Christa Uusi-Rauva

The Influence of Communication on Perceived Barriers

to Environmental Action

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To all who gave me inspiration

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is motivated by a desire to increase our understanding of the role of communication in affecting barriers that individuals perceive to environmental action, especially in the context of organizations. This is achieved by reviewing previous literature and building a theoretical framework based on it in Part I, as well as by analyzing two different types of empirical data in the four essays that form Part II.

In Part I, the role of communication in influencing individuals' environmental behavior is examined from a perspective that combines two types of communication that have previously been studied as separate fields, i.e. media and organizational communication. Based on the theoretical framework, two overall research questions are formed: *"What barriers to individual environmental action can be identified?"* and *"What is the role of communication in affecting these barriers?"*

In Part II, the first two essays examine the following two more specific research questions: *"How do the media in different EU countries represent the EU climate package?"* and *"How might these media representations overcome previously identified barriers to environmental action, or create new barriers?"* The analyses in these essays are undertaken from a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective. Essay 1 looks at 35 newspaper texts from six EU countries, Essay 2 at 16 newspaper texts from four EU countries. The latter two essays aim to answer the other two specific questions: *"What potential barriers to environmental action can be identified in organizations?"* and *"How can organizations communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to overcome these barriers?"* The answers are examined through qualitative thematic interviews (Essay 3: N=12 in one case company; Essay 4: N=13 in 13 case companies).

The findings of the first two essays suggest that with regard to reporting on the EU climate package in 2008, media representations might have contributed to maintaining and reinforcing three previously identified barriers to individuals' environmental action: the lack of political action by international and national governments, the attitude of decision-makers that other issues, i.e. financial and industrial concerns are more important than the environment, and collective notions of weak sustainability that do not promote radical 'green' action to fight climate change. The findings of the latter two essays suggest that the main barriers to environmental action in organizations are related to four issues: the importance of business-oriented rather than ecological values, employees' low level of motivation for environmental action, the organizational culture of constantly being busy, and employees' unwillingness to discuss environmental issues with their colleagues. To overcome these barriers in organizations, the dissertation proposes a framework for internal environment-related communication and makes five specific recommendations: only asking small environmental actions from employees, keeping the environment-business 'fun and positive', communicating face-to-face rather than electronically, assigning environmental contact persons to act as mediators between employees, and providing employees with incentives for meeting environmental targets.

Keywords: *communication, environment, environmental action*

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Writing a dissertation has little to do with the meaning and purpose of life. For me, however, it so happened that the writing coincided with an increased awareness and remembering of who we really are and why we are here. This made the writing process a great deal easier for two main reasons. On the one hand, I knew through direct experience that I was never alone when writing. On the other hand, it made me realize how little the end result really matters in the greater scheme of things.

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Helsinki, October 25, 2010

Christa

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1 Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to better understand the influence of communication on barriers that individuals perceive to environmental action. This is achieved through examining individuals as environmental actors in the context of organizations. In doing so, the study provides a link between four fields of research that have, until now, been examined as relatively separate from each other: research on individuals' environmental behavior, environmental leadership, media communication of environmental issues, and internal environment-related communication in organizations. In addition to proposing a theoretical framework that demonstrates how these research fields are linked to each other, the individual essays that form the main part of the dissertation advance our knowledge in each of these fields through qualitative analyses of media texts on the one hand, and interview material from case companies on the other.

The dissertation is composed of two parts. The first part is an overview that introduces the topic area, provides a framework for understanding how the four essays relate to each other, and summarizes the findings. The second part consists of the four essays.

The structure of the overview is the following. First, this introductory chapter provides the motivation for the study, identifies gaps in previous literature and presents the research questions used to guide the research process. Section 2 then demonstrates how the theoretical framework guiding the study was developed. This is followed by Section 3, which presents a more detailed review of previous research in the specific fields examined in the individual essays. In Section 4, the data and methodologies used are introduced, and the media and companies from where the data was gathered are described. After that, Section 5 summarizes the objectives, results, and contributions of the essays. Finally, Sections 6 and 7 present the conclusions drawn from the study and outline the theoretical and managerial contributions, respectively.

1.1 Motivation for the study

This work was motivated and inspired by my ambition to find an answer to a question that had been bothering me for years before the opportunity to study it academically arose. In all its simplicity, this question was "how can we get people to take environmental action?" And, related to this main question, I also wanted to find the answer to the question of "why is it so difficult to get people to take this action even when they seem to know they should take it?" In thinking about these questions, I considered environmental action to encompass a variety of different issues, from reducing and reusing to recycling. In other words, not only did I think about 'easy' issues, e.g. how people could learn to recycle, but also about more challenging issues, such as how to make people understand that they do not have to consume so extensively in the first place.

Upon starting to review literature to see what others had found out about people's environmental behavior, it became evident that a great number of people had in fact been interested in the very same questions. In behavioral sciences, for example, a number of researchers had examined what factors influence people's environmental behavior. Some of these researchers had pointed to the importance of studying people in various separate contexts, because different factors may influence different types of behavior (Stern, 2000b). Because the scope of any one dissertation is necessarily limited, this led to the first major decision, i.e. that this study would concentrate on the organizational context and examine individuals as employees. Even though other focus areas would have been possible, this was considered to be the most relevant context given that the study is conducted in the field of international business communication and thus aims at contributing to this particular research strand.

Researchers looking at environmental behavior had further found that such issues as knowledge of the causes of and solutions to environmental problems influence people's actual behavior (see e.g. Barr, 2004; Stern, 2000b). In my opinion, this finding begged the question of how individuals then get knowledge of these causes and solutions, something that these researchers had not addressed in much detail. One obvious answer

seemed to be the media, be it newspapers, TV news or programs that report on environmental issues, or movies such as *The Inconvenient Truth* that have recently informed us of the potential consequences of climate change. As the second step, I therefore turned my attention to media studies focusing on environment-related issues. A review of this literature revealed that a growing number of researchers in this field, too, had been interested in the same questions. For example, several researchers had investigated how climate change is represented in the media in different countries (see e.g. Antilla, 2005; Boykoff, 2008; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Boykoff & Goodman, 2009; Boykoff & Rajan, 2007; Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Doulton & Brown, 2009; Foust & O'Shannon Murphy, 2009; Olausson, 2009, in press; Weingart, Engels & Pansegrau, 2000). More interestingly, from the point of view of this dissertation's main goal of understanding the role of communication in affecting the barriers that people perceive to taking environmental action, a number of media researchers had also already connected media studies to people's environmental behavior. They had, for example, studied the influence of media content and use on individuals' perceived knowledge, scientific understanding, and concern for environmental issues (see e.g. Corbett & Durfee, 2004; Sampei & Aoyagi-Usui, 2009; Stamm, Clark & Eblacas, 2000; Zhao, 2009).

Even though the link between the media and people's environmental behavior had been examined, the more I read about media studies on climate change, the more it felt that something critical was missing. As mentioned above, several studies had looked at how *climate change* was represented in the media. Few studies, however, had examined media representations of political initiatives aimed at *fighting* climate change. Turning the focus to representations of political initiatives seemed especially purposeful because the present study coincided with the introduction and ratification of the first significant transnational environmental policy initiative since the Kyoto protocol, i.e. the European Union energy and climate package. The package, introduced in 2008, aims at 20 per cent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and a 20 per cent increase in the use of renewable energy sources at the EU level by the year 2020 (the package is also nicknamed '20 20 by 2020'). As the review of literature on environmental behavior had indicated that one

potential reason for people not taking environmental action themselves is the lack of political action by local, national and international governments (Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole & Whitmarsh, 2007), it seemed meaningful to extend these previous media studies to an entirely new focus by examining how the EU policy initiative, rather than climate change, is represented in the media. Doing this would fill the first of the two main gaps in previous research that this study aims to fill, i.e. lacking media research on the most current environmental initiative, a gap that necessarily existed due to the very recent introduction of the climate package. In addition, it was considered insightful to extend the scope of previous studies, which had mostly examined media representations in one or two countries, to looking at media representations in several European countries. The rationale for this is that EU environmental policies need to be discussed and implemented throughout the 27 EU countries, and if we accept that media representations are an important source of influence on people's perceptions, as other researchers have established (e.g. Corbett & Durfee, 2004), it is important to conduct comparative studies that examine how specific transnational initiatives are represented in different countries.

Given the earlier decision to examine individuals in the context of organizations, focusing only on media communication did not seem to be enough. Rather, it seemed necessary to consider how organizational communication can motivate employees to take environmental action. Because organizational environment-related activities today mostly fall under the broad category of corporate social responsibility (CSR), also referred to as corporate responsibility (CR), I turned to finding out what previous researchers have found out about CSR communication in organizations. This examination pointed to a significant amount of research on external communication and CSR reporting (for recent studies, see e.g. Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Chaudri & Wang, 2007; Dawkins & Ngunjiri, 2008; Gill, Dickinson & Scharl, 2008; Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2007; Nielsen & Thomsen, 2007; Sones, Grantham & Vieira, 2009). However, it seemed that relatively little research had focused on internal communication, and even less on employees as a target group. This is the second main gap in previous research that this study aims to fill.

1.2 Research questions

The previous section provided a general overview of some of the relevant research fields that are examined in the present study. They will be returned to more fully in the next two sections as the development of the dissertation's theoretical framework is presented in more detail and the literatures are reviewed more thoroughly. Based on the reflection above, however, the two main, broad research questions for this study were specified as follows: *What barriers to individual environmental action can be identified? What is the role of communication in affecting these barriers?*

The research questions cover quite wide areas. Therefore, it is necessary to specify which aspects are taken under closer examination to fill the two main research gaps specified above, i.e. the lack of research on media representations of the most current environmental policy initiative, and the lack of research on company-internal CSR communication and employee viewpoints on environment-related communication. The more specific research questions were thus the following:

1) How do the media in different European countries represent the EU climate package?
2) How might these media representations overcome previously identified barriers to environmental action, or create new barriers?
3) What potential barriers to environmental action can be identified in organizations?
4) How can companies communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to overcome these barriers?

The research presented here addresses the above questions in two main ways. First, previous research in the fields under examination is reviewed to build the theoretical framework that guided the study. Then, the research questions are addressed in four separate essays. Essays 1 and 2 focus on the first two research questions by exploring media representations of the EU climate package, and Essays 3 and 4 turn attention to the latter two questions by examining the communication of environmental initiatives in organizations.

2 Theoretical framework

As discussed in the preceding section, the present study bridges several related fields of research that have, until now, remained relatively separate areas. These fields are studies on environmental behavior that have identified several factors that contribute to and hinder environmental action; media studies on climate change that have pointed to the critical role of the media in influencing the understanding people have of climate change; environmental leadership studies that have recognized the need for stronger environmental leadership to encourage climate action; and studies on environmental communication in organizations that have, until now, rarely focused on employees as a target group even though employees are a key stakeholder group for any organization (Clarkson, 1995; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). This section outlines how the theoretical framework used here was developed based on previous literature in these fields.

2.1 Research on individuals' environmental behavior

The difference between individuals' environmental attitudes and demonstrated behavior has interested researchers especially in the socio-psychological, behavioral fields of research (Barr, 2004; Stern, 2000b), because there seems to remain a consistent gap between people's level of environmental concern and the action they take (see e.g. Barr, 2004; Heiskanen, 2005; Lorenzoni et al., 2007). At least a partial reason for this gap is that mere awareness of an issue does not mean that an individual has knowledge about the problem's causes, consequences, or solutions (Stamm et al., 2000), which have been identified as some of the key determinants of behavioral intentions to address the problem (Bord, O'Connor & Fisher, 2000).

To understand "why our attitudes often fail to materialise into concrete actions" (Barr, 2004, p. 232), several theorists have attempted to uncover the aspects behind individuals' environmental behavior in various contexts. From the point of view of designing communication campaigns and strategies to influence people's behaviors, this kind of understanding of the underlying attitudes and behaviors of any given target audience is important, because it has been established that a person's motivation influences her

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response to persuasive messages (Bator & Cialdini, 2000; see also McGuire, 1989). Like Bator and Cialdini (2000), also Stern (2000b) emphasizes that recent research has found evidence that different sets of norms, beliefs, and values influence environmental behavior in different contexts. Therefore, to advance our understanding of how people's environmental behavior can be changed, Stern (ibid.) argues that it is important to explore "possibilities directly with representatives of the population whose behavior is to be changed" (p. 420) because "such small-scale theory provides the essential building blocks for broader, inductively developed theory about environmentally significant behavior" (ibid.).

In advancing our knowledge on people's environmental behavior, Stern (2000b) suggests that behavioral types can be divided into *private-sphere environmentalism* that includes household or consumer behaviors such as buying organic products and recycling household waste, *environmental activism and non-activist public-sphere behaviors* like voting, signing petitions, having membership in environmental organizations, or willingness to pay higher taxes (Dietz, Stern & Guagnano, 1998; Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano & Kalof, 1999, both in Stern, 2000b), and *individual behavior in organizations*. According to Stern (2000b), understanding behavior in organizations is especially important because "organizational actions are the largest direct sources of many environmental problems" (ibid., p. 410; see also Stern, 2000a; Stern & Gardner, 1981a, b). This makes it important to extend the scope of focus in environmental studies to individuals as employees as a target audience, a gap the present study addresses.

The focus on individuals as employees as a target audience forms the first building block of the theoretical framework; as Figure 1 below demonstrates, individuals and their potential environmental actions are placed in the context of organizations. The following discussion then demonstrates how and why this framework is complemented with research on environmental behavior, media studies on climate change, and organizational communication studies focusing on environmental issues.

Figure 1. Individuals in the context of organizations.
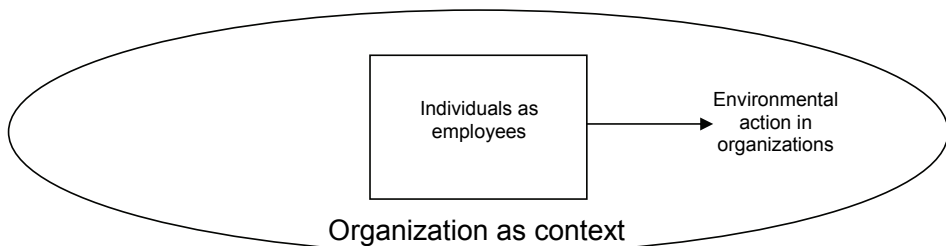
To complement the theoretical framework with an understanding of what potential barriers hinder environmental action in organizations, three frameworks of environmental behavior, developed by different researchers, are reviewed next. As earlier studies often focused on single-determination theories rather than exploring multiple motivations that influence people's behaviors (De Young, 2000), the focus here is on relatively recent models that have attempted to capture a variety of factors that influence environmental behavior. Further, the number of studies that have contributed to advancing our knowledge in this area of research is quite large. To help in providing readers with a comprehensive, yet clear snapshot of previous research in this area, the focus here is therefore on studies that have built frameworks based on a review of other studies in the field. After the review of these three frameworks and a further study that specifically focused on identifying barriers that people perceive to engaging with climate change, the findings from these studies are classified for the purposes of this study.

2.1.1 Waste management behavior

The first framework provides a review of research that has focused on waste management (Barr, 2004). This framework, represented graphically in Figure 2 below, integrates modifying variables in the relationship between intentions and behaviors. As can be seen in the figure, this model suggests that environmental behavior (action) is influenced by three sets of variables: environmental values that influence behavioral intentions, situational factors, and psychological variables.

Figure 2. Barr's framework of environmental behavior

Situational factors

Environmental values → Behavioral intention → Behavior

Psychological variables
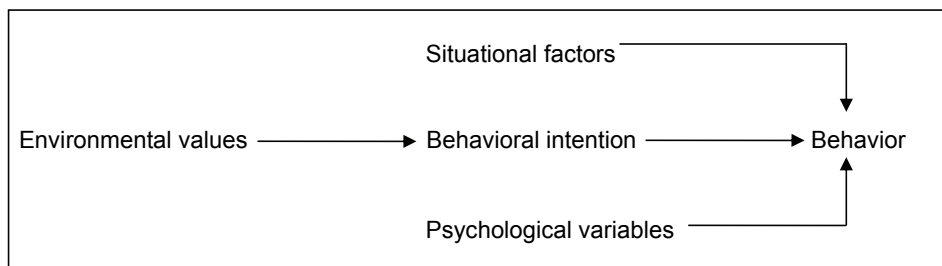
(Barr, 2004, p. 234)

With regard to the first of these, environmental values, Barr (2004) claims that research findings are somewhat controversial. On the one hand, studies suggest that people positively oriented towards nature (Steel, 1996) and 'ecocentric' people, i.e. those that believe nature has intrinsic value (O'Riodan, 1985) tend to act in a more environmentally friendly way, as opposed to people with more 'anthropocentric' or technocentric views, who tend to treat human goals as overriding natural interests and believe "in the ability of human innovation to overcome global ecological crises" (Barr, 2004, p. 234). On the other hand, findings from studies built around using a measurement instrument called 'the New Ecological Paradigm' (NEP) scale, which measures environmental attitudes with 15 statements about the human-environment relationship (Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig & Jones, 2000) have been contradictory, because results have varied when the number of constructs used to measure attitudes has been different. For example, some studies give strong support to the relationship between NEP and environmental activism (Steel, 1996), others provide support for the opposite (Widegren, 1998). In addition, Barr (2004) claims that researchers have also questioned the findings concerning ecocentric vs. technocentric people. Gibbs, Longhurst & Braithwaite (1998), for example, suggest a shifting of environmental values "towards notions of 'weak' and 'strong' sustainability" (Barr, 2004, p. 234-5). The former view perceives "simply a need to hand on a similar stock of [natural] capital, however that may be defined, to future generations" (ibid., p. 235), whereas the latter also acknowledges "a necessity for biodiversity and a stock of critical natural capital" (ibid.).

According to Barr (2004), the second set, situational factors, include four issues that positively affect the tendency to act: first, service and availability of facilities that make it easier for individuals to perform environmental actions like recycling; second, socio-demographic variables such as gender, age and education so that environmental activists tend to be "young, female, educated, wealthy homeowner[s] with liberal political views" (Barr, 2004, p. 235; see also Hines, Hungerford & Tomera, 1987; Schultz, Oskamp & Mainieri, 1995); third; both 'abstract' knowledge of environmental problems and 'concrete' knowledge of how to act in an environmentally friendly way (Schahn & Holzer, 1990; Simmons & Widmar, 1989-1990); and fourth, engagement in other environmental activities (Daneshvary, Daneshvary & Schwer, 1998).

Third, psychological factors concern issues that are related to individuals' personality and perceptional traits. In waste management, Barr (2004) argues that studies have pointed to seven factors that have a positive influence on people managing waste more sustainably: first, people's understanding that they can be ascribed responsibility to help solve an existing problem by recycling (Hopper & Nielsen, 1991); second, people's feeling that recycling is enjoyable, because they then have intrinsic motivation (De Young, 1986, 1985-1986; De Young & Kaplan, 1985-1986); third, the influence of the behavior of significant others (Chan, 1998, 2001; Gamba & Oskamp, 1994; Tucker, 1999); fourth, the extent to which environmental problems can be personalized by demonstrating that they pose a threat to individuals (Baldassare & Katz, 1992); fifth, people's feeling that they are competent to perform a certain action and that this action has a notable positive effect (Arbuthnot, 1977; Chan, 1998); sixth, easy logistics such as storage space for recyclable material and access to recycling sites (Gamba and Oskamp, 1994; McKenzie-Mohr, Nemiroff, Beers & Desmarais, 1995; Vining & Ebreo, 1990); and finally, people's feeling of 'environmental citizenship' that encompasses both environmental rights and reciprocating environmental responsibilities (Selman, 1996). The fifth issue, feeling of competence, has long been recognized as a primary source of motivation in a number of issues, including environmental behavior (see e.g. White, 1959, in De Young, 2000). According to De Young (2000, p. 521), the feeling of competence is critical, because "when people are not sure how to proceed with a new behavior, they are easily

overwhelmed. What seems to others a simple action may become for them a major challenge."

In Barr's (2004) own study that is guided by his framework, he concludes that recycling is an issue that has already become socially accepted and attitudinally normative. In the future, he suggests, researchers should attempt to uncover "how other, less convenient and socially measureable, behaviours will be encouraged" (ibid., p. 247). Essays 3 and 4 of this dissertation attempt to further our understanding of this area by focusing on a variety of environmental actions, not just recycling.

2.1.2 Variables influencing different types of environmental behavior

Similarly to Barr (2004), Stern (2000b) proposes a framework to "increase theoretical coherence" (p. 421) on the way to a general theory of environmentally significant behaviors. As discussed in section 2.1, Stern (2000b) claims that to move towards a general theory, different target behaviors (*private-sphere environmentalism* that includes household or consumer behavior, *environmental activism and non-activist public-sphere behaviors* that include environmental citizenship and policy support behaviors, and *individual behavior in organizations*) should be theorized separately because these behaviors may depend on different factors.

Overall, Stern (2000b) proposes that four types of causal variables influence the four types of environmentally significant behaviors. The causal variables are first, *attitudinal factors* (general environmentalist predisposition, behavior-specific norms and beliefs, non-environmental attitudes about e.g. product attributes, and perceived costs of action); second, *personal capabilities* (literacy, social status, financial resources, and behavior-specific knowledge and skills); third, *contextual factors* (material costs and rewards, laws and regulations, available technology, social norms and expectations, supportive policies and advertising); and fourth, *habit and routine*. Of these four variables, previous research has provided support for the claim that "attitudinal causes have the greatest predictive value for behaviors that are not strongly constrained by context or personal capabilities" (Stern, 2000b, p. 422).

Given the importance of attitudinal causes in influencing behavior, Stern (2000b) proposes a theory called the value-belief-norm (VBN) theory, which is demonstrated in Figure 3 below. The theory incorporates several attitudinal variables that influence people's general environmentalist disposition, and suggests a causal chain of five variables leading to behavior: 1. personal values; 2. three beliefs that are first, beliefs about humans' relations to environment, as measured by the new environmental paradigm (NEP); second, beliefs that environmental issues might have adverse consequences for objects a person values (AC); and third, beliefs that one can, by one's own actions, reduce the threat (AR); and 3. proenvironmental personal norms, reflected in a sense of obligation to take proenvironmental actions.

Figure 3. Value-belief-norm (VBN) theory
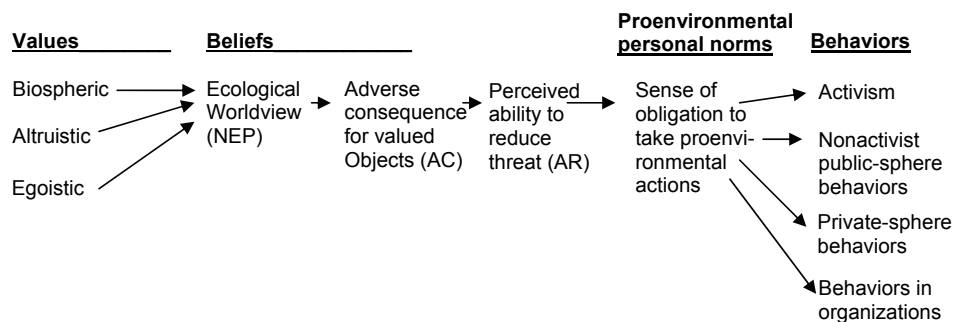
(Stern, 2000b, p. 412)

In aiming to increase our understanding of barriers to people's environmental behavior in organizations and the influence of communication on such barriers, the study at hand adopts an intent-oriented definition of environmentally significant behavior. In other words, such behavior is defined "from the actor's standpoint as behavior that is undertaken with the intention to change (normally, to benefit) the environment" (Stern, 2000b, p. 408). As Stern (2000b) claims, adopting such a definition is necessary in research that focuses on understanding underlying beliefs and motives for environmental behavior. Adopting an intent-oriented definition thus means that this dissertation does not look into environmental behavior from an impact-oriented perspective that would focus

on identifying and targeting "behaviors that can make a large difference to the environment" (Stern & Gardner, 1981a; in Stern, 2000b, p. 408). Clearly, impact-oriented research would also be beneficial in the organizational context, and should be addressed in future research.

2.1.3 Value structures behind proenvironmental behavior

As a third similar model, Nordlund and Garvill (2002) propose that individuals' general values influence their environmental value orientation, which both in turn influence people's problem awareness. Together, the general values, environmental values, and problem awareness then influence people's personal norms, which have an effect on pro-environmental behavior. Figure 4 presents a simplified version of their proposed model.

Figure 4. Value structures behind proenvironmental behavior
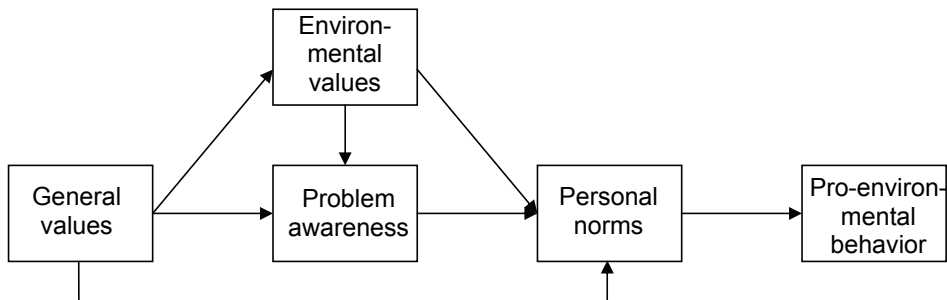
(Adapted from Nordlund & Garvill, 2002, p. 746)

This model is not examined and discussed in more detail because of its apparent similarity to the other two models that were looked at in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2. As the examination of these three models reveals, a lot of the research in the field has adopted a quantitative approach aiming to uncover causal relationships between variables. The models are greatly overlapping, with each proposing that people's values influence their intentions and norms, which both influence environmental behavior. Even though these kinds of studies have been critical in uncovering motives behind environmental behavior,

it also seems that there is a need for qualitative approaches, because these researchers have argued that we still need more studies that can help us more thoroughly understand what motives, besides environmental concern, influence environmental behavior (Nordlund & Garvill, 2002). Qualitative studies aiming at understanding a phenomenon more deeply can also help us focus on what actually drives people's behavior (Barr, 2004). And, when such qualitative studies examine the behavior of specific, different target audiences (Stern, 2000b), they can also help us understand what kinds of influences are important in a specific context. To further our understanding of people's behavior in organizations, the research conducted here thus aims to increase our understanding of factors that influence individuals' environmental behavior by adopting a qualitative perspective. A qualitative perspective is typical in studies that aim to gain an in-depth understanding of the issue under investigation (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003).

Because the research here is undertaken from a qualitative perspective, causal relationships between variables that influence environmental behavior are not focused on. Rather, what is central in the present study is an overall understanding of potential factors that affect people's behavior. In the theoretical framework, these factors are presented as potential barriers to action to enable us to understand the role of communication in affecting, i.e. both creating and overcoming, these kinds of barriers. Below, the research reviewed above is first complemented by a study that has looked specifically at barriers the public perceives to engaging with climate change. Then, the findings of all these studies are put together and classified to demonstrate how they form the second building block of the framework.

2.2 Research on barriers to engaging with climate change
In addition to the need for more qualitative approaches to the study of people's environmental behavior, a central issue missing from the widely overlapping frameworks reviewed above is a special examination of the role of communication in influencing individuals' environmental behavior. It is beneficial to address this gap, because several of the variables in the frameworks can be influenced by communication quite directly.
The importance of studying communication related to climate change is highlighted by the study of Lorenzoni et al. (2007), who examine the barriers that the UK public

perceives to engaging in action against climate change. Their findings indicate several individual barriers, three of which are directly communication-related. Of these three communication-related barriers, the first two are also clearly linked to the behavioral frameworks discussed above: first, the lack of knowledge about the causes and consequences of as well as potential solutions to climate change; second, uncertainty and skepticism about the causes of climate change as well as of the seriousness, necessity and effectiveness of actions; and third, distrust in information sources such as the media. Whereas the two former issues point to the centrality of studying environment-related communication, the latter issue highlights why it is meaningful to expand the scope of focus to how environmental issues are represented in the media. This is an issue that will be returned to below in section 3.3 that focuses on media studies on climate change.

Besides the three communication-related individual barriers identified above, Lorenzoni et al. (2007) point to seven other individual barriers, many of which are closely linked to the findings of Barr (2004), Nordlund and Garvill (2002) and Stern (2000b). First, one barrier is a reliance on the idea that technology will provide a means to solve environmental problems, i.e. people's technocentric views (Barr, 2004). Second, people perceive climate change as a distant rather than close threat, which is related to the need to personalize environmental threats to encourage action (Barr, 2004). Third, related to people's values, the importance of which is emphasized in all of the studies reviewed above (Barr, 2004; Nordlund & Garvill, 2002; Stern, 2000b), Lorenzoni et al. (2007) found that individuals often consider other things in life, e.g. family and financial concerns, as more important than environmental issues. A fourth barrier identified by Lorenzoni et al. (ibid.) is that people are reluctant to change their lifestyles, which in turn is related to habits and routine (Stern, 2000b). Fifth, people often have a 'drop in the ocean' -feeling (Lorenzoni et al., 2007), which is related to the finding that people are more likely to act if they feel that their action has a notable positive effect (Arbuthnot, 1977; Chan, 1998; in Barr, 2004). Finally, two remaining individual barriers discovered by Lorenzoni et al. (2007) are fatalism and externalizing responsibility and blame on the causes and solutions to e.g. governments and industry.

On top of these individual issues, Lorenzoni et al. (2007) found five social barriers that disengage people from climate action. These were first, lack of political action by local, national and international governments; second, lack of action by business and industry; third, worry about the free-rider effect; fourth, need to conform to social norms and expectations, especially with regard to expectations to consume and the undesirability of 'green living'; and fifth, lack of enabling initiatives that would be inexpensive and convenient. From the viewpoint of this dissertation, the perceived barrier of the lack of political action by governments is significant, because this study is conducted after the introduction of a major political initiative, i.e. the EU energy and climate package, aimed at fighting climate change. Two of the essays specifically focus on how the climate package is represented in the media in different European countries, and one of them focuses explicitly on the question of whether the EU, with its '20 20 by 2020' -initiative, manages to demonstrate environmental leadership to engage other societal actors in the fight against climate change. The perceived barrier of the lack of action by business is of equal importance, because whether or not employees consider their own organization to demonstrate environmental action in its operations can certainly be a significant factor in influencing employees' own actions.

2.3 Classification of barriers to action

For the purposes of the present study, the above factors influencing behavior are combined under four headings that focus on potential barriers to environmental action (anthropocentric / technocentric / weak sustainability values, situational factors, psychological factors, and habits and routine that do not support environmental action). A focus specifically on barriers is meaningful, because it has been argued that different interventions to change people's behavior (e.g. information, moral appeals, incentives) "do little or nothing until one of them removes an important barrier to change" (Stern, 2000b, p. 419). In other words, based on the studies of Barr (2004), Stern (2000b) and Nordlund and Garvill (2002) and the claim that providing real knowledge of what causes climate change might best help in overcoming the gap between public concern and action (Bord et al., 2000), I argue that if e.g. knowledge of environmental problems, their causes, and how to act are positive influences on environmental behavior, then a corresponding lack of knowledge might be a potential barrier even though most of the

studies reviewed here have not focused on these barriers. Future studies should examine this proposition to establish whether it can also be statistically proven.

Given that there are slight variations in how the researchers reviewed in sections 2.1 and 2.2 have classified different factors that influence behavior, the classification used here, summarized in Table 1 below, is by no means the only way to put these models together. The purpose of the classification is just to give a simplified presentation of potential factors that influence environmental behavior. As can be seen from the left-hand column of the table, the focus is on factors that can potentially be influenced by communication. Therefore, issues such as people's reliance on technology, availability of recycling facilities, socio-demographic variables, or material costs, which cannot very directly be influenced by communication, were not included in the framework. These potential barriers to action form the second building block of the theoretical framework, as demonstrated in Figure 5 below.

Table 1. Classification of factors that influence environmental behavior.

Potential barriers to environmental action that might be influenced by communication (classification used in this study)	**Influences on environmental behavior** (previous research findings)
1. *Anthropocentric / technocentric / weak sustainability values*	**Positive influences on environmental behavior** -ecocentric values, notions of strong sustainability (Barr, 2004) -altruistic values (Stern, 2000b) **Barriers to engaging with climate change** -anthropocentric / technocentric values; notions of weak sustainability (Barr, 2004) -egoistic values (Stern, 2000b) -reliance on technology (Lorenzoni et al., 2007)
2. *Situational factors*: lack of -knowledge of problems and how to act -political action (incl. regulations) -trust in information sources -trust in necessity and effectiveness of action	**Positive influences on environmental behavior** 1. Barr (2004) -knowledge of environmental problems and how to act -availability of e.g. recycling facilities -certain socio-demographic variables -engagement in other environmental activities 2. Stern (2000b) -behavior-specific knowledge and skills -certain socio-demographic variables -financial resources

	-material costs and rewards
	-supporting laws and regulations
	3. Nordlund & Garvill (2002)
	-problem awareness
	Barriers to engaging with climate change (Lorenzoni et al., 2007)
	-lack of knowledge about causes / consequences of and solutions to climate change
	-distrust in information sources such as media
	-uncertainty and skepticism about the necessity and effectiveness of actions
	-lack of political and industry action
3. *Psychological factors*: feeling that -other things are more important -environmental threat is not personal -one is incompetent to act -(individual) action is insignificant -one should conform to social norms	**Positive influences on environmental behavior** 1. Barr (2004): -understanding that one can help solve a problem -intrinsic motivation -behavior of significant others -personalization of threats -feeling of competence and that actions matter -easy logistics and access to e.g. recycling sites 2. Stern (2000b) -proenvironmental personal norms -perceived costs of action -adverse consequence for valued objects -perceived ability to reduce threat -social norms 3. Nordlund & Garvill (2002) -personal norms **Barriers to engaging with climate change** (Lorenzoni et al., 2007) -externalizing responsibility to governments and industry -need to conform to social values -perception of climate change as a distant threat -holding other things more important -fatalism -'drop in the ocean' –feeling -worry about the free-rider effect
4. *Habits and routine* that do not support environmental action	**Barriers to engaging with climate change** 1. Stern (2000b) -habits and routines 2. Lorenzoni et al. (2007) -reluctance to change lifestyles -lack of enabling initiatives that would be inexpensive and convenient

Figure 5. Influences on individuals' behavior and barriers to action.

1. Anthropocentric / technocentric values
2. Situational factors: lack of
   -knowledge of problems and how to act
   -supporting political action (incl. regulations)
   -trust in information sources
3. Psychological factors: feeling that
   -other things are more important
   -environmental threat is not personal
   -one is incompetent to act
   -(individual) action is insignificant
   -one should conform to social norms
4. Habits and routine that do not support
   environmental action

2.4 Bringing media communication into the framework

As the above review of studies demonstrates, perception, knowledge and understanding of environmental problems, their effects, and how to solve them have been found to be significant influences on behavior. Importantly, it has also been argued that "proenvironmental action can be influenced by information that shapes these beliefs" (Stern, 2000b, p. 414). This raises the questions of how individuals get knowledge of these issues, and what kind of knowledge they get.

Previous research in the field of mass communication indicates that in issues related to global warming and climate change, the media are an important information channel. As Zhao (2009, p. 703) quotes Nelkin (1995, p. 68-69), "[I]n areas of science and technology where readers have little direct information or preexisting knowledge to guide an independent evaluation…, the press, as the major source of information, defines the reality of the situation for them." In complex global warming issues, which have vast environmental, economic and political consequences, Zhao (2009) thus argues that various media outlets are a central mediator through which information largely enters

public awareness - a claim supported by the findings of several other researchers (see e.g. Bell, 1994; Corbett & Durfee, 2004; Wilson, 1995).

Whereas behavioral scientists have focused on factors such as the level of knowledge that influence people's environmental behavior, several media researchers have examined how the media influences people's level of knowledge (Corbett & Durfee, 2004; Sampei & Ayoagi-Usui, 2009; Slater, 2007; Stamm et al., 2000; Zhao, 2009). The link between these two fields of research, i.e. behavioral and media studies, thus seems relatively clear, not only because an increase in newspaper coverage of global warming issues has been found to correlate positively with public concern for the issue (Sampei & Ayoagi-Usui, 2009), but also because media use (Slater, 2007; Zhao, 2009) and elements in news stories (Corbett & Durfee, 2004) have been found to influence a variety of different beliefs, attitudes and behavior as well as perceived knowledge of environmental issues. Further, for example Stamm et al. (2000) found that even though people are aware of global climate change, their understanding of the causes and consequences of and solutions to the problem are limited. They also found that the media (as well as interpersonal communication) not only make a positive contribution to people's understanding but also possibly perpetuate some common misconceptions. Because media representations influence people's perceptions, it is beneficial to complement quantitative media studies with qualitative research that focuses on uncovering how climate issues are represented in the media. Uncovering media representations can also increase our understanding of factors that underlie people's mistrust in the media as an information source, identified as one of the barriers the public perceives to engaging with climate change (Lorenzoni et al., 2007).

Given the influence of media communications on people's understanding of environmental issues, which in turn has been demonstrated to influence environmental behavior, media communication of environment-related issues forms the third building block of the theoretical framework. This is demonstrated in Figure 6 below. Here, the entire framework could visually be surrounded by a box that represents the society at large and different environmental issues that are prevalent in the society, because they

can be thought of as forming the background for the entire research setting. To keep the framework visually as simple as possible, however, this larger background context is not drawn in the picture.

Figure 6. Media communication in the theoretical framework.
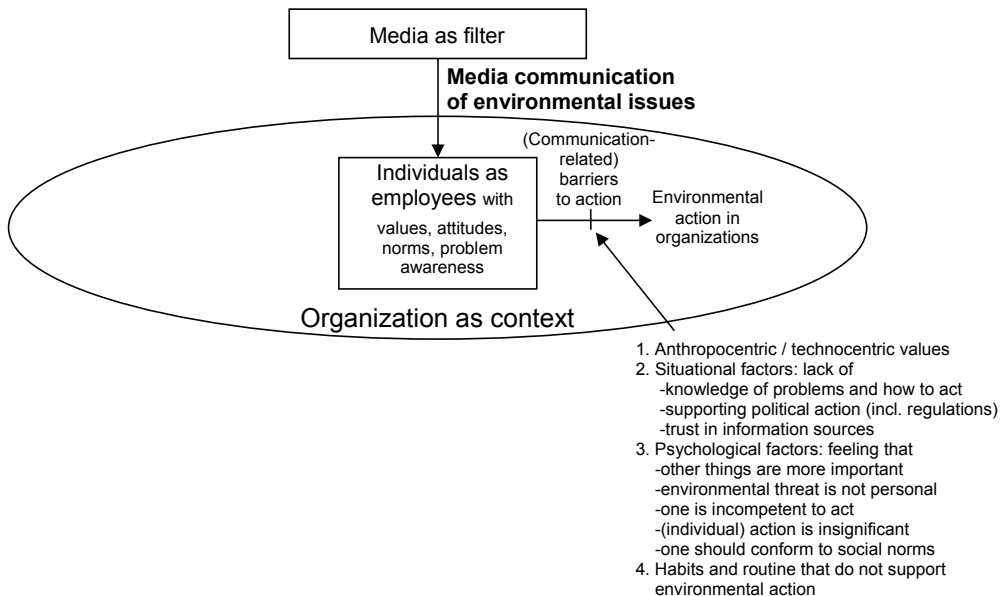
Previous studies that have looked at media representations have mainly focused on how climate change is constructed and framed in the (newspaper) media in different countries. These studies have, to a large extent, focused on European countries, where climate change has mostly been constructed as certain (Brossard, Shanahan & McComas, 2004; Carvalho, 2005; 2007; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Olausson, 2009, in press; Weingart et al., 2000) and the US, where it has often been constructed as uncertain (Antilla, 2005; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Zehr, 2000). Several studies have also examined the transmission of information from science to politicians and the media. Findings from these studies indicate that this transmission is not unproblematic, because discourses used in these three domains differ from each other (see e.g. Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004;

Boykoff & Rajan, 2007; McComas & Shanahan, 1999; Ungar, 1992; Weingart et al., 2000; Zehr, 2000).

Here, the examination of media representations is extended to an analysis of how the most current and significant political initiative, the European Union (EU) energy and climate package that was introduced and ratified in 2008, is represented in the media in six European countries. This focus is regarded as timely and significant, because previous research has identified the lack of environmental leadership in the form of political action as a potential barrier to individuals' engagement with climate change (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). The two essays on media communication focus on examining first, whether the EU climate package was represented in the media in 2008 as a sign of environmental leadership, and second, how the climate package was framed in the selected media outlets, as well as the ways in which the adequacy of these transnational measures were represented. To pinpoint what the media in this study acts as a filter of, the theoretical framework is complemented with the EU climate package as shown in Figure 7 below. Turning attention to a political initiative with direct effects on many firms that will need to start buying (and selling) emissions permits as a result of the climate package was further considered interesting because of this study's focus on individuals in the context of organizations. The influence of the package on firms is indicated with a dashed line in the figure because this aspect is not examined here.

Figure 7. Media as a filter of the EU energy and climate package.
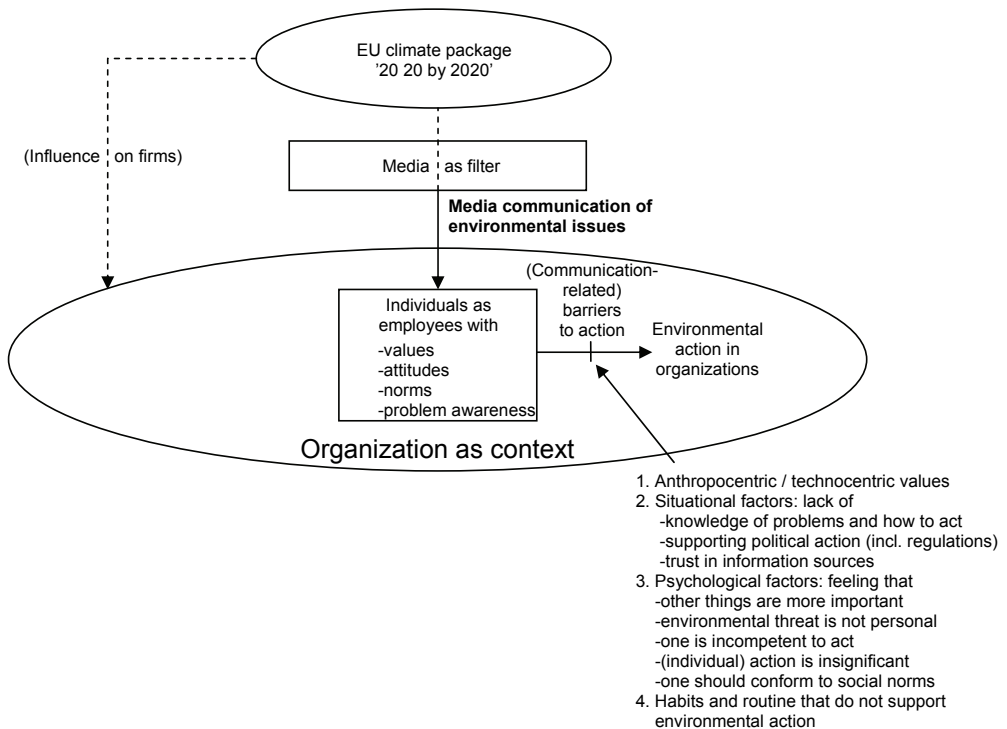
2.5 Role of organizational communication in the framework

The final building block of the theoretical framework is the internal, environment-related communication that takes place in organizations, as companies strive to engage their employees in environmental actions. In other words, the focus is on organizations' internal communications to employees, which is one aspect of corporate communication. It should be kept in mind that different environmental initiatives that companies decide to implement as well as decisions about what is communicated to employees about these initiatives and other environmental issues originate from an organization's overall (CSR) strategy. Strategic decisions about CSR, however, fall outside the scope of the present study and are therefore not examined here.

According to Argenti and Forman (2002, p. 4), corporate communication as a whole can be thought of as "the corporation's voice and the images it projects of itself on a world stage populated by its various audiences", audiences that can also be referred to as stakeholders. In addition to communication to employees, corporate communication also includes other areas such as corporate reputation and advertising; investor, government, and media relations; and crisis communications (ibid.). As Argenti and Forman (ibid.) argue, internal communication to employees is a critical part of corporate communication because it influences employees' attitudes towards their employers and workplaces, and thereby employee motivation to participate in activities employers would like them to participate in.

Besides the fact that employees' motivation influences the way they put organizations' strategies into practice, the centrality of employees as a key stakeholder group (Clarkson, 1995; Mitchell et al., 1997) and employee commitment to an organization's values is widely stressed because employee views also influence the company's reputation in the eyes of other stakeholders. As for example Belasen (2008, p. 102) states, "employees need to understand, facilitate, and commit to the organization's identity (core values) in order to become advocates of corporate goals and values. Once their attitudes and beliefs coincide with those of the organization, a positive reputation is projected to other stakeholders through direct and indirect communication with employees." Or, as Cheney and Christensen (2001, p. 232) put it, "many organizations have begun to realize the difficulties of convincing an external audience about their deeds (e.g., their protection of the environment…) if the *internal* audience does not accept the message."

In the present study, the examination of internal communication centers on the question of how organizations can effectively communicate about their environmental strategies and targets to get employees to take the kinds of actions that help put these strategies into practice to reach the set targets. The focus is thus on looking at how organizations can communicate to achieve certain goals, and the effectiveness of this communication is assessed through whether the interviewees in the case companies (Essays 3 and 4) feel that it has resulted in the desired action. Goal achievement has also been one of several

approaches to conceptualizing communication competence; as for example Monge, Bachman, Dillard, and Eisenberg (1981, p. 820) have stated, "competent communicators are those who are effective at achieving their goals" (in Jablin & Sias, 2001, p. 820). Unlike in Monge et al.'s (1981) definition, however, the focus here is not on the communicators and their competence, but on what kinds of messages would best motivate employees to take environmental action, and through what kinds of channels these messages would best reach employees in environmental issues.

For firms, considering the environmental impact of operations has become an ever more critical aspect, as they face increasing pressure from different stakeholders to consider the social and societal impact of their operations in addition to adhering to laws and regulations. This pressure has given rise to corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities in companies, part of which are environmental issues. At the same time that CSR has become a key consideration in firms, it has also become an increasingly popular field of research. Research on CSR also suggests that one of the focal stakeholder groups for any organization is its employees, because they are those who put corporate CSR initiatives into practice (Collier & Esteban, 2007). Therefore, to make sure employees put such initiatives into practice, it matters how and what organizations communicate about these initiatives to their employees. Insofar, however, employees (Heiskanen & Mäntylä, 2004) and internal communication (Barrett, 2002; Ligeti & Oravecz, 2009; Vaaland & Heide, 2007) have relatively seldom been the focus of research, although researchers have highlighted their centrality. Rather, most recent studies looking at CSR communication have focused on external communication, especially the Internet as a communications channel (e.g. Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Chaudri & Wang, 2007; Gill et al., 2008; Sones et al., 2009) and CSR reporting in different countries (e.g. Dawkins & Ngunjiri, 2008; Hartman et al., 2007; Nielsen & Thomsen, 2007).

To fill the existing research gap on employees and internal communication, it is claimed here that it is important to examine the internal communication of environmental issues to employees. Essays 3 and 4 aim to fill this gap, the former by looking at employee viewpoints on barriers to environmental action in organizations and effective internal

environment-related communication, the latter by examining what communication challenges firms have faced in implementing and communicating an office greening initiative to their employees. Figure 8 below shows the entire theoretical framework guiding this study, with organizational communication included.

Figure 8. Theoretical framework of the dissertation.
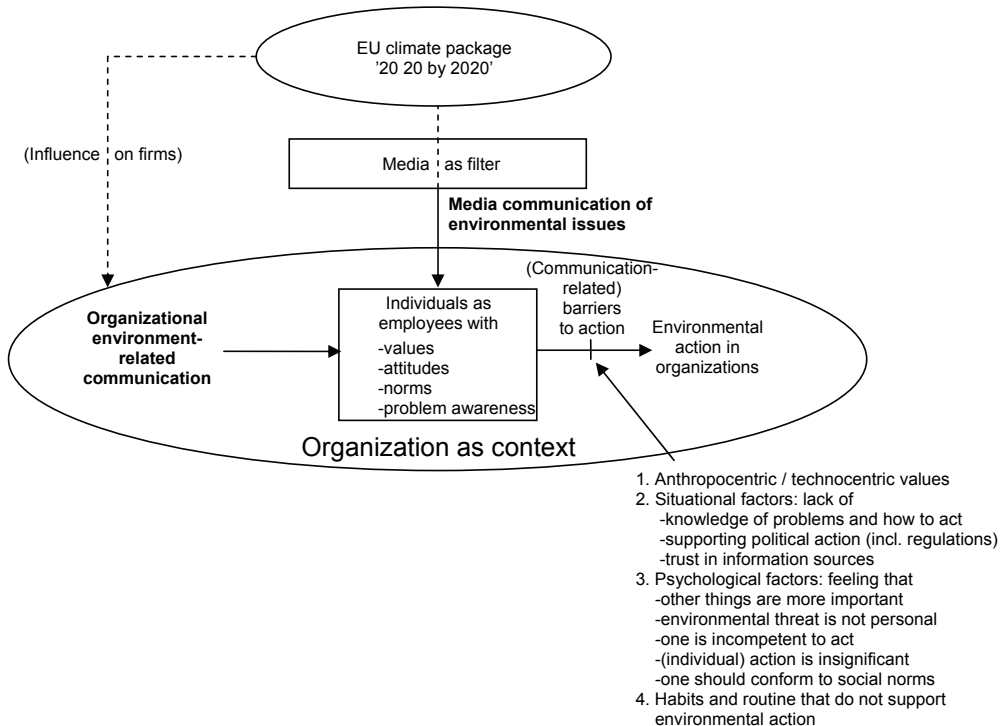
This section has described the development of the theoretical framework that guided the research process. The next section will introduce relevant theories and concepts from each strand of literature that forms the basis for each of the individual studies. The literature review thus provides more details of earlier research in each topic area and serves as an introduction to the individual essays.

3 Literature review

As discussed above, the present study builds on and bridges different strands of academic literature. First, Essay 1 mainly builds on literature on EU environmental leadership, although it also complements research on discursive leadership and media studies on climate change. Second, media studies on climate change also form the theoretical underpinning of Essay 2. Third, the theoretical focus of Essay 3 is on CSR communication research, which also provides a starting point for Essay 4. In addition to CSR communication research, however, the last essay also uses concepts and theories from literature on corporate governance (CG) to examine how CSR initiatives could benefit from similar, measurable targets that there are in the field of CG.

To provide a background for the entire discussion, the review is started with a look at some of the prevalent environmental discourses that have been identified during the past decades. This review is provided to offer an understanding of the main ways in which environmental issues have been (re)constructed in text and talk.

3.1 Environmental discourses

In his seminal study, Hajer (1995) argues that environmental conflict has become discursive. In other words, the discussion no longer focuses on whether there is an environmental crisis, but on how it is interpreted. According to Hajer (ibid., p. 21), the discursive strategies used by different actors matter, because "the discursive construction of reality… [can be] an important realm of power." This is echoed by Dryzek (1997, p. 9), for example, who argues that "the way we construct, interpret, discuss, and analyze environmental problems has all kinds of consequences" for policies and politics. Since these claims, an increasing number of researchers have concluded that it matters how environmental challenges and solutions are talked about in public (see e.g. Alexander, 2008; Ereut and Segnit, 2006, 2007; Harvey, 1999; Lorenzoni et al., 2007; Risbey, 2008; Sampei & Ayoagi-Usui, 2009).

As the importance of discursive strategies has been understood, several researchers have examined the environmental discourses that have been prevalent in the society. One of the most comprehensive reviews is provided by Dryzek (1997). He classifies four main discourses that have developed over time and are partially complementary: (1) *survivalism vs. growth forever* ('unless action is taken, humanity will hit the limits of nature, resulting in a global disaster' vs. 'humans are ingenious enough to develop and turn to substitute resources if limits are getting closer'), (2) *problem solving* (there are environmental problems, but those can be solved within the framework of the political industrial economy), (3) *sustainability* (combining economic growth and ecological preservation are possible simultaneously), and (4) *green radicalism* (key to 'green' change is a shift to 'green' consciousness or politics).

Dryzek (1997) argues that sustainability has been the dominant discourse in Western societies during the last two decades. According to many researchers (Alexander, 2008; Hajer & Fischer, 1999; Sachs, 1999; Thompson, 1999), the sustainability discourse is problematic, because it has merely brought about eco-managerialism rather than the kind of institutional restructuring that is deemed necessary if current ecological crises are to be solved. The discourse of ecological modernization, which Dryzek (1997) treats as a sub-discourse of sustainability, takes sustainability a step further. This discourse argues that economic growth and ecological preservation are not only possible to combine, but that the latter can actually lead to the former. However, also ecological modernization is criticized for not challenging "the viability of endless material growth and consumption" (Hajer & Fischer, 1999, p. 3).

Dryzek's (1997) environmental discourse classification is complemented by Risbey (2008), who concentrates on *climate discourses*, analyzing whether the language used by climatologists is consistent or inconsistent with findings from science. Risbey's (2008) findings relate to the three climate discourses identified by Ereaut and Segnit (2006), that is *alarmism* (climate change is immense and beyond our control), *settlerdom* (climate change can be dismissed as a serious issue), and *small actions* (small, easy-to-implement solutions can solve the problem). Risbey (2008) suggests that a further discourse of

alarming is emerging, where climate change is presented as a real threat, but something that can still be fought if radical, comprehensive action is taken. This discourse is thus similar to discourses of green radicalism (Dryzek, 1997).

Prasad and Elmes (2005), in turn, who look at environmental discourses in organizations, state that the language used in environmental management is centered on practicality, demonstrated by the core messages of economic utilitarianism, compromise, and interorganizational collaboration. They (ibid., p. 864) conclude that these messages are based on instrumental rationality, "a viewpoint and form of knowledge that views the world and our relationships in it as tools (means) to achieve rational ends." The prevalent discourses of environmental management can therefore be seen to reflect anthropocentric views (Barr, 2004) that place human interests over nature. Both Dryzek (1997) and Prasad and Elmes (2005) recognize a need for fundamental changes rather than smooth transitions to solve some of the central ecological crises, and call for a shift from instrumental to ecological rationality.

Table 2 below draws together and categorizes some of the central environmental discourses that different researchers have identified. It also illustrates the basic assumptions that underlie these discourses. Some of these discourses will be returned to in the discussion and conclusions –section of the first part of the thesis.

Table 2. Environmental discourses

Environmental discourses	Environmental discourses identified in earlier literature	Basic assumptions within the discourse
Alarmism	• Alarmism (Ereaut & Segnit, 2006)	The problem of climate change is simply <u>too big to be solved</u>.
Green radicalism	• Green radicalism (Dryzek, 1995) • Ecological rationality (Prasad & Elmes, 2005) • Alarming (Risbey, 2008)	Climate change is a real threat, but it can be managed by <u>taking radical action</u> and restructuring the economy along 'greener' lines.
Survivalism	• Survivalism (Dryzek, 1997)	There is a need to <u>take radical action</u> to avoid hitting global limits of natural resources, but restructuring the economy is not necessary.
Ecological modernization	• Ecological modernization (Hajer, 1995; Harvey, 1999)	Societies should <u>take a proactive stance</u> to environmental regulation, as preventing systematic environmental harm is preferable to curing problems afterwards. <u>'Being green' can also be profitable.</u>
Sustainability	• Sustainability (Dryzek, 1997) • Economic utilitarianism, compromise (Prasad & Elmes, 2005)	Economic growth and ecological preservation are <u>possible simultaneously</u>.
Problem-solving	• Problem-solving (Dryzek, 1997) • Small actions (Ereaut & Segnit, 2006)	There are environmental problems, but they can be solved with human problem-solving devices and by <u>taking small actions</u>.
Status quo	• Growth forever (Dryzek, 1997) • Standard view of environmental management (Harvey, 1999) • Settlerdom (Ereaut & Segnit, 2006)	The basic raison-d'être of nation-states and societies is to accumulate capital. There is <u>no need for action</u> as there is no real problem.

3.2 Environmental leadership

In light of this study's aim to understand the role of communication in affecting barriers to environmental action, the importance of research on environmental leadership and how it is discursively constructed arises from the fact that the lack of political action by international and national governments is one of the barriers individuals perceive to their own action (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). The centrality of examining contemporary

environmental leadership in the society is further highlighted by the claim that the world needs stronger environmental leadership in order to make global environmental agreements reality (Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Metz, Berk, Kok, van Minnen, de Moor & Faber, 2001). As the Kyoto Protocol is about to expire at a time when awareness of the potentially hazardous effects of climate change has reached unprecedented levels, the nations of the world face the need to strike a new deal that aims to address climate change.

Even though the UN climate meeting held in Copenhagen in December 2009 resulted in no deal and as such fell short of many people's expectations, it is intriguing to examine whether the EU climate package, introduced in 2008, can help the EU assume a leadership role to help pull other nations and regions towards a global agreement in the near future. In such a leadership role, communication is a central element because many leader activities, such as developing a vision and creating solidarity, involve communication and therefore discourse (Schnurr, 2009). Focusing media analysis specifically on politically oriented discourse, on the other hand, is important because as Dunmire (2005, p. 482) claims, the discursive means used by key political figures and institutions "constrain the ways the future can be imagined, articulated, and realized", offering a "particularly powerful means of influencing contemporary behavior."

As a field of research, leadership has been very popular. In the field, Fairhurst (2007) argues, there has been little agreement on how leadership should be defined. Nevertheless, as she further posits, leadership studies have two main traditions: leadership psychology and discursive leadership. According to her, the former has been more interested in issues such as leader traits, behavior, and charisma, treating communication as a subsidiary issue. The latter, on the other hand, puts communication into main focus. Because this study focuses on communication, leadership is here approached from a discursive perspective. Adopting a discursive perspective that looks at language and communication is further considered meaningful, because previous research on EU environmental leadership has concluded that even though the role of rhetoric is

important (Andresen & Agrawala, 2002; Falkner, 2007; Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Vogler & Stephan, 2007), it remains an understudied area.

Traditionally, leadership research has focused on individuals (Gormley-Heenan, 2006). In the case of environmental issues, however, individuals alone cannot solve the problems we are facing. Rather, as deLeon and Varda (2009) argue, there is tendency to form interorganizational networks to solve the problems. The EU as a potential global environmental leader is also a collective form of leadership, encompassing 27 countries. The focus of discursive leadership research is here thus extended to the ability of organizations to act as leaders. Leadership is therefore here defined as "not about the person in charge but about the way one or more actors engages the community and its mores in collective action" (Zoller & Fairhurst, 2007, p. 1339).

The EU's role as a global environmental leader has developed in relatively recent decades. As Falkner (2007) states, it is only since the late 1980s that the EU has gradually become active in the environmental field. According to him, this development has been influenced by several EU initiatives and actions. One of the key starting points was that the Union created "an explicit EU competence for the environment" (ibid., p 509; see also McCormick, 2001). In 1987 and 1993, respectively, the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty provided the legal basis and listed environmental protection as one of the EU's main policy objectives. In 1992, on the other hand, the EU introduced the precautionary principle as the basis for Community policy on the environment and strongly pushed for the adoption of the Kyoto protocol at the UN Conference on Environment and Development. Following these initiatives, Falkner (2007) claims that the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 "established sustainable development as a norm of EU politics" (ibid., p. 509; see also Baker, 2006, p. 83). As a result of the Union's gradual greening, Falkner (2007) concludes, also European Commission strategy papers have become environment-oriented, and the EU has come to view itself as having a global leadership role.

As mentioned above, discursive research on EU environmental leadership is scarce. Rather, until now, researchers have mainly approached the topic from two alternate angles. On the one hand, several researchers have examined four types of leadership and whether or not the EU has demonstrated these in the past. On the other hand, researchers have evaluated the EU as a 'normative power' in environmental issues. These approaches and the conclusions drawn by a number of researchers are discussed below.

The first angle has involved dividing environmental leadership into four main types: structural, directional, instrumental, and intellectual. For a large part, the conclusions of researchers have been contradictory. The first type, structural leadership, is based on political and economic power. With regard to this type of leadership, for example Gupta and Ringius (2001) as well as Vogler and Stephan (2007) have argued that the EU has it, whereas Metz et al. (2001) have claimed the opposite. Insofar, the influence of the EU enlargements from 15 to 27 countries in 2004 and 2007 on the EU's potential for structural leadership has not been extensively examined. With regard to the second type, directional leadership, which arises from the example of domestic implementation, researchers have agreed that the EU has potential. Nevertheless, it has been argued that to truly demonstrate this type of leadership, the EU needs to establish credibility through implementing more coherent and effective policies (Andresen & Agrawala, 2002, Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Lightfoot & Burchell, 2004; Metz et al., 2001; Vogler & Stephan, 2007). The third type is instrumental leadership, leading by using diplomatic skills to establish winning coalitions. So far, Andresen and Agrawala (2002) have argued that the EU's performance has been rather weak. Others, however, have concluded that the EU has potential for this type of leadership, if it would form coalitions with developing countries (Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Metz et al., 2001) and non-EU members of the OECD (Gupta & Ringius, 2001). Researchers have also concluded that the EU has potential for the fourth type, intellectual leadership, i.e. exerting influence during agenda-setting phases. For example Vogler & Stephan (2007) argue that the EU has exerted influence on others in promoting sustainable development. The real success of this effort, however, has also been criticized (Falkner, 2007).

The second angle taken by researchers has evaluated the EU's performance as a 'normative power' (Burchell & Lightfoot, 2004; Lightfoot & Burchell, 2005; Manners, 2002; Scheipers & Sicurelli, 2007), in other words as able to act in international settings through promoting its central values and ideas rather than using military or economic force (Falkner, 2007). It should be noted, however, that views of the EU as a normative power have also been criticized. For example Falkner (2007) claims that while the EU is indeed a leader in some fields of environmental policy, it remains a laggard in some other areas. According to him, this renders claims of environmental leadership contestable, and makes it important to place any analysis of leadership claims into the political-economic context in which they take place, as is done in this dissertation. Furthermore, Falkner (ibid.) argues that it should be kept in mind that environmental sustainability is not the sole EU principle, but rather only one principle that continues to compete with the ideas of economic freedom and free trade. As a result, he states that instances of leadership might equally result from efforts to maintain competitiveness rather than the EU wanting to act as a normative power in environmental issues.

Because economic competitiveness remains one of the key principles in the EU, Baker (2000) and Burchell and Lightfoot (2004) have claimed that until now, the EU has attempted to promote rather non-radical models of sustainable development that have not posed an economic threat to the Union. The introduction of the EU climate package, which binds the EU to 20% emissions reductions regardless of whether other regions follow suit, provides a fruitful opportunity to examine the ability of the Union to act as a normative power to promote its ideology in the international setting before the UN negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Essay 1 complements these two strands of research within EU environmental leadership studies in four main ways. First, it provides an examination of contemporary environmental leadership by focusing on a recent policy initiative introduced at a time when the Kyoto Protocol is about to expire. Second, it focuses on how 'environmental leadership' is discursively constructed, an understudied area until now. Third, the study bridges the above-reviewed approaches to the study of environmental leadership by

discussing whether the media represent the climate package as demonstrating both the four types of leadership and the EU's ability to act as a normative power in the international setting. And finally, it provides a link between environmental leadership and media studies by examining how 'leadership' is constructed in media texts.

3.3 Media studies on climate change

One of the founding claims of the study at hand is that the media is an important mediating channel between politicians and the public because it influences people's perceptions of the seriousness of climate issues and the need to act. For this reason, previous media studies on climate change form part of the theoretical foundation for examining discursive representations of EU environmental leadership in the media. In addition, they form the basis for analyzing media representations of the EU climate package. The following review highlights the criticality of the field and outlines the central approaches and findings in extant literature. This review is followed by an examination of the contribution of Essays 1 and 2 to this literature.

In recent decades, the media has emerged as a central setting for the social (re)construction of environmental discourses (Corbett & Durfee, 2004) because of its critical role in today's society. From the perspective of encouraging individuals to take environmental action, studying media representations of climate change topics is important because, as both Corbett and Durfee (ibid) and Sampei and Ayoagi-Usui (2009) argue, the media and elements included in news stories influence people's perception of the seriousness of climate change issues. Reflecting this importance, an increasing number of researchers have examined media representations of climate change in different countries. The majority of this research has focused on the UK (Boykoff, 2008; Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Doulton & Brown, 2009; Ereaut & Segnit, 2006, 2007) and the US (Antilla, 2005; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Foust & O'Shannon Murphy, 2009; Zehr, 2000), although media representations in some other European countries such as France (Brossard et al., 2004), Germany (Weingart et al., 2000) and Sweden (Olausson, 2009, in press) as well as in India (Billett, 2009) have also been examined.

Studies in the field have highlighted four key findings that are relevant here. One of the most common approaches in these studies has been analyzing how the media have taken part in framing climate change over the years. In these studies, framing can be understood as how journalists decide on which sides of an issue to make salient, and then make connections between these issues so that particular interpretations, evaluations, or solutions are promoted over others (Entman, 1993). These studies have resulted in two main findings. First, extant studies suggest that the media both in Europe (Boykoff, 2008; Doulton & Brown, 2009; Ereaut & Segnit, 2006, 2007; Olausson, 2009, in press; Weingart et al., 2000) and in the US (Foust & O'Shannon Murphy, 2009) have often employed catastrophic or apocalyptic discourses when reporting on climate change. This means that journalists have highlighted the potentially catastrophic effects of climate change. Second, these studies demonstrate an apparent disparity between the US and Europe in the media coverage on climate change. In the US, the journalistic norm of balance and the use of climate skeptics as primary definers of the debate have often resulted in climate change being constructed as uncertain (Antilla, 2005; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Zehr, 2000). In Europe, in turn, the press has in general framed climate change as certain (Brossard et al., 2004; Carvalho, 2005; 2007; Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Olausson, 2009, in press; Weingart et al., 2000;). This also seems to be the case in India (Billett, 2009).

The third key finding in the field has been the fact that climate discourses of different societal actors differ from each other. For example Weingart et al. (2000) found that discourses on climate in three key domains, i.e. science, politics, and the media are not in line with each other, and as Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) argue, popular discourse on climate change is not the same as the discourse of scientists, indicating a "failed discursive translation" (ibid., p. 125). These findings suggest that the transmission of information from science to politics and the media is not unproblematic (see e.g. Boykoff & Rajan, 2007; McComas & Shanahan, 1999; Ungar, 1992; Zehr, 2000). This is problematic from the point of view of climate change communications because as Hulme (2006) argues, catastrophic discourses, used in the media in many countries, do not

reflect the language of science and can be counterproductive by not encouraging behavioral change.

The fact that discourses between actors have differed from each other makes it meaningful to continue identifying potential disparities between politics and the media. In addition to the interfaces between science, politics, and the media, Boykoff (2008) has pointed to the importance of considering the influence of non-state actors like nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that also participate in the politics of climate change. To further our understanding of potential "communication disturbances" (Weingart et al., 2000, p. 280) between politicians, the media, and NGOs, Essays 1 and 2 examine texts from these three actors. From the point of view of this thesis, understanding these disparities is central because discourses (Alexander, 2008; Lorenzoni et al., 2007) and the ways in which scientific knowledge is represented in the media (Carvalho, 2007) have implications not only for political programs but also for individuals and the assignment of responsibility in the fight against climate change.

Finally, the fourth key finding in media studies on climate change has been that discursive practices with regard to climate change may shift as a result of critical discourse moments (Chilton, 1987; Gamson, 1992). These are such moments in time when something particular happens that may "challenge existing discursive positions" (Carvalho, 2005, p. 6). Although media studies on climate change have proliferated in recent years, I argue that it is critical to continue conducting such studies at times that might signal critical discourse moments. Years 2008 and 2009, when the research for the present study was mainly conducted, included several such potential moments with regard to climate change. These included the introduction and ratification of the EU climate package in 2008, the passing of the US climate bill in congress in 2009, as well as the United Nations climate summit in Copenhagen in December 2009.

In addition to studying media texts at a time when significant new environmental initiatives are being introduced and implemented, Essays 1 and 2 contribute to media studies on climate change in two other main ways. First, they extend the scope of focus

from single-country investigations to cross-societal comparisons of media texts, which are arguably important in the European context where transnational environmental policies need to be implemented in 27 societal contexts. And second, it also shifts focus away from a relatively widely studied area, i.e. how climate change is represented in the media, to a less studied area, i.e. how a significant policy initiative aimed at *fighting* climate change is represented. This shift of focus is purposeful because previous research has already indicated that European newspapers have tended to frame climate change itself as certain.

3.4 Communication of corporate social responsibility

Regardless of where firms operate, they need to adhere to a number of laws and regulations. In the EU, for example, the EU climate package will relatively soon influence especially those firms that will become a part of the emissions trading system where they can buy or sell pollution permits. In addition to laws and regulations, however, companies also face pressure from their stakeholders to consider the social and societal impact of their operations. This pressure has given rise to corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities in companies. At the same time, CSR, also called corporate responsibility (CR), has become an increasingly popular field of research.

As a research topic, CSR/CR consists of several focus areas. Egri and Ralston (2008), for example, who provide a review of 321 articles on CR in 13 international business journals between 1998-2007, have identified four separate CR themes: CSR, environmental issues, ethics, and governance topics. The weight given to these areas during the last decades has varied between different fields of research. In international business journals, for example, Egri and Ralston (ibid.) claim that the majority of CR studies have focused on ethics and governance issues, whereas fewer studies have concentrated on corporate environmental responsibility. In management literature between 1992-2002, on the other hand, Lockett et al. (2006) argue that topics related to ethics and environment have been the most popular. Concerning research approaches, the findings of both these studies point to the prevalence of quantitative empirical research (Egri & Ralston, 2008; Lockett et al., 2006).

As CSR studies have become common, also research on CSR communication activities has proliferated. Perhaps due to ease of access to material, many of these studies have focused on external communication, especially the Internet as a communications channel. More specifically, these researchers have addressed issues such as how CSR message themes are communicated in mission and value statements (Sones et al., 2009), how responsibility issues are organized and presented online (Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Coupland, 2006), the content and characteristics of overall CSR communication (Chaudri & Wang, 2007) and CSR reports (Gill et al., 2008), the influence of national cultures on CSR communication in corporate websites (Kampf, 2007), or how the rhetoric of CSR is legitimized (Coupland, 2005). In addition, many studies have looked at CSR reporting in different countries (e.g. Dawkins & Ngunjiri, 2008; Hartman et al., 2007; Nielsen & Thomsen, 2007). In addition to these studies that have focused on external communication, some researchers have highlighted the importance of internal communication (Barrett, 2002; Ligeti & Oravecz, 2009; Vaaland & Heide, 2007), which is an area that warrants further study. This dissertation addresses the lack of research on internal communication.

Increasingly, both researchers and businesses approach CSR from a stakeholder perspective (see e.g. Jamali, 2008; O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2008; Pater & van Lierop, 2006; Pedersen, 2006; Rodrigo & Arenas, 2008). This perspective recognizes the importance of firms considering the needs and expectations of all their stakeholder groups. With regard to communication with stakeholders, Birth, Illia, Lurati & Zamparini (2008, p. 184) conclude that recent research emphasizes the "importance of defining clear communication objectives for each stakeholder". The necessity to address each stakeholder group separately makes it important to also focus research on the different influential stakeholder groups.

One of the key stakeholder groups for any organization is employees, because they put corporate CSR initiatives into practice (Collier & Esteban, 2007). The fact that employees are key implementers of corporate policies highlights the importance of understanding individuals' behavior in organizations, as proposed by Stern (2000b) and

discussed above in section 2. From the perspective of CSR activities, employees are also critical because they are seen by other stakeholders as credible information sources concerning a firm's true CSR efforts (Dawkins, 2005; Nielsen & Thomsen, 2009b), whereas firms' own communication about CSR activities can be viewed with skepticism (see e.g. Alexander, 2008; Dhir, 2006). Insofar, however, employees have relatively seldom been the focus of research in environment-related studies (Heiskanen & Mäntylä, 2004). Because of the central role of employees, this study claims that it is important to examine internal communication of environmental issues and how employees think these issues should be communicated to them for the communication to be effective, i.e. to engage employees in action. Essays 3 and 4 address this issue.

3.5 CSR linked to corporate governance (CG)

As discussed in the previous section, issues related to CSR have become increasingly central aspects in the operation of firms. As the pressure for environmental CSR in companies has increased, the nature of sustainability issues has also changed away from a focus on processes and product designs to how corporations are designed to begin with (Elkington, 2006). According to Harrison (2009), this means that companies can no longer treat environmental concerns only at the operational level. Rather, he argues, environmental issues are now high on the corporate agenda, as companies must take into account economic and financial issues such as environmental risk exposure and the effect of future emission limits. The rise of CSR issues to the agendas of corporate boards has triggered a line of research that suggests that CSR is increasingly interrelated with corporate governance (CG), which focuses on protecting the rights of shareholders and other stakeholders through e.g. accurate disclosure of information (OECD, 2004).

Jamali, Safieddine and Rabbath (2008) propose that the interrelatedness of CSR and CG arises from at least three issues. The first is that both the holistic approach to CG and the stakeholder approach to CSR emphasize the importance of firms being responsible to all their stakeholders (see also Dunlop, 1998; Kendall, 1999). Second, both CG and CSR require and encourage companies to disclose information on their operations, the former stressing the disclosure of accurate information (OECD, 2004), the latter the disclosure of social information (Birth et al., 2008). This links CSR to risk management (Juholin,

2004), which is also one of CG's aspects (OECD, 2004). Further, in disclosing information, accountability, transparency and honesty are three key notions in both CG and CSR (Jamali et al., 2008; Page, 2005; Van den Berghe & Louche, 2005). And finally, the goal of both CG and CSR is to satisfy the needs and expectations of all (influential) stakeholder groups to ensure long-term performance and operations (Jamali et al., 2008; see also Aguilera, Rupp & Ganapathi, 2007; Hancock, 2005; Ho, 2005).

Even though researchers increasingly see CG and CSR as interrelated fields, there remains a key difference with regard to measurability. CG involves relatively specific, measureable and objective governance codes that companies must adhere to. These specific codes increase the credibility and transparency of CG information. As mentioned in the previous sections, however, CSR activities are often viewed with skepticism, especially in the case of 'green' operations that are often just considered PR stunts (Alexander, 2008). Two of the problems leading to this skepticism are that first, it is difficult to verify data concerning CSR activities (Birth et al., 2008), and second, that there are differences between what firms consider as responsible activities (Juholin, 2004). Thus, even though transparency is a key element in CSR (Carroll, 1999), CSR activities often suffer from a lack of transparency, making it difficult to evaluate companies' CSR activities. This raises the need for research that examines potential ways to increase the measurability of CSR initiatives. Essay 4 focuses on this issue by examining first, how a greening initiative shared by over 140 companies has been implemented and communicated in 13 Finnish firms, and second, how the initiative could be made more standardized to increase the ability of both external and internal stakeholders to assess this initiative's credibility.

4 Data and methodology

This dissertation consists of four essays, all of which have a qualitative research approach. Of the essays, two look at media texts and adopt a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective, and two are case studies where interview data collected from case companies is subjected to thematic analysis. This section first outlines the data and

method used in each of the studies in more detail. The quality of the research is then discussed before the section is concluded by a discussion of the epistemological and ontological foundations and limitations of the study.

4.1 Data used in the essays

4.1.1 Media texts

In Essays 1 and 2, the primary data consists of media texts from selected print media in the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Germany and Italy in Essay 1, and the first four of these countries in Essay 2. The former looks at a total of 35 media texts from January, October, and December 2008, and the latter at 16 media texts from January and December 2008 (for a list of the media texts and newspapers, see Table 1 in Essay 1 and Table 2 in Essay 2). These three points in time were selected for the following reasons: January 23-24 followed the introduction of the EU package by the European Commission, October 16-17 an EU summit that focused on addressing the severe financial crisis that accelerated throughout the world during 2008 and had a seeming impact on the climate package, and December 12-13 the approval of the climate package by European leaders.

In addition to the media texts, both essays look at two speeches by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and press releases from environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs). The speeches preceded the media texts in January and December 2008, and the press releases were also from these two points in time. In Essay 1, the press releases from ENGOs were not the main focus of the study, but were rather included to highlight the importance of intertextual analysis in the case of media studies on environmental issues. In Essay 2, both Barroso's speeches and the press releases were mainly included for purposes of illustration rather than subjected to closer textual analysis.

4.1.2 Case studies

Essays 3 and 4 use case study methodology. In both cases, this method was considered meaningful because the questions asked where "how" and "why" types, which are often best answered through case studies (Yin, 2003). The design of the two studies was,

however, different because Essay 3 is based on a single case study, and Essay 4 on a multiple case study. As both studies focused on one unit of analysis, they were both holistic designs (ibid.).

In Essay 3, we wanted to study employee viewpoints on the organization's internal, environment-related communication. We selected a single case because we wanted to examine employees' views in a context where they had recently been targeted with such environmental communication. This decision was made because we believed the interviewed employees would then be better able to evaluate the internal communication, as they could compare their thoughts on the topic to the communication they had recently encountered.

The particular case company, KONE, is one of the world's largest manufacturers of elevators and has, in its field, been recognized as environmentally active. KONE seemed well suited for the study, because it had, at the time of the study, made active efforts to communicate the company's internal environmental policy to its employees for a period of approximately one year.

The data for the study in Essay 3 was gathered through 12 thematic, semi-structured interviews with employees, conducted in May-June 2009. The interview themes were based on a theoretical framework developed for this particular study (see Figure I in Essay 3), and the themes used to guide the interviews are shown in Appendix 1. The employees were selected through convenience sampling using three criteria. The first and most important criteria was that they were selected from the 110 employees that had, in a recent survey on a related topic in the same company, indicated their willingness to be interviewed in issues relating to the company's handling of environmental issues. Second, they were selected from these 110 individuals based on a common strong language (Finnish, Swedish, or English) between the interviewee and interviewer to ensure fluent interviewing either face-to-face (nine interviews) or on the phone (three interviews). And finally, the interviews focused on office workers (11 out of the 12 interviewees), because we wanted to understand the perspective of office workers in a

production-driven organization. Table 1 in Essay 3 gives more information on the backgrounds of the interviewees, including their age, nationality, work location, position in the organization, and whether they have direct contact with environmental issues in their jobs.

In Essay 4, the objective was to explore how one greening initiative, the WWF Green Office –program, has been implemented and communicated in Finnish firms. To enable such an examination, a multiple case study was considered most appropriate. Convenience sampling was used to select the case companies from the approximately 140 Finnish firms that were part of the Green Office –program at the time of the study (fall 2009). Two issues were considered in the sampling process: first, the firms were selected from those that were located in the Finnish capital region, and second, only those whose Internet pages included the name of a person to contact in Green Office –related issues were approached. Initial inquiries with these firms resulted in interviews in 13 firms. The interviewees were either the Green Office coordinators of their firms or persons that the initial contacts indicated as best informants on Green Office -related communication. The thematic, semi-structured interviews were conducted in October-November 2009. The interview themes, outlined in Appendix 2, were based on the theoretical framework that was developed in Essay 3.

Tables 1 and 2 in Essay 4 provide more detailed background information on the interviewees and the case companies, respectively. More specifically, Table 1 describes the interviewees' positions in their organizations, and Table 2 outlines the case companies, their line of business, the number of employees that work in the office that has the Green Office –designation, and the year when the first office building of each case company received the designation.

4.2 Analytical methods

4.2.1 Critical discourse analysis

Both Essay 1 and 2 adopt a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective. As suggested in Fairclough's (2003) CDA framework, the material is analyzed at three different levels: text, discursive practice, and social context. In Essay 1, the analysis of text-level issues focuses on how European environmental leadership (or the lack thereof) is (re)presented in the analyzed texts. Specifically, the analysis considers whether this potential leadership is supported or undermined by how the targets of the climate package are presented. In Essay 2, on the other hand, the textual analysis focuses on key words and sentences, text structure, elements that are made salient in the texts, and modality to enable evaluating the frames that were employed in the selected media texts in reporting on the climate package; as Entman (1993, p. 52) claims, news frames are "manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments."

With regard to the analysis of discursive practice, both essays focus on the intertextual dialogue that the texts enter into. In other words, the examination focuses on uncovering traces of other texts that are visible in the material at hand. In addition, both essays examine which actors are and are not given voice in the texts. This analysis is important, because those who are given voice in the media are the ones that get to define the issues for the readers. Finally, concerning the analysis of the social context, both essays consider what elements in the larger social context could be identified as the most significant influences on the texts. This analysis enabled understanding and discussing the findings in the social context in which the texts were produced. In both of these studies, central elements included the global financial crisis that accelerated in Europe throughout 2008, the election of President Barack Obama in the US in 2008, and the upcoming UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009. Together, the analyses at these three levels helped to understand how the selected media in several European countries represented the EU climate package in 2008. Combined with an understanding of potential barriers to individuals' environmental action, demonstrated in the theoretical framework of the present study, it was then possible to evaluate how the

media representations might have contributed to either overcoming or creating barriers to individuals' environmental action.

It should be noted, however, that the quality of the discourse analysis in these two essays could have further benefited from a discussion of how the stories in the different media were prioritized in comparison to other news, as well as how much attention the topic overall received in the different media. This is something that should be considered in future media studies that aim to provide cross-cultural comparisons of media texts.

4.2.2 Thematic analysis

In both case studies, the transcribed interview data was analyzed based on the themes that guided the interviews as well as themes that emerged from the data upon closer examination. In Essay 3, the analysis of the data focused on three main themes based on the theoretical framework developed for that study: the interviewees' ability to link the company's environmental policy to their own jobs, employee views on the content and channel of environmental communications, and their views on potential (communication) barriers in environmental issues. In Essay 4, closer analysis focused on the communication challenges that the firms had encountered when trying to implement the Green Office –program in their offices.

4.3 Quality of the study

In any study, it is central to evaluate the quality of the research. Traditionally, especially in quantitative research, validity and reliability have been the criteria against which the quality of a study could be measured. As is well established, the former refers to whether the study measures what it was intended to measure, the latter to the whether the findings are repeatable in other contexts (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Yin, 2003).

In qualitative research, these traditional criteria are often applied differently, because it is recognized that the aim of the research is not to measure an objective truth (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Ultimately, then, the evaluation of qualitative research boils down to the questions of whether the research process is credible or not and whether the readers of qualitative research reports can relate to the findings (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003). As

Moisander and Valtonen (2006, p. 26) also state, the validity of research is "something that the audience of the research reports and papers decides on". To increase the quality of qualitative research and the ability of the readers to evaluate it, researchers are recommended to describe the research process carefully (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003) so that it is both methodologically and theoretically transparent. According to Moisander and Valtonen (2006, p. 27), this means that both the "data production process, analytical procedures and principles, how interpretations were developed, and conclusions drawn" as well as "the theoretical stance from which the interpretation takes place" are stated explicitly.

In the individual essays as well as in this introductory part of the dissertation, an attempt has been made to outline the choices made in the research process as explicitly as possible to enable readers to evaluate the process. Of the four essays, the first two are based on an analysis of media texts. Both these essays include a multitude of quotations from the texts under analysis to increase the transparency of the analysis and thereby the reliability and validity of the study (cf. Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Olausson, in press). As Carvalho and Burgess (2005, p. 1461) state, "CDA is essentially an interpretative work. Logic and credibility of the argumentation, backed up by quotes from the texts, are the main 'validity' tests in this kind of analysis" (see also Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Potter, 2003). The analysis also focused on publicly available data. This enables other researchers to replicate the studies and to consider the plausibility of the findings, made easier by the fact that both essays include a list of all the media (and other) texts that were under investigation.

The analysis in Essays 3 and 4 focuses on the themes that emerged from the qualitative interviews. The themes were partly pre-determined because of the thematic interview guides that were used to ensure a certain level of standardization between interviews, but some themes also emerged from outside the interview guide. To increase the theoretical transparency of these studies, the data collection and analytical phases were based on previous research (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006), in these studies research on CSR communication. The fact that all data was gathered by one interviewer through semi-

structured interviews further increases the consistency of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2003). In Essay 4, which was a multiple case study, the use of semi-structured interviews also enhanced cross-case comparability (ibid.). Furthermore, in analyzing the data, the transcriptions of the interviews were read and re-read several times to ensure the validity of the categorization of themes (Dey, 1993).

To make the analysis more explicit and evaluable (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003), the research process is clearly explained in both papers, and the interpretations made are supported by quotations from the interviews wherever possible. These procedures make it possible for readers to evaluate both the research process and the researcher's interpretations, and increase the reliability of the findings. Finally, to make the studies replicable, this thesis includes the thematic interview guides that were used in both of the studies (Appendices 1 and 2)

4.4 Ontological and epistemological foundations

Kakkuri-Knuuttila and Heinlahti (2006) argue that when research follows well-known traditions in a field, it is not necessary to explain the underlying philosophical assumptions in great detail. The research in this dissertation falls within the scope of well-established traditions in business and communication research, as both discursive approaches to text analysis and using qualitative interview data are relatively typical in the field. The ontological and epistemological foundations of the study are therefore discussed rather briefly.

Ontologically, the research here builds on the position that the world that we live in is socially constructed, in other words that "social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors… [and] in a constant state of revision" (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p. 20). In this view, it is argued that there is no external reality that could be measured. Rather, social entities are constructions made up of the thoughts and actions of their actors (ibid.).

If we accept that the world is socially constructed, the study of language becomes meaningful, because "language is an irreducible part of social life, …interconnected with

other elements of social life" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2). As a research approach, (critical) discourse analysis, used in Essays 1 and 2, enables researchers to examine taken-for-granted value assumptions and their links to power issues that are reproduced through language (Fairclough, 2003; Kakkuri-Knuuttila & Heinlahti, 2006). Studies taking a discourse analytical approach thus help us understand how we socially construct the world through language. In the media studies in Essays 1 and 2, a focus on language enabled gaining an understanding of how the language used creates different representations of the same issue, the EU climate package, and how these representations might then contribute to creating or overcoming barriers to individuals' environmental action. In addition, an important element in the CDA approach in these studies was to examine which actors are given voice in the media. This has a direct link to power issues, because the ones who are given voice in the media are the ones whose views of social reality are promoted.

Contrary to the first two essays, which analyze media texts, Essays 3 and 4 focus on employees and their experiences to enable examining how they interpret the social world that they live in. Bryman and Bell (2003) argue that for business researchers that approach the research objects from a constructivist viewpoint, it is meaningful to adopt this kind of an interpretative epistemological orientation that bases understanding on the experiences of people working in organizations. Here, it is argued that this kind of an understanding would not be possible through more positivist approaches that focus less on a deep understanding of an issue.

4.5 Limitations

The present study examines the influence of communication on barriers to individuals' environmental action in organizations. The examination here is, however, limited to only two communication aspects, media and organizational internal communication. Further, the research only addresses media communication of one environmental initiative, the EU climate package, and provides an analysis of internal, environment-related communication in only a total of 14 organizations, all based in Finland. The fact that all case companies are from the same country might bias the findings, because research evidence suggests that companies operating in different societal contexts might face

different kinds of pressures from their stakeholders with regard to communicating about CSR issues (see e.g. Kampf, 2007; Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Therefore, even though all the individual essays complement their respective research fields, it is clear that more research in different societal contexts is still needed into both media and organizational communication to enable developing a general theory of environmental behavior in organizations (Stern, 2000b). In addition, it would be beneficial to extend the scope of studies to other types of communication, e.g. advertising, that can influence people's environmental behavior in organizations and elsewhere. In Finland, for example, a team of advertising and communication agencies put together a communication campaign called 'Ilmastotalkoot' (joint climate effort) in 2008 (www.ilmastotalkoot.fi). The campaign was visible in different media, and the target audience included individuals, companies, and other organizations. In a nutshell, the purpose of the campaign was to inform all Finns of what they can do to halt climate change, as well as what others are already doing. These kinds of communication campaigns no doubt have potential to influence people's behavior, and as such would be an important focus of research in the future.

With regard to the media studies, an additional limitation is that the studies only examine a relatively small number of texts from selected print media over a period of only one year. To increase our understanding of media representations of the EU climate package, it would be important to conduct studies that focus on other media, e.g. the TV, as well as more longitudinal studies with a larger number of texts, and preferably from further countries. Equally, from the perspective of understanding people's environmental behavior, it would be central to also examine reader perceptions of these texts.

Concerning the organizational studies, Essays 3 and 4 together propose a framework for effective internal environment-related communication. The value of this proposed framework should be further examined in other studies in order to evaluate its workability. In addition, the influence of organizations' external communication on employee behavior should also be considered in future research, because it has been argued that external messages "forcefully…serve internal purposes such as reinforcing

corporate identity and building identification among organizational members" (Morsing, 2006, p. 171). This communication aspect was left out of this study due to the necessity of any one dissertation to focus on a limited number of issues. This is a limitation that should be addressed in future studies.

5 Summary of essays

In this section, the four essays that form Part II are summarized. The summary focuses on the main results and key contributions of each study to the overall dissertation. The essays are independent from each other, and how they are linked to each other has already been discussed above in Section 2. Therefore, the links between the essays are not highlighted here. The summaries are, however, also accompanied by a demonstration and discussion of what aspects of the theoretical framework introduced in Section 2 are examined in each study. After the summaries, Part I is concluded by a discussion of the general theoretical and managerial implications of the dissertation, as well as a discussion of potential avenues for further research.

5.1 Summary of Essay 1

Title:	The EU energy and climate package: a showcase for European environmental leadership?
Author:	Christa Uusi-Rauva
Publication:	Environmental Policy and Governance
Year:	2010
Volume:	20
Number:	2
Pages:	73-88

The first essay contributes to research on environmental leadership by shifting the focus from looking at whether the EU has demonstrated different types of leadership in the past to how the notion and different types of 'environmental leadership' are discursively constructed by different actors in text and talk. In this study, the actors that are examined include the EU, European newspapers, and environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs). The motivation for this shift of focus is that even though previous research has concluded that the role of rhetoric is an important part of the EU's

environmental leadership (Andresen & Agrawala, 2002; Falkner, 2007; Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Vogler & Stephan, 2007), previous studies in the field have not adopted discursive approaches to examine the rhetoric in more detail.

This essay addresses the first two specific research questions, i.e. 1. *"How do the media in different European countries represent the EU climate package?"* and 2. *"How might these media representations overcome previously identified barriers to environmental action, or create new barriers?"* The study thus focuses on the upper part of the theoretical framework, as demonstrated in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. Area of theoretical framework examined in Essays 1 and 2.
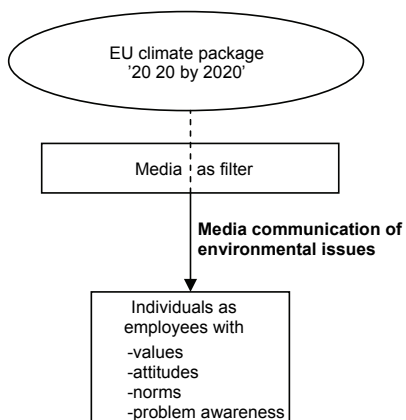
In the essay, the focus is on how different actors in the national media in the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Germany and Italy discursively construct 'environmental leadership' in connection to the climate package, and whether or not the texts construct the package as a sign of EU environmental leadership. In addition, the study explores which actors are given voice in the national media under investigation.

As an answer to the first research question, the findings suggest that in the analyzed texts, environmental leadership is a struggle for meaning that shifts over time. In January, when the climate package was introduced, the EU claimed that it is a global environmental leader because the climate package includes emissions reduction targets that are higher than what other regions in the world have committed themselves to. In December 2008, when the package was approved of by European leaders in a modified form, the EU's claim of environmental leadership focused on the fact that the '20 20 by 2020' reduction targets remained the same, although, unlike in the original package, industry would receive most pollution permits for free.

The EU's claims of leadership were contested both in January and December. In January, ENGOs argued in their press releases that the suggested '20 20 by 2020' measures would not be enough to halt global warming below critical levels. As a sign of leadership, the ENGOs instead called for measures that would make a real difference. As ENGOs were given little voice in the media, however, this struggle was not widely evident in the media texts. In December, on the other hand, ENGOs as well as dissatisfied members of the EU parliament were given voice in nearly all the media texts under investigation. Now, the opposing view of environmental leadership focused on the claim of these critics that an environmental leader would have presented effective means to reach the specified emissions reduction targets rather than letting industry get free pollution permits. The analysis further indicates that the EU's leadership role, which seemingly changed in the media from a leader to a quasi-leader position during 2008, was influenced by the global financial crisis that forced the Union to offer concessions to industry to achieve a deal at all.

As an answer to the second research question, it might well be that media representations of EU environmental leadership in 2008 might have contributed to maintaining the barrier to environmental action resulting from the lack of political action by international and national governments (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). This conclusion will be discussed in more detail in Section 6, which draws together the findings of the dissertation.

5.2 Summary of Essay 2

This study was undertaken to complement existing studies on media representations of climate change by turning attention to how an environmental policy initiative aimed at fighting climate change is represented in the media. This shift of focus was considered important because, as argued above, the lack of political action has previously been identified as one of the barriers to individuals' environmental action (Lorenzoni et al., 2007)

Similarly to the first essay, Essay 2 addresses research questions 1 and 2, i.e. 1. *"How do the media in different European countries represent the EU climate package?"* and 2. *"How might these media representations overcome previously identified barriers to environmental action, or create new barriers?"* Therefore, the essay focuses on the same section of the theoretical framework as Essay 1 (see Figure 9 above).

In this paper, the main objective is threefold: first, to understand how the national media in the UK, Ireland, Sweden and Finland frame the climate package in the selected news texts; second, how these media texts present the measures proposed in the package – i.e. as adequate or inadequate in the fight against climate change; and third, how these representations and framings change from January to December 2008.

The main focus is on the second objective, i.e. how the adequacy of the measures proposed in the package is represented in the media texts during 2008. In answering the first research question from this viewpoint, the findings of this study point to how what are considered as adequate measures in fighting climate change are a relative concept in the media, even when examined within a period of just one year. Based on the analysis, it

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is suggested that the adequacy of measures is both contingent upon the social context, both national and transnational, and relative with regard to time and to the comparisons made. First, with regard to social context, media representations of measures to tackle climate change remain determined by considerations of the competitiveness of nationally significant industries (national context) and by the actions and inactions of other countries and regions (transnational context). Second, concerning time, the media representations of the adequacy of measures are relative to both ongoing (escalating financial crisis) and prospective (forthcoming UN climate negotiations) events. And third, the adequacy of the measures is relative in terms to the comparisons made between, for example, 'us' (our nation-state) and 'them' (other EU states, mainly newer member states from Central and Eastern Europe).

These findings demonstrate that in climate change and other environmental issues, changes in the social context can very quickly influence media representations, and thereby our understandings, of what should be done and how. As an answer to the second research question, it is therefore suggested that the media representations during 2008 might have further contributed to creating and maintaining the attitude that other things are more important in the society (psychological factor), because financial and industrial concerns at the end of the day weighed heavier on the scale than effectively fighting climate change. This finding will also be discussed in more detail in Section 6.

5.3 Summary of Essay 3

To increase our understanding of people's environmental behavior in the organizational context, it is significant to uncover what potential barriers to action employees themselves perceive. In addition, it is useful to examine how employees think environment-related issues should be communicated to them to overcome these potential barriers and engage them in such action. Focusing on employee views is further meaningful, because it has been suggested that real practices in organizations often fall short of the recommendations made in literature concerning the involvement of employees in environmental initiatives (Heiskanen & Mäntylä, 2004). Addressing this lack of research on employee viewpoints, Essay 3 that thus aimed to answer the third and fourth research questions, i.e. 3. *"What potential barriers to environmental action can be identified in organizations?"* and 4. *"How can firms communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to overcome these barriers?"* Turning attention away from the media to organizational communication, the study therefore focuses on the inner part of the theoretical framework, as demonstrated in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. Area of theoretical framework examined in Essays 3 and 4.
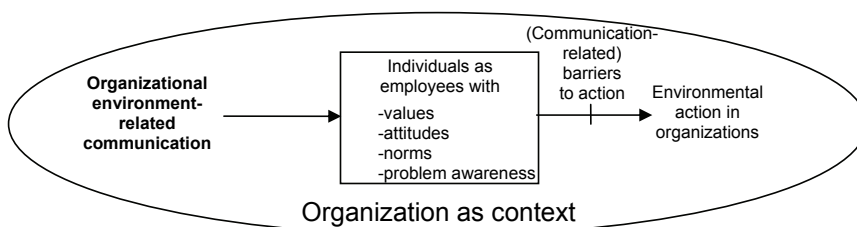
The data in Essay 3 consists of transcribed interviews with 12 employees from the case company, KONE, selected because it had made active efforts to communicate its new internal environmental policy to employees for a little over one year at the time of the study. This provided a good opportunity to consider whether employees thought the communication had been effective in engaging them in environmental action. Further, the recent nature of the initiative helped to ensure that the interviewees were well positioned to reflect on the organization's environment-related communication.

As an answer to the third research question, the findings of the study point to four main barriers to environmental action in organizations. The first barrier is the fact that environmental issues do not seem to be a priority to most employees, but are rather easily forgotten when 'time is money' or people are 'too busy'. This low priority is related to the second barrier, which is employees' relatively low level of motivation for environmental actions. The interviewees felt that employees would, in most cases, only be motivated to take very small and easy actions, if even them. The third barrier is the organizational culture of being too busy. Being too busy is not only a problem because it easily leads to people pushing environmental issues aside (related to the first barrier), but also because it seems to work as a barrier at the organizational level. For example, even though many interviewees felt that formal and informal meetings would be most effective channels for delivering environment-related messages, they also felt that the culture of everyone being constantly in a hurry did not support organizing these kinds of meetings. Finally, a fourth barrier to spreading environmental activity inside the company is the feeling that it is not easy to approach one's colleagues directly with environment-related suggestions, because people want to neither insult others nor been seen as 'green hippies' themselves.

With regard to the answer to the fourth research question, the findings also point to four main considerations. First, environmental messages should be tailored to different target audiences to make the messages meaningful for all employees. Specifically, in a production-oriented organization, it is important to clearly communicate to office workers what they can do for the environment. Second, environment-related messages

should be clear, practical, and easy to implement, and they should not demand too much effort from the employees. Third, messages should potentially emphasize cost-savings and optimization to motivate employees to take the environment into consideration in their work. And finally, it might be useful to assign environmental contact persons to each department to make it easier for employees to bring up environmental initiatives. This might help in overcoming employees' unwillingness to approach their colleagues directly in these issues, which acts as a communication barrier in environment-related topics. As in any case study, however, it should be remembered that these findings are based on interviews in one organization, in this case an engineering-driven firm with headquarters in Finland. These findings are therefore considerations that can and should not be treated as directly generalizable to other contexts.

The main contribution of Essay 3 to the dissertation is that it builds our understanding of how people themselves think environmental issues should be communicated to them for the communication to be effective – in other words, to engage them in taking the kind of environmental action the organization would like them to take. The essay also sheds light on potential communication barriers that might hinder effective environment-related communication in firms. Even though the findings are based on a study in the organizational context, it is believed that these results can also potentially be meaningful in other contexts, for example in communicating to individuals as citizens.

5.4 Summary of Essay 4

Title: A critical view of the WWF Finland Green Office –program: greening in the office or on paper?
Author: Christa Uusi-Rauva
Unpublished

The final essay also focuses on the third and fourth research questions, i.e. 3. *"What potential barriers to environmental action can be identified in organizations?"* and 4. *"How can firms communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to overcome these barriers?"* In terms of the theoretical framework, the study thus focuses on the same part as Essay 3 (see Figure 10 above).

This study was conducted as a multiple case study in 13 Finnish organizations that have implemented the WWF Green Office –program in their offices. The Green Office – program is an easy-to-implement greening program for offices that aims to reduce offices' carbon footprints through actions such as reducing the use of energy and paper. Even though the program is in principle the same in all companies, it is tailored so that each organization decides which aspects of its operations it wants to focus on, as well as what kinds of targets are set for the planned reductions. Data was gathered through semi-structured, thematic interviews with a total of 14 Green Office –coordinators or persons that the coordinators had indicated as best informants on Green Office communication (two interviewees from one of the companies).

There were two main motivations for the study. The first was to find out what kinds of challenges different firms have faced in implementing and communicating the same program to their employees. This would help in understanding both barriers to employees' environmental action that these firms have experienced and what kind of communication seems to work or not work in engaging employees in action. The second motivation was to explore whether these kinds of shared greening programs that are implemented in a similar manner in several companies could potentially overcome two of the challenges in environmental CSR initiatives, that is the fact that they often lack credibility (Alexander, 2008, Dhir, 2006) and comparability in the eyes of stakeholders.

As an answer to the third research question, the findings suggest two related main barriers to environmental action in organizations that are similar to the findings in Essay 3. On the one hand, the interviewees consider employees' level of motivation in environmental issues to be quite low, which means that the interviewees believe the employees should only be encouraged to take very small actions. Second, partly as a result of this low motivation, the interviewees feel that environmental issues are not a top priority to most employees. As a result, environmental actions are easily forgotten or pushed aside especially when people are busy at work.

Based on the findings, how should firms then communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to engage them in environmental action? The findings point to three main considerations, again similar to the considerations in Essay 3. First, it is suggested that communication should focus on concrete, practical messages that emphasize small things that employees can do for the environment. Second, employees might be most motivated to perform environmental actions if the need and rationale for such actions are communicated face-to-face by their managers rather than electronically via e-mails or intranets. Third, because most employees do not seem to be intrinsically motivated to take environmental action, it is suggested that firms consider motivating their employees with monetary or other incentives that are tied to meeting the environment-related goals that are set in the organization.

In terms of the dissertation, the main contribution of Essay 4 is that it helps us understand some of the challenges firms have had in common in attempting to communicate a shared, albeit tailored, environmental initiative to their employees. This understanding, the recommendations made, and the internal communication framework proposed in the essay make it possible to consider how future environmental communications in organizations could be designed along more effective lines.

6 Discussion

The aim of this section is to draw together the findings of the dissertation and answer the two broad research questions that were first, "*What barriers to environmental action can be identified?*" and second, *"What is the role of communication in affecting these barriers?"* Answering these broad research questions will then allow for an examination of the question *"how can we get people to take environmental action?",* which was the overall motivation behind the entire study. The discussion is divided into three parts. The first part examines the answer to these questions in light of the two first sub-questions that focus on representations of the EU climate package in different European media. The second part explores the answer in light of the other two sub-questions that turn attention

to individuals in organizations. Finally, the third part draws the discussion together by exploring how the framework adopted in this study can help us understand the challenges involved in implementing significant environmental change in the contemporary society. Following this examination, Section 7 will then discuss the main theoretical contributions and managerial implications of these findings, as well as provide avenues for future research.

6.1 Role of media in creating / overcoming barriers to action

The first two sub-questions were specified as 1)*"How do the media in different European countries represent the EU climate package?"* and 2) *"How might these media representations overcome previously identified barriers to environmental action, or create new barriers?"* These questions were addressed through an analysis of media texts on the climate package during the year 2008 from the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Italy and Germany in Essay 1, and from the first four of these countries in Essay 2. In the former, the analysis included articles from January, October, and December, in the latter from January and December. In addition to the media texts, the analyses looked at two speeches from José Manuel Barroso, the EU commission president, and press releases from environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs). The answer to the first research question was already largely provided in sections 5.1 and 5.2 that summarized the findings of the first two essays. Section 6.1.1, which summarizes media representations of the EU climate package, therefore involves some overlap with section five. Section 6.1.2 then provides a concluding answer to the second research question.

6.1.1 Media representations of the EU climate package

In Essay 1, the analysis of the material focuses on uncovering how different actors (the EU, media, and ENGOs) discursively construct notions of environmental leadership in connection to the EU climate package. The focus on environmental leadership was chosen because the lack of political action, and thereby leadership, has not only been found to act as a barrier to individuals' environmental action (Lorenzoni et al., 2007), but also to achieving global environmental agreements (Gupta & Ringius, 2001; Metz et al., 2001). From the point of view of the latter barrier, examining whether the climate package was represented in the media as a sign of environmental leadership or not was an

interesting and important focus area, because the package was introduced and ratified only a year before the UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, where the aim was to reach a new global climate deal to replace the expiring Kyoto protocol.

As an answer to the first sub-question, the analysis in Essay 1 indicates that the EU claimed global environmental leadership with the climate package for two main reasons: first, because the package introduced emissions reduction targets that are higher than what other regions have committed themselves to, and second, because the EU remained committed to the '20 20 by 2020' goals in the ratified version of the package despite the severe financial crisis that shook the world during 2008 and led to many countries expressing significant concerns over whether the targets could be met. In the media texts in January, the focus was largely on introducing the package and describing what it would mean for each country in question. Leadership issues were touched on in only four of the 12 texts, with representations ranging from presenting the package as a positive sign of the EU's leadership (two texts) to presenting it as questionable whether there is any sense in Europe assuming a leading role (one text) and whether EU countries could, in fact, even reach the set targets (one text). Even though ENGOs in January criticized the package's goals as falling short of the kind of targets needed to effectively fight climate change – and the kind of measures that the EU has earlier pushed for, the media texts did not give voice to these critical views.

In the media texts in October and December, however, different critics were given voice in addition to EU representatives who still hailed the package as a sign of EU leadership. In October, the EU's claim of environmental leadership was contested by country representatives, mainly national politicians and in December by ENGOs and other critics, i.e. dissatisfied members of the EU parliament. In October, national politicians questioned the sense in the EU assuming a leadership position when other regions in the world have not proposed significant emissions reductions, and instead emphasized the need to maintain industry competitiveness. In December, ENGOs and critics from the parliament contested the EU's argument of environmental leadership by emphasizing how a true leader would have presented emissions reduction targets that would make a

real difference in fighting climate change. In other words, the ratified version of the package was represented in the media in December largely as a disappointment and a failure to demonstrate strong environmental leadership.

In Essay 2, the analytical focus is on three main issues: first, how the climate package is framed in the examined media texts; second, how the adequacy of the proposed measures is represented; and third, how the framings and representations change from January to December 2008. The focus on the adequacy of the proposed measures was considered particularly interesting because the proposed 20 per cent targets fell short of the 25-40 per cent emissions reductions by developed nations that the EU had itself pushed for already in 2007 at the UN climate summit in Bali.

As an answer to the first sub-question, the findings of Essay 2 suggest that in January, there were four clear main frames. The EU package was presented as either (1) an economic and moral opportunity, (2) a threat to industry competitiveness, (3) an unfair burden on particular societies, and (4) costly, but less so than doing nothing. Five of the eight texts also clearly reconstruct the discourse of ecological modernization which entails the idea that ecological preservation can lead to financial gains (Dryzek, 1997). As the media texts gave voice mainly to industry and EU representatives, the adequacy of the proposed '20 20 by 2020' measures was not questioned. In December, the framings were not as clear as in January, because the media texts gave voice to both EU and national policy-makers who welcomed the agreement as historic, and ENGOs and other critics who criticized the large concessions given to industry in the ratified version of the package. In the eight texts that were examined, variations in representing the ratified package varied from outright disappointment (one text) and a view that the package is quite watered down (two texts), to seeing it as a necessary compromise (three texts) in order to get any kind of a deal together in times of the financial crisis. Only two texts presented the package in a positive light, as a good contribution to addressing climate change.

6.1.2 Role of media in overcoming or creating barriers to environmental action

To answer the second sub-question based on the findings of Essays 1 and 2, it is important to remember that media representations and discourse can explicitly and implicitly affect our views and actions as individuals. In light of the dissertation's theoretical framework, where potential, identified barriers to action included anthropocentric/technocentric/weak sustainability values, different situational and psychological factors, and habits and routine, the findings of these essays suggest that media representations of the EU climate package in 2008 might have contributed to maintaining and reinforcing three of these barriers.

First of all, media representations especially in October and December 2008 might have reinforced the perceived barrier resulting from the lack of political action by international and national governments (situational factor). This is possible because the package was represented as falling short of both the kind of leadership expectations the EU faced prior to the introduction of the package and the kind of measures (25 to 40 % reductions in greenhouse gases by developed nations by the year 2020) that even the EU had already in 2007 called for in order to limit global warming below critical levels. During 2008, the media representations conveyed an image of the EU evolving from a rather visionary leader to a quasi-leader who had had to yield to pressure from industrialists and the financial crisis. As a result, the EU was represented as ending up ratifying a climate deal with targets too low to halt global warming below critical levels, and rather weak means to achieve the weak targets. These kinds of representations might be perceived by readers as yet another political failure to commit to significant environmental action. This might reinforce the cycle of "if 'they' cannot do it, why should 'we'?", especially in light of the fact that people often perceive individual action to be insignificant to begin with (Hinchcliffe, 1996) compared to action by industry and societies.

Second, the representations might have contributed to creating and maintaining the attitude that other things are more important (psychological factor), because financial and industrial concerns were seemingly assigned more significance in the media than the intention to effectively address climate change. This represents the dominant power of

the contemporary global economic system that encourages nations to offer as favorable, i.e. lightly regulated, market conditions to multinational companies as possible (Agmon, 2004; Hodge & Coronado, 2006). In moving from the introduction to the ratification of the climate package, EU countries were presented in the media as reluctant to weaken the positions of their industries by committing to significant emission reductions at a time when other global regions have not done so. In the best scenario, this would inspire at least some individuals to take more initiative in the future to lobby for stronger political action in the years to come. In the worst scenario, however, the reinforced priority of the economy over the environment might discourage individuals from bothering to take action at all.

Finally, the perceived order of priorities in the media representations might further have contributed to reinforcing collective notions of weak sustainability rather than promoting more radical 'green' values that are claimed by many to be necessary if we are to fight climate change effectively (see e.g. Alexander, 2008; Dryzek, 1997; Hajer & Fischer, 1999; Prasad & Elmes, 2005). It therefore seems that despite the unprecedented rise of climate change to political agendas around the world during the first decade of the 21st century, media discourses in the examined texts remain strongly dominated by the discourses of sustainability and ecological modernization that do not challenge the priority given to economic growth and consumption.

6.2 Overcoming barriers to environmental action in organizations

The remaining two sub-questions were specified as the following: 3) *What potential barriers to environmental action can be identified in organizations?* 4) *How should firms communicate environmental initiatives to their employees to overcome these barriers?* These questions were addressed through two case studies. One of the case studies focused on employee views on internal, environment-related communication in one Finnish organization, the other on how an environmental initiative has been communicated in 13 Finnish organizations.

6.2.1 Barriers to environmental action in organizations

Both Essays 3 and 4 address the third sub-question, the former by exploring employee viewpoints on potential barriers, the latter by examining different challenges that firms have faced in attempting to engage their employees in an office greening initiative.

As the essay summaries in sections 5.3 and 5.4 demonstrate, the findings of these two essays are similar, which is why they are discussed together. Based on these studies, it seems that there are four main barriers to environmental action in organizations. First of all, individuals' talk in the organizational context remains strongly dominated by business- rather than ecologically-oriented discourse even though climate change has become a widely recognized issue. While wider organizational discourses have not been studied here, it is quite likely that the way individuals talk reflects wider organizational discourses that continue to stress economic rather than ecological issues (cf Prasad & Elmes, 2005). The dominance of business-related values is reflected in the finding that environmental issues are not a priority to most employees. Rather, environmental issues are easily pushed aside when people are busy or need to concentrate on more 'business-related' issues. In other words, economic concerns often override environmental ones when people are under pressure to perform well.

Second, related to this lack of priority, it seems that employees have a relatively low level of motivation for environmental action. Even though the interviewed employees believe that *"people's normal level of awareness is already at the level that they have thought about [environmental issues]"* (from Essay 3), they think that others, and sometimes the interviewees themselves, are willing to do things for the environment only if it does not require too much effort from them. The interviewees also feel that if you start becoming 'too green' or demand things that are not strictly related to business, employees easily lose all interest in environmental actions. Employees' talk about their willingness for environmental action thus seems strongly dominated by the small actions discourse (see Table 2 in Section 3.1). Even with small actions, the interviewees see it as necessary to communicate extensively and persistently to make the small things into routine to break 'old habits that die hard'. As one of the interviewees said, *"No one leaves the tap*

running, but you can leave the light on. To get a similar routine to that. Not that it's an environmental action to turn off the light, but that it's a normal, sensible action. To get it to be routine like that, that's the challenge." (Essay 4)

Third, 'being too busy' seems to act as a barrier both at the individual and organizational levels. Also this barrier is related to the low priority of environmental issues so that even if employees thought environmental issues were important per se, they would easily ignore them when 'time is money'. At the organizational level, the culture of being too busy seems to work as a barrier to effective communication because this kind of a culture does not support holding formal and informal meetings that employees consider to be the best channels for delivering environment-related information.

Finally, a fourth barrier is that people feel that it is very difficult to bring up environmental issues with colleagues for two reasons: first, fear of insulting others, and second, strong unwillingness to be seen as 'green'. With regard to the former reason, one interviewee summarized the feeling of nearly all interviewees for Essay 3 by saying that it would only be possible to make suggestions to someone *"if you know he doesn't easily take things personally."* (Essay 3) As Halme (2004) argues, people have strong value positions in environmental issues, which might make environment-related initiatives more difficult to implement than other change initiatives.

To summarize the findings of Essays 3 and 4 in light of the dissertation's theoretical framework, it seems that the overriding barrier to environmental action in organizations is the prevalence of business- over ecological concerns. This overriding barrier is related to values, psychological factors, and habits and routine. First, concerning values, the findings suggest that in most companies, business-oriented values override ecological ones both at the organizational level and in the minds of most individuals. At the time of this study, time has clearly not yet been ripe for more radical green discourses that would, unlike the currently dominant environmental discourses such as sustainability, ecological modernization, and here the small actions discourse, question the present business structures that prevail in Western, neo-liberal economies. Second, business-oriented

values are reflected in psychological factors so that business issues are considered to be more important in companies than taking the environment into account regardless of how much companies promote the significance of the environment in their communications. Thus, although climate change has received an increasing amount of attention in the media and in organizations in recent years, the findings of all the essays point to the fact that financial, industrial and business concerns continue to dominate our society both at the supranational, national, organizational and individual levels (in the context of organizations). The weight given to business issues over environmental concerns is exacerbated by the fact that people's overall motivation for environmental action is limited to very small issues, if even them; the findings suggest that even when action is made very easy by e.g. providing easy access to recycling facilities and clear instructions to accompany them, it is difficult to motivate people to recycle. This might be because they do not feel that the environmental threat is personal, as previous literature suggests. For example, in organizations, whether or not an employee recycles or starts printing less has practically no direct impact on that person or objects that the person values (compare to value-behavior-norm theory, discussed in section 2.1.2, Stern, 2000b). Also, the benefits of being environmentally considerate are not, in most organizations, personal either; if the money that could be saved by taking small environmental actions will not be seen by the individuals but will only result in more profits for the faceless corporations that they work for and for the shareholders that own these companies, there is little personal incentive to change one's habits.

The findings also point to two further psychological barriers. On the one hand, it seems that the feeling that individual action is insignificant can be especially strong in production-driven organizations, where factories produce by far the largest share of the organizations' ecological footprint. This is a proposition that should be examined further in future studies. On the other hand, it seems that at least in the Finnish, individualistic culture, the willingness to conform to social norms and the unwillingness to either interfere with others' ways of doing things or to be seen as a 'green hippy' work as strong barriers to spreading environmental knowledge in organizations, because people are unwilling to bring up environmental issues directly with their colleagues. Finally, it

seems that a related barrier is people's persistent habits and routine that they are reluctant to change even in occasions when it would not require very much effort from them.

6.2.2 Role of internal communication in overcoming barriers to action in organizations

In addition to addressing the third sub-question, Essays 3 and 4 also address the final sub-question, which asks how organizational internal communication could be organized and executed to encourage employees to overcome the barriers discussed in the previous section. The findings of both studies are very similar, and they are summarized here as four key recommendations and a fifth proposition that should be examined further in future studies.

First, the studies underscore the importance of only asking small and easy environmental actions from employees, because most employees do not seem motivated to take larger actions. Related to this recommendation, communication should be executed with short and simple messages which clearly highlight the issues employees can do. To further motivate employees, these messages could potentially emphasize resulting cost-savings to the organization. Second, the findings suggest that in motivating people to act, communication should focus on keeping environmental work in the office 'fun and positive' in order not to annoy employees and thereby discourage them from taking action. Third, the results suggest that careful attention should be paid to the communication channel used to ensure that the messages reach employees. Even though the case organizations to a great extent seem to rely on electronic communication, especially corporate intranets to communicate messages internally, the interviews indicate that informal and formal meetings might be a more effective channel in environmental issues. Assigning clearer communication responsibility to e.g. team or department managers might also help in standardizing communication across organizations to ensure that all employees get similar information of and encouragement for implementing environmental initiatives. Fourth, to overcome people's unwillingness to stand out in green issues or give advice to others, it might be useful to assign clear environmental contact persons to each department that employees could then approach with suggestions or questions.

Finally, in the study conducted for Essay 4, one organization had tied employees' bonuses to meeting some of the environment-related goals. This incentive-based method had worked well in motivating employees to reduce the use of paper, and the company had next planned to extend this motivational method to recycling. At the end of the day, an incentive-based method might provide the best answer to overcome employees' wide unwillingness to perform even small environmental actions. After all, as long as business-oriented values are overriding in a majority of companies and it is unclear whether and when there will be a larger shift towards more ecologically-driven values, it might be worth motivating people with the values and language that are important to them. This is certainly a proposition that should be examined in future studies.

6.3 Can we get people to take environmental action?

The role of communication in encouraging people to take environmental action is important, because it can help overcome several of the barriers to action suggested by previous research. For example, communication can undoubtedly help to increase knowledge of problems and how to act. Also, communication seems to offer a soft way to attempt to change people's values little by little and help them realize that changing habits can be a positive thing. As one of the interviewees (#12) of Essay 4 commented, when asked whether she thought people could be motivated to take more significant environmental action through communication, *"if not through communication, then how? Well, you could do it through taxation, but that's not a nice way. That's not a positive way."* The problem, of course, is that if the scientific community is correct and we would need radical changes rather quickly, then a slow change of values might not be enough. Overall, the findings of this dissertation point to one overriding, severe challenge in attempting to implement significant environmental change in the contemporary, business-oriented society that the framework adopted in the study has enabled us to understand: the lack of collective will and, as a result, the lack of collective leadership to really address environmental problems.

At the global level, the lack of collective will to solve environmental problems boils down to the majority of people not believing that we all form a collective global society

where we share global rather than individual, national, or regional problems and solutions. Besides being visible in addressing climate change, this individualistic focus can clearly be seen in other attempts to solve global inequalities. Why else, to name but one well-known example, would coffee producers in the developing world be paid peanuts so that people in Western countries can enjoy cheap coffee even when they know the people producing them live in dire conditions? In today's society, the widespread lack of truly collective values is so overriding that it is difficult to address global problems in any meaningful way. Politicians (who are, of course, also individuals) both at the national and supranational levels want to secure their political future, and are thus unwilling to introduce radical measures, because they would risk losing the support of the business lobby. Businesses, on the other hand, where managers are also individuals, are reluctant to make radical changes in fear of losing to competitors if the competitors do not make similar changes. At the same time, the findings of Essays 3 and 4 suggest that organizations consist of workforces that by and large prioritize 'business issues' over the environment. And most individuals, who at the end of the day make important consumption decisions in their private lives, are so blinded by the desire to own more material that they have not yet stopped to think about whether all the consumption has increased their happiness or added to their despair. How can we get people to take significant environmental action when there seems to be no real will at any societal level? As long as we as individuals and decision-makers do not think more collectively, there seems to be little real hope, because the current business-based approach that was evident in the four essays is seemingly not going far enough, but no one seems willing to do more.

Can communication help to initiate a radical shift in people's deeply entrenched, individualistic and materialistic values towards notions of collective good and finding happiness from the inside rather than attempting to find it from consuming more and more? Maybe so. In addition, however, it may be that such a shift requires enough courage from a critical mass of people around the world to imagine and make real a world that is truly different from the one we now live in.

7 Contributions and avenues for future research

This section concludes Part I. It is divided into three parts. First, the theoretical contributions of the study are summarized. Second, the managerial implications of the findings are discussed. And finally, potential avenues for future research are presented.

7.1 Theoretical contributions

The main theoretical contribution of this dissertation is that it proposes a framework for further investigation into the role of communication in affecting barriers to individuals' environmental action. Here, the framework has been used to examine individuals in the context of organizations to address the need to study people's environmental behavior in the context in which they operate (Stern, 2000b). In addition, the focus has been on how one transnational environmental policy initiative, the EU climate package, has been communicated in the media and how media representations of the package have potentially influenced people's perceptions of environmental issues and the need to act. The framework, however, can equally well be modified and transferred to other contexts. For example, in examining the role of media communications, it would be possible to examine media representations of any other environment-related issue besides the EU climate package. Further, the framework can be used to explore the role of communication in influencing other types of behavior, e.g. in households. In such case, the organizational communication 'module' should be substituted by other forms of communication that influence people's perceptions, such as advertising or verbal communication by friends and other peers.

In addition to proposing a framework that in this study bridges two previously separate fields of communication studies, i.e. media and organizational communication studies, by demonstrating the role of both in overcoming and creating barriers to individuals' environmental action in the context of organizations, the research has contributed to each of the four strands of literature that formed the building blocks of the study. These contributions are summarized below.

First, with regard to environmental leadership studies, the present study provides insight into how 'environmental leadership' is discursively constructed by different actors– an

important but understudied area. As this examination is done with regard to the most recent transnational environmental policy initiative in the context of the media, it also focuses on contemporary environmental leadership and builds a bridge between environmental leadership studies and media studies on climate change.

Second, concerning media studies on climate change, the dissertation extends the scope of focus from single-country analyses to cross-cultural comparisons of media texts. As the analyses in Essays 1 and 2 demonstrate, there were some clear differences in media representations of the EU package in the six countries that were examined. Even though there were also many similarities, it is important to continue uncovering different media representations to understand the role of the media in influencing people's behavior in countries around the world. This study also shifts focus from how climate change is represented in the media, a widely studied topic, to how an environmental initiative aimed at fighting climate change is represented.

Third, the dissertation complements studies on the communication of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by adopting an employee perspective, which has, until now, received relatively little attention. It also provides an analysis of how a shared greening initiative has been communicated in firms. These kinds of initiatives that are shared by several companies are rather rare, and as such the present study provides useful insight into the challenges companies face in implementing and communicating environmental initiatives.

Finally, this dissertation augments studies that have proposed that the fields of CSR and corporate governance (CG) are interlinked. Specifically, it contributes to this line of research by evaluating how the credibility of companies' environment-related CSR initiatives could be enhanced by developing CSR measures towards more standardized practices, as is typical in CG.

7.2 Managerial implications

In any business research, it is important not only to examine the study's theoretical contributions, but also its managerial implications. As discussed above, the findings of

this study suggest that even though climate change has become a central issue in our society and environmental issues have become both an important consideration and a potential source of competitive advantage for many companies, the values of most employees remain strongly business-oriented. Also, most employees currently have a relatively low level of motivation to perform environmental actions in organizations even when these actions do not require very much effort from them. This is not a new finding. What is important, however, is the question of how firms can communicate with their employees to overcome these barriers in order to ensure that the employees participate in implementing the organizations' environmental strategies, policies, and initiatives. While such questions are equally critical when firms face other change situations, the significance of understanding environmental behavior in particular is highlighted by the claim that people often have stronger value positions in environmental issues, which might make environmental initiatives more difficult to implement than other change initiatives (Halme, 2004). In attempting to answer this question, the findings point to a number of insights that are summarized in Figure 11 below. Based on the findings of Essays 3 and 4, this figure proposes a framework for effective internal environmental communication, where effective is understood as communication that results in the action desired by the communicator.

Figure 11. Proposed framework for effective internal environmental communication.

Initiators of environmental communication

Internal environmental communication
–Concrete messages about what should do and why
–Face-to-face, two-way communication
–Standardized practices throughout organization

(1)

Employees

(4)

Environmental action

(2)

Incentives tied to meeting set targets

(3)   Leading by example   (4)

(2)

(Top) management

(Adapted from Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010)
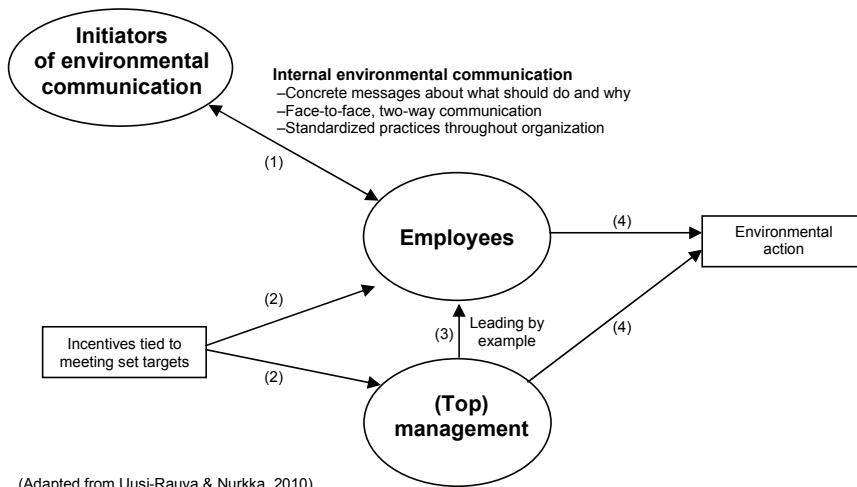
First of all, organizations should set the environmental targets that they want to reach. Ideally, this is achieved together with employees through two-way symmetric communication (Morsing & Schultz, 2006) to ensure employee commitment. As discussed in Section 2.5, these kinds of decisions about environmental targets are influenced by organizations' overall, strategic decisions about CSR. Because strategy is not the focus area of the present study, however, the strategic process is not depicted in the framework. Once environmental targets are set, communication about environmental issues (marked with (1) in the framework) and the set targets might best motivate employees if the messages focus on clear, concrete and easy action that employees should take and potentially emphasize resulting cost savings to the organization. Communication might best reach employees if it is done face-to-face by managers in informal and formal meetings rather than electronically. To ensure standardized practices throughout the organization, such face-to-face communication should be systematically encouraged rather than leaving it up to individual managers what to communicate and how.

Second, given the prevailing business-oriented values and the fact that most employees do not seem intrinsically motivated to take environmental action, it is proposed that (2) monetary or other clear incentives, tied to meeting the set targets, might help in overcoming the barriers to employees' action. Other researchers have also argued that the most effective programs aimed at changing individuals' environmental behavior might need to involve a combination of different intervention types, including education that can help in changing attitudes and providing information, and providing monetary or other rewards (Stern, 1999, in Stern, 2000b). As many of the interviewees especially in Essay 4 pointed out, attempting to change people's underlying values is a long process that requires extensive and persistent communication over a long period of time. In addition, this process is influenced by external factors such as media communication, as discussed elsewhere in this dissertation. Therefore, it is suggested here that as long as these underlying values are not environmentally oriented, it might be better to motivate employees with the language that they understand better, i.e. different incentives. This suggestion is supported by Halme's (2004) claim that it might be better to encourage people to internalize environmental thinking by stressing the facts that motivate people professionally rather than by focusing on environmental values per se.

Finally, to ensure employee commitment, it is important to (3) demonstrate (top) management example in environmental behavior. Example by management can help convince employees that environmental issues are, indeed, one of the priorities in the organization rather than a secondary consideration that is only important on paper. It remains to be seen whether truly ecologically-driven organizations will become a more typical form of business in the years to come. In the meantime, employees' perception that environmental values are important at the organizational level, even if they are not the only priority, might well help in overcoming the barrier to action caused by the strong business-oriented values. Of course, this requires managers who truly consider environmental issues to be important also in practice.

7.3 Avenues for future research

This dissertation opens up several avenues for further research. First, in the field of media studies, the findings lay the groundwork for more refined, longitudinal analyses of how the EU climate package and other policy initiatives are reconstructed by different actors, including the media in different countries. As the Kyoto Protocol will soon expire, and the world's nations are in the process of attempting to achieve a new climate deal, it would be interesting to examine the discursive constructions not only in the EU, but also in the US under the lead of President Barack Obama. It would also be important to conduct such studies in countries like China and India, which play a major role in international environmental politics and are some of the most significant business powers in the contemporary world.

Second, with regard to studies examining the communication of corporate social responsibility actions, it would also be insightful to extend the scope of focus to employees in other countries around the world. Examining and understanding employee viewpoints in a number of countries would increase the ability of managers in multinational companies as well as companies operating locally to better tailor their internal communication to their target audiences. Although the analytical focus in this study was on environment-related CSR, such studies would be equally important in other CSR areas.

Third, other researchers are encouraged to continue examining the interfaces between CSR and corporate governance. Especially, it would be useful to study how the credibility of CSR actions could be increased. Here, analyses could focus on the viewpoints of a multitude of actors, including managers, employees, and external stakeholders such as customers, shareholders and the wider public.

Finally, research should continue addressing the question of how we can move people, and thereby firms and nations, from environmental awareness to action in different contexts, including organizations and private-sphere behavior. In addition, research could examine what kinds of carrots or sticks would be big enough to force people to change

their behavior, if, as it seems, voluntary actions are not enough to halt climate change below critical levels.

To conclude, this final section of Part I has summarized the theoretical and managerial contributions of this thesis. It has also highlighted potential avenues for future studies, because the importance of understanding the role of communication in moving the world towards more radical environmental solutions is ever more critical, as scientific findings suggest we need solutions quickly. It is hoped that this discussion and the essays in Part II will encourage other researchers and practitioners to participate in the effort of getting us all to act before it is too late.

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Appendix 1. Interview themes / Essay 3

<u>Background</u>

1. Name, gender, age
2. Job title / responsibilities
3. How long been at KONE
4. Educational background
5. Networks within KONE; describe who liaise with
6. Work contacts outside KONE; describe who liaise with
7. What do you consider important in your work overall?

<u>Environmental policy / environmental excellency</u>

- Are you familiar with environmental excellency? What does it mean?
- What is your understanding of KONE corporate environmental policy? (How) is it different from env. excellency?
- With regard to env. excellency, what issues do you find important at company level?
- What do you consider important in your work re: environment?
- How does env. excellency influence your work, i.e. do you see the connection between the policy and your job?
- Are the five corporate issues broad enough so that you can do what you want?
    - i. environmentally friendly products
    - ii. minimizing carbon footprint
    - iii. env. management system ISO 140001
    - iv. suppliers to ISO14001 by end of 2010
    - v. communication (internal: training, intra + external: sust. report, GRI B-level + sustainable brand)
- Do you initiate issues, why/why not?
- Are you satisfied with the level of environmental activity at KONE, why / why not?

Communication

- How do you get information on KONE environmental strategy / env. excellency?
  - What channels?
  - Actively or passively?
- What kinds of messages do you find interesting and why? Which not?
- Who do you talk to about environmental issues (if anyone), and what do you talk about?
  - Inside the company
  - Outside the company?
- If you have ideas re: environmental improvements, who do you tell them to (if anyone)? How do you think people will react to your suggestions?
- What kinds of things do company contacts (e.g. customers) want to talk about?
- What do you tell others (friends, family) about KONE?

Meanings assigned to environment

- What does the environment mean to you
  - At work?
  - In personal life?
- How has your thinking developed?
- What do you think are real environmental actions?
- Do you think things can be changed (e.g. climate change)?
- How can you contribute to fighting climate change?
- How do you think others see you re: environmental action?
- How do you see others / What do you think others think about the environment?

Appendix 2. Interview themes / Essay 4

Motive

- Why company became a GO?
- From whose initiative?
- How did the process go, was it easy or difficult?

Process

- Who have been involved in implementation?
- What roles have people had?
- How long did the process last?
- What all has been done?

Communication

- How have communicated to employees about GO?
    - What channels have used? Means besides traditional channels?
    - What kinds of messages have used?
        - Why is the company doing this?
        - What does it mean for employees (employee role)?
        - 'Measuring' results – have you communicated what has been achieved? Do employees get feedback on 'successes' and how?
        - Have e.g. competitions been used to motivate employees?
    - Who has been responsible for communications?
    - What has gone well? What challenges have there been?
- Have employees had a channel to communicate upwards?
    - How has this been communicated to employees? Has it been used?

Reception

- How have employees responded to GO?
- Have there been differences between employee groups?
- What has been praised?
- What has been criticized?
- Have employees suggested initiatives?

Effect

- How has GO affected the organization / employees, have the set goals been reached?
- What does employee attitude feel like?
- What concrete things have changed?

PART II

ESSAY 1

THE EU ENERGY AND CLIMATE PACKAGE:

A SHOWCASE FOR EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP?

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The EU Energy and Climate Package: a Showcase for European Environmental Leadership?

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ABSTRACT

Climate change is one of the main contemporary challenges, and it has been argued that there is a need for strong environmental leadership to achieve global climate deals. Few studies, however, have questioned how 'environmental leadership' is demonstrated in political and media discourse. To fill this gap, this paper adopts a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective to explore how the EU and newspapers in six European countries discursively construct environmental leadership in relation to the EU climate package that was introduced and ratified in 2008. The findings suggest that environmental leadership is a struggle for meaning that shifts over time, from first, aiming at emissions reduction targets that are higher than others' versus targets that would be stringent enough to effectively fight climate change to second, the means used to reach the reduction targets versus the ends that are reached. This shift over the period of year 2008 seems largely due to significant changes in the social context. Copyright © 2010 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd and ERP Environment.

Introduction

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL GLOBAL ISSUES. IN CONNECTION TO the relatively unsuccessful Kyoto Protocol, it has been argued that there is a need for stronger environmental leadership to make global environmental agreements reality (Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001). In 2008, the EU introduced its energy and climate package, also known as '20 20 by 2020' because of its goals of reducing carbon emissions by 20% and increasing the share of renewable energy to 20% by the year 2020. With the package, the Union claimed to assume strong global environmental leadership before the UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, where the world's nations aimed to come up with a new climate deal to replace the Kyoto protocol. Responding to skepticism towards EU environmental leadership in the past (see, e.g., Falkner, 2007; Vogler and Stephan, 2007; Skodvin and Andresen, 2006; Andresen and Agrawala, 2002; Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001), the EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso stated, in December 2008, that the fact that the 'member states have reached unanimously agreement on the most ambitious [climate] proposals anywhere in the world' means that 'yes Europe has passed its credibility test' (Barroso, 2008b).

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The nature of environmental issues is global, however, and it is clear that environmental debates include many actors besides the European Union. This makes it purposeful to study how environmental leadership is constructed in discourse by different actors. So far, the discursive perspective has received little attention even though previous research has concluded that the role of rhetoric is overall an important part of EU environmental leadership (Falkner, 2007; Vogler and Stephan, 2007; Andresen and Agrawala, 2002; Gupta and Ringius, 2001). The importance of studying leadership discourse is further highlighted by the fact that it is through discourse and discursive acts that leaders get an opportunity to show themselves as competent individuals (Schnurr, 2009) that can transform the status quo (De Cillia, Reisigl, and Wodak, 1999). This is because many leader activities, such as developing a vision and creating solidarity, which were two important aspects of the EU climate package on the road to Copenhagen, involve communication and therefore discourse (Schnurr, 2009).

Given that the media is an important mediating channel between politicians and individuals, this paper examines how the EU and national media in six European countries, i.e. the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Germany and Italy, engage in a discursive struggle over the meaning of environmental leadership in connection to the EU climate package. Because texts are always produced in response to, and in anticipation of, other texts, this paper adopts a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective that emphasizes the importance of intertextual analysis and analyzing texts in the social context in which they are produced and read (Fairclough, 2003). Adopting a CDA perspective to examine media texts on climate change issues has been found fruitful in recent research (Olausson, 2009; Boykoff, 2008; Carvalho, 2005, 2007), because it allows for a '[rich] examination of the resources used in any type of text for producing meaning' (Carvalho, 2007, p. 227).

In the next section, a framework for studying EU environmental leadership from a discursive perspective is developed before moving on to the data and method used in this study. Following this, it will be examined how EU environmental leadership is constructed in discourse in the analyzed texts. Finally, the paper is concluded with discussion and suggestions for future research.

Theoretical Framework

EU Environmental Leadership

Global environmental leadership of the EU has received considerable research attention in the past, but few studies have questioned how 'environmental leadership' is used in policy and media discourse (Skodvin and Andresen, 2006; Andresen and Agrawala, 2002). To fill this gap, this study examines how the EU and national media construct 'environmental leadership' in discourse in relation to the EU climate package. Before discussing the approach taken in this paper in more detail, previous research on EU environmental leadership is reviewed to build an understanding of the context in which the concept is discussed.

Studies have concluded that the EU has been influential in affecting the global environmental agenda, but real results have been more modest (Falkner, 2007; Vogler and Stephan, 2007; Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001). In addition, as Skodvin and Andresen (2006) argue, what might seem to be strong leadership performance during negotiations might in fact seem to be the opposite in hindsight, making the analysis of leadership quite dependent on time and context. Some researchers (see, e.g., Andresen and Agrawala, 2002; Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001) have divided leadership into four main types that can be held by e.g. nation states: structural (based on political and economic power), directional (leadership by the example of domestic implementation), instrumental (leading by using diplomatic skills to establish winning coalitions) and intellectual (exerting influence during the agenda-setting phase to convince others of a viewpoint).

First, concerning structural power, some argue that the EU has it (Vogler and Stephan, 2007; Gupta and Ringius, 2001), others that it 'is currently beyond the EU's reach' (Metz *et al.*, 2001, p. 168). It should be noted, however, that the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 expanded the Union from 15 to 27 countries. This increased the size of the Union and thus perhaps its potential for structural leadership, as its economic weight increased. However, as many of the new member countries are relatively poor, the influence of the enlargements on structural power remains to be seen. Second, concerning directional leadership, researchers agree that the EU has potential, but only if it manages to gain more credibility through more coherent and effective internal and external policies (Vogler and

Stephan, 2007; Lightfoot and Burchell, 2004; Andresen and Agrawala, 2002; Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001) that are effectively implemented (Oberthür, 2007). In other words, the Union should attempt to appear and act as a more unified front. Third, concerning instrumental leadership, it is argued that the performance is somewhat weak (Andresen and Agrawala, 2002), but that the EU could better utilize its potential by forming coalitions with developing countries (Gupta and Ringius, 2001; Metz *et al.*, 2001) as well as by encouraging productive dialogue with non-EU members of the OECD to form issue-based coalitions (Gupta and Ringius, 2001). Internally, the Union has succeeded in becoming a coalition when it ratified the Kyoto Protocol after initially resisting it (Vogler and Stephan, 2007). At the same time, its external performance in exerting intellectual leadership has been poorer, as it e.g. failed to convince the US to ratify the protocol (Andresen and Agrawala, 2002). There are, however, instances where the EU has exerted influence in the agenda-setting phase, such as the Union's commitment to promoting the concept of sustainable development (Vogler and Stephan, 2007). The real success of this effort has, however, also been criticized (Falkner, 2007), but it can nevertheless be concluded that the EU also has potential for intellectual leadership.

In addition to these leadership types, researchers have, following Manners' (2002) seminal study, looked at the EU as a 'normative power' in environmental issues (see, e.g., Burchell and Lightfoot, 2004; Lightfoot and Burchell, 2005; Scheipers and Sicurelli, 2007). This view claims that the strength of the Union in international affairs lies in its ideological power, i.e. the ability promote its central values in international settings. So far, it has been argued that the EU has pushed for a non-radical international model of sustainable development that has enabled it to maintain its economic competitiveness rather than promoting more radical models that might have a negative economic impact on the Union (Burchell and Lightfoot, 2004; Baker, 2000). The EU climate package was an opportunity for the EU to demonstrate its ideological power and to exert both instrumental and intellectual leadership on other nations before the Copenhagen climate negotiations. As such, the introduction and ratification of the climate package provides a fruitful moment to explore how EU environmental leadership is constructed in discourse by different actors.

In this paper, the main focus is on the discursive construction of EU instrumental/intellectual leadership. These types are combined and treated under the heading of intellectual leadership because the EU climate package, ratified just one year before the UN climate meeting in Copenhagen, in effect provided the EU with an opportunity to try to establish winning coalitions (instrumental leadership) to influence the agenda-setting phase (intellectual leadership) leading to Copenhagen. As a result, these two leadership types are closely intertwined and, as such, might be difficult to separate from each other. Directional leadership is also discussed, as the EU countries' ability to implement the measures suggested in the climate package is questioned in some of the analyzed texts. Structural leadership, however, is not discussed here because the EU's political and economic power in demonstrating environmental leadership is not questioned in any of the texts analyzed, and is rather taken for granted.

Discursive Perspective to Environmental Leadership Research

In recent times, many leadership researchers have started paying attention to how leadership is socially constructed through discourse (Fairhurst, 2008). Leadership research has largely focused on individual leaders instead of more collective forms of leadership (Gormley-Heenan, 2006). In this paper, the analysis of discursive leadership is extended from the level of individuals to the ability of organizations to act as leaders. This shift of focus is purposeful because 'we increasingly see interorganizational networks forming to solve major contemporary . . . environmental problems' (deLeon and Varda, 2009, p. 60). Because the focus is further on how leadership is co-constructed by different actors that participate in finding solutions to collective environmental problems, leadership is here treated as being 'not about the person in charge but about the way one or more actors engages the community and its mores in collective action' (Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007, p. 1339).

This paper further builds on extant studies looking at environmental rhetoric and discourse from a critical discourse analytical (CDA) perspective. Recently, scholars have used CDA to examine the emergence of a European identity in the news media in the case of climate change (Olausson, forthcoming), media frames of collective action and scientific certainty with regard to global warming (Olausson, 2009), representations of climate change in UK tabloids (Boykoff, 2008), media discourses on scientific knowledge (Carvalho, 2007) and the discursive strategies of political actors (Carvalho, 2005) regarding climate change. It has been found that discourses often shift in times of 'critical discourse moments' (Chilton, 1987; Gamson, 1992), i.e. moments in time 'marked by particular events that potentially challenge existing discursive positions or constructs or, in contrast, may contribute to their

further sedimentation' (Carvalho, 2005, p. 6). As years 2008 and 2009 included several critical events with regard to addressing climate change, such as the ratification of the EU climate package in 2008, the passing of the US climate bill in congress in June 2009, and the UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, it is argued here that this is a meaningful point in time to examine contemporary environmental leadership rhetoric.

Data and Method

Texts from the EU and National Media

Conducting comparative research is especially important in the EU context, where transnational policies are discussed and implemented in different ways in different societal contexts. To gain an understanding of how environmental leadership is discursively constructed in the European context, the analysis looks at two sets of material: first, two speeches by the EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso, and second, 35 media texts from six EU countries. The former, Barroso's speeches, were given to the European Parliament on 23 January 2008 (Barroso, 2008a), when the EU climate package was introduced by the European Commission, and at a European Council press conference on 12 December 2008 (Barroso, 2008b), when the package was approved by European leaders. The latter, media texts, were from three points in time; in addition to 23–24 January and 12–13 December, following Barroso's speeches, media texts from 16–17 October 2008, following an EU summit that focused on addressing the financial crisis that hit the world during 2008, were also examined (see Table 1 for the media text data). Media texts from October were included to capture some of the dynamics of environmental debates in European newspapers, because the financial crisis had a significant influence on the final content of the climate package. Analyzing these kinds of simultaneously published texts enables synchronic analysis on comparable simultaneous depictions of a potential critical discourse moment (Boykoff, 2008; Carvalho, 2005).

Conducting analysis on media texts is important because the media is a central setting where environmental discourses are socially (re)constructed (Corbett and Durfee, 2004), and the media influences people's perceptions of climate change issues (Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui, 2009). Originally, this study set out to analyze media texts from the UK, Ireland, Sweden, and Finland. This choice of countries was based on two criteria. First, these countries will be required to make some of the largest reductions in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the package. Second, they have been shown to differ in their orientations towards the EU (Jordan, 2004; Flynn, 2004; Kronsell, 2004; Sairinen and Lindholm, 2004). The initial analysis revealed that the texts from these countries presented Germany and Italy as the two older EU countries that were blamed for the modifications made to the climate package. Therefore, the analysis was complemented with media texts from Germany and Italy to explore whether the discursive constructions of EU environmental leadership might be different there. Table 2 outlines some basic characteristics of all these countries to provide an understanding of their social contexts, including their typical approach to EU environmental policy and how the media tend to report on EU-related issues.

The newspapers from all countries were selected based on their different political profiles to capture potentially different viewpoints from these societies. The texts all represent the news genre, so e.g. editorials or opinions were not considered. If there were several articles on the EU climate package, the one closest to the front, or the one posted first on the Internet, was selected, because people are most likely to read articles closest to the front (Graber, 1988; Althaus and Tewksbury, 2002). Three exceptions were the texts selected from *Aamulehti* in January, *The Guardian* in October and *Die Welt* in January and October. These had in essence the same content as a short lead article on the front page, but provided a richer text for analysis. Texts in Swedish, Finnish and German were translated into English by the author, and those in Italian to English by a translator. Finally, to demonstrate the importance of intertextual analysis and to analyze who is given voice in the media (Fairclough, 2003), the discussion below draws on five press releases from environmental NGOs (ENGOs) from January and December 2008, but these texts were not subjected to closer textual analysis.

Critical Discourse Analytical Perspective

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides a useful basis for researching how environmental leadership is discursively constructed by different actors because it examines the constitutive role that discourses play in

contemporary society. In this paper, adopting a critical perspective is used to shed light on how different actors talk about environmental leadership, and which actors are given voice in the media. Fairclough (2003) argues that discourses should be analyzed at three levels: text (micro-level textual elements), discursive practice (the production and interpretation of texts) and socio-cultural practice (the social, cultural and institutional context). This form of CDA is typically inter-disciplinary, combining methods of linguistic analysis with social theories.[1] It is also intertextual in that it considers linkages between different texts. In this study, taking a critical discourse analytical perspective that approaches texts at different levels provides a comprehensive approach to analyzing the environmental leadership of the EU that highlights the importance of the social context where the discourse is taking place.

The analysis was carried out in two main phases. First, focus was on text level analysis and the analysis of discursive practice. While there are several issues that can be looked at in text level analysis (Fairclough, 2003), it was here considered important to focus on how European environmental leadership (or the lack thereof) is (re) presented in the analyzed texts. Specifically, it was considered how this leadership is supported or undermined by how the targets of the climate package are presented. With regard to discursive practice, attention was paid to the intertextual dialogue that the texts enter into to construct environmental leadership. Specifically, it was analyzed which other voices are present or absent in the texts to explore who gets to define what environmental leadership is. Analyzing power issues, including whose voices are included and whose voices are excluded or marginalized, is a central element in CDA (Fairclough, 2003). This kind of analysis is important because the media is one of the most central sites where meanings related to climate change are negotiated (Carvalho, 2005). Second, the analysis was put in the larger social context by looking at relevant societal events, including previous environmental agreements, EU enlargement from 15 to 27 countries, the global financial crisis, a shift in the environmental policy of the US, and an increase in the public's environmental awareness, that seemingly influenced the discursive dynamics of environmental leadership at the time of the analysis. It should be noted that the analysis was an iterative process moving between the texts and the interpretations to arrive at the conclusions presented in this paper.

'20 20 by 2020': Environmental Leadership or Not?

In this section, a look is taken at how the EU and the national media construct environmental leadership in the texts. At the same time, it is explored how (re)presentations of environmental leadership change from January to December 2008 as the package is modified so that e.g. industry will get most pollution permits for free.

EU: 'Yes You Can, Yes You Can Also Do What We Are Doing'

In Barroso's speeches, EU environmental leadership is presented as taken for granted (Examples 1 and 2 in Table 3). Furthermore, Example 3 demonstrates how Barroso, by referring to the UN climate conference in Bali in 2007, where the EU pushed for 25–40% emissions reductions by developed countries, presents as 'truth' that Europe has also held a leadership position in the past. As Fairclough (2003, p. 58) states, these types of implicit assumption often do ideological work by rendering a text un-dialogical, in other words not open to other viewpoints. As such, they help in seeking hegemony, i.e. universalizing a specific meaning to either achieve or maintain dominance. While there are some parts in both speeches that also give voice to others (Examples 4 and 5 in Table 3), this is done very vaguely, as the parties behind the critique are left unclear.

The foci in the two speeches by Barroso are quite different. The one in January centers on introducing the package and its key principles. In December, on the other hand, Barroso emphasizes Europe's dedication to lead the world in the fight against climate change with the package that was approved despite the severe financial crisis that shook the world during 2008. As he stresses, 'let's remember *the most important point here*: after all the adjustments, we have guaranteed that the 20% emission cut by 2020 will be achieved. We have guaranteed the 20%

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[1] CDA has, however, also been criticized. Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) point out that CDA's attempt to combine analyses of text, discursive practice and social practice in a single study is challenging. Jones (2007), in turn, criticizes the linguistic methods underlying CDA, and Finlayson (2004, p. 539) the fact that Fairclough fails to fully account for 'the strategic, argumentative context of political enunciations' that politicians must consider in their work.

Outlet	Political profile	Article title	Date (2008)	Journalists
The Guardian (UK)	Liberal center-left	EU aims for moral high ground with swingeing climate change package	24 Jan	Traynor I, Gow D.
		Europe's leaders struggle to stop emissions package unraveling	17 Oct	Gow D.
		EU leaders claim historic agreement on cutting pollution	13 Dec	Traynor I, Watt N.
The Daily Telegraph (UK)	Center-right	EC's emissions targets could raise power prices by 15pc	24 Jan	Hotten R.
		No article on 16–17 October		
		Gore attacks a world obsessed with fame	13 Dec	Gray L, Waterfield B.
The Irish Times (Ireland)	Center-right	Government seeks change to EU emissions targets	24 Jan	McGee H, Smyth J.
		Concessions signalled for some EU states	17 Oct	Smyth J.
		Concessions to industry pave way for climate change deal	13 Dec	Smyth J.
The Irish Independent (Ireland)	Center-right	Climate plan to cost €1bn per year but inaction 'will cost more'	24 Jan	Morgan G.
		EU legal experts join in bid to allay Lisbon fears	17 Oct	Sheahan F.
		Deal to cut emissions could cost EUR1bn a year	13 Dec	Melia P, Sheahan F.
Dagens Nyheter (Sweden)	Center-right	Sverige ska minska sina utsläpp rejält [Sweden to reduce emissions significantly]	24 Jan	Björklund M.
		Stormig miljöresa väntar Reinfeldt [Stormy climate journey ahead for Reinfeldt]	16 Oct	Hedström I.
		EU:s klimatpaket får tummen ner av miljörörelsen [EU's climate package gets thumbs down from environmental organizations]	12 Dec	Björklund M.
Aftonbladet (Sweden)	Liberal center-left	Kravet: Minska utsläppen med 17% [Demand: Reduce emissions by 17%]	23 Jan	Melén J.
		Finanskrisen hotar miljön [Financial crisis threatens environment]	17 Oct	–
		EU:s klimat-paket i hamn [EU's climate package comes into force]	12 Dec	Melén J.
Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)	Liberal	EU:n energiapaketista tulossa kallis lasku kuluttajille [EU energy package to result in expensive bill for consumers]	24 Jan	Sipilä A, Arola H.
		EU-maiden soraäänet horjuttivat vaan eivät kaataneet ilmastotavoitteita [Conflicting views of EU countries shook but didn't knock down climate goals]	17 Oct	Sipilä A, Suominen H.
		EU kasasi ilmastopakettinsa [EU put together its climate package]	13 Dec	Sipilä A.

Newspaper	Orientation	Headline	Date	Author
Aamulehti (Finland)	Center-right	Nyt alkoi energiansäästötalkoi-den ja ilmastolaskun maksun aika [The time for joint energy saving efforts and paying the climate bill began]	24 Jan	Hölttä K.
		Talouskriisi sysäsi Lissabonin sopimuksen sivuraiteelle [Financial crisis pushed Lisbon treaty to the sidelines]	16 Oct	–
		EU teki kaikkien aikojen ympäristöpäätöksen [EU made historic decision on environment]	13 Dec	Satuli H.
Die Welt (Germany)	Center-right, conservative	Brüssels Klimapläne verteuern Energie drastisch [Brussels' climate plans drastically increase energy prices]	24 Jan	Wetzel D.
		Europäische Union will Sparer bei Pleiten besser schützen [European Union to better protect savers from bankruptcy]		Crolly H, Schiltz CB.
		Kanzlerin Merkel setzt sich bei EU-Gipfel durch [Chancellor Merkel gets her way at EU summit]	13 Dec	Keil L.
Süddeutsche Zeitung (Germany)	Center-liberal	Brüssel macht ernst beim Klimaschutz [Brussels serious in climate protection]	23 Jan	–
		Sarkozy beharrt auf früher Entscheidung [Sarkozy insists on earlier decision]	16 Oct	–
		Heute ist 'Yes' auf der Tagesordnung [Today is 'Yes' on the agenda]	12 Dec	–
La Repubblica (Italy)	Center-left	Via libera dall'Ue al piano sul clima confermati gli obiettivi 20–20–20 [Green light from the EU on climate plan. 20–20–20 objectives confirmed]	23 Jan	–
		Clima, Sarkozy: 'Si va avanti' Merkel: 'Accordo entro dicembre' [Climate, Sarkozy: 'We move forward' Merkel: 'Agreement by end of December']	16 Oct	–
		Tra 'intesa storica' e 'fallimento' l'accordo Ue continua a dividere [Between 'historic agreement' and 'flop' – EU agreement continues to divide]	12 Dec	–
Corriere della Sera (Italy)	Center-right	La Ue vara le norme per ridurre il CO_2 del 20% entro il 2020 [The EU introduced the regulations to reduce CO_2 by 20% by 2020]	23 Jan	–
		Ue, tagli ai gas serra: unanimità sugli obiettivi, si deciderà a dicembre [EU on reducing greenhouse gases: unanimity on objectives, to be decided in December]	16 Oct	–
		Accordo in Europa, al via la svolta 'verde' [Agreement in Europe, 'green' turn begins]	13 Dec	Caizzi I.

Table 1. Media text material

Country	Country-specific features	Approach to EU environmental policy	Media and the EU
The UK	Recently aimed to take leading role in global climate issues	Active policy shaper (lately)	Euro-skeptic press; politicians strive to control media agenda
Ireland	Strong economic growth in last decades	Seeks amendments to commission proposals	Issue-specific coverage, focus on money and interstate disputes
Sweden	Cold climate, environmental pioneer	Active policy shaper, strives for stricter standards and tighter European integration	European 'we' vs. American 'them' in climate issues
Finland	Cold climate, energy-intensive industry	Prompt adoption of initiatives	National perspective in EU reporting; use of Finnish sources
Germany	Lot of heavy industry	Leadership in 1980s; since then more controversial	Relatively little attention to EU issues; national perspective in EU reporting; use of German sources
Italy	Economic concerns predominant over environment	Slow adoption of principles of sustainable development, poor record in implementing directives	Political influence on and control over newspapers strong; papers instruments to promote specific goals; relatively sensationalist reporting

Table 2. Basic characteristics of the six countries involved in the study
Sources: Olausson, forthcoming; Golding *et al.*, 2005; Heikkilä and Kunelius, 2005; Mancini *et al.*, 2005; McNamara, 2005; Rosenwerth *et al.*, 2005; Flynn, 2004; Kronsell, 2004; Jordan, 2004; Sairinen and Lindholm, 2004.

	Quotation from text	What is being said about leadership or the package	Source
1	'But we must not forget the huge economic opportunity represented by Europe's transition into a low-emissions economy. *Europe's leadership* also means showing how the technology is there.'	Europe has leadership.	Barroso, 2008a
2	[Barack Obama] 'has made very important statements regarding the commitment of the USA on climate. So we are asking him to *join Europe and with us to lead* the world on this global effort.'	Europe has leadership.	Barroso, 2008b
3	'Europeans want a vision, and a plan of action. The vision was set out last year with leadership from the European political community. It was consolidated by *European leadership at the Bali Conference*. Now we will show how a modern economy *can* be designed to meet the challenge.'	Europe also demonstrated leadership at Bali in 2007.	Barroso, 2008a
4	'Of course there will be *those* who say that change comes at too high a cost, that we have no choice except to put our heads in the sand and hope for the best. I think *they* have got this wrong.'	Voice also given to others, but their view negated.	Barroso, 2008a
5	'Some time ago *many critics* had said that it was impossible. Europe would never do it. And more recently, in the face of the economic and financial crisis, *people* said "Europe is going to give up on that commitment". No Europe has decided to keep its commitment.'	Voice also given to others, but their voice negated. Stress on EU's commitment to climate despite financial crisis.	Barroso, 2008b

Table 3. EU environmental leadership in Barroso's speeches (emphasis added)

target of renewables by 2020. And we have guaranteed that we will increase energy efficiency by 20%' (Barroso, 2008b). The basic argument in Barroso's December speech is that Europe is leading because the package is 'by far the *most ambitious program* on climate ever adopted in the world' (Barroso, 2008b). In other words, Europe is the leader because no one else is doing more yet.

Whether the 20 per cent targets are stringent enough to halt global warming below critical levels is not questioned, even though it was already in 2008 widely recognized, by scientists as well as the EU, that 20 per cent reductions would not be enough; as Barroso's colleague, the EU environmental commissioner Stavros Dimas (2008) stated, also in December 2008, 'in the future, we will need targets that are far more ambitious'. Observing the rhetoric of the EU climate package, selling a package with a slogan '20 20 by 2020' might definitely be easier than attempting to do the same with e.g. '35 20 by 2020'. In this case, however, it might well be that the beauty of rhetoric has been achieved at the expense of nature.

At the same time in Barroso's December speech, much emphasis is placed on the need for partnership and shared leadership (Example 2 in Table 3). This emphasis reflects the change of administration in the US in November 2008 and the expected shift of environmental policy as Barack Obama was elected president. By emphasizing how the package is a message for others to follow the path now taken by the EU, Barroso attempts to promote the EU's values and stresses EU intellectual leadership. For example, he claims, in words that recalled Barack Obama's election slogan, that

> our message to our global partners is this one: 'yes you can, yes you can also do what we are doing. Yes you can achieve the targets we have committed ourselves to achieve'. This is the message we want to convey to all our partners' (Barroso, 2008b).

References to the need for cooperation are typical in texts that draw on discourses of sustainable development (see, e.g., Myers and Macnaghten, 1998; Dryzek, 1997), although Carvalho (2005) claims that appealing to global responsibility can also be seen as a way to duck responsibility by assigning the need to act to others. In Barroso's speech, however, partnership appeals perhaps more reflect the importance of the EU climate deal in paving the way to Copenhagen. To remain globally competitive despite its commitments to emission reductions, the EU would like to exert its ideological power and intellectual leadership to assure that others follow its example. These inclusive partnership appeals are an attempt to make sure they do so. This focus on shared leadership with the US might be a sign of a significant shift in discourse, because the US has earlier often been portrayed as the bad 'other' in climate issues, at least in some European countries (Olausson, forthcoming). As the future climate commitments of the US and other countries become clearer in post-Copenhagen times, it will be interesting to examine how the discourses on both sides of the Atlantic evolve and whether the role of the 'other' in European discourse shifts from the US to developing countries such as China.

Media Texts in January: Relatively Little Attention to EU Leadership

The media texts in January reflect the focus in Barroso's January speech, and to a large extent just introduce the package and describe what it will mean for the country in question. In addition to EU representatives, the main voice in the texts is given to national cabinet ministers. Interestingly, *The Telegraph* from the UK and the German papers are the only ones that give voice to the business lobby through direct and indirect quotations from industry representatives. These criticize the climate package for fear it will impact competitiveness and thereby lead to industry relocating to non-EU countries. The space given for criticism in the German texts reflects the German context, with much heavy industry that will be most heavily affected by rising energy prices. In the other nine texts, the voice of industry is either completely missing (four texts) or only weakly present (five texts), in statements that acknowledge the lobbying pressure from industry. The voice of ENGOs is also notably missing from all the texts except the German ones. This was even though ENGOs in all these countries criticized the 20 per cent emissions reduction target as too weak and urged Europe, as a global environmental leader, to promote measures that would be effective in actually fighting climate change (see, e.g., Duwe *et al.*, 2008; Greenpeace Sweden, 2008; WWF, 2008a, 2008b).

In January, only four of the 12 texts, those in *The Guardian* (the UK), *Die Welt* (Germany), *Corriere della Sera* (Italy) and *The Telegraph* (the UK), touch on leadership issues, from diverse viewpoints. The first two represent European leadership positively, the third controversially, and the fourth more negatively. In *The Guardian*, senior officials in Brussels are quoted as saying 'the climate change package . . . would give the EU the moral high ground, letting it lead the drive for a new, post-Kyoto international bargain on global warming', and the text in *Die Welt* describes how the EU, according to Barroso, 'puts itself on the top in global climate protection' with the package. In other words, these texts argue that the package demonstrates leadership and will indeed give the EU intellectual leadership before Copenhagen. Contrary to this, the text in *Corriere della Sera* is the only one that explicitly highlights the difficulty in assuming a leadership position when others have not agreed on significant emissions reductions. In the text, Barroso is quoted as saying how 'there is no sense . . . in being rigorous in Europe if this means the transfer of production to countries that do what they want with emissions'. The text in *The Telegraph*, on the other hand, is the only one in January that questions the EU's potential for directional leadership by implying that not all countries might be able to meet the renewables target.

Media Texts in October: Financial Crisis Threatens Environment

In October, European leaders met to discuss measures against the financial crisis, and the climate package was also discussed. From a discursive perspective, the influence of the crisis on European environmental leadership with the climate package is evident in two ways. On the one hand, representatives of the EU, mainly the then EU chair, French president Sarkozy, but also Barroso, are given voice in all the texts except the one in the Finnish *Aamulehti*. They stress the importance of demonstrating leadership by remaining committed to the climate plan despite the crisis, and for example the text in the Swedish *Dagens Nyheter* clearly stresses the importance of this to maintain the EU's intellectual leadership position before Copenhagen (Example 3 in Table 4). On the other hand, as the examples in Table 4 further demonstrate, many of the texts also give voice, directly or indirectly, to countries or country representatives who raise objections to adhering to the previously agreed-on objectives in times of the crisis. These critics are most often Italy and its prime minister Berlusconi (seven out of 11 texts). With the exception of *Aamulehti*, the texts that do not give voice to these critics also mention Italy, Poland and countries from eastern and central Europe as the ones to blame for the concessions in the climate package. Table 4 demonstrates these diverging views from some of the papers, highlighting the discursive contests between the EU and environment on the one hand, and objecting countries and economic concerns on the other.

The fact that the media texts present Italy and Berlusconi as one of the main culprits for the concessions in the package renders it interesting to examine the Italian texts in particular. In comparison with the texts from the other countries, the Italian ones are a lot more controversial, reflecting the political orientations of the two newspapers. *La Repubblica* criticizes Berlusconi's actions and presents his views ironically. For example, it is stated how Berlusconi 'welcomed the concessions as "granting all our requests", although he yesterday stressed the impossibility and inutility of going ahead with the 20–20–20 goals in times of the financial crisis, asking in reality to stop everything . . . , as he attacked the core of the measures, that is the emissions trading system. Yesterday, he also claimed that his view was supported by France and Germany, but in the end, the situation was quite different'. The text in *Corriere della Sera*, on the other hand, gives clear support to Berlusconi and the Italian view, with much room for Berlusconi's arguments for why Italy's objections were important. Concerning EU environmental leadership, Berlusconi again questions the sense in assuming a leadership position at all, as he is quoted as saying that because of the costs to businesses, 'we don't believe it is the time to be Don Quixote, to go alone when the large producers of CO_2 like the US and China are absolutely negative about following our actions' (see also Example 2 in Table 4).

Although intellectual leadership is the main focus in the media texts, the texts in *The Irish Times* and the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* also question the EU's and EU countries' ability for directional leadership, as they explicitly present different countries' ability to effectively implement the proposed measures as uncertain because of the financial crisis (see, e.g., Example 4 in Table 4).

Similarly to January, the voice of business and industry is notably missing in October, although industry interests are clearly visible in the texts. Also similarly, ENGOs are quoted only in two papers, *The Irish Times* and the Italian *Corriere della Sera*. The target of criticism, however, is different. Whereas the criticism in the former is

	EU: Must stick to climate goals	Italy, Poland, and countries from central and eastern Europe: Need concessions due to financial crisis	Outlet
1	'European Union leaders yesterday *reasserted their goal of leading the world* in fighting climate change despite signs that the package could unravel in the face of growing economic recession and mounting rifts between the 27 governments. . . . [Sarkozy] told journalists: "*We cannot use the financial and economic crisis as a pretext for dropping it* (the package)".'	'But several heads of government, including Italy's Silvio Berlusconi and Poland's Donald Tusk, insisted they were not in office then and threatened to refuse to be bound by the targets, given the economic gloom.'	Guardian
2	'"*The climate change objective is of total importance*," said . . . Sarkozy.'	'"We don't think this is the moment to push forward on our own like Don Quixote," Mr Berlusconi said when asked why he wanted a delay in agreeing a deal.'	Irish Times
3	'The summit stood firm concerning EU's climate goal and aspiration to ratify a climate package in December this year *to be able to take a leading position in the climate meeting in Copenhagen*.'	'Silvio Berlusconi, who during five years as Italy's prime minister did little to improve Italy's competitiveness, said now that the threat comes from the EU's climate package and threatened with a veto.'	Dagens Nyheter
4	'European Union *does not intend to slip from its goal* of agreeing on the climate package in December . . . "The chairing country [France] had to fight to maintain the goal. It wasn't easy", French president Nicolas Sarkozy said.'	'Several member countries voiced loud concerns over whether the targets could be met. Poland, Italy and many countries from central and eastern Europe announced that the targets, already agreed on twice earlier, are too stringent.'	Helsingin Sanomat
5	'Sarkozy held on to the December deadline. ". . . *we cannot question the climate goals*".'	'Several member countries criticized the contents and deadline of the package . . . Especially Poland and Italy have great problems with the plan.'	Süddeutsche Zeitung
6	'"The climate question is an historical responsibility and the *financial crisis should not diminish our ambitions*" [said Sarkozy].'	'Italy, said [Italian prime minister] has represented "difficulties" not concerning the final objectives, but the "rigidity" of the package.'	Corriere della Sera

Table 4. Influence of financial crisis on the media texts in October 2008 (emphasis added)

against the EU as a whole for unwillingness 'to walk the walk when it comes to decisive action', the protest in the latter is interestingly, despite the text's overall support for Berlusconi, against Italian policy makers who 'want to sabotage the journey to the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol and to hinder the unique possibility to concretely reduce emissions'.

Media Texts in December: Package Historic but Lacks Leadership?

In December, all the 12 texts except the one in the Finnish *Aamulehti*, which presents the modified package very positively, also give voice to critics. These include ENGOs and members of parliament dissatisfied with the modified form of the package. This dialogism and openness to alternative views leads to divided views on EU environmental leadership, and results in a struggle for meaning in the media texts over what environmental leadership is.

On the one hand, the texts quote EU representatives (nine texts) and/or country leaders (ten texts) who both present the package as an historic accomplishment that signifies how 'Europe . . . remains the leader on climate change' (*The Guardian*). These quotations reflect Barroso's message as they imply that the EU is indeed leading (Examples 2, 4 and 5 in Table 5), and stress how the package strengthens the EU's intellectual leadership (Examples

	Package demonstrates leadership	Package falls short of leadership	Outlet
1	'[Barroso] and others stressed that these concessions did not affect the overall targets. The accord was the first such agreement in the world and *put Europe in a strong position to strike a broader pact* with the incoming Obama administration in the US ahead of the effort to reach a worldwide . . . agreement in Copenhagen.'	'But critics complained that the package was too little too late . . . "Industry has to do next to nothing", said . . . a leading Green MEP . . . "If they are honest, these leaders know they haven't agreed something really ambitious".'	Guardian
2	'Barroso called on others to *follow the EU's lead* on climate change in the lead-up to next year's UN summit in Copenhagen.'	'But environmental campaigners claimed the package was so diluted by compromise trade-offs that the CO_2 pledges were meaningless. "This was a moment in time when *real leaders would have stepped up* and taken the positions that would combat the economic and climate crisis at the same time", said a WWF representative.'	Irish Times
3	'Sarkozy . . . and . . . Reinfeldt [Swedish Prime Minister] spoke of how *Europe had put on the leader's shirt* in the climate issue by committing itself to 20 per cent reductions in carbon emissions by 2020.'	'But critics think the agreement . . . is watered down. "*This shows that they have just taken off the leader's shirt* in the climate issue," said . . . [a Swedish] member of the parliament.'	Dagens Nyheter
4	'According to the [Finnish] prime minister, the climate package gives a very good starting point for the Copenhagen climate summit and *strengthens the EU's leadership in international negotiations*.'		Aamulehti
5	'Despite the concessions, the summit participants reaffirmed the goal of reducing greenhouse gases by 20 per cent by 2020. No other continent has set such binding targets for itself, said . . . Sarkozy. *Also Merkel still saw Europe as the worldwide frontrunner* in the fight against global warming.'	'On the other hand, environmental groups . . . criticized the concessions as a "black day for European climate policy".'	Die Welt
6	'The French president and the former vice president of the US [Al Gore] see the glass as half full [i.e. are satisfied], because . . . [these 20–20–20 goals] *make it easier to achieve an international agreement* in Copenhagen in 2009.'	'This – announced [environmental organizations] is a dark day for European climate policy. The heads of state and the European council have failed on their promises and turned their backs on global efforts to fight climate change.'	La Repubblica

Table 5. Contradicting views on 'environmental leadership' in media texts in December 2008 (emphasis added)

1, 4 and 6) before Copenhagen. Remaining committed to the end result, i.e. achieving the 20 per cent reductions, is stressed as a sign of leadership (Examples 1, 3 and 5), and the concessions to industry are presented as a necessary compromise to reach any kind of a deal in times of crisis.

On the other hand, the texts also quote critics who claim that the approval of the modified package demonstrates how Europe has 'just taken off the leader's shirt in climate issues' (Swedish *Dagens Nyheter*) (Examples 1–3, 5 and 6). The main argument for the lack of leadership is that the concessions meant that the Union had not been able to show strong leadership by pushing for measures that would really be effective in fighting climate change. Instead, it had had to yield to industry pressure – something that 'real' leaders (Example 2) would not have done. Interestingly, although ENGOs also criticized the 20 per cent reduction targets per se as inadequate in December (see, e.g., Baxter *et al.*, 2008), this critique as such is not explicit in any of the texts, although Example 1 in Table

5 hints at this by stating that 'the package was *too little* too late'. In other words, only the means to achieve the '20 20 by 2020' targets are presented as the reasons for the lack of leadership, not the end result.

In December, the culprits blamed for the concessions are in all but one of the 12 texts both industry and/or countries, now mainly Germany, Italy and eastern European states that demanded concessions. In the German texts, however, the German demands are presented relatively positively as defending Germany's interests (*Die Welt*) or given very little attention (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*). As stated in the former, 'Merkel strongly defended Germany's interests. Climate protection in Europe should not put local industries in disadvantage against competition from countries with looser regulations'. This reflects the overall tendency of the analyzed texts to focus on nationally important views in reporting on the climate package. In the Italian texts, on the other hand, Italy's role is again seen very differently in the two papers. In *La Repubblica*, which is still very critical of Berlusconi, it is stated that the agreement was seen as a '"great victory" according to Berlusconi, who has done everything possible to hinder the adoption of the 20–20–20 directives . . . [Berlusconi's] threat and the Italian resistance succeeded in creating a package limited in both ambition and potential'. Contrary to this, the role of Berlusconi and Italy is again presented positively in *Corriere della Sera*. For example, the Italian foreign minister is quoted as claiming that the Italian demands have made it possible to keep the door open to 'revisit the targets if "the great global polluters", the US, China and India, don't follow the European example' – in other words, if the EU does not manage to exert intellectual leadership before Copenhagen. The role of the media in promoting political agendas in Italy (Mancini *et al.*, 2005) seems to continue to be strong.

In December, the business lobby is still not given voice in the texts with the exception of the text in *The Irish Independent*, where a business representative outlines some of the problems the deal will cause in Ireland. In all the other texts, business is only present indirectly in statements that recognize that pressure from industry (as well as from countries) led to the concessions.

Social Context

As discussed above, it has been argued that the analysis of leadership is quite dependent on time and context (Skodvin and Andresen, 2006). In this paper, it is argued that five aspects of the larger social context have an impact on how environmental leadership is discursively constructed with regard to the EU climate package: first, previous environmental agreements as well as the upcoming UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009; second, the global financial crisis that began only months before the ratification of the climate package in December 2008; third, a shift in the environmental policy of the US following the inauguration of a new president; fourth, EU enlargement from 15 to 27 countries in 2004 and 2007, and fifth, an increase in the public's environmental awareness.

The importance and influence of the first three aspects have already been discussed above. The fourth issue, EU enlargement to central and eastern European countries in 2004 and 2007, is significant because these nations are, besides Germany and Italy, largely seen as the ones to blame for the concessions in the ratified version of the climate package due to their weaker finances and reliance on coal. In the near future, the need to consider the demands from these newer member states might have a significant influence on the EU's ability to assume a global environmental leadership position. Finally, another important aspect in the social context, is the fact that environmental awareness and the need for global solutions in Western countries have reached new levels (see, e.g., European Parliament, 2008). Because of this increased awareness, politicians know that they need to respond to their citizens; as Barroso (2008a) states in his speech, 'The struggle against climate change . . . touches on every European, every day. That is why we can all sense a real shift in attitudes. Europeans want a vision, and a plan of action'. However, it seems that in the case of the EU climate package, European leaders have perhaps failed to live up to these expectations, instead yielding to pressure from industrialists and ratifying a climate deal with targets too low to halt global warming below critical levels – and weak means to achieve the weak targets.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this paper, it has been argued that extending the focus of EU environmental leadership studies to analyzing how this leadership is discursively constructed by different actors offers a valuable contribution by increasing our understanding of the rhetorical choices and structures in environmental policy and media discourse that – explicitly

or implicitly – may affect our views and actions. The paper further demonstrates the importance of the allocation of voice in the media in this particular instance. This is important because the ones who are given voice are the main parties that get to participate in co-constructing what environmental leadership means.

In particular, the findings in this paper demonstrate the importance of analyzing environmental leadership discourse with an eye on the national and transnational social context, which can seemingly shift quite rapidly. Even though this study only examines texts published during one year, it seems that, in connection to the EU climate package, 'environmental leadership' in these texts is a discursive contest that shifts over time. In January 2008, the media texts display no discursive struggle, although ENGOs contested the EU's claim of EU leadership in their press releases. As ENGOs were given no voice in most of the media, the struggle between whether leadership is about having emissions reductions targets that are higher than others (EU's claim) versus targets that would make a real difference in the fight against climate change (ENGOs' claim) was not visible in the analyzed media texts. In October 2008, due to pressures caused by the financial crisis, the struggle in the media texts took place between the EU and objecting countries, including Italy and countries from central and eastern Europe. The former stressed the necessity of keeping the 20–20–20 goals to maintain environmental leadership, the latter the necessity of concessions to maintain industry competitiveness. Finally, in December 2008, the discursive struggle in the media texts took place between the EU and country representatives on the one hand and critics, especially ENGOs, which were now given voice in nearly all of the media texts, on the other. In December, the struggle focused on the ends striven for versus the means to achieve them. In other words, the media texts in December, by giving voice to ENGOs, contest the EU's argument of environmental leadership by stressing how a true leader would have presented effective means to reach the specified emissions reduction targets rather than giving industry the opportunity to escape responsibility in the fight against climate change.

With regard to the main types of environmental leadership examined in this paper, the focus in the media texts is clearly on intellectual leadership, although the EU's ability for directional leadership is also questioned in some of the texts. The analysis here indicates that, prior to the introduction of the climate package, many people were looking to Europe to provide the kind of intellectual leadership that would help secure an effective global deal in Copenhagen in December 2009. It was hoped that the EU would indeed be the kind of normative power that could promote more stringent global measures against climate change than the non-radical models it has promoted before. As it turned out, however, the media texts in December 2008 reflect the fact that many received the ratification of the compromise package with disappointment, as it fell short of the emission reduction targets that are widely accepted by e.g. the scientific community to be necessary to keep global warming below a critical level. By now, it has also become evident that the EU was not able to be a strong enough normative power or to exert the kind of intellectual leadership with the climate package that would have led to a global agreement in Copenhagen. Thus, so far, the real results of the EU in affecting the global environmental agenda remain modest. Even though the legally binding measures of the climate deal will perhaps make sure that European countries do more than they would without the deal – and as such demonstrate that Europe is at the forefront in addressing climate change – it remains to be seen whether the enlarged Europe is able to become an actor that can engage the global community in collective action (cf. Zoller and Fairhurst, 2007).

The findings of this study point to many similarities in how the media texts in the six European countries discursively construct environmental leadership, particularly with regard to who the media give voice to. There were, however, also some dissimilarities as in the case of Italy. To further our understanding in this area, it would be important to extend the scope of focus to countries from eastern and central Europe where the national social context is quite different from the countries included here. In addition, it would be important to conduct similar studies, first with other sources such as TV news, policy documents and political speeches, second in other regions and third over longer periods of time to enable examining how environmental leadership discursively evolves over time. In particular, it would be interesting to study the rhetoric in the USA under the lead of President Barack Obama, as his appointment in 2008 is expected to mark a critical turn in the country's environmental policy. In addition, turning the focus to developing nations such as China, which is a central player in global environmental politics, would provide a better understanding of how the notion of environmental leadership is globally constructed and understood. It remains to be hoped, following the unclear outcome of the Copenhagen summit, that a courageous, visionary leader will emerge to talk the world towards the kinds of emission reduction that are needed to accomplish results that will make a difference.

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ON THE RELATIVE NATURE OF ADEQUATE MEASURES:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EU ENERGY

AND CLIMATE PACKAGE

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On the relative nature of adequate measures: Media representations of the EU energy and climate package

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to contribute to media studies on climate change through a study of the ways in which the adequacy of transnational measures of tackling climate change are represented in media outlets in the UK, Ireland, Sweden and Finland. Media texts on the European Union Energy and Climate Package, introduced in January 2008 and approved in modified form in December 2008, are analyzed in-depth. Through an exploratory cross-societal comparison of media representations, the paper traces some of the dynamics of contemporary environmental debates. We argue that the adequacy of proposed transnational measures for tackling climate change becomes a relative concept in the media: measures are not adequate or inadequate per se, but contingent upon social context and relative with regard to time and to the comparisons made.

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1. Introduction

"Europe must set the right policies in place to continue to set the pace on climate change. It is too late for anyone in the international community, least of all the European Union to play 'after you, Claude.' Procrastination is no longer an option for anyone. We need to incentivise the saving of the planet."

These words delivered in a speech in January 2008 by Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission of the European Union, illustrate the rise of environmental issues into the center of transnational politics where *"procrastination is no longer an option for anyone."* A collective *"we"* needs to take action. The emphasis on the *"need to incentivise the saving of the planet"* in turn demonstrates a key contemporary characteristic of solving environmental problems, that is the apparent necessity of having solutions that make economic and financial sense.

A growing number of studies have shown that it matters how different actors talk about environmental challenges and solutions in public (Hajer, 1995; Dryzek, 1997; Harvey, 1999; Ereaut and Segnit, 2006; Lorenzoni et al., 2007; Alexander, 2008; Risbey, 2008; Joutsenvirta and Vaara, 2009; Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui, 2009). Several studies have recently highlighted the importance of the media in promoting particular versions of social reality with regard to climate change (Weingart et al., 2000; Antilla, 2005; Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho and Burgess, 2005; Boykoff and Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Boykoff and Rajan, 2007; Boykoff, 2008; Boykoff and Goodman, 2009; Doulton and Brown, 2009; Foust and O'Shannon Murphy, 2009; Olausson, 2009, 2010). These contributions have developed our understanding of media representations of climate change in three main ways: first, by increasing our understanding of the ways in which journalists frame climate change, second, by making sense of how and why media representations have varied over time in particular societies and, third, by analyzing how different actors have employed particular discursive strategies in media debates.

We aim to contribute to media studies on climate change by offering a comparative study of how the adequacy of transnational measures for tackling climate change is represented in media outlets in different societies with distinct energy and environmental policies. As an empirical example, we explore how the EU energy and climate package, the first significant transnational environmental policy initiative since the Kyoto protocol in 1997, is represented in the UK, Irish, Swedish and Finnish media. The package, which was introduced in January 2008 and approved by European leaders in modified form in December 2008, is also known as '20 20 by 2020', because it aims at a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and a binding 20 per cent target for the use of renewable energy sources by 2020. It became an opportunity for the EU to influence international environmental policy making, as it preceded the United Nations climate negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009 that were initiated with the aim of reaching a new global climate agreement to replace the Kyoto protocol.

Cross-societal comparisons are a relevant point of departure for studying transnational initiatives because the framing of environ-

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mental issues in the media and elsewhere is affected by societal contexts, including their particular institutions, policies, cultures and practices (Halme and Laurila, 2009; Halme et al., 2009). Adopting a critical discourse analytical perspective (Fairclough, 2003), we set out to analyze a set of exemplary media texts in the four countries. We focus on the introduction of the EU package in January 2008 and on its approval by EU leaders in December 2008. To complement the media text analysis, we study two speeches by EU Commission President Barroso and four press releases from environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs). We trace intertextual linkages (or the lack thereof) by studying how messages by different actors are (not) given voice in the focal media texts. The novelty value of our study arguably lies in the cross-societal comparison of media representations of a transnational initiative at different points in time; this enables us to trace some of the dynamics of environmental debates. To complement extant media analyses, we argue that the adequacy of proposed transnational measures for tackling climate change becomes a relative concept in the media: measures are not sufficient or insufficient per se, but contingent upon social context and relative with regard to time and to the comparisons made.

Our study is exploratory, and we attempt to lay the groundwork for a more refined understanding of societal and transnational dynamics in the media coverage of environmental policy initiatives. The paper is structured as follows. In section two, we outline extant research on discourses and framings of environmental issues in the media, and proceed to specify our CDA perspective. In section three, we present our research material and analysis, and in section four, we substantiate our argument through empirical illustration. Finally, in section five, we offer conclusions based on our study and suggest avenues for future research.

2. Climate change in the media

2.1. Discourses and framings

Discourses construct particular representations of social reality. Contrasting environmental discourses provide a useful vantage point for studying policy initiatives aimed at addressing climate change, because they incorporate different understandings of how environmental problems can and should be solved. Dryzek (1997) conceives of discourses as shared ways of understanding the world, and argues that the most dominant environmental discourse in Western societies has been that of sustainability. This discourse emphasizes the possibility of combining ecological preservation and economic growth. Due to its attractiveness, it is difficult to contest and resist (Carvalho, 2005). It has been pointed out, however, that the sustainability discourse is problematic, because it places ecological issues within an economic framework rather than promotes the kind of institutional restructuring that is necessary to solve the ecological crises we are facing (Hajer and Fischer, 1999; Sachs, 1999; Thompson, 1999; Alexander, 2008).

The discourse of ecological modernization, which Dryzek (1997) treats as a sustainability discourse, takes the idea of sustainability further, arguing that ecological preservation and economic gains are not only possible to combine, but that the former can lead to the latter. This discourse, too, is criticized for failing to challenge "the viability of endless material growth and consumption" (Hajer and Fischer, 1999, p. 3). As possible alternatives, Dryzek (1997) identifies different problem-solving discourses and discourses of green radicalism. Problem-solving discourses, on the one hand, share the view that environmental problems can be solved by taking small actions. Green radicalism, on the other hand, sees a shift to green consciousness and significantly different politics as necessary in solving environmental problems.

Despite criticism directed towards the discourses of sustainability and ecological modernization, the European Union has strongly promoted sustainable development in international negotiations. This is because "the EU has a strategic interest in ensuring that the international model of sustainable development adopted is one that does not damage the Union's economic competitiveness" (Burchell and Lightfoot, 2004, pp. 333–334; Baker, 2000). Therefore, as Burchell and Lightfoot (2004, p. 334) maintain, "an international model based upon 'green radicalism' ... would have a serious economic impact upon the EU." Faced with an economic risk, the EU has an interest in promoting the kind of international agreements that mirror its own, thus far non-radical operationalizations of solving environmental problems.

Due to its crucial role in contemporary society and its influence on people's perceptions of climate change issues (Sampei and Aoyagi-Usui, 2009), the media has emerged as an important setting for the (re)construction of environmental discourses (Corbett and Durfee, 2004). An increasing number of researchers have set out to study how climate change is represented in the media. Research has focused on EU member-states such as France (Brossard et al., 2004), Germany (Weingart et al., 2000), Sweden (Olausson, 2009, 2010) and the UK (Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho and Burgess, 2005; Ereaut and Segnit, 2006, 2007; Boykoff, 2008; Doulton and Brown, 2009). Several contributors have also studied the media in the United States (Zehr, 2000; Boykoff and Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Antilla, 2005; Foust and O'Shannon Murphy, 2009). Recently, research has also focused on, for example, India (Billett, 2010).

Many of the studies have analyzed how the media have taken part in framing climate change over the years. Following Entman (1993), framing refers here to how journalists decide on which sides of an issue to make salient, and then make connections between these issues so that particular interpretations, evaluations, or solutions are promoted over others. On the one hand, extant studies suggest that the media both in Europe (Weingart et al., 2000; Ereaut and Segnit, 2006, 2007; Boykoff, 2008; Doulton and Brown, 2009; Olausson, 2009) and in the US (Foust and O'Shannon Murphy, 2009) have often employed catastrophic or apocalyptic discourses and framing when reporting on climate change. This means that journalists have highlighted the potentially catastrophic effects of climate change. This is problematic from the point of view of climate change communications because as Hulme (2006) argues, catastrophic discourses do not reflect the language of science and can be counterproductive by not encouraging behavioral change. On the other hand, studies demonstrate a disparity between the US and Europe in the media coverage on climate change. In the US, the use of climate skeptics as primary definers of the debate have often resulted in climate change being constructed as uncertain (Zehr, 2000; Boykoff and Boykoff, 2004, 2007; Antilla, 2005). In Europe, in turn, the press has in general framed climate change as certain (Weingart et al., 2000; Brossard et al., 2004; Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho and Burgess, 2005; Olausson, 2009, 2010). This also seems to be the case in India (Billett, 2010).

Overall, in studying climate change in the media, a focus on framing(s) has enabled researchers to specify the ways in which journalists interpret and evaluate the phenomenon and represent particular sides in the debate. This has increased our understanding of the dynamics of environmental discussions where recurring discourses – e.g. sustainability and ecological modernization – are drawn on to make particular claims. However, the discursive construction of transnational environmental policy initiatives in the media remains a less studied area, and cross-cultural comparisons of media texts are particularly rare. We aim to pave the way for filling these gaps by focusing attention on the ways in which the EU climate package – a significant transnational initiative in fighting climate change – is represented in the media in different countries.

2.2. A comparative CDA perspective

In order to elaborate on the literature above and to consider more closely the impact of social context on media texts, a critical discourse analytical (CDA) approach has been found useful (Carvalho, 2005, 2007; Carvalho and Burgess, 2005; Boykoff, 2008; Olausson, 2009). According to Carvalho (2007, p. 227), CDA "shares with framing analysis an interest in the variable social construction of the world but puts a stronger emphasis on language and on the relation between discourse and particular social, political and cultural context." In this way, it "allows for a richer examination of the resources used in any type of text for producing meaning" (Carvalho, 2007, p. 227).

By adopting a CDA perspective, we aim to contribute not only to understanding how the EU climate package is framed in different media texts, but also to how social context influences the dynamics of media coverage. Considering the national societal context is important because, as Olausson (2009) claims, national logic still influences national media even in representations of globally challenging issues such as climate change. It is, however, critical to bear in mind that discourses and societal contexts are not static but in flux. As Carvalho (2007) argues, the political and economic context in the UK, for example, has influenced discursive practices in the media in different ways at different times. Transnational considerations, in turn, intertwine with nationalistic discourse in media texts, and researchers need to take this into account when analyzing the social context of contemporary media debates (Tienari et al., 2009).

It has also been argued that discursive practices may shift as a result of critical discourse moments (Chilton, 1987; Gamson, 1992). These are moments in time "marked by particular events that potentially challenge existing discursive positions or constructs or, in contrast, may contribute to their further sedimentation" (Carvalho, 2005, p. 6). As the UK studies by Ereaut and Segnit (2006, 2007) and Doulton and Brown (2009) demonstrate, there can be several competing discourses in the media when discursive practices shift. Critical incidents such as the introduction and ratification of the EU energy and climate package may well initiate shifts in discourses, and as such provide a fruitful moment to explore media representations of climate change and transnational policy initiatives.

The ways in which discourses are drawn upon by different actors are also likely to affect media representations. As Weingart et al. (2000) found in a study in Germany, communication of the risk of climate change has varied between science, politics, and the media. It is important to bring to the fore potential "patterns of communication disturbances" (Weingart et al., 2000, p. 280) between these actors to increase our understanding of potential risks of communication in cases when communication by politicians and the media does not directly reflect the findings

of science. Another pattern of communication disturbance may appear between politicians, media, and NGOs. As Boykoff (2008) points out, NGOs and mass media are non-state actors that participate in "the cultural politics of climate change [that] are dynamic and contested spaces battled out by various actors" (Boykoff, 2008, p. 565). "Disturbances" or "battles" are, in part, influenced by journalists who give voice to certain actors over others (Fairclough, 1995). Considerations of intertextuality, that is the presence of "other voices than the author's own" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 218) in the focal texts, are thus important, as they enable us to explore who is given voice in the media and who is marginalized and silenced, and how claims made by different actors, including politicians and NGOs, are presented. Analysis of intertextuality is especially relevant in connection with environmental discourses, because as Carvalho (2005, p. 2) states, "the media are a crucial site for the definition and re-definition of meanings associated with climate change."

CDA has proven valuable in cross-societal comparative research on media representations of controversial issues. This is due to its consideration of socio-cultural practice, that is how texts work within social context (Tienari et al., 2009). Given that the EU is an organization with supranational legislative powers over its 27 member-states in defined policy areas (Rosamond, 2000; Rodriguez-Pose, 2002; Rittberger and Zangl, 2006), we suggest that comparative CDA is especially relevant for studying media discussions of climate change in the EU where transnational policies are discussed and implemented in different ways in different societies. Due to the interplay of transnational and national concerns in relation to the EU, our analysis of social context incorporates both these elements.

To analyze how the EU package is represented in the media, we study media texts from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden and Finland. The choice of countries is based on two main criteria. First, we focus on countries that would be required to make some of the largest reductions in GHG emissions as a result of the package. Second, we focus on countries that have been shown to differ in their orientations towards the EU (Jordan, 2004; Flynn, 2004; Kronsell, 2004; Sairinen and Lindholm, 2004). Also, whereas Sweden and Finland embraced a particular form of state-coordinated capitalism up until the 1990s, and traces of the 'Nordic welfare state model' are still evident in the two countries, the UK and Ireland have operated as relatively clear-cut neo-liberal market economies since the 1970s and 1980s (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Whitley, 1999; Fairclough, 2000).

To provide a background for our analysis, Table 1 outlines some central features of the EU member-states studied. These include features characteristic of the societies, their approach to EU environmental policy, and how their media typically report on EU-related issues. On this basis, a range of themes could be focused on in relation to media representations of the EU package. We suggest

Table 1
EU member-states studied: some key features.

Country	Market ideology	Country-specific features	Approach to EU environmental policy	Media, EU and the environment
The UK	Neo-liberal ("free" market)	Recently aimed to take leading role in global climate issues; 'winner-takes-all' parliamentary system	Recently an active policy shaper	Polarized press; strong Euro-skepticism; politicians strive to control media agenda
Ireland	Neo-liberal ("free" market)	Strong economic growth in last decades, followed by decline	Seeks amendments to commission proposals	Issue-specific coverage, focus on money and interstate disputes
Sweden	Neo-liberal; up to 1990s state-coordinated capitalism	Proactive tradition in environmental issues	Active policy shaper, strives for stricter standards and tighter European integration	European 'we' vs. American 'them' in climate issues
Finland	Neo-liberal; up to 1990s state-coordinated capitalism	Reliance on energy-intensive industries and exports affects debate on climate change	Prompt adoption of EU initiatives	National perspective in EU reporting; use of Finnish sources

Sources: Olausson, 2010; Golding et al., 2005; Heikkilä and Kunelius, 2005; McNamara, 2005; Flynn, 2004; Kronsell, 2004; Jordan, 2004; Sairinen and Lindholm, 2004.

that it is particularly interesting to analyze whether and how the media texts address the adequacy of the measures proposed in the transnational EU package. One reason for this is that the proposed 20 per cent reduction targets fall short of the 25–40 per cent emissions reductions by developed nations that the EU pushed for in 2007 at the UN climate summit in Bali.

Finally, for the kind of research advocated in this paper, it is useful to analyze a relatively small set of media texts. This enables us to provide an in-depth reading of the selected material; in this case, to explore the multifaceted, diverse and contradictory ways in which a transnational policy initiative is represented in national daily newspapers. The media texts studied are treated as topical examples of how the EU policy initiative is (re)constructed in the media rather than as a representative sample of texts. The texts should not be seen as representative of the wider discursive interchanges in particular newspapers, published over long periods of time. Instead, the research material and in-depth analysis allows us to bring to the fore some potentially fruitful avenues for further inquiry and theory development on climate change and the media.

3. Research material and analysis

In order to capture potentially different viewpoints within societies, the media outlets for our study were selected on the basis of their different political profiles: (1) in the UK, The Guardian and The Telegraph, (2) in Ireland, The Irish Times and The Irish Independent, (3) in Sweden, Dagens Nyheter and Aftonbladet, and (4) in Finland, Helsingin Sanomat and Aamulehti. The articles were obtained from the newspapers' online archives. The main criterion for selecting the individual articles was the date of publication, 23–24 January 2008 (following the introduction of the EU package) and 12–13 December 2008 (following its approval by European leaders). Selecting simultaneously published texts enables syn-

chronic analysis on comparable simultaneous depictions of a critical discourse moment (Carvalho, 2005; Boykoff, 2008). All texts in our sample represent the genre of news (no editorials and opinion pieces were considered). Texts in Swedish and Finnish were translated into English by the authors. The research material is summarized in Table 2.

Initially, we set out to explore how the media texts in January 2008 represented the EU climate package. Following Fairclough's (2003) critical discourse analytical (CDA) framework, we analyzed the media texts at three levels: text (micro-level textual elements), discursive practice (here, specifically intertextuality) and socio-cultural practice (the social context, national and transnational). Especially the focus on micro-level textual elements and intertextuality also provided a method for analyzing different frames in the texts (cf. Olausson, 2009). As Entman (1993, p. 52) claims, news frames are "manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments." First, in the text-level analysis, we thus focused on the analysis of keywords and sentences, headings, text structure, i.e. how the texts are rhetorically organized, and which elements are made salient in them. We also considered the texts' modality. The latter includes assertions (this *is* so); modalizations (this *might be* so) and denials (this *is not* so) (Fairclough, 2003). Second, in analyzing discursive practices, we focused on traces of intertextuality. Specifically, we considered what voices are included in the texts by analyzing how direct and indirect quotes from actors are used, and paid attention to what voices are marginalized and excluded. Third, we considered what elements in the social context, both societal (e.g. in terms of national economy and competitiveness) and transnational (e.g. in terms of global responsibility), were the most important influences on the media texts.

To complement this initial analysis, we added media texts from 12–13 December 2008 in our material, following the approval of

Table 2
Media text material.

Outlet	Political profile	Article title	Publication date (2008)	Journalists
The Guardian (UK)	Liberal center-left	*EU aims for moral high ground with swingeing climate change package*	January 24	Ian Traynor and David Gow
		EU leaders claim historic agreement on cutting pollution	December 13	Ian Traynor and Nicholas Watt
The Daily Telegraph (UK)	Center-right	*EC's emissions targets could raise power prices by 15pc*	January 24	Russell Hotten
		Al Gore: World cares more about Paris Hilton than saving the planet	December 12	Louise Gray and Bruno Waterfield
The Irish Times (Ireland)	Center-right	*Government seeks change to EU emissions targets*	January 24	Harry McGee and Jamie Smyth
		Concessions to industry pave way for climate change deal	December 13	Jamie Smyth
The Irish Independent (Ireland)	Center-right	*Climate plan to cost €1bn per year but inaction 'will cost more'*	January 24	Gareth Morgan
		Deal to cut emissions could cost EUR1bn a year	December 13	Paul Melia and Fionnan Sheahan
Dagens Nyheter (Sweden)	Center-right	*Sverige ska minska sina utsläpp rejält [Sweden to reduce emissions significantly]*	January 24	Marianne Björklund
		EU:s klimatpaket får tummen ner av miljörörelsen [EU's climate package gets thumbs down from environmental organizations]	December 12	Marianne Björklund
Aftonbladet (Sweden)	Liberal center-left	*Kravet: Minska utsläppen med 17% [Demand: Reduce emissions by 17%]*	January 23	Johanna Melén
		EU:s klimat-paket i hamn [EU's climate package comes into force]	December 12	Johanna Melén
Helsingin Sanomat (Finland)	Liberal	*EU:n energiapaketista tulossa kallis lasku kuluttajille [EU energy package to result in expensive bill for consumers]*	January 24	Annamari Sipilä and Heikki Arola
		EU kasasi ilmastopakettinsa [EU put together its climate package]	December 13	Annamari Sipilä
Aamulehti (Finland)	Center-right	*Nyt alkoi energiansäästötalkoiden ja ilmastolaskun maksun aika [The time for joint energy saving efforts and paying the climate bill began]*	January 24	Kirsi Hölttä
		EU teki kaikkien aikojen ympäristöpäätöksen [EU made historic decision on environment]	December 13	Heli Satuli

the package by EU leaders. We also decided to augment the media text material with two speeches by the EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso and four press releases from environmental NGOs. The speeches preceded the media texts. They were given to the European Parliament on 23 January (Barroso, 2008a) and at a European Council press conference on 12 December (Barroso, 2008b). The NGO press releases, in turn, are from 23 January 2008 (Greenpeace UK, 2008; Greenpeace Sweden, 2008; Kosonen and Myllyvirta, 2008; WWF, 2008). The texts by Barroso and NGOs are included here for purposes of illustration – searching for traces of intertextuality vis-à-vis the media texts – rather than subjected to close textual analysis.

After an initial reading of the new materials, we decided to refocus the analysis to tackle three questions. First, how is the EU energy and climate package framed in the media texts? Second, how is the adequacy of the measures proposed in the EU package represented, and by whom? Third, how did the framings and representations change from January to December 2008? We then reconsidered the elements in the social context influencing the media texts. Finally, we revisited research on climate change in the media, and re-checked our interpretations of the empirical material in light of the extant literature. In all, our research unfolded in an iterative form, oscillating between theoretical and empirical work, which is typical for critical discourse analysis (Wodak, 2004). We have attempted to make our research process – working with publicly available data that other researchers also have access to – explicit so that the readers are able to follow our chain of argumentation and to consider the plausibility of our findings.

In the following, we first discuss media representations of the EU climate package in January 2008. We then discuss the texts from December 2008, focusing on the difference between the textual materials at these two points in time. In both sections, we consider the importance of the social context as an influence on the texts.

4. EU energy and climate package in media texts

4.1. Introduction of the EU package (January 2008)

When the EU climate package was introduced in January 2008, four main frames could be identified in the media texts studied. The EU package was represented either as (1) an economic and moral opportunity (The Guardian), (2) a threat to industry competitiveness (The Telegraph), (3) an unfair burden on particular societies (The Irish Times), and (4) costly, but less so than doing nothing (Irish Independent, Dagens Nyheter, Aftonbladet). The Finnish newspapers (Helsingin Sanomat, Aamulehti) also framed the package as costly. Contrary to the other texts, however, they presented the package assertively, and the option of

not doing anything was not discussed. Nearly all of the texts also included some textual elements that contradicted the main framing, but these were given very little space.

Despite the different framings, there also appear two main similarities across the texts. First, all the texts give voice almost exclusively to industry and EU representatives as well as national cabinet ministers. By reflecting the voice of industry and politicians, and not possible critics such as environmental NGOs, alternative views concerning the adequacy of the '20 20 by 2020' measures are notably absent from the texts. Second, following Barroso's (2008a) legitimizing claims that the package will enable the market to deliver the most effective solutions and that becoming greener is a great economic opportunity (example 1 in Table 2), five of the texts clearly reconstruct the discourse of ecological modernization in presenting the package in a positive light (examples 2–6 in Table 3). The four frames are briefly outlined next.

First, the text in The Guardian (UK) is the most positively framed. It presents the EU package as a great economic opportunity that should be seized because it will also be an opportunity for Europe to show that it is the global leader in fighting climate change (examples 1–3 in Table 3). The ecological modernization discourse has in recent decades been strong in the UK, particularly in relation to the New Labour government (for a critical view, see Revell, 2005). As the government has had a strong effect on the UK media (Carvalho, 2005; Golding et al., 2005), the text's focus is unsurprising. Further reflecting the discourse, the package is represented as an effective tool that will enable the market to address the problem of climate change: *"The environment secretary . . . said: 'this plan shows exactly what we are aiming for globally – a comprehensive and effective agreement to tackle climate change, with the carbon market at its heart.'"* The effectiveness of the agreement in tackling climate change is not criticized.

The second framing, evident in The Telegraph, is that the climate package, mainly the emissions trading system (ETS), is a threat to industry competitiveness (examples 4–6 in Table 4). As opposed to The Guardian, this text reflects the typically "Eurosceptic [UK] press [that] tends to focus more on the costs imposed by Europeanization, rather than the benefits" (Jordan, 2004, p. 207; see also Golding et al., 2005). The framing is supported by giving the main voice in the text to British industry representatives. The head of EEF (UK manufacturers' group) and the director-general of CBI (UK business lobby organization) are the only people quoted directly, and their words highlight the power of industry as lobbyists in political decision-making. Contrary to The Guardian, The Telegraph gives a lot of weight to criticism of the package. Overall, the text reflects a strongly capitalist and protectionist ideology; the competitiveness of national industry should not be allowed to suffer at the expense of the environment. We suggest that the contrast between The Guardian and The Telegraph is

Table 3
Examples of ecological modernization discourse.

	Quotations	Source	Outlet
1	"We must not forget the huge economic opportunity represented by Europe's transition into a low-emissions economy . . . There are real opportunities there: the renewables sector alone will bring one million jobs by 2020 . . . Europe can be the first economy for the low-carbon age: we must seize this chance."		Barroso (2008a)
2	"Barroso said the package would unleash a money-spinning bonanza in Europe and urged EU firms to seize the opportunity to become global leaders in innovative green technologies. He predicted hundreds of thousands of new jobs."	Barroso	Guardian
3	"[O]ur package . . . is an opportunity that should create thousands of new businesses and millions of jobs."	Barroso	Irish Independent
4	"To do nothing would be even more expensive according to the EU commission that hopes the proposal creates new jobs and increases growth."	EU commission	Dagens Nyheter
6	"According to Pekkarinen, the increase in the use of renewables . . . will be accomplished, among other things, by taxing energy produced with oil, coal, and natural gas. 'The competitiveness of renewable energy sources will improve when the taxation of their competitors is tightened,' Pekkarinen formulated."	Finnish minister for trade	Aamulehti

Table 4
Examples of different framings in January 2008.

		Source	Outlet
Climate package great opportunity			
1	"The climate change package . . . would give the EU the moral high ground."	Senior officials in Brussels	Guardian
2	"The scheme would save €50bn a year in reduced oil and gas imports."	Barroso	Guardian
3	"This package will show the EU's continuing global leadership on climate change. I want to see it agreed as soon as possible to give business the certainty it needs to plan low-carbon investments with confidence."	UK business secretary	Guardian
Climate package threat to industry competitiveness			
4	"[T]here were fears that raising companies' costs at a time when they face intense competition from lower cost rivals in China or India – which have no carbon limits – would be counterproductive."		Telegraph
5	"The head of Britain's manufacturers' group, EEF, warned that the ETS proposals faced intense scrutiny from industry. He said: 'Our concern has always been that if a badly-designed ETS forced European companies to incur extra costs this would damage our competitiveness and increase emissions by forcing companies to relocate elsewhere . . . We are relieved that the commission has recognized this danger and kept the door open for 100pc free allocation of carbon permits for some sectors."	Head of EEF	Telegraph
6	"CBI director-general was also cautious about the renewables target. 'The UK needs more renewables, but this target is daunting and potentially costly.'"	CBI director-general	Telegraph
Climate package an unfair burden			
7	"As Ireland has the second highest gross domestic product (GDP) in the EU combined with a relatively poor record at meeting emissions targets, it is one of the states hit hardest by the new climate strategy which aims to make the richest countries bear the greatest burden."	Irish prime minister	Irish Times
8	"He also revealed that he had written to . . . Barroso . . . outlining these concerns. In the letter, he pointed out that because of the repatriation of profits from the substantial foreign direct investment sector in Ireland, there was a substantial difference between GDP and gross national income (GNI) in this State."	Irish prime minister	Irish Times
Climate package costly, but less so than inaction			
9	"While the measures would cost all European consumers, Commission President Barroso said: 'The cost of inaction is up to 10 times more than what we are proposing."	Barroso	Irish Independent
10	"Electricity bill can increase by 10–15pc with the EU's proposal on how environmentally dangerous emissions will be reduced. But to do nothing would be even more expensive, according to the EU commission."	European commission	Dagens Nyheter
11	"It [the package] will cost, but according to Barroso there is no other way out."	Barroso	Aftonbladet
Climate package costly (but will be implemented)			
12	"Commission: Electricity will become 10–15pc more expensive in 12 years"	(subheading) Commission	Helsingin Sanomat
13	"It is certain that the price of cleaner energy will be seen in the electricity bill. According to some estimates, the EU environment and energy package would raise the price of electricity by as much as 15 per cent. 'It is absolutely clear that the price of electricity will increase,' Pekkarinen stated"	Finnish minister of trade	Aamulehti

characteristic of the UK context, where the 'winner-takes-all' parliamentary system is reflected in a polarized media. Climate change has been found to be represented differently across the UK media, influenced in part by the country's socio-political context (Carvalho, 2007). This is in contrast to the politically more consensus-based Nordic societies.

Third, the text in The Irish Times frames the package as an unfair burden to Ireland, especially due to how the national emissions reduction targets were decided on by the EU Commission based on gross domestic product (GDP) rather than gross national income (GNI) (examples 7–8 in Table 4). Voice is primarily given to the Irish government that, in the journalists' words, is *"expected to mount a strong lobbying campaign to try to reduce the 20 per cut [sic] in Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions."* Burden sharing has always been a problematic issue in the EU. As Bode (2007, p. 72) states, it is difficult to argue what a fair burden sharing could be because "there is an unlimited number of views on fairness and equity principles." That the issue of fairness is taken up in Ireland is perhaps unsurprising, as it has been argued that "Irish negotiators seldom attempt to export their own environmental policy proposals to Brussels, preferring instead to seek amendments to Commission proposals" (Flynn, 2004, p. 129).

The fourth, and most common, framing is that the EU package is costly, but less so than the alternative of doing nothing (Irish Independent, Dagens Nyheter, Aftonbladet). This is best illustrated by the heading in The Irish Independent that quotes EU Commission President Barroso's words, *"Climate plan to cost €1bn per year but inaction 'will cost more.'"* As the alternative (doing nothing) is presented as more costly, and no other alternatives, such as more stringent reductions, are discussed,

the package is legitimated as effective in the fight against climate change (examples 9–11 in Table 4). In Ireland, EU-related articles are often issue-specific, focusing on themes such as money (McNamara, 2005). Sweden, on the other hand, has actively promoted stricter environmental standards in the EU (Kronsell, 2004), and the positive representations of the climate package in the texts in Dagens Nyheter and Aftonbladet can be seen to reflect the society's generally proactive approach to environmental policy initiatives.

The texts in Helsingin Sanomat and Aamulehti (Finland) also present the package as costly, but as something that is going to materialize. Finland has been seen as a 'good pupil' in the EU because it has promptly adopted most EU directives since becoming a member in 1995 (Sairinen and Lindholm, 2004; Patomäki, 2007). Assertive media representations thus seem unsurprising. Reflecting the importance of energy prices and the ETS to the Finnish society (Kara et al., 2008), the discussion in Helsingin Sanomat and Aamulehti focuses on how the package will increase the price of energy in Finland (examples 12–13 in Table 4). Quotes by the Finnish Minister of Trade as well as the Minister of Environment, who are given voice in Aamulehti, present the package and its targets very positively from a Finnish perspective, describing them as *"demanding but moderate . . . fully possible to meet."*

The texts in January 2008 give little room for alternative interpretations. Environmental NGOs, which the text in The Guardian even claims *"sounded broadly satisfied with the package,"* are given no voice – despite some direct criticism that could be found in their press releases (Greenpeace Sweden, 2008; Kosonen and Myllyvirta, 2008; WWF, 2008). Therein, the critics highlight

that the measures suggested in the package are in line neither with the EU's commitment at the UN climate summit in Bali in 2007 nor with the objective of keeping global warming below 2 °C. Mainly, the 20 per cent emissions reduction target was considered grossly insufficient. These viewpoints are excluded from the media texts studied.

4.2. Approval of the EU package in modified form (December 2008)

In December 2008, when the EU package was approved by European leaders in modified form, the main features in the texts were different from those published in January. Pointing to the importance of understanding the social context – and to how media texts are always prepared in response to, and in anticipation of, other texts – the focus in many of the media texts had shifted to how the package, reached at a time of a deep financial crisis (accelerating through 2008), was a necessary compromise, especially as it was now seen as paving the way to the Copenhagen summit in December 2009. In addition, many texts reflected on the change of administration and the expected shift of environmental policy in the USA as Barack Obama had become president.

The framings are not as clear as in January, because most texts discuss both the positive and negative sides of the modified agreement. What is of main interest here is that while the texts still give voice to European and national policy-makers who by and large hail the agreement as historic (see Table 5), all the texts except the one in Aamulehti (Finland) also give voice to critics, which include environmental NGOs and members of national parliaments who show their disappointment with the large concessions given to industry. Variations in representing the finalized package range from tones of outright disappointment (Dagens Nyheter) and a view that the package is quite "watered down" (Helsingin Sanomat; The Telegraph) to seeing it as a necessary compromise (Guardian, Irish Times, Irish Independent) in order to get any kind of deal together. In fact, Aftonbladet

(Sweden) presents the package as historic precisely for the fact that it was achieved in the middle of the financial crisis that hit Europe in 2008:

> "'<u>The most important result</u> of this meeting <u>is that they managed to reach an agreement in the first place</u>. When the question last came up in October, many countries thought they would not be able to survive both the financial crisis and the climate crisis,' says Aftonbladet's political commentator."

Table 5 demonstrates how giving voice to those who critique the package makes the texts more dialogical. This contributes to presenting the deal as an ambiguous outcome or even a disappointment although it was simultaneously seen as a necessary compromise. Small word choices by journalists highlight the size of the concessions to industry even though EU representatives attempt to play them down by pointing out that concessions were necessary to reach an agreement.

Of the texts studied, only Aftonbladet (Sweden) and Aamulehti (Finland) present the modified package positively, the former giving very little space to critique (see Table 5 for the only criticizing comment in the text) and the latter playing the criticism down. In Aamulehti, the Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen defends the modified EU package: *"According to Vanhanen, the critique by environmental organizations is about spreading false beliefs. Emissions targets were not touched. 'The decision doesn't allow industry to emit a gram more. Giving out free pollution permits only affects state income.'"*

Despite continued appeals for European and global partnership by the EU (examples 1–3 in Table 6), the media texts studied remain focused on national industry competitiveness. Most of the texts in December 2008 reflect the fact that the concessions in the deal were a result of strong lobbying and competing interests between countries (see examples 4–8 in Table 6). Discourse about particular nation-states, their (industries') interests and how they

Table 5
Examples of openness to alternative views in December 2008.

	Support	Critique	Outlet
1	"European leaders last night announced they were leading the world towards a low-carbon future after sealing an ambitious climate change pact by making generous concessions to the big polluters in European heavy industry."	"'Industry has to do next to nothing,' said … a leading Green MEP from Luxembourg … 'If they are honest, these leaders know they haven't agreed something really ambitious.'"	Guardian
2	"Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister, hailed the 'historic' agreement that will force the EU to cut emissions but protects the interests of different countries by giving allowances for important industries like coal and aluminium."	"However environmental groups said it was a failure for letting these highly polluting industries continue and because two thirds of the cuts could be made by buying carbon 'offsets' from abroad."	Telegraph
3	"French president Nicolas Sarkozy, who brokered the compromise agreement that offered important concessions to Italy, Germany and a group of central EU states led by Poland, hailed the political agreement at the EU summit as historic."	"But environmental campaigners claimed the package was so diluted by compromise trade-offs that the CO2 pledges were meaningless. 'This was a moment in time when real leaders would have stepped up and taken the positions that would combat the economic and climate crisis at the same time,'" said a WWF representative.	Irish Times
4	"Mr Cowen [Irish Prime Minister] insisted the deal was good for Ireland and the environment, but he recognized compromise was necessary … Today's agreement is testament again to Europe's ability to keep working, however challenging that may be,' he said."	"Environmentalists criticised the package, saying that heavy industry had been granted too many exemptions. Friends of the Earth accused Taoiseach Brian Cowen of a 'dereliction of duty' for agreeing to a 'watered-down' package."	Irish Independent
5	"Nicolas Sarkozy … and Fredrik Reinfeldt [Swedish Prime Minister] spoke of how Europe had put on the leader's shirt in the climate issue by committing itself to 20 per cent reductions in carbon emissions by 2020."	"'This shows that they have just taken off the leader's shirt in the climate issue,' said … a social democratic member of parliament."	Dagens Nyheter
6	"'This is one of the EU's greatest achievements. It is actually historic to take on the climate challenge so quickly and already now show the way for 27 countries,' said [Swedish Prime Minister] Reinfeldt."	"A Swedish member of parliament … says … that EU leaders have been way too generous to industry."	Aftonbladet
7	"At the same time, the union takes the leading position in global climate protection, the leaders of EU countries stressed in Brussels … 'No other continent has set equally tough commitments for itself,' said Sarkozy after the complicated and tense negotiations."	"The environment package is, however, a compromise created of many mutually conflicting goals. Environmental organizations even talked about the watering down of climate protection targets on Friday."	Helsingin Sanomat

Table 6
Examples of collective appeals and nation talk.

		Source
Collective appeals		
1	"This package represents an opportunity for Europe to show itself at its best … Using the EU's continental scale to best effect."	Barroso, 2008a
2	"And more recently, in the face on the economic and financial crisis, people said 'Europe is going to give up on that commitment.' No Europe has decided to keep its commitment."	Barroso, 2008b
3	"Our message to our global partners is this one: 'yes you can, yes you can also do what we are doing. Yes you can achieve the targets we have committed ourselves to achieve.' This is the message we want to convey to all our partners."	Barroso, 2008b
Nation talk		
4	"The rules for the emissions trading scheme, however, were relaxed under German pressure to exempt most companies in the processing industries."	Guardian
5	"States from central Europe … also won a temporary derogation from buying emission allowances for the power sectors."	Irish Times
6	"Germany and Italy were also granted some exemptions … with fears expressed that steel manufacturers could suffer if they had to pay to emit carbon."	Irish Independent
7	"Poland, Italy, and Germany, among others, have fought: their industries would suffer too much."	Aftonbladet
8	"The compromise is a great victory for a small Finland."	Aamulehti

had managed to impact upon the modified form of the EU package was prevalent. Comments mostly related to how other EU member-states (mainly Italy, Germany, and new EU member-states) were responsible for the concessions. In this way, blame on the modification of the package could be put on other countries.

In brief, with regard to the two sets of texts studied, the social context is visible in media representations in different ways. In January 2008, national considerations were evident and the texts reflected the countries' orientations to EU environmental policy (and they were in line with findings in earlier research on how the media in different countries report on EU and climate issues). In December 2008, however, the transnational context with the escalating global financial crisis and the approaching UN climate negotiations in Copenhagen seemed to gain more relevance over national societal context, and the modified form of the EU package was now typically represented as a necessary compromise paving the way for the Copenhagen summit.

5. Conclusion

In this article, we have aimed to contribute to media studies on climate change through shifting the focus of analysis from how climate change is reconstructed in the media in particular countries to a cross-societal comparison of the ways in which the adequacy of transnational measures of tackling climate change are represented. We have traced some of the key dynamics of contemporary environmental debates. Our critical discourse analysis of media texts from four member-states of the European Union has brought to the fore the relative nature of adequate measures to tackle climate change, which we offer as stimulation for further analysis and discussion.

The dynamics of the media discussion on a transnational environmental initiative – here, the EU energy and climate package – seem to a significant extent be determined by national economic arguments. As several key contributors have pointed out, mainstream media such as daily newspapers continue to recon-struct discourses of sustainability and ecological modernization, which treat environmental problems and solutions within the confines of the capitalist economy and take its focus on material growth for granted (Dryzek, 1997; Carvalho, 2005). Our analysis suggests that media representations of measures to tackle climate change remain determined by considerations of the competitive-ness of nationally significant industries and businesses. This is influenced by the language of capitalism that has become global as the interests of multinational business are promoted over other concerns, and the principles of the cross-border 'free' market are rendered self-evident (Fairclough, 2000; Fairclough and Thomas, 2004). The contemporary global economic system pits nation-states against each other in a race to offer favorable, i.e. lightly regulated, market conditions for the economic activity of multinational corporations (Agmon, 2003; Hodge and Coronado, 2006). Decision-makers in nation-states are reluctant to make allowances to weaken the position of corporations that occupy an important position in their respective national economies. In relation to this, considerations of the (in)actions of key countries in the global economy – the United States, China and India, among others – seem to determine how the range of possible viable solutions are represented; EU member-states do not go along with ambitious measures unless it is guaranteed that other key countries follow suit. Thus, the adequacy of proposed measures to tackle climate change become relative in media representations: measures are not adequate or inadequate per se, but contingent upon the wider social context, national and transnational.

Our focus has been on how journalists choose to represent particular interpretations of climate change and measures to tackle it, and how they construct relationships between different inter-pretations. However, it is equally important to consider what is excluded from the texts, because the politics of climate change remains a contested space (Boykoff, 2008). In our media material on the introduction of the EU package in January 2008, no voice was given to criticism. This was the case although several environmental NGOs had made public their disagreement with the adequacy of the proposed measures. When the EU package was approved in modified form in December 2008, however, most of the media texts studied demonstrated variety. While we found framings of the EU package to be relatively clear-cut in January 2008, they turned out to be more fragmented in December 2008. On the one hand, the deal was now presented as a necessary compromise. The global financial crisis, which became evident in Europe during 2008, glorified the ability of European leaders to reach an agreement in these severe conditions. On the other hand, the modified form of the EU package attracted criticism. Concessions given to industry were discussed at least moderately critically in most texts. The voice of environmental NGOs was now heard, but the absence of science and scientists both in January and December 2008 is noteworthy. Representing other nations, especially Germany, Italy and new EU member-states, as the reason for modifying the package was a prevalent discursive practice. Importantly, the package now also came to be viewed in relation to the forthcoming United Nations climate negotiations. Thus, media representations of the adequacy of measures to tackle climate change became relative with regard to time: ongoing (vis-à-vis the escalating financial crisis) and prospective (vis-à-vis the forthcoming UN negotiations). The adequacy of proposed measures also became relative in terms of the comparisons made, for example, between 'us' (our nation-state) and 'them' (other EU member-states).

It needs to be born in mind that our study is exploratory. We offer ideas for further academic inquiry on policy initiatives related to climate change in the media. The points above on the relative nature of the adequacy of transnational measures to tackle climate change need to be subjected to more longitudinal cross-societal comparative media analysis. Our study indicates that similar argumentation can be used to justify different viewpoints on the adequate measures to tackle climate change. This should be studied further, including in the analysis other critical discourse moments such as the Copenhagen summit in December 2009. A longitudinal study of US media representations would also be helpful, for example, preceding and following the climate bill that was passed in the US Congress in June 2009. Intertextual linkages – or, even more interestingly, the lack thereof – between the US and European media debate also provide an interesting subject of study.

The research reported in this article has centered on media representations of measures to tackle climate change. We have merely scratched the surface. The media has at best an indirect influence on politicians, corporations and the public at large. Irrespective of media representations, the physical environment around us continues to be affected by human behavior. Actions and inactions matter. An ambitious initiative by the EU became modified in the face of a complex and shifting social context, and settling to play *"after you, Claude"* became the solution at this particular moment. However, challenges do not go away and the discussion continues.

Acknowledgements

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ESSAY 3

EFFECTIVE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT-RELATED COMMUNICATION:

AN EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

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Effective internal environment-related communication

An employee perspective

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Abstract

Purpose – The paper aims to understand what kinds of internal messages concerning a company's environment-related corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities would be most effective in engaging employees in implementing an organization's environmental strategy. Furthermore, the paper explores how environmentally active employees could be utilized as internal communicators to spread environmental activity internally.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper reports on findings from interviews ($n = 12$) conducted within a multinational case company that has recently adopted an active approach to communicating its environmental policy internally.

Findings – Employees whose work does not have a clear environmental impact can find corporate environmental policies distant, and would rather see simple, practical messages about what they can do for the environment in their jobs. Furthermore, employees might ignore environmental considerations if they are too busy at work. To encourage environmentally active employees to share their ideas, it might be useful to assign clear environmental contact persons to each department, because employees may be unwilling to approach colleagues directly with environment-related suggestions.

Practical implications – At a time when most companies are striving to be greener, the findings help organizations understand how they can communicate effectively to encourage all employees to consider the environment in their jobs. In addition, the results point to how organizations can better utilize environmentally active employees for internal promotion of environmental strategies.

Originality/value – The paper extends research on CSR communication to consider internal communication within an organization. In addition, it adopts the perspective of employees to bring new insight into their role in CSR-related activities.

Keywords Corporate social responsibility, Communication, Employees, Environmental management

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In the past few decades, companies have become increasingly concerned with corporate social responsibility (CSR). At the same time, researchers and businesses have shifted to viewing CSR from a stakeholder perspective (Jamali, 2008; O'Riordan and Fairbrass, 2008; Pater and van Lierop, 2006; Pedersen, 2006). A central aspect in managing CSR and stakeholder relationships in organizations is communication (Ligeti and Oravecz, 2009),

but studies reveal that communication is often not treated as a central link in the practice of corporate responsibility (Dawkins, 2005; Juholin, 2004; Clark, 2000). A similarly forgotten core link in CSR is one of the key stakeholder groups: employees. Employees are critically important because other stakeholders see them as a credible information source, and they can, therefore, be useful for enhancing a company's reputation (Dawkins, 2005). Nevertheless, employees are not always involved in decision making, and are often just sent one-way messages about decisions made elsewhere in the organization (Ligeti and Oravecz, 2009). In doing so, companies fail to utilize the full potential of employees as active CSR communicators (Kuvaja and Malmelin, 2008; Dawkins, 2005).

At the same time, that the importance of employees as stakeholders has been recognized, the natural environment has become a potential salient stakeholder (Norton, 2007; Driscoll and Starik, 2004) as, e.g. climate change has become increasingly topical. This makes it impossible for organizations to avoid considering the environmental aspects of their operations. Given that employees are a key group in implementing CSR initiatives in practice (Collier and Esteban, 2007), it is important to examine the role of employees not only as communicators, but also as producers and users of environmental knowledge in organizations. To increase our understanding of the role of employees, this paper presents findings from interviews that were conducted within a company. By examining employee viewpoints on internal environmental communication, and how and why they incorporate (or fail to incorporate) organizational environmental strategies into their work, this study benefits the field of CSR and communication research in two main ways: first, it gives more insight into the role of employees in the environmental aspect of CSR and second, it analyzes the role of internal communication in environment-related knowledge generation and use.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Relevant literature on CSR communication is reviewed next to build the theoretical framework for this study. This is followed by a presentation of the interview method and data and a discussion of the main findings. The paper is then concluded together with suggestions for further research.

CSR communication
Recently, research on CSR-related topics has proliferated, and an increasing number of studies have focused on CSR communication. In this section, relevant research is discussed to point out why it is important to extend these studies to employees and internal communication to gain more insight into how all employees can be engaged in an organization's environment-related activities.

CSR communication studies
Studies on CSR communication have mainly focused on external communication. As the internet has gained prominence as a corporate communications tool, many of the studies have focused on how CSR activities are reported on the internet. These studies have, for example, looked at how CSR message themes are communicated in mission and value statements (Sones *et al.*, 2009), how responsibility issues are organized and presented online (Capriotti and Moreno, 2007; Coupland, 2006), the content and characteristics of overall CSR communication (Chaudri and Wang, 2007) or CSR reports (Gill *et al.*, 2008), the influence of national cultures on CSR communication in corporate web sites

(Kampf, 2007), or how the rhetoric of CSR is legitimized (Coupland, 2005). Studies have furthermore looked at CSR reporting in certain countries (Dawkins and Ngunjiri, 2008; Hartman *et al.*, 2007; Nielsen and Thomsen, 2007) and how CSR reports are a part of the discursive struggle over sustainable development (Livesey, 2002). In addition to CSR on the internet and CSR reporting, researchers have recently also looked at the communication of CSR in small- and medium-sized enterprises from the viewpoint of middle managers (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009a, b), overall CSR practices in different countries (Ligeti and Oravecz, 2009; Sotorrío and Sánchez, 2008), how companies can manage critical incidents that relate to CSR (Vaaland and Heide, 2008), and what journalists perceive to be important when companies communicate CSR to the media (Tench *et al.*, 2007).

Stakeholder approach to CSR communication
Increasingly, also CSR communication researchers have pointed to the importance of adopting stakeholder approaches. According to Dawkins (2005), communicating CSR should be about carefully listening to stakeholders, and then utilizing the information received from them as well as operating in a transparent manner so that interested stakeholders can understand how the organization operates. A key step in managing stakeholder communication is first identifying and prioritizing stakeholders to be able to analyze their strategic importance to the firm (O'Riordan and Fairbrass, 2008; Cornelissen, 2004) and the action that should be taken (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). The classification of stakeholders can be accomplished in a number of ways (Werther and Chandler, 2006; Mitchell *et al.*, 1997; Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984). While there are differences in these classifications, employees represent a key stakeholder group in each because they are necessary for an organization to survive (Clarkson, 1995), and their claims on the organization have legitimacy, power, and urgency that require the organization to give priority to them (Mitchell *et al.*, 1997).

In CSR issues, employees are a key stakeholder group because they can enhance the company's reputation. This is because other stakeholders see them as a credible information source about an organization's true CSR activities. Employee communication to external stakeholders is, therefore, important (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009b; Morsing *et al.*, 2008; Dawkins, 2005). This is critical especially in relation to environmental activities because "green" corporate operations are often seen as little more than public relations stunts (Alexander, 2008) or empty talk (Humphreys and Brown, 2008).

How CSR is communicated externally is important also from the employees' viewpoint because organizational members often read these external messages that "forcefully [...] serve internal purposes such as reinforcing corporate identity and building identification among organizational members" (Morsing, 2006, p. 171). Nevertheless, also the importance of effective internal communication has been highlighted. For example, Barrett (2002) emphasizes the importance of face-to-face communication to reach employees instead of relying on indirect channels such as electronic media, and Vaaland and Heide (2008) stress the centrality of channels that encourage bottom-up communication. Furthermore, there are claims that employees should be differentiated based on, e.g. demographics or structural levels rather than be treated as a single public (Welch and Jackson, 2007). This can help in ensuring that the information targeted at any one audience is as relevant and meaningful for them

as possible (Barrett, 2002). These findings point to the importance of conducting CSR communication studies that focus on employees as a key stakeholder group. Studies focusing on employees are insofar rather rare. According to Heiskanen and Mäntylä (2004), one reason for this might be that environmental issues first rose to the center of attention in industrial companies. In these companies, environmental issues were long treated as purely legal and technological questions rather than strategy-related issues.

CSR communication strategies

To develop our understanding of how CSR could be communicated to stakeholders for the communication to be effective, researchers have outlined different CSR communication strategies. Three-related approaches are outlined here to build the theoretical framework used in this study. First, Morsing and Schultz (2006) propose that companies can use three different CSR communication strategies, namely stakeholder information, response, and involvement strategies. These are based on how firms "strategically engage in CSR communication *vis-à-vis* their stakeholders" (p. 325). Of these three strategies, the information model relies on one-way communication and the company merely "'giv(ing) sense' to its audiences" (p. 327), i.e. disseminating company-designed information to others (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991). The response strategy, on the other hand, also gathers information from stakeholders. This two-way communication is, however, asymmetric because while the company tries to influence stakeholder attitudes, the company itself does not change as a result of this communication. In other words, the company engages in "sensemaking", i.e. "develop(ing) a sense of the organization's [...] environment" (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991, p. 434) by reflecting on the information (Weick, 1995) received from stakeholders. The organization then "gives sense" to its audiences accordingly. In contrast to the other two strategies, stakeholder involvement engages stakeholders in a dialogue with the company because their involvement is seen as central in order for the company to understand and adapt to stakeholder concerns and get their positive support. According to Morsing and Schultz (2006), companies should move from stakeholder information and response strategies towards stakeholder involvement strategies. In this strategy, the communication challenge is then to establish and maintain two-way symmetric communication where sensemaking and sensegiving are iterative, progressive processes.

A second approach, by Morsing *et al.* (2008), further highlights the importance of employees as a key stakeholder group. In line with the claims of others discussed above (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009b; Dawkins, 2005), they suggest that CSR communication should be developed with an "inside-out approach" so that the starting point is ensuring employee commitment. Morsing *et al.* (2008, p. 105) then propose that at least in societies where the public is skeptical towards CSR messages from organizations, companies should target their CSR communication at an "exclusive group of experts" that includes organizational members, politicians, and journalists. This should be done through an "expert CSR communication process" focused on facts and figures (Morsing *et al.*, 2008). These "third-party stakeholders" can then communicate the messages to the general public and customers through an "endorsed CSR communication process" (Morsing *et al.*, 2008). According to them, this might help the organization not to be seen as self-complacent in CSR issues. Finally, introducing a third approach, Nielsen and Thomsen (2009b) argue that in designing CSR communication, companies should

consider the context, the company's overall strategy, and the information needs of different stakeholders. In this study, the last point is considered especially critical, as we aim to understand the information needs of employees in issues relating to an organization's environmental activities.

The CSR communication strategy proposals by Morsing and Schultz (2006), Nielsen and Thomsen (2009b), and Morsing *et al.* (2008) are important. So far, however, little research has focused on finding out what employees consider important in the internal "expert communication process" (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009b; Morsing *et al.*, 2008); as Welch and Jackson (2007, p. 187) state, "research into employee preferences for channel and content of internal corporate communication is required to ensure it meets employees' needs." To fill this gap, this paper concentrates on the information needs of employees to increase our understanding of how the environmental aspects of CSR can best be communicated internally to get employees committed to the organization's environmental goals. Focusing on the environmental aspect of CSR is considered important because of the shift of the natural environment to a potentially salient stakeholder (Norton, 2007; Driscoll and Starik, 2004).

Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework used in this study. Specifically, because employees are important CSR communicators to external stakeholders (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009b; Morsing *et al.*, 2008; Dawkins, 2005) (indicated in grey in Figure 1 because this issue is not investigated here), the aim of this study is to help companies understand first, how they can ensure their environmental strategies are meaningful for employees and second, how they could better utilize the environmental potential of employees to spread environmental action internally. These are achieved through examining (1) employee information needs (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009b) in environmental issues, (2) their preferences for message content and the communication channels used (Welch and Jackson, 2007), and (3) whether they feel they get to participate in the sensemaking and sensegiving activities (Morsing and Schultz, 2006) that relate to the organization's environmental strategies (left side in Figure 1). We also examine (4) whether employees integrate environmental issues into
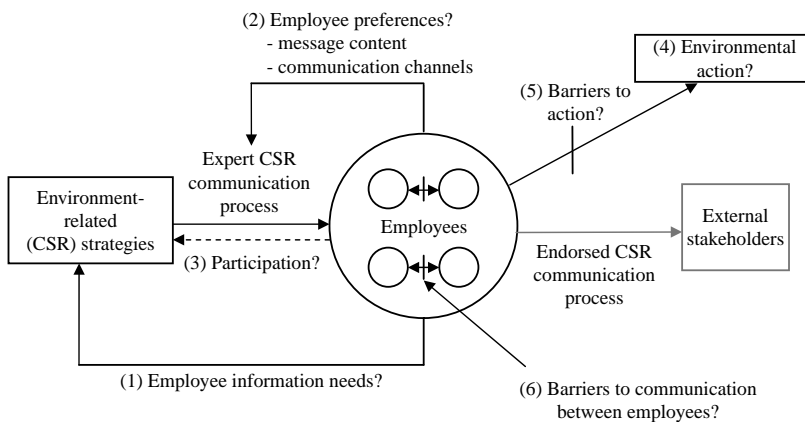
Source: Adapted from Morsing *et al.* (2008)

Figure 1.
Theoretical framework.

their work, as well as potential barriers they feel with regard to (5) engaging in environmental action, and (6) employee-to-employee communication about environmental issues. Examining potential barriers is important to better understand why environmental awareness does not always transfer to action (Lorenzoni *et al.*, 2007; Barr, 2004; Hinchcliffe, 1996). Overall, the study's research questions can then be summarized as follows:

RQ1. Are employees familiar with the organization's environmental strategies?

RQ2. Are they engaged in the making of these strategies (through symmetric two-way communication)?

RQ3. Do they find these strategies relevant in their own work and do they attempt to integrate these environmental aspects into their work?

RQ4. What are employee needs and preferences with regard to the organization's internal, environment-related communication?

RQ5. Do employees see themselves and other employees as potential environmental actors inside the organization and if not, what potential barriers might influence this?

Method and data
KONE case company
To answer the research questions, we approached a global elevator company, KONE, which had, at the time of the study, communicated its internal environmental policy called "environmental excellence must-win-battle" throughout the organization for a little over one year. As seems typical for CSR-related initiatives in Finland (Juholin, 2004), the policy is strongly top-management driven, it is given high priority in the organization, and it is seen as a business-case for environment rather than a matter of ethics or philosophy. In other words, taking the environment into account is seen as reasonable because it in many cases brings cost savings to the firm. The policy aims to incorporate environmental considerations into all organizational activities, and includes goals such as minimizing the company's carbon footprint, developing environmentally friendly products and operations, and implementing environmental management systems (ISO14001) both within KONE and in the supply chain by the end of 2010. In searching for the case company, emphasis was put on finding a firm that has actively tried to communicate environmental issues internally. We believed this would make it possible to evaluate the communication better than focusing on a company that has not had active internal communication efforts. In addition, we believed the employees would be in a better position to discuss the communication in a situation where they have encountered such communication to begin with. While focusing on a single company is, of course, a limitation for the study, it is at the same time an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of environmental policy communication and implementation in one company. This will help us to begin to understand employee viewpoints on environmental communication in multinational organizations.

Interview data
This paper reports on findings from 12 employee interviews that followed a large, company-wide survey with 1,386 responses. The survey examined the employees'

understanding of the internal environmental excellence policy, as well as employees' mindsets concerning environmental issues. The survey results indicated that KONE's environmental operations are important for employees, as 93 percent of the respondents had agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am proud to work for a company that is committed to environmental excellence." However, it also seemed that there was a lot of room for improvement, as 82 percent had stated that they would like to have more information and guidance on the topic. The purpose of the interviews was, therefore, to develop a more complete picture of the kind of environment-related communication employees think would be most effective in engaging all employees in environmental action. The interview themes were developed based on the theoretical framework introduced above as well as the findings from the survey. There were four main themes: first, employee understanding of the company's environmental policy; second, the meaningfulness of that policy in the employees' own jobs; third, employee views on the content and channel of environmental communications; and fourth, employee views on potential barriers to communication and action in environmental issues. The analysis then focused on emerging characteristic features related to all but the first theme. The first theme was omitted from closer analysis because both the survey and the interviews demonstrated that employees knew the policy well.

Interviewee selection was based on two survey items. First, to ensure interviewee motivation to participate, the interviewees were selected from the 110 that had, in the survey, indicated their willingness to be interviewed. Convenience sampling was used to select the interviewees from these 110 to enable as many face-to-face interviews as possible and to ensure a fluent common language between the interviewer and interviewee in the three interviews that were conducted over the phone. Second, the survey analysis showed that employees working in offices answered most negatively to questions regarding the environmental excellence – policy, whereas production workers replied most positively. The reason behind this might be that all KONE plants have recently received ISO14001 certification. As a result, employees working in production face environmental issues on a daily basis. In contrast, the environmental responsibility of office workers is often purely optional; they can choose to recycle, print more ecologically or use virtual meeting tools or not. To better understand the perspective of office workers, we focused our interviews on them. Of the 12 interviewees, 11 were office workers and one a fitter who was, for work-related reasons, present in one of the other interviews. Based on the most fluent common language of the interviewee and the interviewer, the interviews were conducted either in Finnish, English, or Swedish. Table I outlines some background information about the interviewees, including their age, nationality, work location, gender, and the position they had in the organization. Concerning their positions, some had tasks where they could, in their own opinion, see little or relatively little direct environmental impact. Others, on the other hand, said that their work included more direct contact with environmental issues. This is also indicated in Table I.

Findings

The analysis focused on three main issues: the interviewees' ability to link the company's environmental policy to their own jobs, employee views on the content and channel of environmental communications, and employee views on potential barriers to communication and action in environmental issues.

Interviewee	Age	Nationality	Work location	Gender	Position	Direct contact with environmental issues
1	30-39	Finn	Finland	Male	Project manager in key technologies	X
2	30-39	Finn	Finland	Male	Collaboration manager	X
3	40-49	Finn	Finland	Male	Fitter	X
4	30-39	Finn	Finland	Female	Project engineer responsible for shipping products to Asia	X
5	30-39	Spaniard	Finland	Male	Global database manager	
6	30-39	Finn	Finland	Male	Developer of instruction manuals	
7	40-49	Finn	Finland	Male	Supervisor of fitters	
8	30-39	Finn	Belgium	Male	Project manager responsible for process development	
9	40-49	Italian	Finland	Male	Feedback team worker	
10	30-39	Finn	Finland	Male	Project manager responsible for process development	
11	40-49	Briton	The UK	Female	Safety and environment coordinator	X
12	50-59	Sweden	Sweden	Male	Salesman	

Table I.
Interviewee background information

Ability to link environmental policy to one's own work
First, the interviews suggest that the employees' ability to see the connection of a corporate level policy to their work really depends on what their job is. Those working directly with environment-related issues found it easy to see the link between their jobs and the policy. Furthermore, all of the interviewed felt that they can do small, concrete things for the environment, e.g. travelling less or closing the computer's monitor at the end of the day. However, those whose work did not involve any large-scale environmental considerations felt that the small things were quite distant from the corporate-level policy. Therefore, they would have liked to see more concrete messages about what they can do for the environment. This finding ties to general recommendations on strategy communication, i.e. that it might be useful to tailor strategy messages to different groups in the organization (Welch and Jackson, 2007; Barrett, 2002).

Content and channel of environmental communications
Second, concerning the internal communication of the environmental excellence-policy and other environmental issues, several interviewees stated that they had received such information from several sources. This finding confirmed the survey results and indicated that the company has succeeded well in reaching the employees. The employees generally felt that if they had suggestions, they could bring these up and the bottom-up communication would function appropriately. Two of the employees further felt that the two-way communication was symmetric, while others thought it was more asymmetric, i.e. that their suggestions would not necessarily lead to any major changes. The difference was that the two that saw the communication as more symmetric had jobs where their responsibilities included making environment-related suggestions.

Three themes emerged from the data concerning the improvement of environmental communication inside the company, and these were related to the perceived barriers to environmental communication and activity: arranging regular, informal meetings, rethinking the structure and content of the messages, and assigning an environmental contact person to each department to overcome widespread unwillingness to make suggestions directly to peers. The first two themes, arranging regular meetings and rethinking the structure and content of the messages reflect previous findings from strategy communication research. With regard to the first theme, for example Hämäläinen and Maula (2006) and Juholin (2006) suggest that organizing unofficial meetings such as "Friday coffees" can be very effective venues for communicating strategy. Several of the interviewed employees called for these kinds of meetings to talk about environmental or any current issues. For example, one of them stated:

[...] we absolutely have a lack of internal communication [...] We have many internal current issues that only come up at the coffee machine or if you happen to be in the right meeting at the right time. If not, you hear from a colleague later on that you should have done something you had no idea of.

Meetings were seen as a good venue for discussion and an effective way of delivering information – opposed to e-mails that were often just skimmed. People felt, however, that being too busy did not support these kinds of informal meetings. According to one interviewee, "here in this department nobody takes a coffee break with somebody else. We just are always busy with work." Two interviewees also commented that being too busy is the main reason for why environmental issues may often be ignored altogether, or why employees' environmental initiatives are not implemented. One of them said, "environmental issues are not, when you are awfully busy at work, at the top of the agenda," and "(environment) is one of the viewpoints, but then there is always being in a hurry, and this overrides everything else." The other interviewee felt that his suggestion of changing all printers' default settings to two-sided printing had not been implemented due to a lack of time:

[...] it's certainly a very good idea, and they think it's a very good idea and suggestion for development. If they could stop the world for one day, they might maybe do it.

Concerning the second theme, the structure and content of the messages, Hämäläinen and Maula (2006) emphasize the need to express strategy in easy-to-understand format, and Barrett (2002) stresses the need to tailor the information to the audience. Supporting this recommendation, the interviewees wanted very clear, short, and practical messages about what they can do for the environment. For example, one interviewee suggested that:

[...] it's better if you put clear actions instead of 20 pages of PowerPoint presentations. It's better if you have just have one presentation that you just do this, this, and this.

Focusing on simple messages might be better because many interviewees felt that other employees (and in some cases the interviewees themselves) would do things for the environment only if the actions would not require too much effort. This finding is relatively unsurprising considering the individualistic values in Finland, as studies linking environmental attitudes to general value theories have suggested that people with individualistic or competitive social values are generally less willing to take environmental action even if their attitudes towards the environment are seemingly

positive (Stern, 2000). To encourage people to start taking action, many interviewees felt that the messages should stress the cost benefits resulting to the organization, because money was seen as the language employees are more interested in than environmental benefits. As Halme (2004) claims, stressing the facts that motivate people professionally is often a better way to encourage people to internalize environmental thinking than focusing on environmental values *per se*.

The third theme was the need for a departmental contact person for environmental suggestions. The interviewees were very unwilling to approach colleagues directly with environmental suggestions. In thinking about how the potential of environmentally active employees inside companies could be harnessed, how the interviewees talk about themselves and others as environmental actors emerged as the most fruitful theme from the interviews. Previous research has indicated that people are in general well aware of and concerned about environmental issues like climate change, yet unwilling to engage in radical activity because "climate change challenges virtually every aspect of modern lifestyles and the prevailing paradigm to consume freely" (Lorenzoni *et al.*, 2007, p. 454). People also often feel that their individual actions are futile (Hinchliffe, 1996). At the level of organizations, however, individuals would have potential for at least slightly more collective action. Seeing that many micro-level environmental considerations that require little effort, e.g. printing less or using less energy in the office, can bring cost savings to firms, it would make sense for organizations to try to engage employees in these actions.

We, therefore, wanted to find out why environmentally conscious people are unwilling to discuss these issues with their colleagues even though they feel that "people's normal level of awareness is already at the level that they have thought about (environmental) issues." Based on the interviews, there seem to be two main reasons. On the one hand, people do not feel like they are in a position to give others advice, and they think the other person would be insulted by a suggestion. As one interviewee commented:

> [...] in practice, if an independent guy has decided to do something in a certain way, it is at least in our (Finnish) culture a bit impolite or inconsiderate to go and say "hey, don't do like you are doing, but do like I'm telling you to do".

The same unwillingness to start telling others what to do is clearly reflected in another interviewee's statement "well, they think the same way. We are all normal people. They have the same thoughts. I don't need to start giving them advice that [...]." A third interviewee further rationalized, "I guess you think that he must have a reason (for leaving the tap open for 15 minutes for seemingly no reason)." And, as a fourth interviewee summarized nearly everyone's feeling, it would only be possible to make suggestions to someone "if you know he doesn't easily take things personally." These comments support Halme's (2004) claim that in comparison to most other change initiatives in organizations, people have stronger value positions in environmental issues, and these positions might lead to strong feelings. The supposed feelings of others might make it difficult for employees to openly discuss environmental issues with their colleagues, and therefore, work as a barrier to environment-related communication between employees. On the other hand, people seem unwilling to make suggestions for fear of being seen as "green." When the interviewees were asked how they thought others would see them as environmental actors, the interviewees stressed normality,

reflecting previous findings that green living is seen as undesirable, e.g. "weird" or "hippy" (Lorenzoni *et al.*, 2007). This is demonstrated in the following two interviewee statements:

> They see me as normal I think. Not as over-enthusiastic. You see immediately if someone is over-enthusiastic in environmental issues [. . .] If you are normal, there is nothing bad in being a bit enthusiastic, in a normal way.

> Well, I do not think colleagues associate me to a green hippy.

The strong willingness to conform to social norms and expectations (being "normal") combined with the unwillingness to approach anyone directly seem to work as the greatest barriers to engaging environmentally active employees as communicators in greening the workplace from the inside, at least in the Finnish context. For this reason, the interviewees strongly felt that a separate environmental contact person should be assigned to each department. These contact persons could then send general messages to everyone about what should be done. What is important in assigning environmental responsibility is not simply adding these responsibilities on top of the employee's current responsibilities, but rather allocating necessary resources, time, and money, to actually translate the environmental culture into practice (Halme, 1997). Halme (1997) claims that if the contact person's previous tasks are not reduced, there is a risk of reduced enthusiasm and effort that might lead to nothing really happening (Wolters *et al.*, 1995).

Conclusions and discussion

As industrial companies face increasingly stringent environmental regulation with the advent of large, supranational initiatives such as the European Union climate package, it is becoming more crucial for corporations to strive for greener operations. In addition, in times of fierce global competition, it is important for companies wanting to use environmental responsibility as a competitive advantage to engage all employees in environmental work. This study has aimed to gain more insight into the role of employees as participants in an organization's environmental activities. Specifically, it set out to understand how well employees know their organization's environmental policy/strategy, if they get to participate in the policy-making process, and whether they see the policy as meaningful in their jobs. The study also aimed to understand employee viewpoints on how environmental messages should be communicated for them to be effective, as well as potential barriers that employees feel might hinder internal environmental activity. Researching employee viewpoints is important, because as Heiskanen and Mäntylä (2004) claim, real practices in organizations often fall short of the recommendations made in literature concerning the involvement of employees in environmental initiatives.

In the case organization, it seems that communication about the organization's environmental policy has reached employees well through what the majority of the interviewees saw as asymmetric two-way communication. The company thus seems to use a stakeholder response strategy (Morsing and Schultz, 2006) in communicating environmental issues, as is typical in Finnish organizations (Juholin, 2004). In other words, the voice of employees is heard and the employees feel that their suggestions are taken seriously. They do not, however, with the exception of people whose jobs include making improvement suggestions, to a great extent get to participate in the sensemaking and sensegiving processes. It is, of course, important to keep in mind that

all employees might not even be motivated to participate in stakeholder dialogue concerning environmental issues, especially if they do not feel these issues are important for them personally. Regardless of which communication strategy a company uses, however, the reality is that many environmental actions are related to cost savings. Therefore, companies would benefit from motivating their employees to consider the environment in their work.

To engage all employees in environmental work, the findings of this study point to an important overall barrier to environmental action as well as three potentially important considerations with regard to internal communication. The former, an overall barrier, is that environmental issues do not seem to be a priority to many employees. Rather, these issues are easily pushed aside when people are "too busy" or when "time is money." The latter, important considerations in internal communication, include three issues. First, in line with previous studies (Welch and Jackson, 2007; Barrett, 2002), the results stress the importance of tailoring environmental messages to different employee groups based on what is relevant to them in their jobs. Specifically, it would be important for production-driven organizations to clearly communicate what different types of workers can do for the environment. Second, environmental messages might best encourage employees to take environmental action if the messages are clear, practical, and easy to implement. The interviews indicate that employees might be positively oriented towards environmental action only if it does not require too much effort from them. Emphasizing cost-savings and optimization might best motivate employees to consider the environmental impact of their work at least in an organization like KONE, where the corporate culture is engineering-driven. Concerning this finding, however, it would be important to study companies based in other countries and different types of organizations to understand what kinds of motivational factors best work in other contexts. Finally, to utilize environmentally active employees as internal communicators to promote environmental activity throughout the organization, it might be useful to assign contact persons to each department who everyone could then approach with environmental initiatives. This might help in overcoming the problem that people at least in the Finnish, individualistic culture feel that there is a communication barrier to approaching colleagues directly with suggestions for two reasons: first, unwillingness to interfere with others' action for fear of insulting them, and second, strong willingness to be seen as "normal," i.e. to not stand out as a "green hippy." This theme emerged very strongly from the data, pointing to the fact that it might be an important consideration also more widely. The study also points to the importance of encouraging managers to collect suggestions and discuss environmental issues in formal and informal meetings to provide a venue for employees to bring up environmental suggestions without the need to tell them directly to their colleagues.

This study has explored environment-related communication in one multinational company that has actively strived to become green throughout the organization, and that has during the period of over one year purposefully approached internal environment-related communication from a strategic communication perspective. To gain more insight into employee views on effective environmental communication and how employees see organizations' environmental strategies, it would be important to conduct similar studies in other companies that function in different fields, that have different levels of environmental activity, and that might not have integrated CSR issues

into strategic communication planning. As a recent study by Nielsen and Thomsen (2009a) points out, it can well be that CSR issues are not always seen as sources for competitive advantage, and they might be isolated from strategic communication planning. This might influence employee views, and studying different types of organizations would provide an opportunity to investigate whether the findings discussed above would also be relevant in other types of organizations. In addition, it would be very interesting to conduct cross-cultural interview studies that focus on understanding why people from certain countries feel and act in a certain way. In particular, it would be interesting to contrast Western nations with developing nations such as China or India. Focusing on these areas would also address the lack of research regarding environmental responsibility in poorer countries (Egri and Ralston, 2008). For multinational companies, this kind of cross-cultural understanding would be important in designing global and local communication strategies.

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Further reading

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A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE WWF FINLAND GREEN OFFICE –PROGRAM:

GREENING IN THE OFFICE OR ON PAPER?

Christa Uusi-Rauva

Unpublished manuscript

A critical view of the WWF Finland Green Office -program:
greening in the office or on paper?

Abstract

Manuscript type: Empirical

Research question / issue: This study explores the implementation of an office greening initiative, the WWF Green Office –program, in Finnish firms. It focuses on communication-related and other challenges the companies have faced in this process, and provides recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness and credibility of environment-related corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.

Research findings / insights: The findings from qualitative interviews (N=13) point to three main challenges in implementing the program: selecting a communication channel that reaches employees, communicating persuasively in a positive tone, and motivating people to change their habits. The findings further suggest that the program's easiness might also be its greatest weakness; it greens offices with easy actions but fails to encourage companies to set truly ambitious greening targets and to re-think their working practices. It is suggested that these kinds of programs should be developed so that they would provide a more standardized way to encourage environmental actions.

Theoretical / academic implications: The study addresses some of CSR's main problems, the lack of verifiability and transparency, and makes suggestions for how these could be improved to move CSR towards corporate governance (CG) that involves more measureable codes.

Practitioner / policy implications: This paper proposes a framework to help organizations understand how they can effectively engage their employees in activities that relate to environmental responsibility. This is critical, because employees are a key stakeholder group in putting environmental strategies into practice.

Keywords: Corporate Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility, Communication, Employees, Environment

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, increasing stakeholder demands have made it critical for companies to appear as responsible entities that consider the social and societal impact of their operations in addition to adhering to laws and regulations. This has given rise to both corporate governance (CG), which focuses on protecting the rights of shareholders and other stakeholders through e.g. accurate disclosure of information (OECD, 2004), and corporate social responsibility (CSR), which increasingly emphasizes the need for companies to operate in a way that considers the interests of all their stakeholders (see e.g. Jamali, 2008; O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2008).

The environment is one of CSR's main focus areas. As climate change and the need for radical measures to fight it have entered the political agenda and public consciousness around the world, companies face the need to minimize the environmental impact of their operations to meet both increasingly stringent environmental legislation and higher stakeholder expectations. With regard to legislation in the European Union (EU), for example, the Union's energy and climate package, introduced in 2008, aims at 20 per cent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in the Union by year 2020. This has implications for companies that will be a part of an emissions trading scheme (ETS) where they will need to buy and/or sell pollution permits.

A central problem in all (environment-related) CSR-activities is the fact that data concerning these activities is often difficult to verify (Birth, Illia, Lurati & Zamparini, 2008). Also, as Juholin (2004) argues, what one company considers as responsible might be considered as irresponsible by others. This leads to problems with transparency, a key element in CSR (Carroll, 1999), and the fact that the public often views CSR-initiatives with skepticism (Alexander, 2008; Dhir, 2006). To address these problems, the present study is motivated by two particular issues. The first issue is the importance of developing more measurable practices for at least some CSR areas or initiatives to increase the transparency and comparability of CSR activities between organizations. Having more measureable practices would move CSR towards corporate governance (CG), which includes relatively specific governance codes that companies should adhere to, and might help in closing the "gap between rhetoric and reality" (Dhir, 2006:252) that remains between what is communicated by companies about their CSR activities and what the companies are really doing. The second issue is focusing specifically on the environmental aspect of CSR, because 'green' operations especially are often perceived as merely public relation stunts (Alexander, 2008) or empty talk (Humphreys & Brown, 2008) rather than real efforts to reduce companies' environmental impacts. This focus area

is further considered meaningful because of the natural environment's shift from a silent to a potentially salient stakeholder (Driscoll & Starik, 2004; Norton, 2007).

Based on the two premises discussed above, this study examines the implementation and communication of WWF Finland's Green Office -program in 13 Finnish companies. The program aims to provide firms with easy ways to reduce offices' carbon footprints through activities such as reducing the use of paper and electricity. The program also aims at increasing overall environmental awareness and bringing cost savings to organizations through the reduced use of resources (WWF, 2009). These kinds of programs that aim to activate employees in CSR-related activities seem welcome, because several studies demonstrate that even though people are aware of environmental issues like climate change and the need to act, this awareness has not resulted in actual behavior change (e.g. Barr, 2004; Hinchcliffe, 1996; Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole & Whitmarsh, 2007). To increase the effectiveness of the Green Office -program in engaging office workers in greening action as successfully as possible, it is important to critically evaluate both the content and success of the program in different organizations. This critical examination also provides an opportunity to explore how the program could be developed to increase its verifiability and transparency. While this paper only focuses on one small greening initiative, it is hoped that the findings of this study provide a platform for further discussion on developing more CG-type codes for environment-related CSR issues.

The rest of the paper is divided as follows: the next section will first, review relevant literature on corporate governance (CG) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) with a special focus on the interlinkages between the two to provide the background for this study and second, present the research questions that guided the research. This is followed by a discussion of the interview method and data as well as a presentation of the study's main findings. The paper is then concluded

with a discussion based on the analysis and concluding remarks with suggestions for further research. In this final section, a framework for effective internal, environment-related communication is also proposed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility

Recently, researchers have suggested that the areas of CG and CSR are increasingly interrelated. For example Elkington (2006) claims that it is ultimately the responsibility of corporate boards to make decisions concerning how their firms will meet the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental concerns (Elkington, 1997). As Harrison (2009) also argues, the need of corporate boards to address environmental concerns has increased, because sociopolitical conditions have changed so that corporations can no longer consider the environment only at the operational level in the form of e.g. recycling and waste management. Rather, he argues, companies also need to consider economic and financial issues such as environmental risk exposure and the effect of future emission limits, which bring environmental issues high on corporate agendas. This necessarily leads to a close relationship between CG and CSR, because "a growing proportion of corporate sustainability issues revolve not just around process and product design but also around the design of corporations" (Elkington, 2006:524).

Jamali, Safieddine and Rabbath (2008) provide a review of studies that propose the interrelatedness of CG and CSR. They claim that the two concepts should be seen as increasingly intertwined for at least three reasons. First, both the broad, holistic approach to CG and the stakeholder approach to CSR emphasize the importance of firms being responsible towards all their stakeholders (Jamali et al., 2008; see also Dunlop, 1998; Kendall, 1999). Second, both CG and CSR hold central the

notions of accountability, transparency, and honesty (Jamali et al., 2008; see also Page, 2005; Van den Berghe & Louche, 2005). With regard to this aspect, both CG and CSR require companies to disclose information on their operations. The former stresses the importance of disclosing accurate information (OECD, 2004), whereas the latter can be seen as "contribut[ing] to a corporation's corporate social disclosure" (Birth et al., 2008:184). As such, CSR is also linked to risk management (Juholin, 2004), which is one of the aspects in CG (OECD, 2004). And third, both CG and CSR aim at ensuring firm performance and operations in the long run through making sure the interests of different stakeholder groups are met (Jamali et al., 2008; see also e.g. Aguilera, Rupp & Ganapathi, 2007; Hancock, 2005; Ho, 2005).

Communication Focus

As was discussed above, the public often views CSR activities, especially 'green' operations, with skepticism (Alexander, 2008; Humphreys & Brown, 2008). This has a direct implication for CSR communication, namely that companies face the dilemma of how to communicate about their 'good deeds' without raising further public cynicism (see e.g. Schlegelmich & Pollach, 2005; Tixier, 2003). At the same time, as CSR is considered an increasingly important part of companies' operations, companies cannot easily choose not to communicate, because they need the support of their stakeholders, which in turn requires effective communication (see e.g. Harrison, 2009; Ligeti & Oravecz, 2009). As for example Harrison (2009:284) emphasizes, "consistent, understandable and open communication and dialogue will serve the strategic purposes of maintaining – and creating – supportive stakeholders and moving towards new collaborations that will be in play because of climate change and sustainability." The necessity of firms to engage in CSR communication makes it meaningful to investigate what and how firms should communicate about their CSR activities to different stakeholder groups.

A key stakeholder group in CSR activities is employees, because they are critical in putting CSR initiatives into practice (Collier & Esteban, 2007). In addition to environmentally committed employees being a potential way to spread environmental knowledge inside the company, especially if such persons work as contact persons for other employees (Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka, 2010), employees have an important role as (CSR) communicators to external audiences (see e.g. Cheney & Christensen, 2001; Morsing, 2006; Schlegelmich & Pollach, 2005), and they are generally seen as one of the most credible sources concerning an organization's true CSR activities (Dawkins, 2004). Effectively engaging employees in CSR can thus help spread CSR messages inside organizations as well as help alleviate the problem of public cynicism by aligning the activities and communication about them. One of the central ways to achieve employee commitment to CSR goals is internal communication; as Argenti and Forman (2002) claim, internal communication directly influences employee motivation to participate in activities employers would like them to participate in by affecting employees' attitudes towards their employers and workplaces. Given the importance of internal communication in achieving employee commitment, the main focus of this study is on how the Green Office -program has been communicated to employees. As such, this study also addresses the recent call for more studies looking at the relationship between CSR communications and activities (Lattemann, Fetscherin, Alon, Li & Schneider, 2009).

Previous research on effective CSR communication strategies has further highlighted the critical role of employees. For example Morsing, Schultz, and Nielsen (2008) suggest that ensuring employee commitment should be the starting point for all CSR communication. This raises the question of what and how employees would like to see communicated to them to engage them in CSR issues. So far, little research has explored these employee preferences, although the need for studies looking at employee preferences for channel and content of internal corporate

communication has been recognized (Welsch & Jackson, 2007). An exception is a study by Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010:303) that focuses on increasing our understanding of "the information needs of employees… [and] how the environmental aspects of CSR can best be communicated internally to get employees committed to the organization's environmental goals." Understanding employee viewpoints is desirable, because as Nielsen and Thomsen (2009) argue, it is important to analyze the information needs of different stakeholder groups to be able to tailor CSR communication to different audiences. In addition to understanding the information needs of stakeholders, Morsing and Schultz (2006) propose that companies should aim to use stakeholder involvement strategies that feature two-way symmetric communication aimed at engaging stakeholders in a dialogue with the company. According to them, this helps in gaining stakeholder support for the company's activities. Similarly to Morsing and Schultz (ibid.), Stohl and Cheney (2001:358) claim that moving towards more participatory communication can help to increase employee commitment to the implementation of decisions in practice. This participatory communication, although not problem-free, promotes dialogue through different communication networks rather than more traditional hierarchical structures.

In their study that thus explores employee viewpoints on effective internal, environment-related CSR communication, Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) integrate some of the above-discussed studies and propose a theoretical framework that focuses on uncovering employee information needs (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2009), employee preferences for message content and the communication channels used (Welch & Jackson, 2007), and whether employees feel that the communication is interactive (Morsing & Schultz, 2007), allowing them to participate in the environmental strategy process. Based on their findings from one case organization, Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) then suggest that environment-related messages to office workers should be clear, practical and easy to implement, and possibly focus on potential cost savings for the organization. In addition, they

propose that to overcome employee unwillingness to discuss environmental issues with their colleagues, which works as a barrier to communication between employees, organizations should assign environmental contact persons to each department who people could approach with improvement ideas.

The Green Office -program and its implementation in several companies provides a fruitful opportunity to explore whether these kinds of greening programs can motivate employees to move from environmental awareness to action, because it seems to do exactly what the findings of Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) suggest should be done: it strives for simple, easy-to-implement environmental improvements, and provides a contact person or several such persons for employees to contact, as each participating company should establish a team that coordinates the program in the company. To examine the effectiveness of the Green Office –program in getting employees to take environmental action, the interview themes and the analysis in this paper are based on the following three main research questions that were developed based on the literature reviewed above:

> *RQ1*: What kinds of targets have the organizations set for themselves in the
>
> Green Office –program?

The answer to this research question provides a starting point for analyzing whether communication has resulted in meeting the set targets, in other words desired action.

> *RQ2*: How have the organizations communicated about the Green Office –
>
> program to their employees?

This research question involves an investigation of message content and formulation as well as the channels used in communicating with employees. The answer to this question enables analyzing what kinds of messages and which channels have seemed to be effective or ineffective in reaching employees and encouraging them to act.

> *RQ3*: Has communication about the Green Office -program resulted in the
>
> desired result, i.e. employees taking the kind of environmental action
>
> promoted in the program in these organizations?

Because the Green Office –program is, for most companies, only one part of their environmental activities and their communication also encompasses other environmental issues, it should be noted that this study cannot, in all cases, clearly distinguish between environmental CSR and Green Office –communications.

INTERVIEW METHOD AND DATA

In September 2009, offices from approximately 140 Finnish organizations had the Green Office (GO) designation (WWF, 2009). Of these, GO-coordinators from 28 companies located in the capital region of Finland were approached to ask for their willingness to be interviewed. These 28 companies were selected because they had contact person information available on their Internet pages. After 10 interviews with either the GO-coordinators or with people that the coordinators had indicated as best informants on GO-related communications, there seemed to be little new information in the responses. Therefore, as it seemed the saturation point had been reached (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003), a decision was made to limit the interviews to the 13 that had already been scheduled at that time.

Table 1 below outlines, in the order the interviews were held, some basic information about the 14 interviewees (two interviewees in one company) and the interviews, including the positions that the interviewees held in their respective organizations, their gender, and the length of the interview. As can be seen from the table, their positions vary greatly. Five interviewees had communications-focused jobs, three positions related to general office administration, and the remaining six varying tasks related to environmental issues, HR, planning, consulting and operations / systems. Eight interviewees had clear managerial roles. All but one of the interviewees had willingly assumed the responsibility of acting as a GO-contact person or coordinator.

Table 1. Interviewee background information.

Inter-viewee #	Position in organization	Gender	Interview length
1	PR manager	Female	50:57
2	Communications manager	Female	37:22
3	1. Tendering consultant, 2. Communications manager (2 interviewees)	Male	38:35
4	Member of corporate responsibility team (part of communications)	Female	58:06
5	Communications manager	Female	40:50
6	Environmental planner	Female	23:20
7	Operations manager	Female	01:01:57
8	Special planner	Male	37:27
9	Environment specialist	Female	56:30
10	HR manager	Female	46:45
11	Systems specialist and labor protection manager	Male	51:12
12	Office administrator	Female	47:05
13	Director of administrative affairs	Female	59:10

The companies involved in the study represent different fields. Table 2 below outlines, in alphabetical order, some basic characteristics of the companies, including the line of business, number of employees in the office that has the GO-designation, and the year when the designation was received. The information in Table 1 and Table 2 is presented separately to protect the privacy of the interviewees.

Table 2. Background information on companies included in the study.

Company #	Line of business	Employees in GO*	Year GO received
Castrén & Snellman	Law firm	150	2009
Gummerus	Publishing	33	2009
Hansel	Government procurement	55	2009
Helsingin energia	Energy production and sales	750**	2002***
Hewlett-Packard	Information Technology	780	2006
KonicaMinolta	Imaging	55	2009
KY	University student union	30	2009
McDonald's Oy	Fast food	40	2008
Neste Oil	Oil refining and marketing	750	2009
Opetusvirasto	City education department	230	2008
Ruukki	Supplier of metal-based components and systems	300	2009
TKK Dipoli	Conference center	130	2004
Veikkaus	Services – gaming	330	2007

*	Number of employees in the office that has the GO-designation
**	In a total of seven offices
***	Year when first office received GO-designation

The semi-structured interviews (Eskola & Suoranta, 2003) focused on three main themes based on the research questions: 1. the targets that the organizations have set for themselves in the Green Office –program 2. how the Green Office –program and its goals have been communicated in the organizations, and 3. how employees have reacted to the program, and whether it has resulted in appropriate action to reach the set goals. The interviews were rather open to give the interviewees an opportunity to reflect on the issues that had been important in their specific organizations.

The data from the interviews was analyzed in three main phases. First, all the interview recordings were transcribed and read several times. Second, a list of all the main issues arising from the interviews was compiled with several main categories. Observations from individual interviews were then recorded under these categories. Reading and re-reading this list revealed three major issues that the interviewees stressed: communication-related issues, challenges in motivating employees to change their habits, and overall challenges that mainly related to the need for more support in implementing the program and measurability (e.g. how to measure energy reductions if the company only rents one floor of an office building owned by someone else, and the use of electricity is not measured per floor but per the entire building). The third phase included constructing mind maps of all the issues to help in categorizing them into these major groups of challenges.

The findings section below starts with a look at the targets the organizations have set for themselves in the Green Office –program. This is followed by a discussion of the challenges related to communication and motivating people to change their habits. Finally, the findings section is ended by a discussion of the fact that while the informants were overall satisfied with the program, they felt that more support would have been welcome. Challenges with measurability fall outside the scope of this study, and are therefore not looked at in detail in this paper. As far as possible, the text

below provides citations from the interviews to enable readers to evaluate the conclusions drawn in this study. As the interviews were conducted in Finnish, these citations have been translated into English by the author. Because some companies did not want their company names to be shown other than in Table 2 above, the citations are only accompanied by numbers, assigned according to the order in which people were interviewed (see Table 1).

FINDINGS

Green Office -Targets in the Investigated Companies

The qualifications for a Green Office are relatively generic (see Table 3) and include no set percentage targets organizations have to reach. Rather, when an organization starts the process that aims at receiving the Green Office (GO)–designation, it has to review its office operations to find the areas that it would like to improve in to reduce its overall carbon footprint. Thereafter, the company sets its own goals for the reductions that will be aimed at. The generic nature of the GO-program gives organizations a fair deal of leeway in designing greening programs that best suit their business operations and needs. The lack of pre-assigned targets also enables each organization to evaluate the level of greening ambition they want to aim at.

Table 3. Green Office –criteria.

Green Office -criteria
A Green Office:
- selects a Green Office -coordinator and team   - plans a practical environmental program   - improves energy efficiency continuously in order to mitigate CO_2-emissions   - reduces waste, and recycles and sorts out waste according to local requirements   - pays attention to green issues in procurements   - informs and educates its personnel about Green Office practices   - aspires towards continuous improvement in environmental matters   - monitors the fulfillment of its objectives using the indicators chosen and   - reports to WWF annually

Source: WWF (2009)

In the 13 companies examined in this paper, the most common reduction areas are the use of paper and electricity. In addition, many companies aim to improve their recycling to e.g. minimize the amount of mixed waste, and several have targets related to travelling. In the companies, there are great differences in the level of aspiration concerning the reduction targets. With regard to paper, for example, only six of the 13 companies had concrete percentage reduction targets that they were aiming at, others only aimed at reducing the use of paper. In the six companies that had concrete reduction targets, the targets varied between -5% and -20 % (or, in one organization, using 100,000 sheets less paper during a year). In electricity, on the other hand, only two companies had a percentage reduction target, one aiming at 5% reductions, the other at 10%. Similar differences could be found in travel issues. For example, one company had a 149 g CO_2 / km emissions limit for company cars, another 190 g CO_2 / km, whereas many companies just aimed to "reduce unnecessary travel".

From the perspective of CSR initiatives needing more transparency and verifiability to increase their credibility in the eyes of different stakeholders, the non-specific nature of the Green Office – program is somewhat problematic because companies set such different greening targets for themselves. In these 13 companies, for example, the Green Office –logo and information about the program is widely used on corporate websites as a partial 'sign' of the companies' environmental responsibility. Given the wide differences in what Green Office in reality means in these companies, it is arguably difficult for a stakeholder to evaluate what the program actually tells about an organization's environmental responsibility activities.

Communication Challenges in Implementing Green Office

Selecting a Communication Channel that Reaches Employees. Concerning communication, the first common challenge has been selecting a communication channel that reaches employees. Most of the companies rely on the corporate intranet to inform their employees

about Green Office –related issues. Several of the interviewees commented that they assume, for varied reasons, that other employees follow these messages. As was stated by three informants:

"We do assume that people read them from here [intranet]" (#13)

"This is the channel, we've told people that everything that used to be sent by e-mail is now put here [...] We believe and hope that they are also read [...] We of course assume that people also read them." (#3)

"Our intranet is very active, the news change every day. There's always something new, and there might be something new during the day [...] The readership is quite high because it has automatically been put as the opening page for everyone." (#4)

Despite these positive assumptions, none of the interviewees actually knew whether employees read messages from the intranet. This would be critical information in assessing the effectiveness of the intranet as a communication channel, because previous studies have suggested that electronic communication is not unproblematic. For example Lehmuskallio (2008) found that even though intranet editors often believe that lower-rank employees are not very interested in corporate-level issues that are published on intranets, companies seldom survey employees to find out what information they would like to see there. In addition, Lehmuskallio (ibid:107) reminds that even though many companies use intranets to introduce and implement corporate strategies, simply "offering employees large amount of information does not make intranet communication strategic." Further, in their study that focused on employee viewpoints on effective internal communication, Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) found that employees tend to view informal and formal meetings as more effective than intranets or e-mails in communicating about environmental issues. Also Barrett

(2002) claims that strategy-related messages should be communicated face-to-face rather than impersonally. These findings point to the importance of critically evaluating the effectiveness of intranets as a communication channel in firms – especially, if the intranet is used as the main channel as is done in many of the interviewed companies in Green Office –related issues.

Similarly, even some of the interviewees in this study found face-to-face communication to be a lot more effective in reaching employees and getting them to take action. For example interviewee #6 stated, *"if you say something, people maybe remember it [...] Like one guy told that even though he had sent the message by e-mail three times, still people would say 'oh, what?'. It's really difficult [...] Especially if you have the wrong kind of heading, then that's it."* Another interviewee further stressed the importance of engaging team leaders or department contact persons in communicating with the employees working in their respective teams or departments. As he said, *"for example this waste business [recycling correctly], it does not get across unless people are trained in the department. If we organize a training here, we'll get 30 interested people. And there'll be the same women and some guys, and when you ask how many are managers, you get that none."* (#11)

With regard to encouraging managers to use e.g. face-to-face communication or post Green Office – related tips in their departments, the interviews revealed a potential problem that while this is generally encouraged, there are no common practices. Rather, as is done in one of the companies, *"some [team leaders] might do so [...] but it's a bit like people do whatever they do."* (#6) Another interviewee also commented that *"I know some teams have been more active than others. In some teams they are more active, and they might not need to discuss these issues in their meetings, but those who are not active, it would be good to bring these things up. But I haven't asked them in more detail [if they really do this]."* (#9) Overall, it seemed that encouraging team leaders and

managers to discuss these issues with their employees could be done more systematically as opposed to the random manner in which it was now often done.

Communicating Persuasively in a Positive Tone. The second communication challenge, communicating persuasively in a positive tone, came out as a difficult issue. In many companies, the interviewees felt it was like walking on a very thin line: e.g. interviewee #12 said, *"you have to work hard, because it's about people's habits…but the challenge is how to do this without annoying them."*

Several interviewees stressed that the communications should be positive and not in any way blaming. For example, cleaners in one company had at first used messages like 'this wasn't quite right' when people had recycled incorrectly. The interviewee from this company said that some employees had reacted negatively, saying things like *"are you now going to spy on everything here? [...] Isn't it enough that you do your own job well, do you now need to learn by heart what waste goes into which waste basket?" (#4)* Communicating about Green Office in a positive way was also considered the major future communication-related challenge, as the following quotation suggests:

> *"To always find these new things and in communications the challenge [...] of keeping this environmental business fun and positive. That the people who always make the same mistake or don't do something, I can't go and say that 'hey come on now, really'. I have to invent all sorts of…[pause] really bend myself. That I come up with how to say it nicely and positively so that the issue doesn't become negative, that's the communication challenge [...] Because it's not [nice and positive] if you are always told off, and you start thinking 'do I dare even go there, 'cause I'll just be told off again'."(#12)*

Motivating People to Change Their Habits. The biggest challenge in the interviewed companies has been motivating people to really change their habits even though the environmental actions promoted in the program are very simple and easy for the employees. Quoting interviewee

#12, *"this is concrete, this makes sense, this isn't as science fiction as I think these certificates [ISO14001] are that go a bit too far…A good thing and not difficult things, certainly not difficult things. If it was difficult, how challenging would it <u>then</u> be?"* (underlining added to show speaker emphasis)

This challenge included four related aspects. For one, interviewees from production-driven organizations shared two difficulties: on the one hand, motivating people to engage in small activities like printing less when production facilities at the same time pollute significantly more, and, on the other hand, not making Green Office sound more important than it really is from the point of view of reducing environmental impact. As interviewee #9 put it,

> *"It could be, if we started introducing [Green Office] in production facilities, that it is quite amusing, if a production employee looks at the [amount of energy use in production] all day and sees what the energy consumption is there, that we'd then start nagging that he should print double-sided on one page. We don't even want this […]; rather, we want to talk about the right things in the right places. […]*
>
> *There's the danger that these kinds of office-related environmental issues become more important to those in the office than they really are […] The reality is that our greatest environmental considerations are in production."*

As a result of this difficulty in maintaining the right balance between engaging all employees in environmental efforts but not assigning too much importance to the activities that relate to Green Office, one communication goal in these organizations has been helping all employees realize that even small actions are important even though the greatest environmental impacts come from elsewhere.

The second issue in motivating people to change their habits has involved the necessity of not asking too much from the employees to keep them motivated. The interviewees largely felt that it you started becoming 'too green' or demanded things that were not strictly related to business, employees would lose all interest in the program. For example, when asked about the challenges in

the future, interviewee #10 stated that *"it must be that the issue doesn't turn against itself, that we aren't especially green at the expense of other issues. For example that working would become more difficult here."* Interviewee #5's comment was similar: *"these Green Office things are such that you need to maintain a very positive feeling. […] if you cross the line and start demanding too many things that relate to personal life, then it turns against itself."* The program's simplicity and small actions were considered as an aid in overcoming this challenge. As interviewee #3 commented, *"We didn't want to take anything here that adds to our work, we've got so much work. Nothing aims at making things more complicated. Normal things that can be done aside your own job."*

The third challenge in motivating people to change their habits has been the question of how to do this with busy people. Similarly to what Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) found, the present findings also show that being busy often overrides environmental concerns. For example, in reflecting on how to motivate employees to participate in environment-related events, interviewee #10 wondered *"how to get them to participate. How to make them think that this Green Office -thing is more important than getting the urgent things on your desk done."* The informants felt that people would often forget Green Office –issues when they are busy. Quoting interviewee #12, *"When you leave a meeting in a hurry, you put all the waste in the same basket. This is a concrete example of what happens when you are busy."* The interviewees did not have any suggestions for how this problem could be solved other than trying to make these small things into routine by communicating extensively over a long time. As interviewee #6 said, *"No one leaves the tap running, but you can leave the light on. To get a similar routine to that. Not that it's an environmental action to turn off the light, but that it's a normal, sensible action. To get it to be routine like that, that's the challenge."*

Communicating persistently over a long time, even after everything has already been said has been the final motivational challenge in the interviewed firms. The interviewees considered it important to keep communicating because *"people lose interest. We need to constantly have some activity and motivate that 'remember, we are a Green Office', that we act, that we don't get tired of these things." (#11)* Interviewee #1's comment echoed this view: *"as I said at some point, we have to just keep repeating it although the topic is completely worn out, we have to keep saying this is important."* Because motivating people to act in this case involves the necessity of changing habits, several interviewees felt that one of their main targets with regard to Green Office has been to change attitudes little by little. Influencing people's attitudes was also considered positive from the business point of view, because this would help people consider the environmental effect of their jobs more widely. According to interviewee #9, *"this kind of an office environmental program is good because it makes people consider these issues in their own jobs. Then, it's more convincing in selling something to clients, when they have a background that they take the environment into account in their own jobs."* Interviewee #6 had a similar opinion: *"I think it's first and foremost a person's own environmental awareness, that here I have to sort organic waste, then maybe in his own job, when he's planning [a production plant], he'll know how to make the environmentally friendlier choice."*

Considering the claim that motivating environmentally aware people to change their habits is a major challenge in environmental communication (Carvalho & Peterson, 2009), it is perhaps surprising that most of the interviewed companies had not provided strong incentives for employees to meet the set targets. Only one of the 13 companies had, already before receiving the GO–designation, tied employees' bonuses to achieving a 10 % reduction in the use of paper. In 2010, they had then planned to tie bonuses to successful waste recycling and reduction. In all the other companies, meeting the targets was not tied to any direct incentives. This might be a point of

improvement to consider to motivate both employees and managers to change their behavior, because previous research has suggested that a combination of information and incentives might work a lot more effectively in encouraging people to change their habits than either method alone (Stern, 1999, in Stern, 2000).

Great Overall Satisfaction but Wish for More Support

The interviewees were by and large very satisfied with the Green Office –program because, as they reported, 'it is so easy and practical'. Besides the fact that the program is simple, the interviewees also felt the changes had been easy to integrate into everyday operations. According to interviewee #2, for example, *"it's so effortless…and when the change has been made once, the process continues on its own."*

However, it also seems that there is need for a study that explores and shares best practices in these firms, as some of the respondents reported that they had received little support from WWF in implementing the program in their offices. As such, they felt that they had had to reinvent the wheel – quite unnecessarily. According to interviewee #9, WWF should say *"do this, and you'll achieve this, this and this. Or communicate things like this, this and this, because these practices have been found effective in these companies."* Interviewee #4 agreed, saying that since the launch of the program is a critical moment to get employees enthusiastic about it, it would have been very beneficial to hear what other companies have found useful: *"We were quite alone with how to launch it…Since they [WWF] have been in many of these launches or at least heard of them, they would have had [advice] that when you launch, at least consider these things…It was completely, they didn't give anything."* Even though the program's strength is that each organization can decide on their own areas of improvement and on how to implement the program, it seems, based on the interviewees' comments, that the program could benefit from being somewhat more standardized to help companies implement it even more easily.

DISCUSSION

As Harrison (2009) claims, environmental concerns are the most important consideration firms need to address in the near future, because stakeholders are increasingly demanding them to do so. The companies that do this best and most credibly will be the ones that face the greatest prospects for success. As discussed above, however, companies' current environmental activities often suffer from a lack of transparency, objectivity and comparability. To address these problems, this paper departed from arguing that it is beneficial to critically evaluate greening initiatives shared by several companies, as has been done here with regard to WWF Finland's Green Office –program.

The findings of this study reveal that in the case of the Green Office –program in the 13 Finnish firms that were analyzed, there is great variety in the level of greening the program is set out to reach. The lack of similar targets between companies highlights the problem in objectively evaluating companies' environmental activities. Further, in many of the organizations examined here, the targets are not overly stringent. This suggests that in many cases, greening might take place more on paper than in reality because it does not necessarily involve an actual change in employees' behavior. With regard to paper, for example, just aiming to reduce the use of paper especially during the first year is far from ambitious. This is because these companies at the same time often move to double-sided printing, which automatically reduces paper use even if no one changes their actual printing habits. The interviews suggest that the program has only in very few companies provided employees with a spark to really do things differently for the benefit of both the organization, in the form of cost savings, and the environment, in terms of significantly reduced environmental burden. In one of the more ambitious organizations, the benefits of doing things differently were appreciated. According to the interviewee, *"We want…people to rethink their work in an entirely new way…That this has, in a way, brought with it a lot of the kind of thinking that we can be so much ahead of our competitors in many ways. Just in the way we do the work." (#5)* As

these kinds of attempts to actually change working practices were not very common among these 13 companies, however, it seems that there would be a lot of room for more ambitious greening efforts.

It is suggested that in the future, the Green Office –program could be developed in two ways to enhance its credibility, transparency and comparability between organizations. First, the program could be developed overall so that it would be more standardized and aim at truly encouraging employees to change their working practices. Second, to overcome the challenges of how to reach employees and motivate them to change their habits, it is suggested that companies should themselves take a more purposeful orientation. The discussion below focuses on this second suggestion.

Concerning the former issue, reaching employees, it is suggested that companies should aim to implement more standardized practices, especially with regard to manager-employee communication. In other words, companies should try to more actively engage managers in the greening process and make them more responsible for encouraging employees to implement environmentally friendly practices, because face-to-face communication could be more effective in encouraging employees to act than electronic communication. Related to engaging managers, it might also be useful to demonstrate clearer top management commitment. As it is, all of the interviewees claimed top management commitment to the Green Office –program. In some companies, especially the ones that seemed to have implemented the program more successfully, this truly seemed to be the case. At the same time, however, some said that the managers themselves sometimes failed to show an example for their employees. And, as interviewee #9's statement demonstrates, the issues related to Green Office were not, in all companies, so important that you could get managers to leave their other work to attend e.g. information sessions: *"we can't, when you talk about managers, start telling them what to do. Sit down there. The issues where we*

can order people to sit down are quite different." It is believed that as environmental issues reach the corporate boards, stronger commitment and example from the top would be one of the best ways to motivate all the employees to follow suit.

To further help in overcoming the latter challenge, motivating people to change their habits, it is recommended that companies consider providing employees with stronger incentives to do so. For example, this could be achieved by tying environment-related reduction results to bonuses, as is done in one of the investigated companies. This could help in sending a clearer signal to employees of the significance of these environment-related activities.

Based on the findings of this study, I propose a framework for effective internal environmental communication (see Figure I below) that builds on the work of Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (2010) by combining the insights gained from this study with their findings. In the framework, it is suggested that environment-related CSR communication to employees might be most effective if concrete, practical messages suggested by Uusi-Rauva and Nurkka (ibid.) are complemented by active, face-to-face communication by managers. Such face-to-face communication, also recognized by others to be important in communicating strategy (see e.g. Barrett, 2002; Dulye, 2006), is also a potential enabler for symmetric two-way communication that Morsing and Schultz (2006) propose companies should aim at, although it is clear that talking face-to-face does not, by itself, guarantee such communication. Overall, managers throughout organizations should be encouraged to communicate about environmental issues in a more standardized manner rather than leaving it up to them whether and what to communicate. In addition, it is suggested that to motivate employees to really take environmental action, the framework could be complemented to include monetary or other incentives for both employees and (top) managers for reaching the set targets. Finally, another way to lower and get rid of the barriers to environmental action would be the example shown by top

management in demonstrating desired environmental behavior action in their own work. The pivotal role of managers is undeniable whenever organizations are trying to change, as is the case when organizations try to implement new initiatives such as the Green Office –program. As for example Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991:446) state, "ultimately, strategic change is a negotiation process. The nature of the resulting change depends upon the kind of negotiated reality that the CEO and top management team are able to arrive at with other organizational stakeholders." In negotiating reality with employees, providing a clear model of desired behavior enhances the chances of employees following suit, because it shows that managers are 'walking the talk' (Barrett, 2002).

Figure I. Proposed framework for effective internal environmental communication.

(Adapted from Uusi-Rauva & Nurkka, 2010)
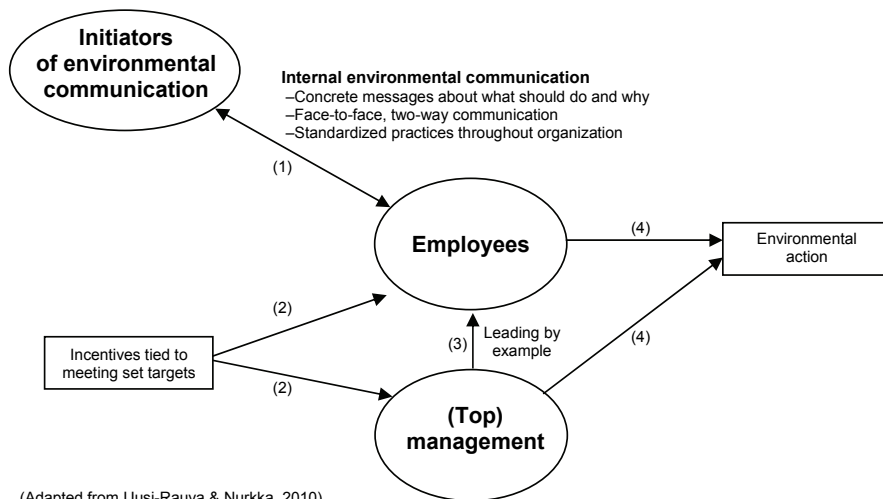
Because environment-related matters and communication about them can be organized in a number of different ways in companies, the 'communicating' party in the framework cannot be easily specified. Therefore, in the framework, it is named broadly as "initiators of environmental communication", be it the communication department, the environmental strategy team, a manager, or someone else. The arrows, in turn, indicate the above-discussed propositions that (1) internal environmental communication might best lead to (4) environmental action by employees (and managers) if it is combined with (2) monetary or other incentives tied to meeting the environment-related targets set in the organization as well as with (3) example shown by (top) management of the kind of environmental action that is desired.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While this paper has sought to provide insights into how organizations could strengthen the credibility of their environment-related CSR activities and how internal environment-related communication should be executed for it to be as effective as possible, the research clearly has some limitations. For one, the findings are based on a single-country investigation, in this case Finland, where studies in the field of corporate governance have claimed that managers consider it an important matter of honor to both comply with applicable laws and present a true and fair view of their organizations' practices (Miihkinen, 2008). These kinds of governance practices and the overall governance environment vary between countries (see e.g. Latteman et al., 2009), and might influence internal communication of environmental issues. Further, both organizations and employees in other national and cultural contexts might have different motivations concerning environmental issues (see e.g. Kampf, 2007; Maignan & Ralston, 2002). In addition, the suggestions discussed above have been developed based on the analysis of only one small greening initiative, even though companies' overall environmental activities in most cases encompass a variety of different activities.

Nevertheless, it is believed that this study can provide new insight into the study of environment-related CG and CSR activities, as it provides a cross-industry evaluation of an initiative shared by several companies. It also makes clear suggestions concerning both how such greening initiatives could be strengthened as well as how environment-related internal communication could be developed in organizations to effectively engage the critical internal stakeholder group, employees, in environmental action. It is hoped that this study will lead to further explorations to examine whether the suggestions provided in the framework in Figure I above hold true in other contexts. In addition, it is hoped that this study will encourage both theorists and practitioners to continue considering new ways to increase the transparency and comparability of organizations' (environment-related) CSR activities.

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