhD work may subsequently be presented at national and international research conferences, and/or published in academic journals.

Who will have access to information about me?

Hard copies of any material containing personally identifiable information about the participants (e.g. sheets from the flip chart) will be kept secured in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office. Electronic data (digital audio recording) containing personally identifiable information about the participants will be stored on password-protected media devices to which only the researcher and her supervisors have access to. No one other than the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the filled in questionnaires or audio recording of the interview.

Since the research activity is an interview, the anonymity of participants cannot be guaranteed. That is, simply by being part of the interview, the researcher will know who was present and what the person said. At the start of the interview, you will be asked to read and sign the 'Informed Consent' documentation. The confidentiality of respondents will be further safeguarded by the way the collected data will be used. The names of participants and any other possibly identifying information will not be disclosed in the

write-up of the PhD or any subsequent conference papers or publications. In addition to these measures, the signed consent forms will be kept separately from the data collected from the interview, so as to limit the ability of responses being linked to any specific individual. All materials (hard copy and electronic) and all data containing personally identifiable information about participants will be destroyed at the request of any individual participant.

By taking all these measures, the researcher will do her utmost to safeguard the confidentiality of all participants. That said she nonetheless must work within the confines of current legislation over such matters as privacy and confidentiality, data protection and human rights. In a very small number of cases therefore (for example where there is concern over actual or potential harm to yourself or others) offers of confidentiality may sometimes be overridden by law.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is organised by Lavinia Ioana Udrea and is being conducted as part of her PhD degree in Philosophy. The researcher is part-funded in her PhD studies by Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do her best to answer your questions. You should contact *Lavinia Ioana Udrea* on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus), or at

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact her supervisor, *Dr Elisabeth Carter* on 01782 734 248 or at e.carter@keele.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the study, please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton

Research Governance Officer, Research & Enterprise Services. E-mail:

n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or require any further information, either now or at any time during the research study, please contact me (Lavinia Ioana Udrea) on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus) or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Kind regards,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A8: The information sheet of the debriefing session with green and non-green students



School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)

INFORMATION SHEET

The debriefing session with green and non-green students

Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Aims of the Research

The research study aims to explore whether there is a *shared morality* that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection. The research will include a focus group and semi-structured interviews with Keele University students who display varying levels of willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally. A questionnaire will also be administered to a number of these participants in the course of the project. Finally, the research will close with a debriefing session in which the findings of the study will be communicated to all participants.

Invitation

You have already been invited to take part in this research project, and more specifically to take part in a debriefing session. The project is being undertaken by Lavinia Ioana Udrea, a Philosophy PhD student in the School of Politics, International Relations and

Philosophy at Keele University (supervised by Dr Elisabeth Carter, Prof Andrew Dobson and Dr Sorin Baiasu).

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what your participation will involve.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

To protect the interests of any vulnerable participants, I kindly ask you to inform me if you require any additional support to take part in research activity to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be made in advance.

You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way.

Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student at Keele University (and will be continuing your studies for the academic year 2015-16) and have already been involved in one of the previous activities (focus group or interview) of the current research study. You have been invited along with 26 other students to take part in the debriefing session that makes up this study.

Do I have to take part?

Your contribution will be valuable and will enrich the research study. However, you are free to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will

be asked to sign two consent forms. One is for you to keep and the other is for the researcher's records. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without giving reasons.

What will happen if I take part?

27 Keele University students who have already been involved in one of the previous activities (focus group or interview) of the current research study will be invited to take part in a debriefing session. The debriefing session will last approximately one hour and will take place on Keele University campus.

The purpose of the debriefing session is to communicate the findings and results of the data analysis to all the participants who have been involved in the study and to discuss the way they experienced the research activity and group collaboration regarding environmental protection. At the end of the debriefing session, I will invite participants to write testimonials as a way of documenting the outcomes of their contribution to the research study. Points from the discussion will be recorded on a flip chart and/or whiteboard, and the discussions will also be audio-recorded (see section on confidentiality below) and a note taker will be present.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

There will be no direct personal benefit to you in taking part in this study. However, there will be wider benefits in as much as participating in the debriefing session will allow you to experience a safe, secured and non-judgemental environment where you will be able

to share your opinions and explain how the previous research activity impacted your beliefs and current lifestyle (if this is the case).

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

There are no discernible risks involved in taking part in this project. At the most, you might disagree with other participants, or you might find that one or more participants might attempt to impose their personal opinions on the others. The researcher will do everything in her power to ensure the discussions run smoothly and are conducted in a friendly fashion. She has wide-experience in facilitating discussions and feels confident in mediating any conflicts or misunderstandings that might occur during the debriefing session.

How will information about me be used?

Discussion points from the debriefing session will be noted, in writing, on a flip chart and/or whiteboard and written testimonials. A record of these points will be kept by retaining the sheets from the paper flip chart and/or by taking photos of the notes written on the whiteboard. In addition, the debriefing session discussion will be audio-recorded on a digital recorder, and a note taker will be present to make notes and observations during the discussion using the researcher's laptop.

The flip chart and note taker's notes, photos, written testimonials and digital audio recording will be analysed by the researcher as part of her PhD project. This PhD work may subsequently be presented at national and international research conferences, and/or published in academic journals.

Who will have access to information about me?

Hard copies of any material containing personally identifiable information about the participants (e.g. sheets from the flip chart) will be kept secured in a locked cupboard in the researcher's office. Electronic data (photos, digital audio recording) containing personally identifiable information about the participants will be stored on password-protected media devices to which only the researcher and her supervisors have access to. No one other than the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the notes, written testimonials, photos, or audio recording of the debriefing session.

Since the research activity is a debriefing session, the anonymity of participants cannot be guaranteed. That is, simply by being part of the debriefing session, each participant will know who else was present and what each person said. However, a number of measures will be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of respondents. At the start of the debriefing session, all participants will be asked to read the 'Informed Consent' documentation and will be asked to sign a non-disclosure statement. By signing this statement, participants are agreeing not to disclose any information pertaining to who was part of the debriefing session, what points were discussed, and what views were aired. The confidentiality of respondents will be further safeguarded by the way the collected data will be used. The names of participants and any other possibly identifying information will not be disclosed in the write-up of the PhD or any subsequent conference papers or publications. In addition to these measures, the signed consent forms will be kept separately from the data collected from the focus group, so as to limit the ability of responses being linked to any specific individual. All materials (hard copy and electronic)

and all data containing personally identifiable information about participants will be destroyed at the request of any individual participant.

By taking all these measures, the researcher will do her utmost to safeguard the confidentiality of all participants. That said she nonetheless must work within the confines of current legislation over such matters as privacy and confidentiality, data protection and human rights. In a very small number of cases therefore (for example where there is concern over actual or potential harm to yourself or others) offers of confidentiality may sometimes be overridden by law.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is organised by Lavinia Ioana Udrea and is being conducted as part of her PhD degree in Philosophy. The researcher is part-funded in her PhD studies by Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do her best to answer your questions. You should contact *Lavinia Ioana Udrea* on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus), or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact her supervisor, *Dr Elisabeth Carter* on 01782 734 248 or at e.carter@keele.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the study, please write

to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton

Research Governance Officer, Research & Enterprise Services. E-mail:

n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or require any further information, either now or at any time during the research study, please contact me (Lavinia Ioana Udrea) on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus) or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Kind regards,

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Appendix A9: Focus group consent forms

School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)



CONSENT FORM

The focus group with green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet version 2, dated 13/05/2015 for the above research study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above research study.
4. I agree to the focus group being audio recorded.

5. I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.
6. I agree to keep the issues discussed within the focus group confidential and in particular, to avoid identifying any of the participants in relation to these issues/individual comments made during the session.
7. I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects.
8. I understand that if I change my mind, all my data will be removed from the research study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature



Keele
University

CONSENT FORM (for the use of quotes)

The focus group with green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the appropriate box

(tick one box only)

1. I agree for my quotes to be used.
2. I do not agree for my quotes to be used.

Name of participant Date Signature

Researcher Date Signature



CONSENT FORM

The interviews with non-green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet version 2, dated 13/05/2015 for the above research study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above research study.
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.

5. I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.
6. I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects.
7. I understand that if I change my mind, all my data will be removed from the research study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature



CONSENT FORM (for the use of quotes)

The interviews with non-green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the appropriate box

(tick one box only)

1. I agree for my quotes to be used.
2. I do not agree for my quotes to be used.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix A11: Debriefing session consent forms

School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy

(SPIRE)



CONSENT FORM

The debriefing session with green and non-green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet version 2, dated 13/05/2015 for the above research study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above research study.

4. I agree to the debriefing session being audio recorded.
5. I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.
6. I agree to keep the issues discussed within the debriefing session confidential and in particular, to avoid identifying any of the participants in relation to these issues/individual comments made during the session
7. I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects.
8. I understand that if I change my mind, all my data will be removed from the research study.

Name of participant	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature



CONSENT FORM (for the use of quotes)

The debriefing session with green and non-green students

Research Study Title: *Is there a shared morality that could be deployed in the context of environmental protection?*

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Lavinia Ioana UDREA

Philosophy PhD Student - School of Politics, Int'l Relations & Philosophy. E-mail:

l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk

Please tick the appropriate box

(tick one box only)

1. I agree for my quotes to be used.
2. I do not agree for my quotes to be used.

Name of participant Date Signature

Researcher Date Signature

Appendix B: The resources used in the research activities

Appendix B1: Focus group question set

Appendix B2: The Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire

Appendix B3: Interview question set

Appendix B4: Debriefing session question set

Appendix B5: The final version of the moral code for environmental protection on Keele
campus

Appendix B1: The focus group (with green students) question set

Introduction

What is your name?

What do you study at Keele?

1. Think back to when you first arrived on campus, what was your impression of the natural environment at Keele University?

Transition Questions

2. How would you describe students' behaviour towards the natural environment on Keele University campus?
3. Do you consider the well-being of the student community dependent on the natural environment on Keele University campus? Why?
4. What values do students who protect the natural environment on Keele University campus share?

Key Questions

5. How do you feel about the following statement?

Every student has the responsibility to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus.

6. Should the student community adhere to a moral code to protect the natural environment on Keele University campus? Why?

Ending Question

7. What would be the moral norms for protecting the natural environment on Keele University campus that students should take into consideration in their daily life?

A norm is an accepted or typical behaviour in a group of people. So, a moral norm is the morality that is expected of people in their social group.

Appendix B2: The Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire

In this questionnaire, you will be asked to share your opinions about Keele student lifestyle in relation to nature conservation and your values regarding the protection of the natural environment on campus.

Do I have to take part?

Your contribution will be valuable and will enrich the research study. However, you are free to decide whether you wish to take part.

What are the benefits of taking part?

You have the opportunity to win prizes, as a thank you for taking part in the research study. There will be wider benefits in as much as completing the questionnaire will allow you to get a better understanding of the personal values and attitudes in relation to environmental protection and see more clearly what position you hold in the nature conservation debate. It will take you about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is organised by Lavinia Ioana Udrea and is being conducted as part of her PhD degree in Philosophy, you will, therefore, need to provide your consent to take part in the study via the tick boxes below. The researcher is part funded in her PhD studies by Keele University.

To enter the prize draw all you need to do is complete all questions in the survey and provide your Keele email address at the beginning of the questionnaire. The prizes are as follows:

20 X Keele VegBoxes (<http://keelesu.com/vegbox/>)

20 X Free Lunches on Keele campus

There are no likely negative consequences of taking part in this research. If you require further assistance to complete this survey or if you have any questions about this research project, please contact Lavinia Ioana Udrea on 01782 734 091 (from outside Keele) or 34091 (from on campus), or at l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk who will be happy to help you.

Your participation in this survey would be highly valued and greatly appreciated.

1. I agree to take part in this research study. *

If for any reason you wish to withdraw your contribution to this research study, please email Lavinia Ioana Udrea (l.i.udrea@keele.ac.uk) expressing your wish to do so, provided that you gave your Keele email address at the time of completing the questionnaire.

Mark only one oval.

Agree

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and if I change my mind, all my data will be removed from the research study. *

Mark only one oval.

Agree

3. I understand that the data collected about me in the completed questionnaire will be anonymised. *

Electronic data containing personally identifiable information about you, as a research participant, will be stored on password protected media devices to which only the researcher and her supervisors have access to.

Mark only one oval.

Agree

4. I agree to allow for anonymous quotes and the dataset collected to be used for future research outputs. *

Mark only one oval.

Agree Disagree

Part I. General Questions

5. Your Keele email address: *

.....

6. Which of the following best describes your status? *

Tick all that apply.

- Undergraduate student
- Postgraduate (Taught) student
- Postgraduate (Research) student

7. Which academic year are you currently in? * Tick all that apply.

Foundation year

1st year

2nd year

3rd year

Other:

8. What academic discipline/subject area do you study at Keele? *

If you have more than one discipline/subject area, please specify.

Part II. Non-Green Student Profile Questions

9. Do you see yourself as 'green' in any way? *

Mark only one square.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Yes, very much so	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all

10. Do you consider yourself to be sceptical about the current environmental threats we face due to global warming and people's unsustainable behaviour? *

Mark only one square.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Yes, very much so	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No, not at all

11. Could you please rate your interest and concern as a Keele student, for environmental protection/ nature conservation on campus? *

Tick all that apply.

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not really interested
- Not interested at all
- Don't know
- Rather not say

12. What is your level of pro-environmental activity on Keele campus? *

Mark only one square.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very high	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very low

13. How willing are you to change your student lifestyle to reduce the impact you have on the environment at Keele? *

Tick all that apply.

- Extremely willing
- Very willing
- Moderately willing
- Slightly willing
- Not at all willing
- Don't know
- Rather not say

14. When it comes to protecting the natural environment on Keele campus, to what population segment do you consider yourself to be part of? *

A framework for pro-environmental behaviours (Defra 2008) sets classes of consumers taking into consideration their willingness and ability to act pro-environmentally to obtain the best possible results while engaging people of all social strata. For further information, please visit the link provided:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69277/pb13574-behaviours-report-080110.pdf

Mark only one square.

- Positive greens
- Waste watchers
- Concerned consumers
- Sideline supporters
- Cautious participants
- Stalled starters
- Honestly disengaged
- Don't know
- Rather not say

Part III. Student Behaviour on Keele Campus

15. Thinking back to when you first arrived on campus, could you describe in one sentence what was your impression of the natural environment at Keele University?

16. How would you describe students' behaviour towards the natural environment on Keele campus?
17. What could the University do to positively influence you to become more sustainable and protect the natural environment whilst at Keele?
18. How relevant do you think a student sustainability induction would be to you in order to become more sustainable and protect the natural environment on Keele campus?

Part IV. Personal Attitudes towards Environmental Protection at Keele

19. How confident are you in understanding and explaining to others the meaning of the following words:

Mark only one square per row.

	Very confident	Confident	Moderately confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident	Don't know	Rather not say
Environmental protection							
Nature conservation							
Sustainable development							
Climate change							
Environmental citizenship							
Environmental justice							

20. How confident are you in using educational and learning resources available at Keele to become better informed about climate change and nature conservation?

21. How often do you think of the need to wisely use your available student resources, whilst at university?

Tick all that apply.

- Very frequently
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never
- Don't know
- Rather not say

22. How important do you think each of the following actions are in your daily student life?*

Mark only one square per row.

	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Unimportant	Very unimportant	Don't know	Rather not say
Recycling							
Reusing of available resources							
Reducing waste and consumption, in general							

23. What do you think about using public transport/green transport/student car share schemes to reduce your carbon footprint while being at Keele? *

24. How often in your daily student life do you make decisions thinking about the possible consequences of your actions on the natural environment at Keele? *

Tick all that apply.

Very frequently

Frequently

Occasionally

Rarely

Never

Don't know

Rather not say

25. How do you feel about donating parts of your available student resources (e.g. money, volunteer work, goods, food) to the less privileged and/ or local charities at Keele?

26. Do you ever think of yourself as 'a champion of change'? Why?

27. How willing are you to engage with environmental initiatives and projects implemented at Keele?

28. If you had to choose between collective work and individual work for nature conservation at Keele, what would you choose? Why?
29. What is your opinion about the Keele green students (e.g. KeeleSU Environmental Student Representative, Think Green Student Society, Keele Student Eats), who are heavily engaged in environmental protection initiatives and projects on campus?

Part V. Personal Beliefs and Values towards Environmental Protection at Keele

30. How important is Keele sustainable culture (becoming familiar with the rules and practices in place toward environmental protection at Keele) to you, as a student? Why?*

31. Of the following values, which five do you consider the most relevant in influencing your behaviour/ attitude towards the natural environment on Keele campus? *

Tick all that apply.

- Self-discipline
- Ambition, hard work, aspiration
- Spirituality
- Freedom of action and thought
- Responsibility
- Love
- Independence, self-reliance, self-sufficiency
- Social recognition, respect, approval by other

- Sense of belonging, feeling that others care about me
- Cleanliness, neatness, tidiness
- Helpfulness - working for the welfare of nature and others
- Capability, competence, effectiveness, efficiency
- Creativity
- Being part of nature, fitting into nature
- Being healthy
- Forgiveness, willingness to pardon others
- Honesty
- Equality – equal opportunity for all
- Enjoying life
- Intelligence
- Detachment from worldly concerns
- Success - achieving goals
- Moderation, avoiding extremes of feeling and action
- Broadmindedness, tolerance of different ideas and beliefs
- Self-respect
- Religious devotion
- Friendship
- Curiosity – being interested in everything
- Wealth, material possessions, money

32. Why did you pick these particular five values out of the list provided?

If you would like to explain your choice, please write below.

33. How do you feel about the following statement: 'We all have joint responsibility for our communities' (Keele University Student 2015) *

34. Do you consider the well-being of the student community dependent on the natural environment at Keele? Why? *

35. Do you think that having a moral code (set of moral norms) to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community adheres to, is a good idea? Why? *

Definition of the word: norm. A norm is an accepted or typical behaviour in a group of people. So, a moral norm is the morality that is expected of people in their social group.

For example, it is a moral norm in society that one should not steal. It is not a moral norm to match your socks (it is a norm to match them, but it is not immoral to mismatch them, so it is not a moral norm).

36. Do you have any final comments?

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Appendix B3: The interviews (with non-green students) question set

General questions

1. What academic discipline/subject area do you study at Keele? Does your subject have any connection to the natural environment?

The non-green student profile

2. Why did you decide to complete the Keele Non-Green Students' Questionnaire?
3. What does it mean to 'be green' to you?
 - 3.1. Is there a stereotype that you can think of related to 'being green'?
 - 3.2. Read quote: 'I do find however that [green students] can conform to a bit of a stereotype which some people may find off-putting' (QP9). What is this stereotype about?
4. Questionnaire respondents expressed that there is a sense of coercion in the pro-environmental debate. What do you think?
 - 4.1. Read quote: 'the patronising or even mildly aggressive tactics of numerous green representatives serve only to alienate people from what is otherwise a valuable cause, such that they become entirely disillusioned and disinterested' (QP26). Is this the case? Why?
 - 4.2. Read quote: 'It is important that people are not forced into being green'(QP35). Why is that?
5. Some questionnaire respondents stated that environmental protection is a hard and time-consuming matter to deal with. What do you think?

6. With what type of environmental initiatives, you would be more open to engage?

7. Are you willing to change your lifestyle whilst at Keele? Why?

7.1. Read quote: ‘Make it easier (...) Put more things in place so that students could passively be green without thinking about it’ (QP46), ‘give simple steps that we can follow’ (QP33). How do you feel about these quotes?

8. When filling in the questionnaire, did you consider yourself to be part of a Defra population segment? If yes, which one and why?

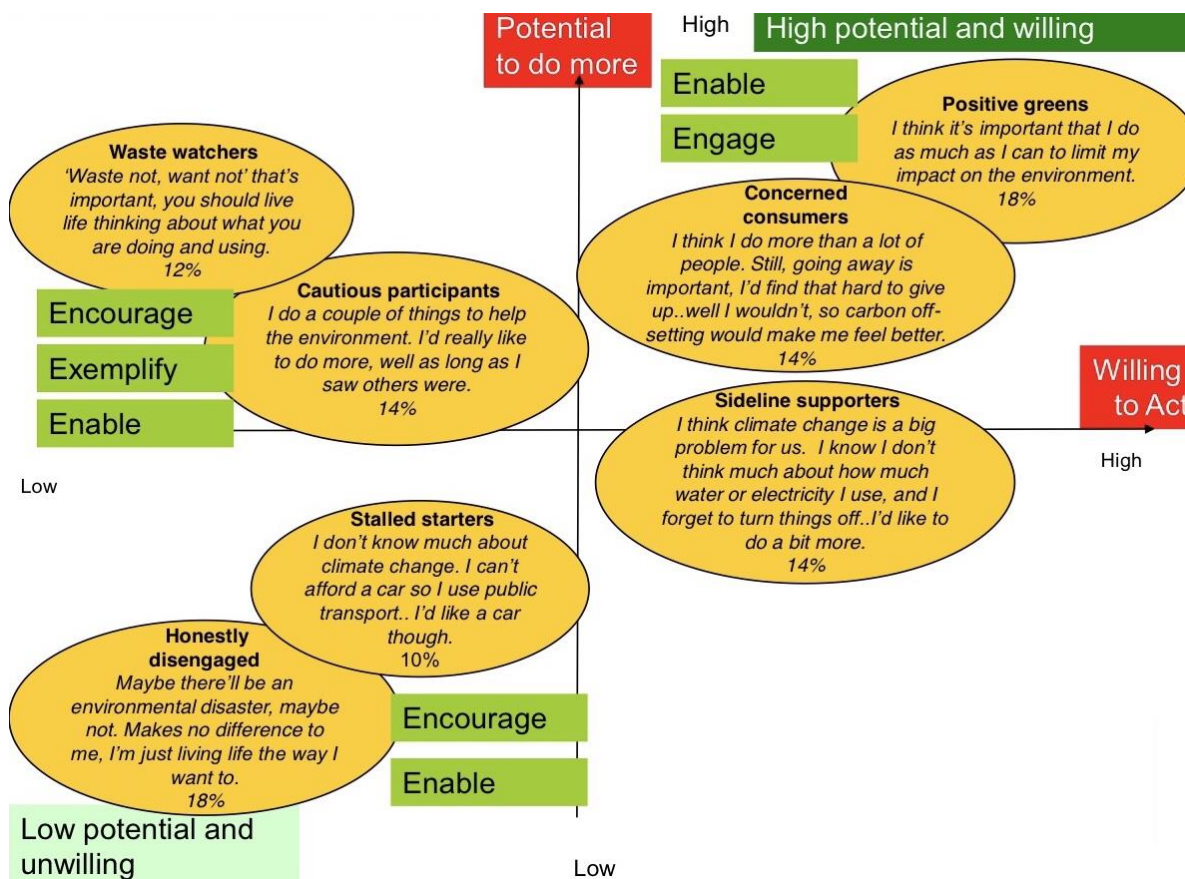


Figure B.1. Defra's segmentation model used in the interview stage with non-green students (Defra 2011c: 18)

Student behaviour on Keele campus

9. How would you describe student behaviour towards the natural environment on Keele campus? Why?

9.1. Read quote: 'People are too comfortable in their sheltered, soft lives to actively be willing to make too much change. (...) If it is not forced down their throats by biased mass media or ignorant peer pressure, they have no interest' (QP40). Is this true? What is your opinion?

10. When you hear the following two concepts *environmental citizenship* and *environmental justice* what do they mean to you?

11. Do you think students have a collective responsibility to protect the environment at Keele? Why?

Personal attitudes towards environmental protection at Keele

12. How easy is for you to consider the possible consequences of your actions on the natural environment at Keele?

12.1. Read quote: 'I do what I can - I try to avoid food waste, I reuse/reduce/ /recycle as far as possible, but I am human, and I find it hard to exclude myself completely from the trappings of modern life' (QP49). What is your opinion in regards to the offered response?

13. Do you ever think of yourself as a 'champion of change'? A champion of change is 'a person who is very interested in new or different ways of doing something and is determined to make changes happen' (Cambridge Dictionary).

13.1. 75% of the respondents do not see themselves as champions of change. Do you agree with the 75%? Why do you think is this the case?

Personal beliefs and values towards environmental protection at Keele

14. 58,6% of respondents answered that a Keele sustainable culture (becoming familiar with the rules and practices in place toward environmental protection at Keele) is important for them, as students. Do you agree with the 58.6%?

15. The most common values chosen by the questionnaire respondents are: **being healthy; responsibility; cleanliness**, neatness, tidiness; **being part of nature**, fitting into nature; **helpfulness**, working for the welfare of nature and others and **enjoying life**) out of the 29 values provided. Why do you think respondents picked these particular six values out of the list provided?

15.1. What is the connection between these values and the natural environment?

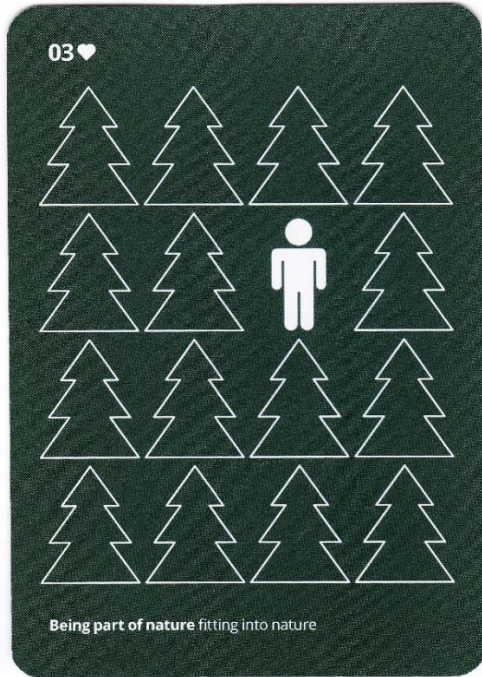




Figure B.2. PIRC' (2015b) set of values cards used in the interview stage with non-green students

16. Do you think that having a moral code (set of moral norms) to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community adheres to, is a good idea?

16.1. 63% of questionnaire respondents said that having a moral code for environmental protection on the Keele campus is a good idea.

Read positive comment: 'Yes I think so, although individually we should all take responsibility for the environment. If there is a set standard of acceptable behaviour, this means more people are likely to adhere to it, and those who do not are more likely to be reprimanded or face the contempt of the community. This will hopefully mean everyone will take more responsibility for the environment' (QP9). What is your opinion in regards to the offered response?

16.2. 23,9% of questionnaire respondents said that having a moral code for environmental protection on the Keele campus is not a good idea.

Read negative quote: 'I fear that this would be encroaching on student's personal freedoms to make choices about their own life or the world around them. By enforcing a code, it becomes something to oppose and may actually have a negative effect on the natural environment'(QP20). What do you think about the student's response?

17. Read quote: 'It is important to note that not everyone has the same opportunity to achieve change. It is up to those that do to take action, push for change and to enable others to do so too' (QP19). How do you feel about this quote?

Appendix B4: The debriefing session with green and non-green students question set

Introduction

What is your name?

What do you study at Keele?

1. Based on your previous involvement in the research study, what do you expect to find out in the debriefing session?

Objective A

We presented the preliminary outcomes of the data analysis and additional findings related to students' behaviour to be considered in addressing the existent value-action gap for environmental protection in the academic community.

2. Group discussion: We asked for participants' opinion regarding the partial results of the data analysis.
3. Do you think that having a moral code (set of moral norms) to protect the natural environment at Keele to which the student community adheres to, is a good idea?

Objective B

We presented the initial moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus developed by green students in the focus group and inquired if the research participants would suggest any improvements in its design.

4. Group exercise: We divided participants into mixed groups to improve the initial moral code to be sent for review and implementation to the Vice-Chancellor of Keele University and the Students' Union.

Appendix B5: The final version of the moral code for environmental protection on Keele campus developed by green and non-green students

‘We all have a joint responsibility to and for our communities.’ - Keele student

Preamble:

We are Keele students, and these are the values (that form the moral code of conduct) we strive to hold onto our sustainable green campus.

Pledge I. Adopt a low carbon student lifestyle

We will try to:

1. Reduce resource use.
2. Reuse and recycle what we can.
3. Use public transport/green transport/car share schemes.
4. Donate what we can, be it: money, food, clothes, and time.

Pledge II. Be environmentally conscious

We will try to:

5. Think about the consequences of our actions and become better informed about environmental protection.
6. Recognise we are in a privileged position as students to take environmental action and encourage others to do the same to help those who do not have the privilege that we have.

Pledge III. Educate ourselves about sustainability

We will try to:

7. Familiarize ourselves and engage with the University's environmental culture and practices, through learning resources and initiatives.
8. Attend the University' sustainability induction.

Pledge IV. Ensure the well-being of the student community

We will try to:

9. Work together, collectively (rather than individually) for environmental protection.
10. Be environmental advocates and advise others on how to be more sustainable.
11. Be change agents, supporters, or examples of sustainability.

'This is what we try to do, and we would like you to come and join us.'- Keele student

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