

Climate change and environmental citizenship: transition to a post- consumerist future?

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Declarations and statements

Declaration of originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of the my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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The research in this project was approved by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee; approval number H0010708.

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Abstract

Human-induced, potentially catastrophic climate change is now firmly established as a major threat to life on earth, including human. Nevertheless, policy action at the international and in many cases, national, level has been slow to emerge. Over-consumption, primarily in the West, is clearly complicit in the continued global increase in greenhouse gas emissions, and any effective response to climate change will have implications for Western consumers. However, liberal-democratic governments are dependent on maintaining consumption levels in order to maintain economic growth. Such governments, especially if they have short election cycles and/or carbon-intensive economies, therefore face a major conundrum: the need to introduce major reforms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but the potential for voter backlash if such reforms are perceived as increasing prices and leading to job losses in fossil fuel intensive industries.

The international policy response to over-consumption and its contribution to environmental harm, as examined in sustainable consumption scholarship, has been largely based on technological solutions that support economic growth while reducing environmental impacts – the ‘myth of decoupling’. Encouraging consumers to purchase ‘greener’ products is an integral part of such strategies. It is clear that this policy approach has not been successful in reducing GHG emissions to the degree required to avoid catastrophic climate change. The alternative approach, which involves reducing consumption and resource exploitation while still allowing citizens to live satisfying lives, has largely been ignored by governments.

Given the importance of consumption, the thesis focuses on the role of the individual in seeking to redress climate change. Its approach is to initially build up an understanding of the theoretical and empirical issues surrounding the individual’s role in and response to climate change by initially analysing citizenship theory, which addresses the relationship of the individual to her or his society and polity. The thesis then examines individualism in the context of consumerism, over-consumption and hence climate change, including the international policy approach to addressing unsustainable Western consumption. Having given an account of the problem being addressed, the thesis then turns to analysis of a theoretical approach that potentially offers a framework for citizens’ responses to climate change: environmental citizenship.

Environmental citizenship theory addresses questions concerning individual responsibility, and is highly pertinent to issues of governmental and societal efforts to deal with climate change. Environmental citizenship seeks to explore and interrogate the recent neo-liberal focus on individual rights with a view to proposing its reversal, so that the individual has a responsibility to behave according to the environmental (and societal) good.

Until recently there has been little cross-over between sustainable consumption and environmental citizenship theory. A major area of criticism found in both fields of literature is that a focus on voluntary, individual and household-based action deflects citizens' attention away from the structural – economic and political – causes of environmental problems like climate change. It also legitimises governments', and some NGOs', delegation of responsibility to individuals and households to act on climate change. While agreeing in principle with these criticisms, the thesis finds that the situation is not so straightforward: while it may be that individual and household action is inadequate to the task of reducing GHG emissions, it is also difficult to imagine in individualised Western societies citizens rising up to demand governments redress the structural causes of climate change. The thesis therefore aims to determine whether environmental citizenship theory in the context of sustainable consumption is able to overcome these objections and to provide a framework for citizen action on climate change. The analysis reveals the transformative potential of environmental citizenship, in theory, but also reveals a number of gaps or areas that need further work.

An analytical framework devised during research for the thesis is used to examine existing empirical studies; and the thesis presents for the first time in the Australian context a study of environmental citizenship in the context of sustainable consumption, with its target population members of the Tasmanian Greens party. Analysis of the case study results leads to the conclusion that the respondents are indeed environmental citizens; that compared to other Australian studies, the Greens members are much more involved in personal, community and political actions to mitigate climate change; and they also found value in all types of actions even if results are not immediately apparent. However, like other studies, it finds that there are numerous barriers to environmental citizenship in practice, and that even the most aware of citizens tend to take the easiest and cheapest actions, with implications for the potential of environmental citizenship to become widespread among the broader Australian public.

The key finding of the thesis is that while environmental citizenship theory does provide a framework for citizen action on climate change in the context of sustainable consumption, it is only through committed environmental citizens acting to raise public awareness and pressure governments, that real change can come about. The challenge for theorists continues to be to find the key that unlocks the gap between theory and widespread practice.

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This thesis is dedicated to environmental citizens everywhere: those who speak out and stand up for the future of this little planet we call home.

Table of contents

Declarations and statements	iii
<i>Declaration of originality</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Authority of Access</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Statement of ethical conduct</i>	<i>iii</i>
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	v
Table of contents	vii
Chapter One Introduction.....	1
1.1 <i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>1</i>
1.2 <i>Thesis background</i>	<i>1</i>
1.3 <i>Aims.....</i>	<i>2</i>
1.3.1 <i>Research questions.....</i>	<i>3</i>
1.4 <i>Significance and justification</i>	<i>3</i>
1.5 <i>Scope and limitations</i>	<i>5</i>
1.5.1 <i>Citizenship</i>	<i>5</i>
1.5.2 <i>Climate change</i>	<i>6</i>
1.5.3 <i>Individualism and the role of consumption</i>	<i>6</i>
1.5.4 <i>Environmental citizenship</i>	<i>6</i>
1.6 <i>Methodology.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.6.1 <i>Literature review.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.6.2 <i>Case study.....</i>	<i>8</i>
1.6.2.1 <i>Justification and significance</i>	<i>8</i>
1.6.2.2 <i>Aims of the study</i>	<i>9</i>
1.6.2.3 <i>Limitations</i>	<i>9</i>
1.6.2.4 <i>Methodology:</i>	<i>10</i>
1.7 <i>Thesis structure</i>	<i>10</i>
1.7.1 <i>Framework for analysis</i>	<i>10</i>
1.7.2 <i>Outline of chapters.....</i>	<i>11</i>
Chapter Two: <i>Citizenship.....</i>	<i>11</i>
Chapter Three: <i>Individualism, consumerism and climate change</i>	<i>12</i>
Chapter Four: <i>The promise of environmental citizenship</i>	<i>12</i>
Chapter Five: <i>Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption in practice.....</i>	<i>13</i>
Chapter Six: <i>Case study of Tasmanian Greens members.....</i>	<i>14</i>
Chapter Seven: <i>Environmental citizenship as a response to climate change.....</i>	<i>14</i>
Chapter Eight: <i>Conclusions.....</i>	<i>15</i>
1.8 <i>Climate change in Australian politics</i>	<i>15</i>
1.9 <i>Conclusion</i>	<i>20</i>
Chapter Two Citizenship	21
2.1 <i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>21</i>
2.2 <i>What is citizenship?.....</i>	<i>21</i>
2.3 <i>A brief history of citizenship.....</i>	<i>22</i>
2.4 <i>Australian citizenship.....</i>	<i>26</i>
2.5 <i>Citizenship theory.....</i>	<i>27</i>

2.5.1	Introduction	27
2.5.2	Revival of citizenship theory	28
2.5.3	Multiple or differential citizenship	29
2.5.4	Issues in citizenship theory	29
2.5.4.1	Republican citizenship	30
2.5.4.2	Liberal citizenship	32
2.6	<i>The citizenship contract</i>	33
2.7	<i>Active, passive and 'good' citizenship</i>	36
2.7.1	Active versus passive citizenship.....	36
2.7.2	Participation and the 'good citizen'	38
2.7.3	The decline of the political	40
2.7.4	Community and citizenship	43
2.7.5	Summary: active citizenship	44
2.8	<i>Territoriality and cosmopolitanism</i>	45
2.9	<i>Conclusion</i>	46
Chapter Three	Individualism, consumerism and climate change.....	49
3.1	<i>Introduction</i>	49
3.2	<i>The problem with consumption</i>	50
3.3	<i>Economic growth, consumerism and neo-liberal politics</i>	52
3.3.1	Introduction	52
3.3.2	A brief history of consumerism	52
3.3.3	The freedom to consume	54
3.3.4	Economic growth, consumerism and climate change	57
3.3.5	Why do we continue to consume so much?	61
3.3.6	Escaping from consumerism.....	63
3.4	<i>Policy responses to over-consumption</i>	64
3.4.1	From 'sustainable development' to 'sustainable consumption'	64
3.4.2	Climate change and 'sustainable growth'	67
3.5	<i>Individualism, consumerism and climate change politics</i>	70
3.5.1	Background.....	70
3.5.2	Individualisation	71
3.5.3	Individualisation and climate change politics	72
3.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	74
Chapter Four	The promise of environmental citizenship	77
4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	77
4.2	<i>What is environmental citizenship?</i>	77
4.3	<i>The origins of environmental citizenship theory</i>	79
4.4	<i>Environmental citizenship and citizenship theory</i>	80
4.4.1	Background.....	80
4.4.2	Rights and obligations	81
4.4.3	The active/passive divide.....	82
4.4.4	The public/private divide	82
4.4.5	Territoriality.....	83
4.4.6	The virtues of environmental citizens.....	83
4.4.7	Summary.....	84
4.5	<i>Major theoretical approaches</i>	84
4.5.1	Dobson's ecological citizenship	84
4.5.2	Barry's green and sustainability citizenships.....	87
4.6	<i>Issues in environmental citizenship theory</i>	89

4.6.1	Background.....	89
4.6.2	What is the ‘political space’ in which environmental citizenship takes place?	90
4.6.3	What motivates environmental citizens, and how does this relate to virtue?.....	92
4.6.4	Does the extension of citizenship to the private sphere depoliticise environmental action?	93
4.6.5	What are the barriers to environmental citizenship?.....	97
4.7	<i>Definition of environmental citizenship</i>	98
4.8	<i>Environmental citizenship in practice</i>	99
4.9	<i>Conclusion</i>	100
4.9.1	Conclusion to Chapter Four	100
4.9.2	Conclusion to background and theoretical literature analysis.....	101
Chapter Five Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption: dealing with climate change in practice.....		103
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	103
5.2	<i>The ‘citizen-consumer’</i>	104
5.3	<i>Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption in practice</i>	108
5.3.1	Introduction	108
5.3.2	Environmental concern and behaviour change	108
5.3.2	Everyday lives: environmental practice and individual responsibility	116
5.3.3	Motivation for environmental citizenship through sustainable consumption	118
5.3.4	Barriers, trade-offs and contradictions.....	123
5.3.5	Individual agency and individual/collective action	125
5.4	<i>Conclusion</i>	129
Chapter Six Case study of Tasmanian Greens members.....		131
6.1	<i>Introduction</i>	131
6.2	<i>Background to the case study</i>	131
6.2.1	The development of Tasmanian Green politics	131
6.2.2	Tasmanian Greens, climate change and sustainable consumption.....	133
6.3	<i>Justification of case study target population</i>	135
6.4	<i>Aims of case study</i>	137
6.5	<i>Methodology</i>	137
6.5.1	Strategy:.....	137
6.5.2	Procedures:	138
6.5.3	Framework for analysis of survey and interview responses	140
6.6	<i>Climate change and the responsibilities of environmental citizenship</i>	141
6.7	<i>Acting on individual responsibility</i>	142
6.7.1	Consumption decisions	142
6.7.2	Conclusions and analysis: changes in personal consumption practices.....	148
6.7.3	Demographic context of consumption changes	150
6.8	<i>Extension of citizenship to the private sphere</i>	153
6.9	<i>The depoliticisation of citizen responsibility?</i>	155
6.10	<i>Barriers, contradictions and inconsistencies in personal consumption decisions</i>	156
6.11	<i>Conclusions</i>	160
Chapter Seven Environmental Citizenship and sustainable consumption in theory and practice		163
7.1	<i>Introduction</i>	163

7.2	<i>Involvement in the public sphere</i>	163
7.2.1	Community participation by case study participants	163
7.2.2	Political involvement of case study participants	168
7.2.3	The need for public sphere action.....	172
7.2.4	Is public sphere action alone enough?	175
7.2.5	Intersection of the public and private.....	176
7.3	<i>Political space</i>	176
7.4	<i>Motivation</i>	177
7.5	<i>Individualisation</i>	182
7.7	<i>Agency</i>	184
7.8	<i>Conclusions</i>	188
Chapter Eight	Conclusion	191
8.1	<i>Summary of thesis</i>	191
8.2	<i>Major findings and conclusion</i>	197
8.3	<i>Directions for further research</i>	200
8.4	<i>Conclusion</i>	201
References		203
Appendix One		219
	<i>Greenhouse gas emissions data</i>	219
Appendix Two:		224
	<i>Charter of the Tasmanian Greens</i>	224
	<i>Tasmanian Greens' Climate Change Policy</i>	225
Appendix Three	Survey documents	227
1.	<i>Letter from Tasmanian Greens, including message from Senator Christine Milne (also sent out by email)</i>	227
3.	<i>Questionnaire</i>	231
4.	<i>Interview volunteer contact form</i>	243
Appendix Four: Interview documents		244
1.	<i>Participant information form</i>	244
2.	<i>Interview participant consent form</i>	247
3.	<i>Interview plan</i>	249
Appendix Five	Demographic tables	253
1.	<i>Demographic tables (questionnaire respondents):</i>	253
2.	<i>Details of interview participants</i>	254
3.	<i>Comparison with Greens' membership figures:</i>	255
Appendix Six:	Results	256

Figures and tables in text

Figures:

<i>Figure 1: Percentage of respondents who have changed various areas of everyday life in response to climate change</i>	144
<i>Figure 2: Degree to which respondents consider various factors when shopping (percentage)</i>	148
<i>Figure 3: Involvement in community-based responses to climate change in the last five years</i>	165
<i>Figure 4: Percentage of respondents who have taken political actions in response to climate change</i>	169
<i>Figure 5: The many connections and influences of environmental citizens</i>	198

Tables:

<i>Table 1: Percentage of respondents who have changed various types of consumption in response to climate change, by demographic categories</i>	151
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Figures and tables in appendices

Figures

<i>Figure A1. Trends in global emissions of carbon dioxide 1990-2008</i>	219
<i>Figure A2. Global greenhouse gas emissions by source activity</i>	221
<i>Figure A3. Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by emissions process</i>	222
<i>Figure A4. Average household profile: greenhouse gas production</i>	223
<i>Figure A5: supermarket shopper</i>	251
<i>Figure A6: Penguin tourism</i>	252
<i>Figure A7: Views on climate change and respondents' mitigating activities</i>	256
<i>Figure A8: Reasons for not reducing consumption in response to climate change</i>	257
<i>Figure A9: 'Other' reasons for not changing travel practices in response to climate change</i>	258
<i>Figure A10: Reasons for not participating in community-based responses to climate change in the last five years</i>	259
<i>Figure A11: Reasons for not participating in particular political response to climate change in the last five years</i>	261
<i>Figure A12: Changed consumption within the last five years: percentage of changed respondents by income</i>	262
<i>Figure A13: Changed consumption by income, including respondents who have been making changes for more than five years</i>	263

Tables

<i>Table A1. Global CO2 emissions 2006-2010</i>	219
<i>Table A2. Global greenhouse gas emissions per country (2010)</i>	220
<i>Table A3: Respondents' income</i>	253
<i>Table A4: Respondents' age</i>	253
<i>Table A5: Respondents' education</i>	253
<i>Table A6: Respondents' occupation</i>	253
<i>Table A7: Number of respondents' children</i>	253
<i>Table A8: Area where respondents live</i>	253
<i>Table A9: Respondents' employment sector</i>	253
<i>Table A10: Respondents' employment status</i>	253
<i>Table A11: Details of interview participants</i>	254
<i>Table A12: 'Other' reasons for not reducing or changing consumption practices in response to climate change</i>	258
<i>Table A13: 'Other' reasons for non-participation in community-based programs</i>	260
<i>Table A14: 'Other' reasons for non-participation in political responses to climate change</i>	260

Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Introduction

For at least thirty years the link between environmental degradation and over-consumption of the earth's resources has been clear, and recognised in international and national environmental policy. However, the current extent of environmental problems indicates that these policy efforts have been less than successful.

Catastrophic climate change is recognised as a major threat, if not *the* major threat to the natural environment on earth. Humanity, too, is faced with major, sometimes life-threatening, challenges as the environment on which we depend changes in response to the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere. Accepting human-induced climate change as a scientific fact, this thesis explores two areas fundamentally linked with climate change: over-consumption by humans in advanced industrial countries, and citizenship as a framework for considering responses to climate change.

This introductory chapter outlines the research approach taken in the thesis, its aims, significance, limitations, methodology and structure.

1.2 Thesis background

The urgent need for effective policy responses to the threat of climate change has been well established by reports such as Stern 2007, Garnaut (Garnaut 2008b, 2011b) and UN 2011, and scientific reports such as however international climate change negotiations have been slow to reach agreement on the future direction for GHG reductions, and some national governments, such as Australia's, have been slower to act than others. While Australians have been shown by surveys to be concerned about climate change, the federal government response has been, at best, slow. There is a complex mix of practical, political and ideological factors at play determining this lack of effective policy action, as discussed in section 1.8 below, where a background on climate change and Australian politics is presented.

Against this background of policy failure in Australia at least (Crowley 2012) citizenship, in the broad sense used in this thesis, has a key role: citizens' concerns both about the impacts of climate change, and about the potential economic implications of measures to reduce the country's fossil fuel dependence, are crucial factors influencing government decision-making. The concept of environmental citizenship – which essentially concerns citizens' responses to environmental harm or threat – is a relatively new addition to political theory, but it is highly relevant to

environmental issues such as climate change, in which citizens' actions and attitudes are deeply implicated.

The way people live their lives as consumers in advanced industrialised countries like Australia has a major role in both contributing to climate change, via greenhouse gases emitted in the production, distribution and disposal of products, and in attempting to mitigate it. At the international level, 'sustainable consumption' is one of a suite of sustainable development policy approaches adopted in response to environmental concerns raised from the 1970s to early 1990s. However, sustainable consumption has a much more prosaic meaning as it is applied by people who are attempting to reduce their own environmental impact, including their contribution to GHG emissions. Such limitations or changes to consumption have been the subject of an expanding academic literature. Despite the common field occupied – the ways in which citizens go about trying to limit human impacts on the natural environment – there has been little overlap between academic consideration of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption, especially in Australia.

All of the issues touched upon above are important parts of the thesis' examination of the role of environmental citizenship as a response to the problem of consumption and its contribution to climate change.

1.3 Aims

The thesis aims to advance environmental citizenship research by examining environmental citizenship in the context of sustainable consumption. It focuses on the following areas of research:

- The historical and contemporary role of individualism and consumption in Western ideology and economics;
- The contribution of over-consumption by humans in the West to environmental degradation, particularly climate change, and how it has been dealt with at the level of international environmental policy;
- The importance and relevance of citizenship in modern democracies, and the major theoretical issues;
- Environmental citizenship, including the major theoretical issues and gaps;
- The combination of environmental citizenship with sustainable consumption in practice;

- The meaningfulness of environmental citizenship as a political tool in the context of climate change.

1.3.1 Research questions

The specific research question addressed by the thesis is:

Can environmental citizenship, in combination with sustainable consumption, provide a framework for citizens' action on climate change?

Associated sub-questions are:

- What are the major issues in environmental citizenship theory, including the gaps, if any, in the theory?
- How, if at all, is environmental citizenship relevant to everyday life?
- How is it relevant to climate change politics?
- Does action on climate change have to come via the political-economic system, or do individuals and communities have an important role to play through changes to consumption and production?

1.4 Significance and justification

As well as contributing to climate change, and potentially suffering its consequences – some say we already are, evidenced by drought, unprecedented bushfires, heatwaves and floods in Australia in recent years (Hall, NL & Taplin 2008; Milne 2011a) – what potential do individuals and communities in the affluent West have to contribute to climate change mitigation? While this question may seem simplistic, given the efforts in recent years by governments and non-government organisations (NGOs) alike to encourage households to reduce their emissions, it poses interesting issues, which will be raised and explored in this thesis.

These exhortations of consumers to change their consumption habits so as to reduce GHG emissions have been criticised as doomed to failure and deflecting citizens' attention from what is required: systematic economic, social and political change (Luke 1997; Maniates 2002b). These criticisms – dealt with in detail in Chapter Three – are intellectually convincing. However, it is also true that individuals have been major contributors to political and social change throughout history (Lowe 2005). Environmental citizenship theory, which concerns this relationship between the individual and their society, is an ideal lens through which to examine the political and personal responsibility of individuals towards the environment, however it too

has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on the role of the individual; whether this focus detracts from its legitimacy as a theoretical and practical framework for citizen action on climate change is examined as the thesis progresses.

Although there have been significant developments in environmental citizenship theory in the past decade (for example Dobson 2003; Luque 2005; Barry 2006; Latta 2007) virtually all of this work has been done outside Australia, especially in the UK and northern Europe. Very little theoretical work specifically on environmental citizenship has been published in Australia since Peter Christoff's (2000) chapter in Hudson and Kane (2000a) following up on Christoff's (1996a) and Robyn Eckersley's (1996b) contributions, mainly on environmental rights. In addition, as discussed in section 1.6.2, there have been very few empirical studies of environmental citizenship in Australia.

This thesis, with its focus on environmental citizenship as a framework for putting citizens' concerns about climate change into practice, is timely given the current political and economic uncertainty in Australia regarding climate change mitigation (Pietsch & McAllister 2010; Bailey, Compston & MacGill 2011; Crowley 2011). The response to environmental issues is a huge part of citizenship (Dobson 2003), and climate change is adding a sense of urgency (Bolin 2007; Garnaut 2008a). Australia, indeed, is in a peculiar position with regard to climate change: due to its geographic position and climate it will potentially be worse affected by rising temperatures than most other developed countries; it has a highly fossil fuel dependent economy, with the industry actively influencing government policy; and it has a wealth of resources that could be harnessed to capture renewable energy (Garnaut 2011b). It has also made slow progress towards implementing effective domestic climate change policy, and only ratified the Kyoto Protocol in late 2007, thus arguably placing greater importance on the role of Australian citizens, the majority of whom are concerned about climate change (see the background to Australian climate change politics in section 1.8 below). Environmental citizenship offers an ideal way to examine this role.

Paralleling the recent developments in environmental citizenship is the broad field of sustainable consumption literature, which includes critiques of the political and economic dependence of Western governments on economic growth and over-consumption (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002b; Jackson 2009), studies of 'downshifting' or 'voluntary simplicity' and their potential role in changing society (Maniates 2002a; Nelson, Rademacher & Paek 2007), and studies of the 'citizen-consumer' or 'ethical consumerism' (Stolle, Hooghe & Micheletti 2005; Sassatelli

2006; Jubas 2007; Trentmann 2007). Rarely, however, do environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption overlap in the theoretical literature, although recently there has been a spate of empirical studies, outside Australia, of environmental citizenship expressed through citizens' everyday lives, including consumption decisions (see section 1.6.2). The empirical study presented in Chapter Six adds to this research, in an Australian context. Given the relationship between over-consumption in developed countries like Australia and increases in GHG emissions, this seems an ideal area in which to ground-test environmental citizenship theory. Both of these areas of theory are still evolving, and this study offers a way of seeking to find common ground between them.

1.5 Scope and limitations

1.5.1 Citizenship

Citizenship is the link between the individual, society and government. It is tied up with some of the biggest issues that have concerned political theorists for centuries, such as the role of the individual as a member of a polity, and whether the individual has a duty to act in the interests of the common good of society. The thesis addresses crucial citizenship questions concerning the role of the individual vis à vis the state, and the rest of society in face of the looming threat of climate change; and whether individual citizens have a responsibility to modify their consumption habits for the good of society, or a right to continue with business as usual.

Citizenship is an extremely broad field of theory, and practice. In an effort to focus on those aspects of citizenship most relevant to environmental politics, climate change and consumerism, large areas of citizenship theory and practice will not be considered. These relate to migration, multiculturalism, refugee status and human rights generally. In addition, citizenship and citizenship theory is presented only from a Western point of view, from the English language literature.

Cosmopolitan citizenship, a major focus of recent citizenship theory (with ancient roots) is not discussed in any detail, as it is focused on ways in which citizenship can be exercised internationally, while the focus of the thesis is on the actions of people living in the West, within their own states. The thesis does, however, recognise and discuss the profound global implications of Western consumption, not least through focusing on Andrew Dobson's 'post-cosmopolitan' citizenship, which is partially derived from cosmopolitan citizenship theory (Dobson 2003).

1.5.2 Climate change

As noted above, the thesis acknowledges the established climate change science, which recognises that human-induced climate change exists and is a major problem that requires urgent international and national policy responses (Bolin 2007; Garnaut 2008a, 2011b; UN 2011). There is therefore no need for the thesis to discuss the science of climate change, however Attachment One provides a summary in graphic form of current trends in global greenhouse gas emissions data and increases in GHG emissions are discussed in section 3.3.4. Since the thesis focuses on a framework for political action at the national or sub-national level, there is also no need, other than as a brief background, to discuss the international policy response over the past few decades, which is also well-covered by academic sources, for example Bolin (2007), Compson & Bailey (2008), Helm & Hepburn (2009), Harrison & Sundstrom (2010), and Garnaut (2011a).

The thesis acknowledges that many people in developing countries are already suffering the devastating impacts of climate change such as inundation of low-lying coasts and islands, and that these impacts will only worsen in the absence of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. However these issues are beyond the scope of the thesis except in so far as it considers Western consumers' contribution to GHG emissions and attempts to reduce them.

1.5.3 Individualism and the role of consumption

At the heart of issues to be addressed is the notion of individualism, and its relationship, historically and currently, with consumption; again, from a Western perspective. The thesis argues that consumption cannot be regarded as a neutral activity when it is so integrally related to the capitalist, growth-dependent economic and political system in which we live in advanced industrialised, liberal-democratic societies like Australia. This is not an economics thesis, but it is necessary to draw attention to the role of over-consumption and consumerism in contributing to climate change so that a framework for action on climate can then be examined: the combination of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption.

1.5.4 Environmental citizenship

Environmental citizenship combines eco-political and citizenship theory; as a recent body development in political theory it is still essentially a work in progress. After examining the broad concept of environmental citizenship, and dealing in detail with

issues raised by a number of theorists, this thesis adopts the approach of those theorists whose work most directly addresses its major concern, that is, the way individual citizens are both responsible for, and can act towards ameliorating, climate change. While finding this instrumental, responsibility-based theory the most appropriate and convincing, the thesis addresses particular gaps and inconsistencies in this approach as the thesis progresses.

As will be discussed in Chapter Four, authors use different terms when discussing environmental citizenship. Unless discussing a specific author's work, this thesis uses the term 'environmental citizenship' to encompass the general concept. Due to the unsettled nature of much of the theory, in Chapter Four, a working definition of environmental citizenship is introduced, to guide the thesis' empirical analysis: *acting on a commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society*.

As noted above, much of the theoretical and empirical work on environmental citizenship comes from a UK and wider European perspective. This thesis attempts to expand that range by focusing on Australia. The case study, for both practical and theoretical reasons, takes place in the island state of Tasmania.

1.6 Methodology

The research comprised of reviewing literature and undertaking a case study of sustainable consumption and environmental citizenship.

1.6.1 Literature review

Theoretical and background literature reviewed related to citizenship, environmental citizenship, climate change, consumption and sustainable consumption. Empirical studies of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption were also reviewed. Sources came from diverse disciplines: mainly political theory, political economy, sociology, history, geography, psychology and anthropology.

A gap analysis was undertaken with respect to the environmental citizenship theoretical literature to determine how this thesis could best contribute to developing the theory.

1.6.2 Case study

1.6.2.1 Justification and significance

Environmental citizenship theorists are aware of the need for studies of environmental citizenship in action (Dobson 2003; Luque 2005). Until recently there had been relatively few empirical studies, although there have been notable additions in the last few years, for example studies by Wolf, Brown and Conway (2009) building on the work of Horton (2006) and Seyfang (2006), and from a more critical perspective, Flynn, Bellaby and Ricci (2008). There have also been a number of empirical studies of environmentally responsible or sustainable behaviour, such as Ngo, West and Calkins (2009) and Evans and Abrahamse (2009). There have, however, been very few empirical studies of environmental citizenship in Australia, with exceptions by Davidson (2000) and Star (2005). Davidson's (2000) study took place in Tasmania, and focused on barriers to citizenship due to lack of social capital in dependent island communities, with a field study in the Huon Valley. Star (2005) used interviews with climate change campaigners to tease out the connections between environmental justice and ecological citizenship in the context of their campaigns. The empirical study undertaken for this thesis takes a different approach to both of these studies (see methodology discussion below).

This thesis adds to the body of empirical work by providing a case study of Tasmanian Greens Party members, who, being steeped in the history and practice of eco-politics were chosen as subjects for their likely practice of environmental citizenship (see discussion in Chapter Six justifying the selection of the target population). By establishing the subjects' environmental citizenship at the outset, at least at the macro level of values orientation, it is able to proceed immediately to examine whether, and how, sustainable consumption is a relevant and important aspect of their citizenship. It is also able to examine the conjunction, if there is one, between the respondents' attitudes and practices concerning consumption and climate change, and their political practice as Greens members.

The case study is a particularly appropriate way to give life to the theory and to reveal any inconsistencies or gaps that might not be apparent at a more abstract level. As Gerring (2004) defines it, a case study is 'an intensive study of a single unit [a relatively bounded phenomenon] for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units' (p. 342): the case study does not necessarily aim to provide generalisable data, but is particularly suited to in-depth exploratory studies. The case

study may use qualitative or quantitative methodologies or a combination of them (Gerring 2004).

This case study is designed to enable an immediate focus on the practice of environmental citizenship, due to the specific location of the study – the Australian state of Tasmania, where environmental issues have been high on the political and social agenda for several decades – and the social group chosen for the study (the ‘unit’): members of the Tasmanian Greens political party (see section 6.2 for background to the case study setting). The target population is not chosen for its representativeness of environmental citizens in general, but rather as a group who would be ideal subjects for an in-depth exploratory study (Gerring 2004) of environmental citizenship in practice because of their expression of values consistent with environmental citizenship (see section 6.3). After clearly identifying members of the Tasmanian Greens as environmental citizens, the case study then uses the findings from the survey and interviews, relating to the way the subjects have responded to climate change through their own personal and political actions, to analyse environmental citizenship theory in the context of sustainable consumption.

1.6.2.2 Aims of the study

The investigation aimed to use the views and experiences of members of the Tasmanian Greens

- to build on environmental citizenship theory, in particular with regard to the relationship between personal consumption decisions and political engagement; and
- to evaluate the potential of environmental citizenship as a framework for citizen action on climate change.

1.6.2.3 Limitations

As noted above, the case study takes place in the Australian state of Tasmania, and focuses on a group of people who are able to be identified at the macro level as environmental citizens by virtue of their values orientation as members of the Greens party. They were not chosen as representing environmental citizens in general, but as ideal subjects for an exploratory study (Gerring 2004) which aims to glean insights highly relevant to environmental citizenship theory and practice. Specific limitations of the case study will be discussed in the methodology section of Chapter Six.

1.6.2.4 Methodology:

In order to obtain sufficient data to undertake the theoretical work of ‘ground-truthing’ environmental citizenship theory and to develop it in the real-life context of consumption, a mixed method approach was taken in the empirical study. A quantitative approach, a questionnaire, was taken initially and followed up with qualitative, semi-structured interviews. In this way the case study benefits from two types of data: the broad mass of information received about particular aspects of the larger number of questionnaire respondents, and the ‘rich, nuanced and detailed’ data obtained from the smaller number of interviews (Mason 2002, p. 3).

Methodology is further discussed in Chapter Six.

1.7 Thesis structure

1.7.1 Framework for analysis

The thesis addresses the links between consumerism, climate change and citizenship. In doing so it traverses through economic and political history, identifying the locus of much of the problem: the rise of individualism and neo-liberal politics, and their connection with over-consumption. The key issue discussed in the thesis is the role of citizens in attempting to redress this connection between over-consumption and climate change. The thesis argues that this is where environmental citizenship comes in: it involves people putting their environmental principles first, or at least very high in the priorities according to which they live their lives.

The three ‘literature review’ chapters build up an analytical framework consisting of:

- the rise of individualism and associated loss of civic engagement by individuals;
- the association between rising individualism and increasing importance of consumption politically, economically and socially;
- the relationship of rising consumption levels in the West with climate change;
- the international policy response to Western over-consumption; presenting criticisms of it and an alternative approach;
- the political difficulties governments have had introducing climate change measures that could be perceived of as negatively affecting individuals and households;

- the way in which environmental citizenship theory addresses the relationship between over-consumption in the West and global environmental problems like climate change;
- criticisms of voluntaristic, consumption-based policy and action, including that seemingly endorsed by some environmental citizenship theorists, at the expense of political action to redress the structural causes of environmental problems like climate change.

This analytical framework is then used to structure the examination of empirical studies of environmental citizenship and climate change in Chapters Five and Six, and the theoretical issues requiring particular attention are identified early in those chapters.. In Chapter Seven, the framework for analysis is used to analyse environmental citizenship theory and practice in the context of sustainable consumption, with a view to evaluating its potential as a framework for citizens' action on climate change.

The following section provides an outline of the chapters, demonstrating the development of the framework for analysis.

1.7.2 Outline of chapters

Chapter Two: Citizenship

Given that this thesis goes into some detail on individualism and its relationship with consumerism and hence climate change, and that the main theoretical area considered is environmental citizenship, Chapter Two gives a background to citizenship theory. The chapter discusses the rise of individualism in modern Western liberal-democratic societies, associated by many scholars with a loss of civic-mindedness. Several themes, central among them the struggle between private interest and public or common good, become evident as the chapter progresses. Although not discussed specifically in Chapter Three, these themes, along with the rise of individualism, form the backdrop to the discussion of the relationship between consumerism and climate change in Chapter Three, which essentially establishes the problem being addressed by the thesis. In Chapter Four the discussion again returns to the specific themes addressed in Chapter Two, which act as foundations for its consideration of environmental citizenship theory.

Chapter Three: Individualism, consumerism and climate change

Chapter Two introduced the rise of economic rationalism, or neo-liberalism, and discussed its connection with the increasing individualism of modern Western societies and associated lack of citizen engagement. This chapter continues the focus on the individual by outlining the problem being examined in the thesis: the rise of an individualistic culture in the West and the connection between economic growth, over-consumption and climate change. The arguments presented in this chapter concerning individualism focus on consumption, clearly one of the, if not the, most significant ways in which people in modern liberal democracies relate to their broader society. It argues that while over-consumption is implicitly tied to excessive GHG emissions and hence dangerous climate change, such consumption, and indeed consumerism, continues to be encouraged by a political and economic system addicted to growth (Jackson 2009).

The chapter also gives a brief background to the international policy response to over-consumption – sustainable consumption. This background on sustainable consumption policy is an important contribution to the thesis' consideration of the role of individuals in responding to climate change. The chapter also briefly discusses the recent Australian policy response to climate change.

The key contribution of this chapter is to establish that individualism and consumerism are fundamental to both the growth of GHG over the last two centuries, and are also major obstacles to governments deciding to take significant ameliorating action. A central aspect of governments' decision-making on climate change is of course how it perceives that its policies will be received by voters. That perception is at least partly based on how citizens have, or have not, demanded that the government act to protect the environment, and the society which depends on it; and possibly also on whether they have taken that need for protection to heart by changing their own consumption practices. Environmental citizenship theory, which discusses such citizen action and its relationship with the broader polity, is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Four: The promise of environmental citizenship

This chapter discusses the major issues and debates in environmental citizenship theory. One of the most contentious aspects of the theory is the extension of citizenship to the private sphere, the sphere where consumption decisions take place, which is particularly pertinent when discussing, as this thesis does, citizens' responses

to the threat of climate change. Environmental citizenship theory is a relative newcomer to political theory, and is by no means settled; while presenting a broad range of perspectives, the chapter is directed towards the question being addressed by the thesis, that is on those theorists whose work is most relevant to the issue of the individual's role in contributing to, and potentially responding to, climate change. These theorists take a normative approach that looks at the responsibility of Western societies, and their citizens, for global environmental problems. Other theoretical approaches, such as those looking at the rights of non-human species or future generations are presented as background, but the chapter in essence argues that the responsibility approach taken by most recent theorists is the most promising in terms of addressing the link between individualism, consumerism and climate change. The chapter does, nevertheless, present a number of criticisms of this responsibility-based theory, which inform the analysis of environmental citizenship in the remaining chapters.

By now, at the end of the major 'literature review' chapters, the thesis has established a number of positions about individualism, consumerism, climate change and environmental citizenship; it has developed the analytical framework outlined in section 1.7.1. Empirical work is now necessary to add depth to the understandings arrived out through the background and theoretical literature. While using the framework of analysis developed so far, the next chapter brings the thesis down to the practical level by looking at environmental citizenship practice in the context of sustainable citizenship.

Chapter Five: Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption in practice

Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption are concepts that involve action by citizens; hence empirical studies concerning the way in which individuals respond to climate change through sustainable consumption are an important means of examining the theory. The chapter begins that process by first of all discussing in theory one way in which environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption can be combined in practice. It examines the concept of citizen-consumption, that is, consumption decisions made with some sort of ethical or political goal in mind, arguing that consumption decisions made with the knowledge and awareness of the global consumption-production chain and its social and environmental impacts, is consistent with environmental citizenship, thus finding one area in which these two disparate fields of theory could be combined. The discussion is also important background for discussion of empirical studies that follows.

The chapter then proceeds to examine literature on the gap between people's awareness of the contribution of our high-consuming way of life to environmental problems like climate change, and their failure to respond by changing their own practices. Studies of citizens who have endeavoured to make changes to their own consumption practices are then examined; using an analytical framework derived from the literature discussed in Chapters Two to Four. The examination of empirical studies serves to provide a basis for further consideration and refinement of environmental citizenship theory. The insights gained in this chapter, combined with the theoretical understanding built up in previous chapters, are also used to design and analyse the case study, which is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Case study of Tasmanian Greens members

The chapter begins with a discussion of the setting for the case study: Tasmania and in particular the development of green politics there, as background to the ensuing identification of members of the Tasmanian Greens party as environmental citizens. The chapter then discusses methodology and presents the results of the survey and interviews on consumption. Several themes are used to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaire and interview responses: these relate to individual responsibility for actions contributing to or aimed at mitigating climate change; issues arising from the extension of citizenship to the private sphere; and barriers, contradictions and inconsistencies in consumption decisions. While the questionnaire responses are able to provide quantitative information on these citizens' practices and beliefs, the questions were not able to elicit the kinds of qualitative responses obtained in the interviews, which add great depth to the case study's consideration of environmental citizenship. Presentation of results on community and political involvement and further analysis of environmental citizenship theory in the light of all of the results is presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Seven: Environmental citizenship as a response to climate change

As well as presenting the case study results on participants' involvement in community-based and political responses to climate change, the chapter analyses the results in the light of issues from the theory and other empirical studies, discussing the need for private as well as public sphere action and the connection between them; political space, motivation for environmental citizenship; individualisation of responses to climate change; and agency. In its conclusions it finds that environmental citizenship provides a useful theoretical framework for citizen action on climate

change. However, the motivational as well as structural barriers from the economic, political and social context and the need for urgent, far-reaching action on climate change mean that it is unlikely to be taken up widely while most citizens of advanced Western democracies are comfortable with the way they live.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

This chapter briefly reviews the thesis and outlines the conclusions reached. It points out that the major contribution of the thesis is its incorporation of concepts and findings from sustainable consumption and pro-environmental behaviour theoretical and empirical research which have enabled a broad-based, realistic evaluation of environmental citizenship theory. While environmental citizenship is a useful theoretical framework for climate change action, which can and does take place at the personal, community and political levels, it is up to the most highly motivated of such citizens, who are able to transcend the many social, economic and political barriers, who must lead the way for other citizens, and governments. The chapter also suggests topics for future research.

1.8 Climate change in Australian politics

The chapter now provides a background section on climate change in Australian politics. This discussion provides necessary background to some of the discussion in later chapters, in particular Three, Six and Seven. As will be seen from the discussion below, the reluctance of governments to take meaningful action on climate change in the context of a highly fossil fuel dependent economy, makes the potential role of environmental citizenship as a framework for citizens' action particularly salient.

Australia has one of the highest per capita level of greenhouse gas emissions in the world (see Appendix One) and has one of the most high-consuming, and wasteful, standards of living (Hamilton 2003; Hamilton, Denniss & Baker 2005). Its political and economic system is entrenched in a growth ethic, or 'fetish' (Hamilton 2003), fuelled by an economy which has become increasingly carbon intensive and dependent on fossil fuel exports (Hall & Taplin 2008; Curran 2009; Crowley 2011). Australia is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to its climate, economy and location, but at the same time should be able to make larger cuts in emissions than other countries (Garnaut 2008b). Australian climate change politics is therefore particularly complex (Hall, NL & Taplin 2008; Curran 2009; Crowley 2012). The following brief summary is

offered to begin the thesis' task of applying the concepts of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption to climate change in the Australian context.

The 'greenhouse effect', as it was known, was one of a range of environmental issues which came to prominence in the late 1980s, during the Hawke Labor government's tenure. Australia participated enthusiastically in the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, where it signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and announced its target of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2000. The government then developed its *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development* (ESD) and associated *National Greenhouse Response Strategy*. While Pakulski and Crook (1998, p. 10) agree that the government's actions reflected increased public concern about the environment, particularly issues such as the greenhouse effect and other pollution which 'threatened the life and health of mainstream Australians', the government was nevertheless reliant on support from environmentalists who had campaigned for its election during the Franklin Dam dispute (Christoff 2002).

By the time the ESD documents were finalised under the new Keating (Labor) government in 1992, they had been 'emasculated' by joint Commonwealth-State committees 'controlled by bureaucrats largely indifferent or hostile to the recommendations' intent', reflecting the dominance of resource interests and the declining influence of environmentalists (Walker 1999; Christoff 2002 p. 28). The influence of resource interests on government policy, including on climate change, was only to increase during the next two decades – under both Liberal and Labor governments (Christoff 2002; Hall & Taplin 2008; Stephenson 2009; Crowley 2010).

The rise of 'brown' issues – water pollution, greenhouse, ozone, soil erosion – as mainstream issues in the 1990s, Pakulski and Crook (1998) argue, facilitated the 'routinisation' of the environment as a political issue as voters' concerns were ameliorated by the major parties' environmental policies and actions. Meanwhile, the classic 'green' issues, such as forests, remained the preserve of a specific social milieu, which increasingly turned to the Greens. Climate change as an issue is a hybrid between green, for its impacts on biodiversity and species survival, and brown, with significant human health and economic impacts (Tranter & Pakulski 1998), evoking widespread public concern since the 1990s. The pervasiveness of GHG emissions throughout Australia's social and economic life, however, means that the social, economic and political implications of abatement action are perhaps more complex and challenging than any other environmental issue and as action becomes more urgent, so public opinion becomes more polarised.

The Howard Liberal-National party (conservative) government abandoned the ESD process in 1997 and proceeded to wreck Australia's reputation as a leader in international environmental forums by its spoiling behaviour in the negotiations for the Kyoto Protocol, and subsequent refusal to ratify (Crowley 2007). Australia's role in international climate change negotiations has been analysed in detail elsewhere (for example Christoff 2005;; Crowley 2007, 2010; Curran 2009); it suffices to note here that under the Howard government Australia's climate change policy response was a much lower priority than focusing on economic growth, particularly from the mining sector (Christoff 2005; Hall and Taplin 2008; Curran 2009). The government's international stance went decidedly against Australian public opinion as shown in numerous polls (Christoff 2002), although it is interesting to note the drop in public concern from 90 percent in 1997 to 78 percent of Australians in 2003 (Crowley 2007). It then declined even further before increasing again to 78 percent in 2007 (TCI 2007). This decline in concern during the height of the Howard government is perhaps an indication that the government's insistence that it would meet the Kyoto target anyway while focusing on the Australian economy and jobs was allaying public concern somewhat: as Crowley (2007) points out, the concerns of environmentalists were simply not a match for the government's overweening economic rationalism and even climate change scepticism, especially during a period when Australians were enjoying an economic boom (Mackay 2007).

The government introduced some climate change policy initiatives, including establishing the Australian Greenhouse Office, introducing the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target (MRET) which aimed to increase renewable energy production to a paltry two percent by 2010, standards and codes of practice for energy efficiency, in conjunction with the states and providing information and grants for householders, including subsidies for installation of solar power (Crowley 2010, Diesendorf in press). However there was no overall regulatory or even market-based scheme: for the most part the government relied on voluntary initiatives. While funding for GHG emission programs increased under the Howard government (Crowley 2010), a large part of that funding was for research into carbon sequestration or 'clean coal' – burying carbon emissions from the coal industry, much criticised by environmentalists and many scientists as extremely expensive, potentially ineffective and very long-term, (for example ACF no date). Little progress was made in reducing GHG emissions; in fact they increased markedly during the Howard years (Crowley 2010; DCCEE 2011c).

Public concern about climate change rose substantially in response to a combination of events in late 2006 (TCI 2007): water shortages faced by some southern cities due to the drought drew attention to scientific predictions of reduced rainfall due to climate change; former US Vice-president Al Gore's climate change film *An Inconvenient Truth* significantly affected public opinion; the UK Stern Review (Stern 2007) effectively negated the Howard government's refusal to act on climate change out of concern that it would disrupt economic growth and employment; and concerns were raised in religious quarters about climate change as a moral issue (Hall & Taplin 2008; Crowley 2007). The government responded to public opinion by setting up an inquiry into establishing an emissions trading scheme, finally agreeing that one should be introduced. However, by then the government's sceptical and obstinate attitude to climate change had turned public opinion against it. In addition, the opposition's new approach, promising a target of 60 percent emissions reduction by 2050 over 1990 levels and an emissions trading scheme in 2011, meant that climate change became one of the most significant issues in the lead-up to the 2007 election campaign (Crowley 2010), widely touted as the world's first 'climate change election', although it was not the decisive issue in the Howard government's loss (Rootes 2008). Public concern almost reached its former heights in the wake of the election: 89 percent in late 2007–March 2008 (TCI 2008).

One of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's first actions on attaining office was to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, in time for the Bali climate change 'roadmap' meeting in February 2008. In opposition, the Labor party had set up an inquiry of its own into climate change policy, headed by economist Professor Ross Garnaut, who called for urgent government action to reduce GHG emissions (Garnaut 2008a). Garnaut's final report, released on 30 September 2008 following wide consultation, recommended a range of policy measures including emissions reduction ranging from 25 percent on 2000 levels by 2020 and 90 percent by 2050, to five percent by 2020, depending on whether a 450 ppm¹ or 550 ppm 'emissions concentration scenario' is adopted, and on progress at the Copenhagen meeting (Garnaut 2008b). By the time Garnaut reported, the 'Global Financial Crisis' had hit and demanded the government's urgent attention. The government's final policy, taken to the Copenhagen meeting, was a target of five percent reduction in 2000 levels of greenhouse gases by 2020, to be increased to fifteen percent if other nations responded similarly, and the development of an emissions trading scheme: the 'Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme' (CPRS) (Australian Government 2008). The target was derided by environmentalists as weak

¹ Parts per million.

(for example ACF 2008) and the CPRS when it was finalised was similarly criticised as being too pro-industry due to subsidised emissions permits: an ‘offensive transfer of taxpayers’ funds to the downtrodden big polluters’ (Macintosh 2009). The Greens voted with the Opposition (though for different reasons) to defeat the scheme in the Senate.

Beside the CPRS the government had continued the Howard government’s grants schemes for households, though bringing in a means test and later reducing the amount by restricting payments to renewable energy credits, and introduced a massively funded (and ill-fated)² scheme to subsidise household insulation, part of its economic stimulus package (DCCEE 2011a). In August 2009 it also increased the re-named Renewable Energy Target to twenty percent, having to adjust the scheme in February 2010 to remove distortions when the scheme became flooded by households moving to solar power (Vincent 2010). Environmentalists still pointed out major problems with the government’s renewable energy policy, including its subsidies to coal power, and inclusion of wood burning as renewable energy (ACF 2010; Australian Greens 2010; Vincent 2010).

The Rudd government’s response to the CPRS’s rejection was to abandon the effort until the end of 2012, citing the difficulty of obtaining bipartisan support and slow international progress (AAP Reuters 2010). Roundly criticised by almost everyone, the government’s backdown on the CPRS caused a major drop in the government’s, and Rudd’s, approval ratings (TCI 2010; Rootes 2011; Crowley 2012). Largely as a result of his disappointing performance on climate change policy, Rudd was replaced as leader by Julia Gillard in June 2010 (Rootes 2011; Crowley, in press). However the government continued to largely ignore climate change, with no new policy announcements other than a ‘Citizens’ Assembly’ to attempt to arrive at consensus (Denniss 2010), which only served to diminish the government’s re-election prospects (TCI 2010; Crowley, in press). Although climate change had declined to a middle order concern for voters by 2010, following the ratification of the Kyoto protocol and the easing of the drought (TCI 2010), it remained a significant enough issue to have a substantial effect on the 2010 election outcome.

The ‘most desultory election campaign in modern political history’ during which both major parties side-stepped the issue of a carbon price (Denniss 2010, p. 1; Rootes 2011) resulted in a hung parliament, with Labor hanging on to government with support from the Greens and independents (Rootes 2011). A Green was elected

² After a number of workers were killed during installation, the scheme was abandoned in February 2010 (ABC News 2010c).

in the lower house for the first time, and the party more than doubled its Senate representation to nine. Included in the negotiations following the election was an agreement that a parliamentary committee would be set up to consider how to set a price on carbon (Denniss 2010). Exit polls confirm the impact of Labor's poor performance on climate change, with 67 percent of respondents believing Gillard failed to provide leadership on climate change and one third of Green voters saying they would have voted Labor if Gillard had not decided to delay the introduction of the CPRS (TCI 2010).

Early in 2011, the government announced that, with the support of the Multi-party Climate Change Committee (which the opposition boycotted), it planned to introduce a price on carbon – widely regarded as a carbon tax – as a first step towards an emissions trading scheme. The Greens support this approach (Milne 2011a), however the government has faced a 'political and commentariat frenzy' over its climate change policy (ABC News 2011a; Bailey, Compston & MacGill 2011; Maher & Ryan 2011; Oakes 2011), and its standing in opinion polls has declined drastically (ABC News 2011b). Nevertheless, the Clean Energy Bill 2001 completed its passage through Parliament on 8 November 2011, and is discussed briefly in Chapter Three.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the concepts which the following chapters will consider in depth: the problem of climate change and its relationship to an individualistic culture and over-consumption in the West; and environmental citizenship, especially in the context of sustainable consumption, as a framework for responding to climate change. The structure of the thesis, its justification, scope, limitations and methodology were then outlined. Finally, the chapter presents a discussion on Climate Change and Australian Politics as background to consideration of climate change later in the thesis.

Chapter Two proceeds to discuss the problem addressed by the thesis: the intersection between individualism, consumerism and climate change.

Chapter Two Citizenship

2.1 Introduction

Citizenship is at the centre of individuals' engagement with their community and government; it is intrinsic to the way in which a society sees itself, and to the relationship between individual lives and that of the society at large.

The chapter starts off the thesis' analytical framework by discussing citizenship theory and identifying recent issues and controversies within it. It thus sets the scene for the thesis' focus on the individual Western citizen and her or his role in both contributing to climate change, as a consumer, and seeking to ameliorate it. The chapter teases out the links between citizenship, politics and individualism, while the links between individualism, consumerism and climate change will be elaborated in Chapter Three.

The chapter proceeds from a general discussion of the meaning of citizenship, noting the lack of an agreed definition, through a brief history to discussion of the revival of citizenship theory and a number of theoretical issues. These issues are detailed through consideration of the two historically dominant 'types' of citizenship: liberal and republican, followed by a detailed consideration of the oft-identified dichotomy: active and passive citizenship.

A major theme to emerge from the literature is the decline of the political – of civic spirit and involvement – in modern liberal democracies. Perhaps ironically, the revival of citizenship, especially republican, is seen as a way of redressing this cynicism and apathy. The rise of neo-liberalism, economic and political globalisation, and associated social and environmental problems providing further impetus for the revival of citizenship (especially republican) and its extension in new and challenging ways.

The territorial basis of citizenship, and cosmopolitanism are briefly discussed as background to the discussion of environmental citizenship in Chapter Four.

2.2 What is citizenship?

Over its long history citizenship has meant different things to different people: Galligan and Roberts' (2004) succinct definition, 'membership of a political community' (p. 1), is broad enough to encompass most of them, yet it holds within it the seed of a huge field of enquiry that has occupied many theorists and thousands of publications in the last few decades (Isin & Turner 2002).

At first glance, the word 'citizenship' conjures a vague notion of national identity, of 'nationality' and some basic right to protection by the nation-state (Isin & Turner 2002; Smith 2002). In democratic societies, it is also associated with political rights to participate in the society's governance, such as voting, standing for election and taking part in debates on political issues (Isin and Turner 2002; Smith 2002). Since the 18th century citizenship has been fundamentally linked to political principles of democracy, equality and self-government: '[t]he citizen is the basic unit of democracy, as the subject is in a monarchy' (Salvaris 2000, p. 77, referring to Davidson 1997).

Beyond participation in the formal processes of government such as voting, citizenship has a broader meaning: active involvement in civic, or public, life (Dagger 2002). Salvaris (2000) also notes that during its centuries of development, citizenship has acquired social, as well as ethical, dimensions: belonging, solidarity, nationalism, and more recently the universal values of dignity and human rights (p. 77). Since the early 20th century it has been associated with the right to social support from the state (Heater 1990; Smith 2002), although this association is a complex one, given that social entitlements are not necessarily linked to formal citizenship status (Heater 1990). Social citizenship – especially the welfare state – has been the subject of much debate in recent decades: a debate which goes beyond the concept of social support to consider rights and duties, individualism versus the common good and the decline in citizens' political and community involvement.

Hudson and Kane (2000b) note that discussions of citizenship are often makeshift and 'transitional to a new synthesis that has not yet appeared', involving tensions between '*citizenship as a moral and political philosophy idea, citizenship as a formal legal status, and citizenship as an administrative category*' (p. 5, emphasis in original). Falk (2002) refers to the 'confused, confusing, and exceedingly complicated pattern of shifting, inconsistent and overlapping allegiances that continue to inform the overall theme of citizenship' (p. 21).

2.3. A brief history of citizenship

The history of citizenship is the history of politics itself, and much has been written on it, including books by Heater (1990) and Rosenberg (1992). Citizenship is an ancient concept; this small space therefore only offers an overview of major themes as a background to a discussion of theoretical issues.

Rosenberg (1992) divides the history of citizenship into two periods: from the Greek city-state to the French revolution, and since then. The major distinguishing

feature he points out is that the 'first citizenship' was small-scale, participatory, exclusive, hierarchical and practised in a limited face-to-face environment; the second is universal, or potentially universal, based upon birth or residence in a territorial state too large for face-to-face politics, where the government rules on the basis of a constitution acceptable to the citizens. In the first, 'politics was frequently intense ... and the community's success and survival depended upon the personal contribution [including military] of each of the relatively few citizens', whereas in the second, government is more remote and '[t]he fierce devotion of the few has been replaced by the slack association of the many' (Riesenberg 1992, p. xix).

The original concept of the citizen was that of a person (within a strictly defined category – see below) actively involved in government. In ancient Athens the government *was* the body of citizens: it was their right as well as their duty to take part in the decision-making and running of the city (Riesenberg 1992; Smith 2002). Aristotle defined a citizen as 'one who shares in ruling and being ruled' (Galligan and Roberts 2004, p. 2). This is the classic 'civic republican' citizenship (Dagger 2002).

While modern-day political theories which aim to promote government of the people by the people all derive from classical Greek and Roman republicanism (Dagger 2002), these ancient city-states can hardly be likened to modern democratic nation-states: to be a citizen in Athens one had to be a property-owning, arms-bearing male, and born or descended from men born in Athens (Dagger 2002; Davidson 1997; MacGregor 2006), thus excluding the great bulk of the population from participation in government.

Riesenberg traces in detail the vicissitudes of citizenship from the ancient city-states through mediaeval times, the Reformation and Renaissance, describing a gradual transformation from citizen to subject. The development of modern citizenship began in earnest in the 17th century, with the emergence of the nation-state from the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, and the formation of the idea of popular sovereignty and the theoretical basis of liberalism (Heater 1990; Ignatieff 1995). In the 18th century many of these ideas bore fruit in revolutions that further embedded the idea of citizenship (Heater 1990). Economic changes – the emergence of new market-based wealth and of course the Industrial Revolution – were also intimately connected with the development of citizenship (Ignatieff 1995; Heater 1990).

The 19th century was a period of intense political activity: the extent to which citizenship, particularly political citizenship, could be extended to the working class was a major issue. Dobson (2003) refers to the 'evolution' of citizenship into the liberal variant, in which 'rights-claiming comes to take precedence over civic virtue'

(p. 35). This comment, however, glosses over the intense political battle for workers' rights, and the equally intense battles for male, and then female, suffrage (Galligan & Roberts 2004). Nevertheless, as Dobson points out, the ancient republicans and medieval citizens would not recognise citizenship in modern liberal democracies.

Much of the story of citizenship is linked with economics: as Riesenberg (1992) points out, citizenship in ancient and mediaeval times often carried with it personal advantage; and citizenship in modern liberal states has developed hand-in-hand with capitalism (Heater 1990). As Ignatieff (1995) comments, the modern interventionist state was created 'essentially to reduce an intolerable moral contradiction between the promise of citizenship and the reality of a market economy' (p. 66) – that is, the gain of civil and political rights had not improved living conditions for the bulk of people. Turner goes further, arguing that 'the "focal point of citizenship" is the tension between the need to moderate scarcity on the one hand and to maintain solidarity on the other' (Turner 1997³ in Dean 2001, p. 500).

In the decades following T H Marshall's famous 1950 publication⁴ on the development of citizenship rights – from civil to political to social (the right to social and economic security) – citizenship was seen as basically meaning rights and entitlements (Dobson 2003). These rights were pursued vigorously during the 1950s–60s and into the seventies by various civil, social and latterly, environmental groups (Dagger 2002; Schudson 2006; Isin and Turner 2002) with major achievements (Galligan & Roberts 2004; Papadakis 2001).

The backlash to this upsurge in rights-claiming and granting and associated new regulatory measures came with economic downturn in the mid-seventies and the reinvigoration of classical economics, under the influence of the Thatcher and Reagan governments in the United Kingdom and United States respectively (McAllister & Wanna 2001). While this change has been referred to as 'neo-liberalism', 'neo-conservatism' or 'economic rationalism', it

has been above all an attack on citizenship as a coercive bargain: citizenship is seen as a commitment to others which does not give "value for money"; in place of civic relations between strangers, it is proposed to substitute market relations because these enable a person not only to choose the extent and degree of his commitment to others but also to put a price on this commitment relative to other expenditures of time and money (Ignatieff 1995, p. 55).

³ Turner, B 1997, Citizenship studies: a general theory, *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, pg. 11.

⁴ Marshall, TH 1950, *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays*, Cambridge University Press.

The welfare state – social citizenship – associated with ‘big government’ and high tax rates, was a major focus of the change, with neo-liberal ideology favouring small government and low taxation (Saunders 1993), although it has many other economic and social manifestations.

Another aspect of the backlash to the rights-claiming decades is the renewed emphasis on responsibilities, which is discussed in section 2.6.

Coincident with the rise of neo-liberalism, economic and political globalisation has been a major influence on citizenship. While liberal citizenship is generally seen as being an Anglo-American tradition, globalisation has seen the spread of liberalism as a political and economic force throughout the world (Purcell 2003). As Falk (2002) comments,

transnational market forces [have successfully induced] nearly every state in the world to adhere to a neo-liberal policy framework that includes minimising social roles and subordinating the provision of public goods, while endorsing ideals of liberalisation and privatisation as enhancing the efficiency of capital and global competitiveness (p. 16).

This quote demonstrates the way neo-liberalism integrates the political and the economic, and thus sets the scene in which citizenship is both viewed and practised – in an increasingly individualised world, that is, a world in which the individual has become much more important than the collective. This focus on the individual and its relationship to ‘passive’ citizenship is discussed further below (section 2.7).

The history of citizenship reveals intense paradoxes at its heart, relating to the constant struggle between private interest and public good (Riesenberg 1992) and its relationship to territoriality and nationality (Davidson 1997; Beiner 1995). MacGregor and Szerszynski (2003) refer to its use as both ‘a tool of social control in the interests of the ruling class and a radical democratic idea that social movements have used to claim and expand rights for the marginalised’ (MacGregor and Szerszynski 2003, p. 6). It is this ‘Janus faced’ character of citizenship that makes it such a complex concept: it is ‘simultaneously coercive and empowering’ (MacGregor and Szerszynski 2003, pp. 6-7).

Citizenship continues to be exclusive, even in many modern democratic states (Davidson 1997; Smith 2002), albeit not to the same degree as in the pre-universal franchise days⁵. In the context of globalisation and mass movements of people in the

⁵ Which occurred at widely differing times; for example while women could vote from the start of the Australian nation-state in 1901, they were excluded in the US until 1920 and France until 1944.

face of environmental and humanitarian disasters, many of the struggles today are over the right to live in decent conditions in another country – social citizenship and human rights (Isin & Turner 2002). Australia is no exception, and is discussed briefly in the next section. Dobson's (2003) concept of post-cosmopolitan citizenship is an attempt to use citizenship as a theoretical means of addressing fundamental issues of global inequality and environmental harm.

2.4 Australian citizenship

In Australia, which originally consisted of British colonies (mostly penal) established in the late 18th–mid-19th centuries, citizenship was 'conceived largely in statist and passive terms' (Hudson & Kane 2000b, p. 2). There has been no revolution here. Australians had 'the rights of "Britons"' until 1948, and the representative of the British monarch still holds the ultimate political power: to accept or reject a government's legislation and even to dismiss the government, as occurred in 1975 (Davidson 2000; Salvaris 2000). Australians, for this and other reasons, according to these authors, still do not possess full democratic citizenship.

The 'Janus-faced' nature of citizenship has been particularly acute in Australia's short history as a nation-state: the infamous 'white Australia' policy, aimed at excluding non-European migrants; mandatory detention and instances of maltreatment of asylum seekers; and repression, exclusion and maltreatment of indigenous people are the most notorious examples of the dark side of citizenship in Australia (Davidson 1997; Galligan and Roberts 2004; Hudson and Kane 2000b). After a flowering of more tolerant and welcoming attitudes from the early 1970s, the conservative Howard government (1996–2007) was accused of resuscitating the white Australia policy through its treatment of illegal immigrants and refugees (Galligan and Roberts 2004) and its repressive attitudes and policies towards Aboriginal people, including the Northern Territory Intervention (Anderson 2011). Interestingly, the succeeding Labor governments have continued some of these policies in modified form (Anderson 2011).

On the other side of the citizenship coin, the Australian state made strong and early progress in developing conditions to enable a reasonable standard of living for (included) citizens, for example centralised wage fixing, pensions and public housing (Cox 2000), and Australia was a leader in granting universal franchise for citizens

(apart from indigenous people, who were not granted the vote until 1962 at the federal level and citizenship in 1967). With the rise of economic rationalism in the mid-late 1990s, however, social citizenship as well came under strain, and there have been continuing issues over the provision of social welfare and treatment of marginalised citizens, such as the mentally ill and homeless.

Nevertheless, citizenship *per se* is not an emotive concept for most Australians, being associated with 'a dry and rather formal legal category' (Salvaris 2000, p. 78). The wealth of political and policy issues surrounding Australian citizenship, and the role played by an active and engaged civil society in Australian politics are discussed in books published around the centenary of Federation (2001), such as Davidson (1997), Galligan and Roberts (2004) and Hudson and Kane (2000a). It is not possible to cover these issues further here, since the focus of the thesis is the relationship between the individual citizen, consumerism and climate change, although the role of the environment movement in Australian politics is particularly interesting, as discussed briefly in sections 1.8 and especially 6.2.1 in the background to the case study. The decline in citizens' political engagement in liberal democracies, including Australia, is discussed below in section 2.7.

2.5 Citizenship theory

2.5.1 Introduction

Citizenship is a complex and contested field (Dean 2001; Isin & Turner 2002), having evolved in different ways in different societies (Turner 1993b). It seems there are as many different theories or perspectives on citizenship as there are authors. In fact, the field is so broad that new 'types' of citizenship have been identified, generally corresponding to social movements or identity politics, for example sexual, corporate, cyber, media, economic and environmental citizenship (Bell 2005; Hudson & Kane 2000b; MacGregor & Szerszynski 2003). Heater (1990) wonders whether the concept of citizenship is being asked to bear too much of a load, '[a]s more and more diverse interests identify particular elements for their doctrinal and practical needs...' (p. 283). MacGregor and Szerszynski (2003) note that as political and social movements become paired up with citizenship, the latter becomes 'an ever more complex and contested idea; it takes on so many different meanings that it sometimes becomes difficult to establish any core meaning', yet it is one of the most 'compelling concepts in contemporary political discourse' (p. 2).

It is therefore not a simple matter to give a comprehensive overview of citizenship theory (Purcell 2003). The following is offered as a brief introduction, as background to a detailed discussion of environmental citizenship in Chapter Four.

2.5.2 Revival of citizenship theory

Citizenship theory has undergone a transformation in recent decades. Not just as a theory, however: citizenship has been used by governments, political parties, non-government organisations (NGOs) and social movements to 'articulate political projects across the political spectrum' (Dobson 2003, p. 4; Heater 1990; Hindess 1993). Much of the stimulus for the revival has been the international dominance of neo-liberal ideology and economic and technological globalisation (Salvaris 2000; Falk 2002). Citizenship has thus been taken up in an instrumental way, to address questions of social and political justice. Citizenship seems to answer because it is already part of our traditions: it 'elicits positive, if vague' responses, offers possibilities for further development and is 'less immediately divisive than socialist discourse' (Hudson & Kane 2000b, p 1-2). Citizenship, however, is a flexible concept: '[c]onservatives use the rhetoric of citizenship to insist on duties and community service' (Hudson & Kane 2000b, p. 1).

Questions have been raised and discussed at length about the appropriateness and capacity of the nation-state as the sole repository of citizenship in a globalised world (Hudson and Kane 2000b; Dobson 2003; Heater 1990; Dower & Williams 2002). Purcell (2003) points out that not only has globalisation destabilised traditional forms of citizenship, but new forms of citizenship springing up in response to globalisation are undermining the traditional nexus between citizenship and the nation-state.

The revival of citizenship is seen by some theorists as to some extent 'misguided', either for being nostalgic for a supposed earlier period of 'self-governing communities of citizens' (Hindess 2000, p. 69) or as not offering anything new beyond 'familiar perspectives of democracy and justice' (Kymlicka and Norman 1995, p. 300). To Dagger (2002), however, the revival of interest in citizenship is due to the belief that participation in public life is 'neither as intensive or as extensive as it ought to be' (p. 152). He does not see this as some kind of harking back to a golden age; rather, it is because citizenship has failed to live up to its original promise: that participation in self-government would be available to almost the entire people, not just the well-off. Hindess, despite his criticism, sees value in the 'language of citizenship' (p. 73) as it

helps maintain political debate and campaigns against 'arbitrary impositions of governments and their mistreatment of weak minority groups' (p 73).

Citizenship, therefore, is looked to by many as a means of reviving flagging civic spirit in liberal democracies, even as a way of redressing injustices (Isin and Turner 2002). However, citizenship has also been used throughout history by governments to manipulate and dominate populations, for example the Committee of Public Safety of the French Revolution (Ignatieff 1995), nationalism and racial exclusion during the 19th century (Isin and Turner 2002; Davidson 1997) and ultra-nationalism and fascism in the 20th century (Beiner 1995; Ignatieff 1995). While less extreme, Australia is not immune from this manipulation of citizenship in an exclusionist and nationalistic way, as discussed above. As Hindess (2000) points out, there is much promise in the language of citizenship; however its history (and present in many places) reveals a darker side, which should be borne in mind when using citizenship to bolster social and political causes.

2.5.3 Multiple or differential citizenship

Recent citizenship theory has recognised that people can have 'multiple citizenships', not only in terms of geography, but on a much larger scale: political 'space' (national, local, global), identity, social cause (Purcell 2003; Heater 1990; Dobson 2003).

Writing in the Australian context, Hudson (2000) uses the term 'differential citizenship': citizenship varies depending on the context and the capacity in which it is being exercised – as a member of a club or religious group, a workplace representative or as a social or environmental activist (Hudson 2000, p. 16). Hudson sees that accepting the existence of plural citizenships does not 'exclude a strong form of political citizenship allied to specific arts of governance'; in fact managing differential citizenships may require an emphasis on 'citizenship as a form of negotiated settlement with the national community which confers entitlements and duties' (Hudson 2000, p. 22). In other words, it is the traditions of citizenship, formally embodied in our political and legal systems, which provide the necessary structure to enable citizenship to be exercised in a multiplicity of ways. Environmental citizenship, discussed in Chapter Four, is one issue around which citizens may be engaged politically, at a number of different levels, without detracting from any larger concept of citizenship as a member of the Australian polity.

2.5.4 Issues in citizenship theory

There are a number of polarising trends or dichotomies evident in the citizenship literature; one of the most important is between individualism and the common good (Heater 1990), of which a sub-set is the 'battle between rights and duties for the status of citizenship's defining characteristic' (Dobson 2003, p. 42). Other consistent themes in the theoretical literature are the public and the private citizen and whether citizenship may exist beyond the nation-state (Heater 1990).

The dichotomy between liberal and republican citizenship (or civic republicanism) encompasses some of the most important themes in the theory, although this categorisation is often regarded by theorists as simplistic, elastic or potentially misleading (for example Hudson and Kane 2000b; Dobson 2003). Nevertheless, the distinction is often used in the theoretical literature and is useful in conceptualising the major issues facing citizenship today.

2.5.4.1 Republican citizenship

Republican citizenship has an ancient pedigree, dating back to 6th–4th century BC Greece (Dobson 2003). In Ancient Athens, if a citizen did not take part in public affairs as he was expected to, he could be mocked; in fact the opposite of a *polites* (or citizen) was an *idiotes*, a person who could not or would not participate in public affairs (Dagger 2002). No longer so extreme, contemporary republican citizenship is seen by many to set the standard for good citizenship: commitment to the public good through acceptance of responsibilities as well as rights, manifested through civic involvement, taking part in public affairs (Dagger 2002; Barry 2006; Dean 2001; Dobson and Bell 2006). It also emphasises a moral conception of politics (Barry 2006; Dagger 2002; Dobson & Bell 2006).

The concept of 'civic virtue' is fundamental to republican citizenship: this virtue is expressed through the citizen's civic engagement and commitment to the common good (Dagger 2002; Isin & Turner 2002). Through the dual operation of virtue and obligation 'there is an important connection between virtuous citizens and effective and living institutions.... An autonomous citizen will want to be an active and involved participant in society' (Isin and Turner 2002, p. 8). Republican citizenship emphasises 'civic' bonds: political community as a good in itself.

Our humanity would be diminished if our lives lacked a focus for this civic dimension of existence ... This ambitious claim is a modern (and no doubt watered down and liberalized) version of Aristotle's ancient claim that human beings are by nature political animals, that without full

membership in some kind of polis, we live a life that is less than fully human (Beiner 1995, pp. 14-15).

While in an extreme form republican citizenship can mean involvement in politics to the exclusion of all else, self-interest is an acceptable, even positive, part of it: as citizens become more engaged in their community they gain a sense of self which is often lost in modern, fragmented lives (Dagger 2002). Interestingly, Dagger refers back to the liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill, when he points out that active citizenship has an educative role through developing people's skills and confidence, and a sense of how their lives are involved with others: participation in public life works to overcome 'pernicious' individualism through 'fostering the individual's sense of himself or herself as a part of, rather than apart from, the public' (Dagger 2002, p. 152).

Republican citizenship has been criticised on the ground that it threatens pluralism, by denying 'difference', for example gender and race (Dagger 2002). It has struggled to overcome its patriarchal origins (Ignatieff 1995). The republican citizen was expected to not only be involved in public affairs, but to be prepared to defend the city-state; this and the exclusion of women historically gave republican citizenship an essentially masculine character (MacGregor 2006). At a more practical level, as Kymlicka and Norman (1995) point out, it is markedly at odds with the way most people in the modern world understand both citizenship and the good life: they find the greatest happiness in their family life, work, religion, or leisure, not in politics.

Despite these criticisms republican citizenship, with its appeal to public-spiritedness and the common good, is making a comeback, theoretically at least. To Dagger (2002), republican citizenship appeals for unity in diversity, in striving for the common good of the whole of society. While its relevance at a time when the nation-state is said to be losing its power has been questioned, Dagger comments that it is precisely the challenge of globalisation that is making this kind of active citizenship more important than ever: 'the republican advice is to build community' (2002, p. 155).

To Barry (2006), one of the most valuable features of republican citizenship is its 'explicit commitment to freedom as non-domination' (p. 25; see also Pettit 2000). Another is the civic republican view that 'citizens are made not born', that education, practice and critical reflection are vital if citizens are to contribute to their society, and sometimes they need a reminder from the state (p. 26). Barry (2006) believes that the state has a role in promoting and encouraging citizenship practice in ways that are in keeping with non-domination and liberty. His perhaps controversial views on the role

of the state in promoting and encouraging citizen practice are discussed further in the context of 'sustainability citizenship' (Chapter Four).

2.5.4.2 *Liberal citizenship*

The 'primary value [of liberal citizenship] is to maximize individual liberty' (Schuck 2002). Citizens in a liberal state are free to form their own opinions, pursue their own 'projects' and business interests without state interference, except where their interests may cause harm to others. It is basically left up to citizens to

decide what kind of citizen to be – including the possibility that they will decide to forswear any political activity at all, preferring to retreat into an entirely private world of family, market transactions, and self-absorption and gratification, into a world largely indifferent to any public goods not generated within these parochial domains' (Schuck 2002, p. 137).

The role of the liberal state 'is utilitarian, namely to maximize the happiness of the majority, but this "happiness" is most effectively and efficiently measured by their individual wealth' (Isin & Turner 2002, p. 7).

Liberalism in essence sees the public interest in the pursuit by individuals of their own interests, in the context of freedom from state interference, broad protection of freedom of inquiry, speech and worship, and ownership of private property (Schuck 2002). It has no conception of the common good 'beyond that which emerges from the essentially uncoordinated actions of masses of individuals' (Dobson 2003, p. 58), and is seen as giving too little attention to 'fostering the public virtues that lead people to do their duties as citizens' (Dagger 2002, p. 146).

To Davidson (1997), one of the great strengths of liberal polities is the relative openness of their formal citizenship rules, compared to those of states that rely on birth or descent. However, much of the focus of the literature is on the aspect of liberalism that promotes individualism, probably because of what is seen by many as the negative impacts of neo-liberalism on citizen participation. Thus, from Schuck (2002): '[l]iberal polities do not merely permit their citizens to retreat into their private pursuits if they wish; liberal ideology ... affirmatively valorizes the privatization of personality, commitment and activity' (p. 137).

Liberal citizenship has often been accused of lacking any component of virtue (Dobson 2003), however Dobson points out that virtues like tolerance, self-criticism, moderation, reasonableness and non-discrimination have been ascribed to liberal

citizenship. He goes on to note, though, that these are the virtues of any democratic polity if it is to have legitimacy.

In classic liberal citizenship theory, citizens pay taxes and obey the law in return for the state looking after such matters as law and order, welfare, infrastructure and defence; and also, importantly, not interfering with aspects of the citizens' 'private' lives (Williams 2002). Like civic republicanism, citizenship is a public matter (Dobson 2003), although this is not entirely clear as 'liberalism has a remarkably thin theory of the public realm in which [non-self-interested] interests might be expressed' (Kane 2000, p.230). As Williams (2002) points out, in theory the liberal state would not 'interfere' in how citizens, for example, spend money, raise children, recreate or participate in the political process, however it is possible to give examples of legislation in each of these areas. No doubt there are similar anomalies in republican citizenship, for example the public good will clearly involve sometimes regulating matters that would be considered 'private', like the ages of school leaving and sexual consent. Nevertheless, the *theory* is clear – both types of citizenship are nominally carried out in the public sphere.

2.6 The citizenship contract

One of the main criticisms of citizenship in modern liberal democracies is the supposed imbalance between rights and responsibilities. At this point it is worth noting that the terms 'responsibility', 'obligation' and 'duty' are all used in the citizenship literature, and there has been much academic debate about them. The term 'responsibility' is perhaps broader than the other two (Kent 2009), as it has been used in the eco-political literature since its inception when referring to the relationship between human beings and the rest of nature; while certainly not an area free of debate, it is perhaps more of a neutral term than 'duty' or 'obligation' which have moral, religious and even legal overtones. The term responsibility is therefore the one used in this thesis, unless paraphrasing or quoting another's work.

The imbalance between rights and responsibilities was the basis of the late 1970s neo-liberal backlash led by the Thatcher government in the UK against the 'rights' movements of the 1950s to 1970s (Isin and Turner 2002). Social citizenship and the welfare state were said to have caused a decline in civic values because the state had taken on many of the support roles previously carried out in the community, causing people to develop an entitlement mentality (Saunders 1993).

Recent theoretical work, for example by Dobson (2003) and Dean (2001), has critically examined the neo-liberal revival of the language of contract, originally

applied in the citizenship context in the 17th century, and its implications for citizens' sense of themselves as members of a political community. Dean (2001) places republican citizenship at the 'solidaristic', cohesive, end of the axis he proposes, with liberal citizenship at the 'contractarian' end, being informed by a 'commitment to liberty and the idea that to have *freedom* an individual must enter a contract with society and exchange some element of her/his sovereignty in return for a guarantee of social order' (Dean 2001, p. 496).

Dobson's interpretation is different: he sees in both liberal and republican citizenship a relationship of reciprocity between citizen and state, which in the 'dominant modern understanding ... is underpinned by an ideological commitment to contract' (p. 48). However the difference between reciprocity and contract is important: as Dobson himself points out, in a contractual situation the ultimate source of motivation is the threat of sanction or penalty, while reciprocity is a characteristic of mutuality. He quotes Harris (1999)⁶: 'contractual relations have come to substitute for the common bonds of reciprocity and mutuality which shaped social citizenship in the earlier part of the 20th century' (Dobson 2003, p. 46). Many other authors emphasise the republican citizen's commitment to the common good rather than any contractual engagement with the state.

Janoski (1998) believes that rights and obligations within citizenship theory need a better 'conceptual substructure': an explanation of how citizens balance their own rights and obligations relative to their citizenship behaviour (p. 5). He bases his discussion on citizens' 'self-' or 'other-interested' behaviour and their manifestation in 'restricted' or 'generalised' exchange (p. 76). Restricted exchange can result in 'demanding citizens',⁷ who 'pursue their rights without any regard to obligations or repaying society for rights'; generalised exchange, on the other hand,

preserves th[e] realm of political and economic equality. It requires patience, an ability to look out for the larger group or societal results, and the general building of social trust. Rights are no longer tightly connected to obligations, and people give away time and concern for others, invest in socially aware projects and voluntary activities, and even pay taxes for widespread social results rather their own immediate returns. ... Being overly concerned with "What's in it for me" is not part of citizenship (Janoski 1998, p. 90).

⁶ Harris, Patricia (1999), 'Public Welfare and Liberal Governance', in *Poststructuralism, Citizenship and Social Policy*, Routledge, London.

⁷ Referring to Mouritzen, Poul, 1987. 'The Demanding Citizen: Driven by Policy, Self-Interest or Ideology?' *European Journal of Political Research*, 15(4), 417-35.

To Janoski, citizenship in a democratic society requires more than the self-interested individualism of restricted exchange, however it is this type of exchange which dominates in liberal societies.

The neo-liberal revival of the language of contract in citizenship did not stop with the governments of Thatcher and Reagan (or the Howard government in Australia) (Kane 2000), however, but has been adopted to some degree by the centre-left: the slogan 'No rights without responsibilities' was coined by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's 'favourite intellectual', Anthony Giddens (Dobson 2003, p. 43). The matching of rights with responsibilities appears, therefore, to represent a new consensus between the right and left (McKnight 2005). As McKnight (2005) puts it

...focusing on rights is not enough. Social change conceived of as the spreading and advancement of abstract "rights" neglects the plain truth that, in real communities and societies, rights crucially involve obligations – such as the obligation to do something in exchange for support. This lesson applies to many industrialised countries, as well as other communities where the extreme exercise of individual rights is destroying the bonds with and respect towards others on which communities depend' (pp. 164-5) (see also Keating 2001).

In Australia, 'mutual obligation' has been applied in the welfare policies of both the former Howard conservative and the Rudd and Gillard Labor governments (Albrechtson 2008; Galligan & Roberts 2004; Jericho 2011). In addition, federal government inaction on climate change and the voluntaristic nature of what policies do exist have until very recently given households and individuals the responsibility for action (Kent 2009), as discussed later in this thesis.

This new 'consensus' on rights and responsibilities is not without its critics. Like Dobson (2003), Dean (2001) criticises the 'narrow contractarianism' characterising modern citizenship, at least in the UK under Tony Blair's 'Third Way'. MacGregor and Szerszynski (2003) point out the use by socially progressive governments in the UK and Canada of a commitment to 'community, inclusivity and empowerment' combined with 'neoliberal economic policies to facilitate a scaling back of government and the welfare state in order to enhance national performance in the global economy' (p. 7).

Drawing on Apel⁸ Dean looks to ‘co-responsibility’ as the basis for citizenship, ‘because responsibility is by nature co-operative and negotiated’ (p.501). He sees the everyday experiences of the kinds of obligations that are ‘socially negotiated over time, within relationships and between generations’ as providing a sounder basis than the legal fiction of contract ‘for conceptualizing citizenship and for envisaging ways of achieving a just and sustainable distribution of resources’ (p. 501).

Dean points out the inherent vulnerability of human beings – we rely on mutual co-operation and support to survive. Following ‘advocates of deeper forms of citizenship’ (like Clarke 1996) and feminist theorists (like Sevenhuijsen 1998, 2000⁹), Dean argues that an ‘ethic of care’ has to be an essential part of citizenship if it is going to cope with modern social and environmental challenges. It is the ‘crucial link between an abstract principle of co-responsibility and the substantive practice by which we continually negotiate our rights and duties’ (p. 502) (see also Barry 2006 and MacGregor 2006). Dobson’s response – post-cosmopolitanism – is discussed in Chapter Four.

To many authors the ‘triumph’ of the liberal view of citizenship (Isin and Turner 2002, p. 9) – the dominance of contractual relations and increasing association of citizenship with individuals’ rights – is associated with a tendency of citizens to be passive, apolitical and self-interested.

2.7 Active, passive and ‘good’ citizenship

2.7.1 Active versus passive citizenship

Like all categorisations of citizenship, the distinction between active and passive citizenship has been the subject of academic comment and differing opinions. The dichotomy, however, offers a way in to the debate on declining public participation.

Generally, citizenship is associated with people who have the *right* to have a say in the way their society functions, especially the right to vote. This does not tell the full story, however, for example although they were citizens, women of the Australian colonies, like those of other countries, had to campaign for the right to vote so that they could then influence the way their colony (and soon country) was governed. The concept of active citizenship is even more difficult to pin down: the original concept of

⁸ Apel, K (1980), *Towards the Transformation of Philosophy*, Routledge, London; and (1991), ‘A planetary macro-ethics for humankind’, in E Deutsch (ed.), *Culture and Modernity: East—West Philosophical Perspectives*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

⁹ Sevenhuijsen, S (1998), *Citizenship and the Ethics of Care*, Routledge, London; and (2000), ‘Caring in the third way: the relation between obligation, responsibility and care in “Third Way” discourse’, *Critical Social Policy*, vol. 20, no. 1.

citizenship *was* active involvement in the running of the government, and civic virtue consisted of devoting oneself to the common good. Such dominating involvement in public affairs is no longer practical, or desirable, for all citizens.

Turner (1993a) developed a theory of citizenship derived from the origins of citizenship in particular societies: whether it was developed from below, or handed down from above, and whether it was developed in private or in public. Where citizenship develops in a revolutionary struggle, for example in France (and the United States), an active and radical tradition of citizenship tends to be generated; whereas if citizenship is merely handed down from above, citizenship is likely to be passive and rather negative. However, as discussed in section 2.7.3, given the decline in active citizen engagement in liberal-democratic societies regardless of the genesis of the society's citizenship, it seems that whether citizens place greater value on the private or public sphere is the more important factor, and that of course is due to broader political and cultural factors, such as the rise of neo-liberalism.

Janoski's (1998) typology of six 'citizen-selves' shows no clear delineation between active and passive citizenship: it depends on a person's social motivation and 'value involvement', that is, whether they identify with the regime of the day, are alienated from it or simply apathetic. In turn, the way a person behaves as a citizen largely depends on factors like education, family background and socialisation, and type of exchange may be internalised and unconscious. Janoski (1998) identifies certain dominant citizenship behaviours with specific types of regime: liberal, pluralist, states will have more opportunistic, cynical and marginalised (fatalistic) citizens, while social democratic ones will have more active and incorporated citizens.

Dobson (2003) contends that the active/passive divide can be too simplistic, particularly the usual association between liberal (rights-claiming) and passive citizenship. The 'citizen-consumer' can be a very active individual: 'comparing prices, demanding satisfaction from public services, and chasing up failures of service delivery when they occur' (Dobson 2003, p. 40). (This person would be Janoski's (1998) opportunistic citizen). Rather than the dual-contrast approach of Turner, Dobson uses four contrasts – rights/duties, virtue/non-virtue-based, public-private and territorial/non-territorial – which complicate the liberal/republican comparison and point to the need for a third type, post-cosmopolitan citizenship.

Barry (2006) offers a refreshingly straightforward perspective: there is a continuum from 'minimalist, liberal notions of passive citizenship to full-fledged civic republican ones of active and participative citizenship' (p. 25). To Barry, active citizenship is 'critical' in that it does not just accept situations as given but examines

underlying political, economic and social factors and strives against inequality and injustice; and it comes from civil society – from the bottom-up, not top-down.

2.7.2 Participation and the ‘good citizen’

Some of the literature refers to ‘good’ citizenship. Recent definitions confuse any distinction between good and active citizenship, and whether political involvement is an essential element in either. For example, to Galligan and Roberts (2004) good citizenship depends on characteristics such as civility, respect, tolerance for difference, and an ability to ‘discern between what is worthy of respect and pride and what is shameful in national life’; it requires commitment to the public good, including willingness to ‘fight and argue for what should be preserved and enhanced, and what should be changed in law and policy’ (p. xvi). Such definitions include characteristics of both republican and liberal traditions.

Galligan and Roberts (2004) point to a specifically *political* conception of good citizenship, and Heater (1990) notes that while neighbourliness and helpfulness, including voluntary community work, are part of good citizenship, they are not enough: a ‘citizen by very nature of his status is a morally free and autonomous person. Neither subject nor serf, he has the responsibility of using his sense of right and his political judgement’ (p. 200). The good citizen is therefore politically involved in one way or another, such as membership of a political party, protesting, even just taking part in political discussion, thus ‘discharg[ing] his obligation to help shape the general will’ (p. 199).

However, other discussions of good citizenship do not seem to require a specifically political element, for example to Smith (2002) to be a ‘good citizen’ is to contribute valuably to the well-being of one’s political, social or cultural community at some personal cost. Dagger (2002) similarly includes community involvement in his concept of good citizenship.

Dean’s (2001) idea of citizenship as co-responsibility and including an ethic of care would suggest that community involvement is an equally valid part of citizenship. In particular, Dean emphasises the importance of everyday, rather than merely theoretical, understandings of citizenship (while not giving any examples), and perhaps the difference, if there is any, between passive, good and active citizenship lies in the everyday meanings of these terms (if they are, in fact, used – an issue which is striking for its absence from the theoretical literature). The vast range of community-based, non-political activity that takes place in modern liberal

democracies involves active community engagement and would no doubt come within many people's definitions of 'good' citizenship.

However, sometimes 'bad' citizenship is referred to – for example, disobeying road rules, trying to avoid paying tax. The corollary of this is that 'good' citizenship could be associated simply with diligent fulfilment of citizenship obligations, for example filling out tax returns on time, stopping at orange lights, putting out the recycling. In this understanding of 'good' and 'bad' citizenship, there is no reference to political involvement, and given that this understanding (at least of 'bad' citizenship) exists, it is perhaps best to refer only to 'active' citizenship in the context of political involvement.

Active citizenship is discussed in depth by MacGregor and Szerszynski (2003) based on their analysis of the work of Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault. Without going into the details of their analysis, one point that emerges is that citizenship as doing what is expected, for example recycling, glosses over the underlying social and economic factors that would be aired in a more active kind of citizenship. Their discussion is in the context of environmental citizenship and its tendency to be co-opted by governments, corporations and NGOs; that is, citizens are exhorted to behave in certain ways, and citizenship becomes a form of social control rather than a political end in itself. To MacGregor and Szerszynski (2003), '[i]n a sense citizenship is always about the meaning of citizenship itself, and never about following normalized, pre-given codes of behaviour that are based in or supportive of pre-political scientific facts of life' (p. 12); it involves 'continuously cultivating a citizenly attitude towards environmental and other issues', meaning not simply changing private thoughts and attitudes but 'learning the habits of engaging in *public* thought' (p. 14). They are concerned that citizenship and voluntarism are becoming equated through the focus on 'individual citizenly behaviour', which takes the onus off structural economic and environmental issues (p. 12). Other writers on environmental citizenship are wary of voluntarism as well, as discussed in Chapter Four.

This analysis points to one of the key dichotomies in citizenship: that between its top-down or bottom-up character; in this context, the former refers to programs devised by the state and imposed on citizens, or behaviour exhorted by the state and other agencies, such as influential NGOs, while the latter refers to political activity aimed at achieving change. However, there could be a grey area in-between; an area of cross-over between the two, which this thesis hopes to illuminate with reference to environmental citizenship.

The term 'good' citizenship, therefore, should be treated with care, because of these connotations of doing the right thing as defined by authority, and also because of the complex issues surrounding morality and citizenship, which the word 'good' could raise. Barry's (2006) continuum of citizenship is a useful way to conflate these differences: whether it is being 'good' or 'active', there is a range of types and degrees of citizenship activity.

2.7.3 The decline of the political

A number of commentators have observed a decline in participation in public affairs in recent decades (Civic Experts Group 1994; Davis 2001; Smith 2002). Voting turnout and identification with political parties has been decreasing (compulsory voting makes it difficult to judge political participation in Australia) (Davis 2001), and cynicism and apathy are common in advanced liberal democracies, including Australia (Civic Experts Group 1994; McAllister & Wanna 2001). Much of the literature on the decline in citizen participation does not clearly distinguish between political involvement and community activity but refers to 'civic' engagement or participation, and, as noted above, there are different views on the necessity for specifically *political* activity. Davis (2001), however, clearly includes membership of not-for-profit organisations and voluntary work as indicators of 'active democracy' which are declining (p. 2). The discussion below follows his lead, including both political and community involvement unless there is a need to discuss them separately.

Davis (2001) puts the decline in participation down to a decline in trust, not just in government but in public and private institutions equally. The loss of confidence began in the mid-1960s, in a period of prosperity, and has continued at 'about the same rate through peace, war, boom and bust, oil crises and times of plenty, good and bad leaders, moments of national triumph and of sorrow'¹⁰ (Davis 2001, p. 3), indicating that the causes lie outside the political process.

Many see the rise of neo-liberalism (or economic rationalism) with its focus on individualism and materialism as the root of this decline. It has loosened civic bonds (Dagger 2002; Isin and Turner 2002), reduced politics to the market place (Dagger 2002), led to the marginalisation of workers, the degradation of education (Isin and Turner 2002) and the rise of the demanding citizen (Janoski 1998). On the other hand, most people in advanced liberal democracies now have richer personal and social

¹⁰ Referring to Orren, G 1997, 'Fall from Grace: The Public's Loss of Faith in Government', in JS Nye, PD Zelikow & DC King, eds, *Why Americans Don't Trust Government*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, p. 81.

lives than ever before, making political involvement less important and attractive (Kymlicka & Norman 1995; Smith 2002). The rise of television and other technology has also changed social behaviour (Davis 2001; Falk 2002). Above all, the focus on the individual, the hallmark of liberalism, is the basis of these changes.

To Salvaris (2000), the elevation of the market place as the locus of the political and social challenges the fundamental ethic on which citizenship depends – the concept of the public good, and values like tolerance and compassion. He quotes from Ormerod: '[t]he promotion of the concept that the untrammelled, self-sufficient competitive individual will maximise human welfare damages deeply the possibility of ever creating a truly cohesive society in which everyone can participate'¹¹. Against this, Saunders (1993) presents the neo-liberal view: that the liberal social order of market capitalism can generate the conditions for full citizenship, which is undermined by the pursuit of egalitarianism and 'construction of socialist political institutions' (p 57).

Reasons proposed by Heater (1990) for lack of participation relate to political institutions and their effect on citizens' attitudes: low-key monitoring of public affairs rather than active participation may be a sign of satisfaction rather than apathy; if participation is met with bureaucracy and frustration, it will be seen as ineffectual and apathy, or violence, will result; and people may be intimidated by or distanced from governmental institutions, resulting in alienation rather than commitment.

Davis (2001) and others discuss the influential work of Robert Putnam, who associates a fall in participation by Americans in community organisations with an individualistic approach to life. This fall has resulted in a decline in 'social capital', the 'features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives ...' (Putnam 1995¹²: pp. 664-5, in Davis, p. 3). Social capital helps people make sense of their world, and enables 'civic engagement' – people's connections with the life of their communities and, by extension, the politics of their nation' (Davis 2001, p. 3). Davis points out that while membership of traditional community groups is declining, that of social movements and single-interest groups is increasing.

Schudson (2006) discusses the work of Putnam, and Theda Skocpol¹³, who has similarly documented the apparent decline in civic and political participation in the US

¹¹ Ormerod, P 1994, *The Death of Economics*, London, Faber and Faber, p. 211.

¹² Putnam, RD 1995, 'Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 664-83).

¹³ Skocpol, T. (2003) *Diminished Democracy* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press).
Skocpol, T. (1996) Unravelling from above, *The American Prospect*, 25, March–April, pp. 20–25.

in the last 50 years. He argues that both disparage 'activity that is insufficiently oriented to the public good, transitory, individualistic, and lacking in risk or sacrifice' (p. 591). Schudson finds positive attributes of the varieties of civic participation experienced in the US today and criticised by Putnam and Skocpol, such as NIMBYism, one-off public events, legal challenges, self-help groups and the professionalisation of non-profit organisations (that is they are run by professional staff rather than volunteers, who they co-ordinate). Each in its own way either has real or potential civic benefits. He says the critics of contemporary American political life fail to recognise this because they are locked into 'past ideals of civic life' (p. 592).

Kymlicka and Norman (1995), too, are not convinced that modern social problems can necessarily be traced to a decline in good citizenship: '[i]f there are increasing crime and decreasing voting rates, it is equally true that we are more tolerant, respectful of each others' rights, and more committed to democracy and constitutionalism than were previous generations (Macedo 1990, pp. 6-7¹⁴). So it remains unclear how we should be promoting good citizenship and how urgent it is to do so' (p. 301).

Smith's broad definition of citizenship, embracing involvement in all kinds of civic associations, leads him to comment: '[i]ronically, it seems that as citizenship has become ubiquitous, it has also become depoliticized, at least in so far as participation in formal self-governance is concerned' (Smith 2002, p. 112). Smith does not see the decline in political involvement and activism as necessarily a bad thing, if people are active in associations that are important to them, but it would be concerning if it meant adoption of policies that perpetuated or emphasised divides in society. To many authors, this is indeed what has been happening under neo-liberal governments (Salvaris 2000; Isin and Turner 2002; Galligan and Roberts 2004). A number of theorists have also expressed concern about the depoliticisation that comes with voluntarism, an approach to citizenship used by both neo-liberal and centre-left governments.

Davis (2001) and others point out that *traditional* politics has simply become less important to people. Young people, especially, have turned to the electronic campaigns of social and environmental NGOs and those run by broad-based campaign organisations such as GetUp! in Australia and Avaaz internationally to express their political views (Huijser & Little 2008; Vromen 2008). However, the ease with which citizens can take part in such campaigns – at the click of a computer button – raises

¹⁴ Macedo, Stephen 1990, *Liberal Values: Citizenship, Virtue, and Community*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

questions about the depth of such citizenship participation, which go beyond the scope of this thesis.

2.7.4 Community and citizenship

This discussion of community and its apparent erosion brings to mind another form of citizenship: communitarianism. Writers from this perspective, who believe that ‘the good society is built through mutual support and group action, not atomistic choice and individual liberty’, are especially critical of the apparent destruction of community bonds in modern liberal societies (Janoski 1998, pp. 18-19; Kane 2000). However, the term ‘communitarianism’ has become very broad, meaning different things to different theorists (and politicians); it has also been associated with ultra-nationalism and fascism (Davidson 1997; Dagger 2002; Kane 2000) and is not discussed further in this thesis.

The emphasis on community in some branches of eco-political theory has also been criticised as ill-considered and unrealistic in terms of its potential for both democracy and sustainability (for example Saward 1993; Kenny 1996), and more recent green theory places greater emphasis on reforming, rather than replacing, the liberal-democratic state (Hay 2001; Eckersley 1996a). However, in practice, as Hay (2001) points out, the nuances of eco-political theory have little relevance for green activists, and as discussed in the case study (Chapter Six), the theme of community-building is alive and well in the minds of greens today, mainly focused on the ‘transition’ movement as a response to the looming environmental disasters of peak oil and climate change.

However, modern liberal-democratic governments have increasingly relied on the language of community (Delanty 2002). This new politics of community is ambivalent in its possibilities: it could be either ‘superficial moralizing’ or offer empowerment for a new ‘ethico-politics’ (Delanty 2002 p. 167). The governmental discourse of community, at least for the Blair and Clinton governments, emphasised volunteerism, charity and self-organised care (Delanty 2002). Similar examples can be found in Australia, for example mutual obligation in welfare, and Australian governments’ emphasis on voluntarism in the conservation sector (Cockfield in press).

Kane (2000) offers a grid classifying political positions on two dimensions: thick or thin community and active or passive citizenship; liberal individualism, for example, combines a thin conception of community with passive citizenship; ‘moral

citizenship' combines thin community with active citizenship, in which (political) community is only a means to an end of achieving the strongly held notions of the good to which moral citizens are committed. This is the kind of citizenship community towards which Kane believes Australia should be moving; one which involves defining important contemporary values and a process that will emphasise 'open-ended, widely inclusive forms of belonging and participation that are adapted and adaptive to a rapidly changing world' (p. 228). As noted above, 'community' is an important consideration for many Greens, and the extent to which Greens' practice contrasts with this theoretical notion of ecological citizenship as involving 'thin' community is an interesting aspect of the case study.

2.7.5 Summary: active citizenship

The discussion of community links back to the issue of citizenship as either developing from below or being imposed from above; and raises questions about active or passive citizenship. Passive citizenship clearly entails undertaking government-sanctioned citizenly behaviour, but can active citizenship include working as a community volunteer or must it entail political activity to ensure that government takes responsibility for the care of citizens and their environment, or at least debate about what the true role of government should be? Perhaps it involves both. Perhaps there are so many outlets, opportunities for people to exercise their citizenship in modern times that it is no longer possible to prescribe a particular 'active' citizenship: this thesis argues that it makes more sense to see the exercise of citizenship not simply on a continuum from apathy to active participation, but as part of a matrix, with participation at the political, social and cultural levels equally valid expressions of citizenship.

A number of authors, such as Janoski (1998), Dagger (2002) and Dobson (2003), discuss citizenship which combines elements of 'types' of citizenship. As mentioned earlier, citizenship theory is in a state of flux: perhaps citizenship (in theory at least) is tending towards a new synthesis that will help overcome problems of alienation, cynicism and lack of involvement while retaining the tolerance and respect for individual rights that are such strong features of liberalism.

The issue of citizens' involvement in their community and in politics, and the connections between the two, is clearly a large and contentious issue which can only be touched on in this thesis. However, because of the implications of the dominance of

individualism for both the causes of, and potential means of mitigating, climate change, aspects of it will be further discussed in Chapter Three.

2.8 Territoriality and cosmopolitanism

The territorial nature of citizenship is associated with some of its most contentious aspects, such as ultra-nationalism and exclusion of aliens; but also has more positive connotations of belonging and community, although this ideal is rarely achieved (Williams 2002). The territorial boundaries of the state are co-existent with citizenship in the modern period (since the Treaty of Westphalia), and it is difficult to conceive of citizenship without associating it with membership of a state. Citizenship was originally territorial (based on the city state), as one of the major roles of the citizen was defence (Heater 1990; Dobson 2003). As Dobson (2003) points out, the territoriality of liberal and republican citizenship is also integral to their other major characteristics: in order for citizens to claim rights, or to have responsibilities, there needs to be a nation-state to determine and administer them.

However, there is another side to the territoriality story, evident in the long history of cosmopolitanism and the idea of world citizenship, which has been revived with globalisation (Falk 2002; Held 2002). The idea is that the citizen is part not simply of an artificially bounded state but of the whole world; it is closely tied to ideas of global peace, and in modern times, with environmental preservation (Heater 1990). While the 20th century saw progress towards cosmopolitan citizenship with the development of the United Nations, especially its associated bodies focusing on specific issues such as the environment, development and health, and large regional bodies such as the European Union, the concept remains essentially an ideal and there are significant practical hurdles to be overcome in its realisation (Williams 2002). As Falk (2002) and Held (2002) point out, globalisation has seen increasing challenges to the power and legitimacy of the nation-state, for example environmental issues like the management of nuclear waste, and climate change, and the management of international financial markets.

To Held (2002) our complex and interconnected world requires mechanisms to allow decision-making on international issues at the most appropriate level, so that those most affected are able to participate; his idea of 'cosmopolitan democracy', therefore, involves 'a political order of democratic associations, cities and nations as well as of regional and global networks', which would enable intensive participative democracy at local levels as a complement to global public assemblies (p. 99). People would thus have 'multiple citizenships', of the 'diverse political communities which

significantly affect them' (p. 100). While he acknowledges that this is an ideal still in its infancy, he points to international social movements and NGOs as offering optimistic prospects for future global democracy.

Critics of cosmopolitan citizenship need only point to its impracticality, the massive difficulties experienced by participants in international bodies trying to reach consensus, and the continued focus on and relevance of the nation-state, factors recognised even by its proponents (Williams 2002). It is difficult, for example, to see how democratic processes could be designed to allow Held's 'constituencies of concern' to participate (Williams 2002, p. 69). Rather than aiming at possibly unattainable institutional forms, Williams sees the relevance of cosmopolitan citizenship in its idea of 'a universal community of responsibility', which could encompass complementary strategies of state-based political activity and working towards cosmopolitan democracy. To Falk, cosmopolitan democracy encompasses allegiance to *values* rather than to particular states; his 'citizen pilgrims' are committed to secular and spiritual transformation, 'premised on the wholeness and equality of the human family', and oriented towards achieving 'humane governance' locally and globally (2002, p. 27), with key components being global civil society and multi-level global governance.

In response to the shortcomings of traditional and cosmopolitan citizenship, and 'the recognition that the actions of some affect the life chances of distant strangers' (p. 49), Dobson (2003) has developed the radical concept of 'post-cosmopolitan' citizenship. Ecological citizenship is the main expression of post-cosmopolitan citizenship; both are discussed in Chapter Four.

2.9 Conclusion

The idea of citizenship is clearly in flux; and the ideal of citizenship is under constant challenge in all political communities (Salvaris 2000). Broad claims are being made on behalf of citizenship, which has been vastly expanded beyond the original ideas of either republican or liberal citizenship. Certain recognisable core principles of citizenship, such as the role of rights and responsibilities, citizen virtue and territoriality, are discernible in each of the attempts to expand citizenship. However there are challenges in each of these areas and it is pertinent to ask, as Heater (1990) does, whether new 'types' of citizenship are truly citizenship at all.

Whether citizenship is of a passive or active nature is also a major consideration although this is less of an analytical category than a description of the way in which citizenship is actually lived. Active citizenship – participation in public

life (at many levels) – is a major factor in the functioning of democratic polities, and of society, and democratic theorists continue to examine whether, and in what ways, there is a need for this participation to be improved. At a deeper level, philosophical and economic liberalism have entrenched individualism as a way of thinking, feeling and acting – of living – in Western societies, with major implications for citizenship and politics in general. As Salvaris (2000) points out, quoting from Civic Experts Group 1994 (p. 16), ‘while “the justice of a nation’s basic structures is important”, the strength and vitality of the civic culture that sustains them may be more important in the long run’ (p. 78).

This chapter has commenced the thesis’ analysis by focusing on the central role of the individual citizen, through discussing citizenship theory and introducing the rise of individualism and neo-liberal politics.

The next chapter builds on the analytical framework by examining the relationship between individualism, consumerism and climate change, and Chapter Four analyses environmental citizenship, which has been put forward as a means of bringing about a more sustainable, less consumerist, way of living in the West.

Chapter Three Individualism, consumerism and climate change

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two set the scene for the thesis through its wide-ranging discussion of citizenship, which essentially concerns the relationship between the individual and her or his society and polity. It argued that the triumph of neo-liberalism over social democracy has resulted in a pervasive individualism in the West. This chapter advances the thesis' analytical framework by establishing:

- the association between rising individualism and the increasing importance of consumption politically, economically and socially;
- the relationship of rising consumption levels in the West with climate change;
- the international policy response to Western over-consumption; presenting criticisms of it and an alternative approach.

This chapter seeks to explain the situation whereby an obvious causal relationship – increased industrial production and increased consumption leading to climate change – persists despite mounting evidence, and international agreement, over the last thirty years that a problem exists. The literature reviewed here examines structural economic, political and social factors behind the drive to economic growth, consumerism and hence climate change; in turn identifying opportunities for or barriers to reducing consumption. Climate change science, impacts, international negotiations and the intense lobbying and politics surrounding them are only referred to where necessary as background in this thesis: they are dealt with in detail elsewhere (Lowe 2005; Monbiot 2006; Bolin 2007; Crowley 2007; Christoff 2008, 2010; Harrison & Sundstrom 2010).

Since the object of the thesis is to examine the potential role of environmental citizenship in addressing consumption and its contribution to climate change, the focus of this chapter is necessarily on economic growth and consumerism and their role in climate change, leading into a discussion of the means suggested internationally to deal with over-consumption: 'sustainable consumption'.

With this background, environmental citizenship is discussed in the next chapter.

3.2 The problem with consumption

Consumption is the act of using something up (Princen 2002a) it can be observed and measured and is potentially able to be manipulated through financial and other policy measures. Consumerism, on the other hand, is an attitude to life in which self-worth, meaning and personal satisfaction are all defined in relation to owning and accumulating commodities (Smith 1998). While all humans are consumers, it is over-consumption – ‘the level or quality of consumption that undermines a species’ own life-support system and for which individuals and collectives have choices in their consuming patterns’ (Princen 2002a, p. 33) – which is the subject of concern due to its environmental implications. And it is consumerism – the engine which drives over-consumption – and also the economic, political and social forces behind consumerism that are the keys to considering individuals’ contribution to climate change and its mitigation.

Princen, Maniates & Conca (2002a) identify a groundswell of concern among ordinary people in the West about consumerism, the ‘crass elevation of material acquisition to the status of a dominant social paradigm’ (p. 3). A related concern is ‘commoditisation’: the preferential development of things ‘with qualities that facilitate buying and selling – ‘as the answer to each and every type of human want and need’, ignoring other approaches to ‘provisioning’ (Manno 2002, p. 70). These concerns are broader than environmental, embracing ‘community, work, meaning, freedom and the overall quality of life’ (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a, p. 3). (See also Wachtel 1983; Maniates 2002a; Hamilton 2003; Layard 2005). At the same time, other writers comment on the disconnection between people’s concerns about climate change (or other environmental issues) and their unwillingness to change their own lives to contribute to mitigation (for example Witherspoon 1996; Kilbourne, Beckmann & Thelen 2002; Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002; Agyeman & Evans 2006; Nash & Lewis 2006).

The problems with over-consumption, primarily in the West but increasingly in pockets of the developing world, are manifold. In brief, they are environmental – humans are using up more of the earth’s materials than it is able to replace, leading to massive problems, the most pressing of which, for humans as well as the rest of nature, is climate change (Lowe 2005; Monbiot 2006; Helm 2009) – and social: mass deprivation (under-consumption) continues for the world’s poorest people while those in the rich West live lives of ever-increasing consumption of commodities

(Smith & Pangsapa 2008). The concepts of the 'ecological footprint'¹⁵ and more recently the 'carbon footprint' (Taylor 2008) have been used to explain how people in the West consume far more resources, and are responsible for the emission of far more GHG, than those in developing countries. Australia's ecological footprint as at 2005 was 7.8 global hectares (gha) per person, while the average was 2.7 gha (WWF, GFN & ZSL 2008). Even in the West, however, higher incomes and consumption over the past fifty years have not led to contentment – far from it: mental illness as well as a range of 'lifestyle' physical conditions, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease, are at record levels (Hamilton 2003; McKibben 2007).

This thesis considers the citizen's role in both contributing to and attempting to mitigate climate change through consumption, in the context of the larger economic, political and social forces at work, and attempts to find a way through the theoretical maze in which the individual's role regarding climate change is entangled. Looking behind the simplistic appeal to individuals to 'do their bit' reveals a whole body of theoretical inquiry about individualism, 'individualisation' and the efficacy or otherwise of individual action in the absence of broader political and social action. Before discussing the role of the individual, a broader examination of issues concerning the role of consumption in modern Western societies is undertaken, to establish the context for individual action, or inaction. The international policy response to over-consumption is discussed in section 3.4.

The analysis of consumption and consumerism in this chapter is influenced by Princen, Maniates and Conca's (2002a) theoretical framework for a new perspective on consumption, which consists of three main principles:

1. *The social embeddedness of consumption:* The recognition that consumers' choices are not isolated acts of rational decision-making, but are shaped by social context, including media images, and structural features that 'make it convenient, rewarding, even necessary, to increase consumption' (p. 14). There is a rich literature on the intertwining of consumption with many other aspects of modern life, discussed further in section 3.3.5.

2. *Chains of material provisioning and resource use:* Consumption decisions are heavily influenced by the exercise of a whole string of choices, and

¹⁵ Wackernagel, M and Rees, W 1996, *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth*, New Society Publishers, British Columbia, cited in Dobson (2003). Basing policy or political positions on the difference in emissions *between* countries, of course, masks the differences in emissions *within* countries, which are often due to social and economic inequality (Conca 2000). It is likely, however, that looking at the level of individuals or households, most people in Australia would make a larger contribution to climate change than most people in, for example, one of the Pacific Islands prone to inundation due to rising sea level.

power, along the chain from primary resource extraction to ultimate disposal of a product. Consumers are increasingly distanced from the social and ecological factors that make production possible: the severing of feedback, for example the immense social and environmental impacts of decisions hidden from the ultimate consumer of tropical products such as bananas and coffee (Tucker 2002); and the mountain of waste, much of it toxic, that is discarded annually by producers, and by consumers who have no idea what happens to it (Clapp 2002). The commodity chain enables examination of the nodes at which power is exercised: as production is increasingly carried out globally by unrelated entities it is control over the 'means of consumption' – branding and marketing – which is important rather than the means of production (Conca 2002; Hamilton 2003; Klein 2001). To Princen (2002b) '...commercial patterns that separate consumers from the consequences of their behaviour are likely to weight consumption decisions toward narrowly self-interested consumption and away from long-term, intergenerational, and non-human concerns' (p. 116).

3. *Viewing production as consumption:* reveals the costs of production on the environment, people and societies. The standard response to environmental problems – technical solutions – does not question the logic of production. Viewing production as consumption turns this around, that is, 'to construe economic activity as consuming, as depleting value, as risking ecological overshoot, as stressing social capacity' (p. 17).

3.3 Economic growth, consumerism and neo-liberal politics

3.3.1 Introduction

It is not possible to understand the dominance of consumerism – consumption as a way of life – in Western societies today without examining the political-economic landscape. Beginning with a brief tour through the history of consumerism, this section proceeds through a more detailed consideration of neo-liberalism and its economic impact, including the recent 'Global Financial Crisis' (GFC) and then to the relationship of over-consumption with climate change.

3.3.2 A brief history of consumerism

Consumerism is a modern phenomenon – a radical break from the past (Michaelis 2006) – however it is impossible to separate from the intertwining history of politics and economics, and thus requires a longer view to understand the forces that have

shaped today's 'consumer culture'. Science, technology, the Industrial Revolution, imperialism, philosophy, economics and politics intertwine in the lead-up to the supremacy of economic growth, a history much too vast and complex to be told here.

Fundamental roles were played by Enlightenment (16th–18th centuries) and Romantic period (18th–19th centuries) thinkers (Michaelis 2006; Hamilton 2003). In the former, ideas relating to the rational individual, liberty and an instrumental approach to nature were an essential foundation for the Industrial Revolution and massively increasing production and consumption, as well as the modern understanding of the individual, and political and economic institutions (Michaelis 2006; de Geus 2001). The Enlightenment developed in the context of, and contributed to, a period when possibilities for imperial expansion seemed endless, and European economies were still based on slavery and colonialism (Kroen 2004; Tucker 2002; Luke 1999).

The ideas of John Locke and Adam Smith remain highly influential today: Locke, the 'father of liberalism' wrote that people would 'mainly assert their individuality by means of accumulating property, buying consumer goods and following their desires, without accepting limits to their freedoms' (de Geus 2001). Liberalism was essentially a defence of individual rights rather than a defence of the interests of the society as a whole (De Geus 2001), however liberals believed that accumulation of individual wealth would also benefit the nation (Nash & Lewis 2006).

Reacting to these rational Enlightenment ideas, Romanticism brought an emphasis on emotional individualism (Hay 2001) and creativity; consumption of goods became an important means of self-expression (Michaelis 2006). Combined with the economics of the period, when mass consumption was encouraged due to the vastly expanded production of goods with the Industrial Revolution (Jubas 2006; Nash and Lewis 2006), these Romantic ideas set the scene for the evolution of consumerism.

To Hamilton (2003), the Enlightenment idea of progress is 'one of the ideological pillars of capitalism' (p. 98). From a tentative start, the concept of human progress proceeded to cast aside all challenges, especially after the 'triumph of science over religious superstition' in the 19th century, when it was given an internal logic by Darwin's theory of evolution. At the same time, the idea of the 'ethical perfectibility of humanity' was a powerful stimulus to movements for political and social reform (Hamilton 2003, p. 99). By the early 20th century, capitalism in Western Europe and the United States had entered a period of consolidation and centralisation (Tucker 2002). However progress suffered a setback with the barbarity of the First World

War, the deprivations of the Great Depression, followed by the Second World War when new heights of human cruelty and suffering shook its very foundations (Hamilton 2003).

Following WWII, however, progress made a comeback in its modern manifestation – economic growth (Cushman 1990; Hamilton 2003; Kroen 2004). Unlike the scientific and ethical thinking behind the Enlightenment idea of progress, it was now based purely on the more mundane objective of material advancement (Hamilton 2003). The ‘consumer culture’ was born. Durning (1995), for example, quotes ‘retailing analyst’ Victor Lebow declaring at that time:

Our enormously productive economy ... demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption.... We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, discarded at an ever increasing rate (p. 69).

The period since the end of WWII in the US has been called the ‘Consumers’ Republic’¹⁶: consumerism as central to American-style capitalism promised to deliver both economic strength and citizens’ equality through mass consumption, and operated as a bulwark against communism (Jubas 2007; Kroen 2004). During this period incomes in advanced industrialised countries rapidly increased, as did the consumption of ‘consumer goods’, which were now much more widely available due to the expansion of consumer credit (Michaelis 2006). Consumption became a patriotic duty, an expression of citizenship (Csikszentmihalyi 2004; Kroen 2004). At the same time, the worst excesses of capitalism were ameliorated by the social-democratic welfare state (Hamilton 2003). While some were beginning to question the economic growth paradigm during the 1960s–early 1970s amid the flowering of social and environmental movements, the quest for individual freedom and the ‘right’ to pursue happiness which also began in this era are ‘central to a culture in which the pleasures of consumption are condoned as long as others are not harmed’ (Michaelis 2004, p. 209; Hamilton 2003).

3.3.3 The freedom to consume

Neo-liberalism – the term used by many critics to encompass the new right – was based on the twin pillars of neo-classical economics (unrestrained free-market

¹⁶ Cohen, Lizabeth 2004 *The Consumers’ republic: the politics of mass consumption in postwar America*, New York, quoted in Kroen (2004), p. 709.

capitalism) and libertarian philosophy, in which the objective of society and government is 'to promote as much individual freedom as is feasible and to allow individuals to determine their own goals', tracing a direct line back to Locke and (with some convenient oversights) Smith (Hamilton 2008, p. 7; Lowe 2005). Under neo-liberalism, individualism – the pursuit of self-interest – is elevated and collectivism abjured; the individual's 'freedom to consume' is sacrosanct (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a; Hamilton 2003) and politics, ironically given the belief in freedom of the market from government control, becomes ever-more entwined with economics.

As governments progressively removed obstacles to the global spread of financial markets and corporate capital, in the process spreading the ideology of the free market (Hamilton 2003), consumers in the West became inextricably tied into globalisation. Even after the passing of the governments overtly founded in the 1970s–80s on neo-liberal philosophy, it has persisted through a kind of homogenisation of politics in which, while there may be differences in social policy, all major parties are agreed on the primacy of economic growth, while neglecting the kinds of policies that once gave capitalism a more human face (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a; Hamilton 2003, 2007; McKnight 2005; Helm 2009; Pearse 2010).

A consideration of economic principles and their relationship to policy helps explain this 'growth fetish' (Hamilton 2003). Modern capitalism relies on economic growth, and consumption is the key to economic growth: if consumption slows, profits decline, employment falls and there is even less consumption, resulting in recession or even depression (Douthwaite 1999; Jackson 2009). In free market economies there is continuous pressure to increase production and productivity: since 1800 labour productivity has increased twenty-fold, incomes ten-fold, while there is an ever-increasing range of goods and services that can be purchased (Michaelis 2006; Hamilton 2003; de Geus 2004); and consumption of luxury goods and household items has soared (Monbiot 2006; Hamilton and Denniss 2005).

Classical economic theory is based on the neutrality of consumer preferences – their rational choice – and production is then geared to what consumers have shown they want (Luke 1999; Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a; Hamilton 2003; Hamilton & Denniss 2005). This is known as 'consumer sovereignty', and is regarded as one of the two primary forces behind modern politics and economics: the other is the belief that through economic growth the whole population benefits (often called the trickle-down effect), which 'carries a much lower political price tag' than redistribution of wealth (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a, p. 5). Each year citizens of modern Western countries are encouraged by politicians and the media to expect to have greater

disposable income and a better physical quality of life than the year before (Michaelis 2006), thus feeding economic growth. 'Consumerism works in concert with neoliberalism, instructing citizens that they can reinvent themselves continually through the process of consumption' (Jubas 2007, p. 232).

These processes ensure that individual consumption is beyond scrutiny, with the result that policy choices are limited to regulating production processes. Consumer choices, however, are part of 'a stream of [hidden] choices and decisions embedded in social relations of power and authority' (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a, p. 11-12). The doctrine of consumer sovereignty depoliticises struggles over resources and equality, as consumer choice is presented as broadening choice for all citizens (Jubas 2007; Luke 1999), and ignores the power of advertising and the many more subtle forces driving consumer behaviour (Hamilton 2003). As consumer sovereignty has advanced, however, in many ways the range of choices available has declined: the use of the private car has become ubiquitous and expected, for example, while those reliant on, or choosing to use, public transport, are left with poorer services and even social exclusion (Maniates 2002b; Manno 2002; Michaelis 2004). The removal of public telephone boxes with the rapid advance, relentless upgrading and promotion of mobile phones is another example of lost choice. While choice is supposedly democratising, the lack of choice for the poor persists, only exacerbating inequality (Jubas 2007).

Despite these problems, governments, reinforced by the media, are wedded to consumer sovereignty and keenly monitor 'consumer confidence', regarded as a key indicator of economic growth.

Economic forecasts are based on increasing demands: unless people buy more houses, more cars, more sporting equipment and clothes, the economy will falter. ... To refrain from consuming is antisocial; it is seen as a threat to the community (Csikszentmihalyi 2004).

Nor is the production-oriented approach limited to mainstream economists and politicians: much of the environment movement has adopted the approach that regulation of producers is the answer to pollution and other environmental problems, as discussed in sections 3.4.1 and 3.5.3.

The easy availability of consumer credit in recent decades greatly stimulated consumption (Douthwaite 1999; Michaelis 2006), at least until the GFC struck in 2008. Ironically, that same easy credit was a major cause of the GFC (Peattie & Collins 2009), but, as Jackson (2009), points out '[if] there was irresponsibility it was systematic,

sanctioned widely and with one clear aim in mind: the continuation and protection of economic growth' (p. 7). Unfortunately – because the environmental and social implications of rampantly growing production and consumption are clear – governments turned to the only means they knew to avert economic crisis: to stimulate growth and consumption, to recommit themselves to the growth fetish (Jackson 2009; Peattie & Collins 2009; Helm 2009), dispensing large amounts of public money to bolster consumption (Peattie & Collins 2009; Garnaut 2011a; Pearse 2010).

3.3.4 Economic growth, consumerism and climate change

Economic growth has been inseparable from increasing energy usage since the start of the Industrial Revolution (Douthwaite 1999), and it is now clear that increasing fossil fuel-based energy consumption due to industrialisation is the major cause of human-induced climate change (Lowe 2005; Bolin 2007). An economy driven by economic growth and globalisation increasingly favours the production of 'high commodity potential (HCP)' goods and services, that is, those with high inputs of materials and energy (Manno 2002). For example, as agriculture has become increasingly enmeshed in the global economy broad-acre, highly chemical- and fossil fuel dependent monocultures have taken over where numerous family farms had grown a range of food, usually more sustainably. In addition, huge amounts of fossil fuel are used in transporting that food, and other goods (Douthwaite 1999; ACF 2007).

Between 1950 and 1996 the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the largest contributor to GHG emissions, expanded by 360 percent (Douthwaite 1999). While an upsurge of awareness of pollution and other environmental impacts resulted in new laws in the 1970s in Western countries, leading to cleaner air and water, the movement of production to developing countries (Luke 1997; Klein 2001; Conca 2002) has seen pollution, including GHG emissions, increase markedly in those countries while driving down the costs of consumer goods and imported food for Western consumers (Smith and Papangsa 2008; McKibben 2007; Helm 2009). At the same time, while heavy industry in the West may have declined with globalisation, the consumption of fossil fuels in both industry and domestically in the electricity and transport sectors has only increased, thus fuelling climate change (Douthwaite 1999; Monbiot 2006; Garnaut 2008).

Since 1990 global CO₂ emissions have increased by 40 percent (Jackson 2009), with the most significant increase happening since 2001 (Garnaut 2008). Emissions of

other greenhouse gases (apart from CFCs), which are similarly the product of economic expansion, have also been increasing (Bolin 2007). This increase is because of the higher than expected growth in developing economies, especially China and India, and a significant increase in the energy-intensiveness of Chinese GDP (Bolin, 2007; Garnaut 2011a). While economic growth rates worldwide declined with the GFC, this was only a temporary setback for these expanding economies (Garnaut 2011a). Similarly, total GHG emissions have continued to rise in expanding economies while they have declined or stabilised in many advanced Western economies (Garnaut 2011a; Clark 2011; Peters *et al.* 2011). However Western economies generally have much higher per-capita GHG emissions, for example while in 2009 (the latest data available) China emitted 8,321 million tonnes compared to 5,610 million tonnes from the USA, its per capita emissions were still only 6.256 tonnes, while those of the USA were 18.084 tonnes (USEIA 2012).

Due to the production of vast amounts of cheap consumer goods in developing countries, largely destined for Western markets (Helm 2009), these figures could be regarded as an under-reporting of the true amount of GHG emissions for which Western economies (and the people who live in them) are responsible. Under guidelines developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UNFCCC 2011), the emissions reported by Western countries which import large amounts of cheap consumer goods from developing countries do not include those from the 'embodied' energy in those goods, that is, the energy that was used during the creation and transport of the product¹⁷. Recent studies have concluded that reporting only the GHG emissions from within a country's borders distorts the true amounts of GHG emitted per country. For example Li & Hewitt (2008) conclude that 'through international trade, very significant environmental impacts can be shifted from one country to another', finding that the UK would have been responsible for an additional 19 percent of GHG emissions had it produced goods domestically rather than importing them from China (p. 1907) (see also Helm 2009). By developing and applying a GHG emissions accounting method taking into account international trade, Peters *et al.* (2010) found that 'most developed countries increased their consumption-based emissions faster than their territorial emissions' (p. 8903), and that the increase in emissions transfers from developing to developed countries

¹⁷ For example, the Australian National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Regulations 2008 require the reporting of 'Scope 1' (direct use of energy such as gas and petrol) and Scope 2 (indirect use such as coal-fired power) to the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory, but not 'Scope 3', energy used by a supplier in supplying a good or service, such as an airline flight or an imported computer. The regulations and inventory reflect the IPCC guidelines (DCCEE 2011b).

between 1990 and 2008 exceeded the amount by which developed countries have reduced their territorial-based emissions, that is, the emissions reported under the UNFCCC. The USA again becomes the largest emitter (followed by China), with its emissions actually increasing by 17 percent during this period rather than decreasing by almost seven percent as reported.

At the base of this imbalance between production and consumption, is the increase, in the West, in production efficiency with technology, whereby greater volumes are produced rather than working hours reduced, making products cheaper, leading to more consumption, entailing ever-greater resource and energy use (Manno 2002). Long working hours in many OECD countries, with Australia foremost among them, contributes to increasing consumption due to the need to save time and alleviate stress (Wachtel 1983; Brekke & Howarth 2006). However as Hamilton (2003) points out, many people work long hours simply to keep up with their consumption expectations. Increases in incomes and house sizes, proliferation of appliances, especially computers, mobile phones and air conditioners, and the explosion in motorised transport use and aviation have more than made up for energy efficiency savings (Monbiot 2006; Helm 2009; OECD 2011): energy use increased by 23 percent in wealthy countries between 1980 and 2002, even when the most energy-intensive technologies had been exported to poorer nations (Monbiot 2006). This is the rebound effect: as money is saved from energy conservation, it is used to buy more goods, bigger houses, more powerful vehicles, and more long-distance travel, thus reducing overall greenhouse gas emission savings, or in some cases increasing emissions (Monbiot 2006; Helm 2009; Jackson 2009; Druckman *et al.* 2011). Druckman *et al.* (2011) estimate that 'the rebound effect for a combination of three abatement actions by UK households is approximately 34 percent' (p. 3572).

Individuals and households in the West are obviously major contributors to GHG emissions, given that much of the production and transportation that occurs is to provide the means for us to live the way of life that has been developing since industrialisation began: food, transport, clothing, all kinds of materials related to housing, comfort and recreation (Douthwaite 1998; Monbiot 2006; Woodside 2011; and see Appendix One for a graph of global emission source activities, noting that this does not allocate emissions between industrial sources or consumers). As seen from the discussion in this chapter, the global chains of production and consumption that have been developing for centuries, booming in recent years, ensure that it is almost impossible for Western consumers not to be complicit in the worldwide production of GHG emissions. Globally, residential energy use grew by twenty percent between

1990 and 2006 and accounts for almost 30 percent of energy consumption (OECD 2011). It has been estimated that half of that could be saved through behaviour and policy changes; adding transport, which uses another quarter of the world's energy use, there is great potential to reduce GHG emissions currently contributed by individual and households (Woodside 2011).

In Australia, while the federal government apportions 'direct responsibility' for around one fifth of Australia's GHG emissions to households (DCCEE 2011e), there is no mention of the *indirect* contribution of households to GHG via consumption of food and consumer goods, which makes up a larger proportion of the Australian-produced GHG for which households are responsible than direct use of fuel and power (ACF 2007). While Appendix One shows Australian GHG emissions by sector, such as agriculture 16 percent, electricity 36 percent and transport 15 percent, it does not break down the proportion of each sector's emissions by whether the ultimate destination of the product or service being produced or transported is domestic consumption. However, as ACF (2007) points out 'emissions generated from the food we eat and the goods we purchase are together more than four times the emissions from our own personal use of electricity' (p. 5). ACF's chart relating Australians' household GHG production to consumption sector is reproduced in Appendix 1, figure 4.

Clearly, then, major changes are required to our political-economic system if we are to reign in GHG emissions. As Jackson (2009) points out, 'the failure to take the dilemma of growth seriously may be the biggest threat to sustainability that we face' (p. 8): either we must give up our reliance on economic growth, or the nexus between economic growth and resource consumption must somehow be broken. The continuous increase of global GHG in the past thirty years while resource throughput and energy use in many sectors has been declining in Western societies – which have largely become consumer rather than producer societies – bears witness to the 'myth of decoupling' (de Geus 2004; Jackson 2009), discussed further in section 3.4.2. Meanwhile, there seems no end in site to the addiction of our societies to growth, bar war or other crisis (Douthwaite 1999; De Geus 2004; Hamilton 2003; Monbiot 2006) – the GFC only confirmed governments' addiction to growth and consumption (Helm 2009).

While governments clearly bear the major responsibility for ensuring GHG emissions are reduced, people in Western countries continue to over-consume in the face of mounting evidence of the impacts of such consumption on the environment and other people, especially rising GHG emissions. The following section explores

social and psychological factors that intertwine with political and economic ones to perpetuate this consumption.

3.3.5 Why do we continue to consume so much?

In the consumer society, consumption is no longer an act intended to meet our basic individual material wants and needs. Instead, it has become the primary mechanism through which relationships within society are structured; through which we pursue individual happiness, expression, meaning and status; and through which national wealth and success are largely measured (Peattie and Collins, 2009, p. 109).

A consideration of all the interrelated factors driving over-consumption is far too complex to be considered in this thesis. However, in order to consider the potential for more sustainable consumption as an important part of environmental citizenship it is necessary to have at least a background understanding of the factors which influence current consumption behaviour. Shove & Warde (2001) and authors' contributions to Jackson (2006b) provide rich detail of the many ways in which consumption is implicated in modern lives, far more than simply meeting needs for food, water and shelter – the basic needs which form the basis of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Michaelis 2004). Roles of consumption identified in the literature include:

- social comparison – amassing more goods and a greater variety of goods to build social status (Klein 2001; Hamilton 2003; Layard 2005; Michaelis 2006; Schor 2006; Jubas 2007; cf Campbell 2006);
- creation of self-identity: that is, the idea that 'people define themselves through the messages they transmit to others through the goods and practices that they possess and display. ... Increasingly, individuals are obliged to choose their identities' (Shove and Warde 2001, p. 234 quoting Warde 1994¹⁸). As Hamilton (2003) notes 'the individuality of the marketing society is an elaborate pose people adopt to cover up the fact that they have been buried in the homogenising forces of consumer culture' (see also Michaelis 2006).

Individualisation – whereby people think they are free but are 'trapped by a system that forces [them] to establish an identity' (Michaelis 2004, p. 212) – is discussed further in section 3.5.2. This identity creation connects closely with

¹⁸ Warde, A 1994, 'Consumption, Identity-Formation and Uncertainty', *Sociology*, vol. 28, pp. 877-898, p. 878.

the symbolic power of material goods (Schor 2006), and the real power of the marketing industry (Jackson 2006a; Klein 2001);

- mental stimulation: the desire for novelty, the insatiability of human desire as the novelty wears off (Campbell 2006) or tendency towards habituation to higher levels of comfort (Michaelis 2006) is a key part of the economic growth paradigm. Dake and Thompson (2006), however, do not believe that escalating human desire is necessarily innate, and, as discussed in section 3.3.6, there are many people in Western societies who have managed to jump off the consumerist treadmill;
- striving for conformity, the pressure to upgrade (Schor 2006) or the desire not to be socially excluded (Schor 1998) – one of the human needs identified by Maslow (Michaelis 2004). This is related to ‘involuntary’ or ‘locked-in’ consumption, whereby it is difficult or impossible to fit into certain social situations or the job market without particular technology, such as a mobile phone, certain clothing or a car (Douthwaite 1999; Jackson 2006a; Michaelis 2004), and also the insidious way in which ‘sociotechnical’ systems create ever-greater expectations of levels of comfort and cleanliness (Shove 2006);
- McCracken’s (2006) theory of ‘displaced meaning’: material goods have both potent symbolic meanings and physical presence, so they provide a link with the ideal which can never be attained; thus the appetite for future consumption is never quite diminished and the consumer culture perpetuates itself (McCracken 2006). The symbolic connection of consumer goods gives consumption its power over our lives (Hamilton 2003; Jackson 2006a; McCracken 2006), ably exploited by the advertising industry.

There are two underlying, often intertwining, threads to the factors discussed above: ‘needs’ and the means of satisfying them are shaped by social context (Michaelis 2006), and consumption and meaning, or lack of it, are deeply connected in modern Western societies. Michaelis (2004) makes the point that if ‘needs or the appropriate means of satisfying them are shaped by our social context, perhaps we should be asking whether we can adapt our needs to fit with what is ecologically and socially sustainable’ (p. 209). However, such a situation – where social norms lead to minimising ecological impact – would require not just ‘cultural change – a shift in values and consciousness’ (p. 217), but also a major shift in the relationship of liberal-democratic politics to economic growth, as outlined in the UK Sustainable Development Commission’s report *Prosperity Without Growth* (Jackson 2009).

The advertising industry plays a key role in fuelling economic growth, because 'the greatest danger to consumer capitalism is the possibility that people in wealthy countries will decide that they have more or less everything they need'; the marketing machine, therefore, makes ever-greater efforts to convince us that we do not (Hamilton 2003, p. 80). Because of the powerful psychological and social roles of material goods in our lives, current consumption patterns 'might represent a sphere of resistance – potentially quite violent resistance – to social change', thus militating against the prospect of sustainable consumption, other than through changes at the community, rather than individual, level (Jackson 2006, p. 388). Jackson does not deny that individuals can think for themselves and try to bring about change; what he does is analyse the enormous barriers to achieving that change simply through individual action: '[t]o question the belief system that constitutes our own culture is to threaten meaning-structure at the social level' (2006, p. 376).

However, social and political change clearly does happen – witness the abolition of slavery 200 years ago and the extension of the franchise to women starting around 100 years ago – and people, as individuals, clearly contribute to it (Lowe 2005). The role of the individual in climate change politics is discussed in Section 3.5.3.

3.3.6 Escaping from consumerism

While daunting political, economic, social and cultural factors have led consumerism to dominate our society, it also clear that many people have not succumbed to its attractions, or have escaped from it; for example 23 percent of 30-60 year-old Australians have 'downshifted', that is deliberately reduced their income and consumption levels, in recent years (Hamilton 2003). A similar phenomenon has been observed in the US, where Maniates (2002a) notes surveys that have found between 20-28 percent of people have 'voluntarily reduced their income and their consumption in pursuit of new personal or household priorities' (p. 200).

Williams (2005) challenges the 'commodification thesis' – that in advanced capitalism, economic relations are shifting towards greater commodification (marketisation, commercialisation). In fact, he finds that a greater proportion of the GDP of advanced capitalist states is generated by non-commodified work; that is 'self-provision', domestic work, unpaid community work or exchange of goods for no money, and 'monetised transactions' that take place without the profit motive, including public sector work (Williams 2005, p. 17).

Movements towards downshifting and sustainable consumption practices, such as LETS (Local Enterprise Trading Schemes) and co-operatives, are highly relevant to the prospects for environmental citizenship. Although many people 'downshift' for reasons related to health and well-being rather than environmental concerns (Hamilton 2003), it demonstrates that continuing on the economic growth and consumption path is not inevitable, that the potential exists for people to 'opt out' and voluntarily consume in a way that contributes less to greenhouse gas emissions.

3.3.7 Section conclusion

Behind consumerism lies a complex interaction of economic, political and social forces: they are multi-faceted and sometimes contradictory. While an ideology of individualism and the free market dominates politically and economically, social forces both perpetuate consumerism and economic growth and militate against individual rational choice.

Despite the political consensus on economic growth and consumerism, increasing scientific knowledge of rising GHG and climate change has gradually consolidated and been translated into political concern. International efforts to deal with the nexus between environmental concern – including climate change – and consumption are briefly overviewed in the next section.

3.4 Policy responses to over-consumption

3.4.1 From 'sustainable development' to 'sustainable consumption'

The *Limits to Growth* report (Meadows *et al.* 1972) predicted 'overshoot and collapse of the global system' about mid-way through the 21st century due to a combination of diminishing resources and increasing ecological pollution (Turner 2008, p. 400). Shortly after the report's release over-consumption was first officially recognised as a problem during the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, which framed environmental deterioration as a by-product of affluence (Conca 2002; Bruyninckx 2006); however some scholars consider that the report was generally misread and regarded as alarmist (Turner 2008).

Nevertheless, the idea of over-consumption in the West, and by elites in developing countries, continued to be recognised in the international arena, and in 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development reported (Brundtland 1987) announced that consumption of resources in the affluent, industrialised countries of the world, with resultant pollution, GHG emissions and resource

depletion, threatened the environment and survival of the human species itself. Yet the Commission's response – 'sustainable development' – shifted the focus away from consumption and towards cleaner production systems, seeing 'no contradiction in offering a vision of global sustainability that presumed a fivefold increase in world economic output' (Conca 2002, p. 135).

Sustainable development has since become the policy objective of many governments around the world (Dobson 2007), yet many authors point out the contradictions inherent in the term, and that development has been emphasised to the detriment of environmental sustainability (Douthwaite 1999; Pepper 1999; Barry & Wissenburg 2001). Sustainable development has fostered an 'ecological modernisation' (EM) approach to environmental policy, whereby '1970s' notions of environmental limits to economic growth have given way to an "environmentalism" that incorporates growth and capital accumulation' (Pepper 1999, p. 2). By 'greening capitalism', largely through technological change, EM is seen to allow 'win-win' solutions to the growth/environment dilemma (Christoff 1996b; Curran 2009; Naess & Hoyer 2009). As Maniates (2002b) notes, environment groups were as keen as governments to adopt sustainable development as a goal, and many have been complicit with the technology and economic growth paradigm.

The Brundtland report was followed in 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED – the Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, during which governments' attention was again drawn to consumption. Together they drew up an action plan, 'Agenda 21', coining the term 'sustainable consumption' at the international policy level, and laying the responsibility for unsustainability on the developed world's over-consumption (Seyfang 2005). Signed by 179 countries, including most of the world's high-consuming advanced industrial democracies, *Agenda 21* (section 1, chapter 4) asserts that '[c]hanging consumption patterns will require a multipronged strategy focusing on demand, meeting the basic needs of the poor, and reducing wastage and the use of finite resources in the production process' (4.3 and 4.5). Negotiations were difficult as delegates struggled to agree on the role of consumption in environmental deterioration (Murphy & Cohen 2001). The wealthier, industrialised countries were apparently able to ensure that the concept and program of sustainable consumption 'embodied their own interests' (Hobson 2002, p. 99), so the principles, objectives and program for action generally focus on technological improvements to production processes to reduce their usage of materials and energy, and consumption-oriented reforms are treated with 'great trepidation due to the political and economic conflicts engendered by such a critique'

(Cohen 2001, p. 27). However, the last clause under 'data and information' provides that:

Consideration should also be given to the present concepts of economic growth and the need for new concepts of wealth and prosperity which allow higher standards of living through changed lifestyles and are less dependent on the Earth's finite resources and more in harmony with the Earth's carrying capacity (4.11).

As Seyfang (2005) notes, the definition narrowed following Rio, as it evolved through international policy arenas: '[t]he more challenging ideas became marginalised as governments instead focused on politically and socially acceptable, and economically rational, tools for changing consumption processes and marketing green products' (p. 293). The 'mainstream model', based on the OECD's identification of 'market failure' as the prime cause of unsustainability has been widely adopted, with governments expected to influence producers to be more eco-efficient and consumers to choose 'green' products (Seyfang 2005, p. 293). A

discourse has been formed that does not threaten consumption as a form of practice but seeks to bind it to forms of knowledge – science, technology and efficiency – that embody the locus of power held by high-income countries in international relations (Hobson 2002, p. 99).

Thus the production angle integral to the economic growth-consumption paradigm has continued to dominate.

It is clear from the country profiles in Lafferty & Meadowcroft 2000 (though admittedly outdated now) that progress towards implementing Agenda 21's sustainable consumption and production program, while varying across the high-consuming countries studied, focuses, even in those keenest on implementing the concept, on 'decoupling' economic growth from environmental damage: it is rare for countries to report on efforts to change citizens' consumption habits, to induce a less consumerist way of living¹⁹ (Lafferty & Meadowcroft 2000). Since then, there has been little information giving an independent assessment of sustainable consumption policy internationally, although the OECD's report on sustainable consumption policy (2002) gives limited data on progress in individual countries. As evidenced by country reports to the UN, most governments take a piecemeal approach to both programs for

¹⁹ Murphy and Cohen 2001 comment that the derision greeting US President Jimmy Carter's 1979 appeal to citizens to 'turn down the thermostat and put on an extra sweater is still widely remembered as the classic failure to launch a consumption debate' (p. 4, note 3).

reducing consumption, and reporting on them (Lafferty & Meadowcroft 2000; country reports at UNDSO 2011).

3.4.2 Climate change and ‘sustainable growth’

Climate change demonstrates as much, if not more, than any other environmental issue the reluctance of liberal-democratic governments to take decisive action. There is a wealth of literature on the scientifically predicted catastrophic impacts of climate change if drastic cuts are not made to GHG emissions (Flannery 2005; Bolin 2007; Garnaut 2008) and these will not be repeated here. All such reports stress the urgency with which cuts must be made to emissions; the Garnaut Climate Change Review, for example, insists that ‘urgent, large, and effective global policy change’ is essential (2008a, p. 19).

It is not possible here to provide a detailed account of the progress of international climate change negotiations; suffice it to say that despite a positive start – the Framework Convention on Climate Change was agreed in 1992 at the Earth Summit, before final scientific agreement that climate change is human-induced, and the Kyoto Protocol followed five years later – there is still no international agreement on a target for emission reductions, or an agreed mechanism to make them happen (Christoff 2010; HoL Library 2010; Garnaut 2011a). While perhaps excusable at first due to the uncertainties in the science (Lowe 2005; Bolin 2007), these delays must be seen as entirely due to political and economic concerns once the scientific assessments of the threat were less tentative.

The major concern, expressed particularly in wealthy countries such as the US and Australia, is that economic growth would be affected by the measures required to reduce GHG emissions (Hamilton 2003; Monbiot 2006; Helm 2009; Crowley 2011). Article 2 of the Climate Change Convention mandates measures such as emissions trading schemes, which stay within an economic growth paradigm. While this approach ignores the obvious failure of continued economic growth to prevent this most serious of environmental threats which will threaten economies as well (Stern 2007; Garnaut 2008a), there are many constraints on liberal-democratic governments to make radical changes in the interests of the environment even if they are of a mind to (de Geus 2004; Helm 2009). In the case of Australia, where the problem is exacerbated by a fossil fuel reliant economy and fear that industry will relocate to developing countries (Curran 2009; Crowley 2011), ‘sustainable consumption has failed to become a political or public issue’ (Hobson 2003 p. 149), and it would be

'politically untenable' for governments to try to regulate resource use, that is, in the case of citizens, consumption (p. 149). Nevertheless, it is not impossible for countries with such structural issues to reduce emissions, but it does require more than a limited EM approach: it requires 'ecological restructuring', something that few governments have the courage to attempt due to sectoral and industry influence and public concern about unemployment (Curran 2009). To be genuinely aimed at reducing GHG emissions, such restructuring must take into account the costs of reliance on technology, and must focus on reducing absolute levels of consumption, including the GHG emissions arising from the importation of consumer goods from developing countries (Helm 2009).

As Alperovitz, Williamson and Campbell (2000) show, as long as people feel economically insecure, which many if not most people do in modern liberal democracies 'economic expansion and job creation will be a higher political priority than environmental protection for large numbers of people' (p. 167); hence the focus on 'eco-efficiency' solutions, originally recommended by the Brundtland Commission, which are intended to 'decouple' GHG emissions from economic growth while allowing consumption to continue unabated (Naess & Hoyer 2009; Jackson 2009). Despite its almost normative policy status, decoupling is regarded by many commentators, including economists, as a myth. As Naess & Hoyer (2009) explain

[T]he economy is an open subsystem of the earth system which is finite, non-growing and materially closed.... As the economic subsystem grows, it incorporates an ever greater proportion of the total ecosystem into itself and must reach a limit. Institutional arrangements that may change the quality of growth are thus only able to postpone the collision between ecological limits and economic growth (p. 82).

With this in mind, it is worth noting that the predictions of the *Limits to Growth* report have recently been verified by Turner (2008). The faith placed in decoupling conflicts with data showing increased levels of consumption and a rising concern with material acquisitions in places where decoupling has been official policy. For example in Norway, despite a major focus on eco-efficiency, energy use increased by 22 percent and CO₂ emissions by 17 percent between 1987 and 2006; in addition the number of people reporting the need for more material goods in order to feel happy has risen with economic growth, while at the same time increased concern for nature conservation has been expressed (Naess & Hoyer 2009). These observations are 'sharply at odds with the theory of cultural change from materialist to post-materialist

values as affluence levels increase' (Naess and Hoyer 2009, p. 95, referring to Inglehart (1995))²⁰.

As Jackson (2009) points out, what is required is an 'absolute' decline in resource impacts, like GHG emissions, rather than tying them to economic growth (p. 48). An alternative political-economic system – one not based on continued economic growth but which will meet people's material needs while improving health and well-being – is not a new idea: JS Mill, one of the founders of liberalism, saw no reason for continued capitalist growth (Hamilton 2002), and of course the 1970s saw a blossoming of intellectual work on steady state economics (such as Daly 1977 and Schumacher 1978). The neo-liberal ascendancy quickly put paid to such ideas, but with humanity facing the environmental, economic and social threats posed by climate change and peak oil (Diesendorf in press), such ideas are again being explored by some scholars (Hamilton 2003; Helm 2009) and think-tanks (the UK Sustainable Development Commission; the Australia Institute). However, even governments which recognise the threat of climate change cling to mainstream economic solutions that emphasise the continuation of economic growth, such as those offered by the Stern Report (Helm 2009).

The most radical approach to reducing GHG – Contraction and Convergence (C&C), which limits per capita emissions through carbon rationing, via the international allocation of an agreed per capita level of emissions (GCI 2011) – would involve drastically reducing consumption (hence economic growth) in Western countries. Monbiot (2006) estimates that if climate change is to be kept below the 2° Celsius limit above which catastrophic climate change is virtually unstoppable, global per capita emissions must reduce to 0.33 tonnes per year by 2030, while the Global Commons Institute, which originated the concept, gives the example of 0.5 tonnes per person by 2060 (GCI 2011). To put this in context, Australians currently emit around 18.8 tonnes per person (CO₂) annually (USEIA 2012, [2010 figures]). While a more moderate form of the C&C approach has had some influence in international negotiations (Garnaut 2011a; GCI 2011), there is still much disagreement between developed and developing countries, and also within the latter, among which there are widely differing rates of economic and industrial growth (HoL Library 2010; Garnaut 2011a).

As Bolin points out, the means found to mitigate climate change must be politically acceptable: '[t]he issue is thus not primarily a technical or economic one,

²⁰ Inglehart, Ronald 1995, "Public Support for Environmental Protection: Objective Problems and Subjective Values in 43 Societies," *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 28, pp. 57-71.

but societal and political' (2007, p. 214). This point is graphically illustrated by the reluctance of Australian governments to implement meaningful climate change policy, as discussed in Chapter One. The current government, which depends for support on the Greens and independents, has finally taken such action by introducing a carbon price from 1 July 2012, with a starting price of \$23 per tonne, to apply to industries emitting over 25,000 tonnes CO₂-equivalent per year (Australian Government 2011a). The government's information on the package points out that the carbon price 'is not a tax on households', but acknowledges that prices will increase on average by \$9.90 (Australian Government 2011b). The legislation includes a household compensation package consisting of tax concessions and increases to welfare payments, which also commences on 1 July 2012; industry assistance packages are also provided for, including \$13 billion to be invested by a new Clean Energy Finance Corporation in renewable and 'clean energy' projects (Australian Government 2011b). From 1 July 2015 an emissions trading scheme will commence, with the price set through market mechanisms (Australian Government 2011b). As could be expected, after the detailed announcement of the carbon package in July 2011 concerns expressed by the opposition and in the media reached fever pitch – about increased prices for food, power and other necessities, and job losses in fossil fuel intensive industries, with opinion polls revealing a majority of people against the carbon tax, and the government's popularity plummeting (Packham 2011). On its passage the opposition leader declared an 'oath in blood' that his government would repeal the package (Grattan & Wroe 2011).

The challenge for liberal-democratic governments, especially those with short election cycles like Australia, and for citizens concerned about climate change, then, is to find a solution that enables GHG emissions to be dramatically reduced without causing electoral defeat and backtracking. The role of environmental citizens in bringing about such a situation will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. In the meantime, the last part of this chapter brings the discussion of the nexus between climate change and over-consumption down to the level of the individual citizen.

3.5 Individualism, consumerism and climate change politics

3.5.1 Background

The increasing dominance over thirty years of an ideology in which the individual is paramount has undoubtedly influenced the way people see themselves and their part in society, with profound political implications: in Australia, at least, modern politics

has been likened to a battle between major brands for voters' allegiance (Hamilton 2003). As discussed in Chapter Two, the focus on the individual has led, many theorists argue, to a decline in community values and political involvement (Janoski 1998; Salvaris 2000; Dagger 2002; Isin & Turner 2002). The following section discusses these issues in the context of climate change, consumerism and related politics.

3.5.2 Individualisation

In the context of thorny issues of over-consumption and its environmental impacts, the individualisation of responsibility means that it is up to individual consumers to become informed about the issues, and to decide whether, and how, they can 'make a difference'. Consumers, making isolated decisions almost at the end of the commodity chain, are insulated from the 'empowering experiences and political lessons of collective action' (Maniates 2002b, p. 59). At the same time, the broader expectations on individuals to make their own life chances, to 'write their own biographies' emphasises self-interest and funnels individuals towards a consumerist lifestyle (Hamilton 2003; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2000; Jubas 2007). Leaving the responsibility for change up to 'enlightened consumer choice', it is argued, leaves little room to consider the role of corporations and government, and undermines society's capacity to deal effectively with environmental threats (Smith 1998; Luke 1999; Maniates 2002b, p. 45-6). It also 'fails to provide a useful framework for local/global linkages on complex global risks and downplays the "social and political relations which are the glue that hold together our understanding and actions on the world"' (Kent 2009, p. 145; quoting Rathzell & Uzzell 2009, p. 328).

Politics in this individualised setting has become something people do at elections only (or increasingly in many Western countries, not even then). The dominance of self-centred individualism, as well as the focus on economic growth, has arguably led to a less caring, more inward-directed society (Janoski 1998; Hamilton 2003, 2007b; Mackay 2007) and politics has become focused on which party can provide the best benefits to households, especially families. At a time when individual choice is supposedly paramount, the choice between the political parties has increasingly narrowed (Hamilton 2003; McKnight 2005), and consumption patterns 'are strongly defended against government intervention' particularly in the key areas of high environmental impact, including GHG: food, transport and housing (Hobson 2003; Michaelis 2004).

3.5.3 Individualisation and climate change politics

How does the individual citizen fit into the international and national climate change debate? Clearly, measures are necessary to reduce consumption of non-renewable power and fuels, yet even governments which already have significant targets to reduce GHG emissions have been tardy in introducing measures to bring about reductions (Monbiot 2006; Hamilton 2007a; Crowley 2012).

De Geus (2004) argues that by incorporating the issues into technical and bureaucratic decision-making – ecological modernisation – liberal-democratic governments have succeeded in pacifying ‘the ecological critique’ (p. 88). In this way, he says, ‘they have generally been successful in ... preventing a new wave of radical activism, and reassuring their citizens that far-reaching changes in individual consumption levels and lifestyles are neither necessary nor desirable’ (2004, p. 89). As noted above, environmental NGOs have been complicit in this approach. While there has been significant NGO presence at international climate change meetings, and there have been some radical actions by environmentalists, for example the Coal Camp at Newcastle (CCA 2011) the extreme threat posed by climate change would indicate that civil disobedience would be more widespread in the face of government and industry inaction (Hamilton 2009). Australian NGO climate change campaigns have mainly been run at the professional level, in lobbying governments and industry, and some high-profile advertising for example the ‘dinosaur’ campaign in 2009 (TCI 2009b) and the ‘Say Yes’ campaign in support of the carbon price, which involved celebrities such as Cate Blanchett (ABC Sydney 2011). Members, however, are simply encouraged to change their own practices, including buying products sold or promoted by the NGOs themselves, sign postcards or petitions, and come to rallies where they passively listen to speakers: the most challenging activity promoted would be writing letters to politicians. The ACF’s recent reinvention of its long-running magazine *Habitat* to jettison most of the campaign information in favour of a ‘GreenHome’ focus is symptomatic of the incorporation of NGOs into the individualised mindset, which fits well within a weak EM frame.

Nevertheless, NGO (and to some degree government) public information campaigns must have had some impact as public concern about climate change has grown over the last ten or so years, assisted in Australia by dramatic weather changes, as discussed in Chapter One, and around the world by publicity in the lead-up to and during the Copenhagen talks in 2009 (HoL Library 2010). That concern, however, has been expressed much more, in Australia at least, in citizens’ interest in taking up

domestic 'eco-efficient' technology than in working towards political change (Davison, in press; Kent 2009), assisted by the burgeoning of information on how individuals can 'make a difference', for example the former Australian government's 'Be climate clever' program, Blair government's 'You can do your bit' program, and many NGO programs. Maniates (2002b) is scathing about this approach, which perpetuates the individualisation of responsibility and fits well within the neo-liberal ideology of individualism, thus absolving governments and industry of the need to act, and NGOs from mounting concerted political campaigns (see also Kent 2009).

Reliance on voluntary programs to bring about change ignores the well-known 'attitude (or values)-behaviour' gap (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002) discussed further in Chapter Five. Perhaps 'climate change denial' – not just by politicians – is at the heart of the gap between awareness and political concern, and also personal action. It is tempting in the face of such a huge problem to put faith in technological solutions, or simply to pay others to take action on our behalf – carbon offsets – which have been likened to the indulgences sold by the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages to absolve sins (Monbiot 2006). Authors have pointed out that the huge problems and seemingly intractable nature of climate change have simply disempowered people from acting at all (for example (Macnaghten 2003), and if they do, they can feel discouraged by the futility of acting when others continue to pursue profligate lifestyles (Monbiot 2006; Hayward 2006a). This lack of agency is apparent even among people concerned about climate change, as discussed in Chapter Five. Australia makes an interesting case study of the relationship between public concern about climate change, which is amongst the highest in the world (Crowley 2010) and political and personal action by citizens in relation to climate change mitigation: it is the setting of the thesis' case study, discussed in Chapter Six.

To Monbiot, 'only regulation – that deeply unfashionable idea – can quell the destruction wrought by the god we serve, the god of our own appetites', (2006, p. xv) and that will only happen if people take to the streets to demand it. Because it is essentially counter-intuitive for people to campaign for the government to force them to change the way they live Monbiot details how a 90 percent cut in the UK's emissions could be achieved without reducing the standard of living, indeed while improving it in many ways (except for drastic cuts in aviation and other energy-intensive long-distance travel). Meanwhile, governments insist that consumers (voters) need not worry about changing their lifestyles at all (Helm 2009).

From a practical viewpoint, too, the voluntary action approach to climate change must be seen as having failed, as demonstrated in Australia where

governments have principally relied on voluntary programs and emissions have continued to increase (Crowley 2011). As Jackson (2009) points out '[urging] people to insulate their homes, turn down the thermostat, put on a jumper ... holiday at home ... will either go unheard or be rejected as manipulation as long as all the messages about high street consumption point in the other direction' (p. 11). However, as noted previously, there will always be a role for individual citizens in leading social and political change; whether consumption has a legitimate role in such efforts is discussed in the next two chapters.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has advanced the thesis' analysis by touring through the historic, economic, social and political terrain of consumerism; and establishing its intimate connection, via the rise of individualism and the triumph of neo-liberalism, with economic growth and thus with increasing greenhouse emissions.

It argues that climate change faces liberal-democratic governments – especially those with short election cycles and those with fossil fuel dependent economies – with a significant conundrum: how to make tough decisions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions that will undoubtedly increase prices and potentially affect jobs, without significantly affecting their electoral prospects, and thus the likelihood of measures lasting. However, there are ways in which governments can act if they have the political will, demonstrated by the Australian government's carbon pricing decision.

And there are many ways in which concerned citizens can act to reduce their own contributions to GHG emissions, as encouraged by governments and NGOs. However many scholars argue that such voluntary approaches, which are consistent with weak EM and the idea of decoupling economic growth from environmental harm, serve to depoliticise consumption and its environmental impacts. As shown by the continuous rise in global greenhouse gas emissions, especially taking into account the emissions related to the importation of consumer goods to Western countries, these approaches have not to date been particularly successful in reducing overall emissions. The chapter argues that the mainstream policy concept of sustainable consumption has been part of this approach, perpetuating economic growth and continually rising GHG emissions; the alternative approach, which involves consumers examining the implications of their choices and choosing to act outside the global consumption-production chain where possible, largely happens at the margins.

The next chapter continues building on this analysis by discussing environmental citizenship, which addresses questions concerning individual responsibility, including the relationship between Western consumers and global ecological harm.

Chapter Four The promise of environmental citizenship

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the last phase of the thesis' examination of background and theoretical literature. Chapter Two introduced citizenship theory, in particular the concept of active citizenship and arguments concerning the decline in citizens' participation in public life with the neo-liberal ascendancy. Chapter Three continued building the thesis' analytical framework by addressing the links between individualism, consumerism and climate change, and discussing the major conundrum facing liberal-democratic governments confronted with the necessity to mitigate climate change – their dependence on economic growth and associated consumerism. This chapter now completes the analysis of theoretical literature with its examination of environmental citizenship theory, and sets the scene for the empirical work to follow.

Citizens of Western liberal democracies have a significant role in both contributing as consumers to climate change, and in helping to mitigate it: environmental citizenship has been put forward as a framework for considering such citizen action, which includes pressuring governments to introduce the sorts of far-reaching policy changes needed to mitigate climate change, and supporting such changes.

4.2 What is environmental citizenship?

There is no one 'environmental', or 'ecological', or 'sustainability', or 'green', citizenship (Dobson & Saiz 2006); it is a moving feast, an evolving field of theory (Saiz 2005).

To Dobson and Bell, environmental citizenship

will/can/may surely have something to do with the relationship between individuals and the common good. ... the environmental citizen's behaviour will be influenced by an attitude that is – in part, at least – informed by the knowledge that what is good for me as an individual is not necessarily good for me as a member of a social collectivity' (2006b, pp. 4-5).

Here they introduce a major theme of the environmental citizenship literature – that the environmental citizen looks beyond her or his narrow self-interest to what is good

for society – and connect environmental citizenship to the original (republican) conception of citizenship, which often required sacrifice of one's own interests for the common good (Dagger 2002).

Saiz (2005) emphasises the democratic dimension: 'ecological citizenship underlines the responsibilities and obligations of the citizen in the framework of a sustainable society and in relation to underrepresented collectives, as well as its socialising role as a facilitator of ecologically conscious citizens. It is about, then, an active citizenship which must go hand in hand with an extension of political participation' (Saiz 2005).

Environmental citizenship theory both arises out of traditional citizenship theory as well as challenging and extending it in a number of ways, although there is still some debate about whether environmental citizenship is a new type of citizenship or whether it is simply a variation on a theme (Hayward 2006a; Saiz 2005).

Environmental citizenship theory is normative: it seeks to find a way to reduce environmental harm. However, where it fits into modern liberal-democratic politics is unclear: is it a policy tool for bringing about changed attitudes and behaviour towards the environment, a means of empowering citizen participation in debate and decision-making on the environment, or a framework for citizenship action in both the public and private spheres to work for better environmental outcomes, even better social outcomes? Perhaps all of these? Theorists seem to claim one or all of these functions; and one of the difficulties of coming to terms with environmental citizenship theory is to find a way through the divergent approaches to a definitive idea of how the theory meshes with reality in a modern democracy. Consideration of issues such as:

- environmental citizenship rights and duties and to whom, or what, they apply;
- environmental citizenship behaviour;
- the 'political space' or 'political community' of environmental citizenship;
- the relationship between environmental citizenship and democratic theory and practice; and
- the relationship between the environmental and the social in environmental citizenship;

has filled the pages of numerous journal articles and some books since citizenship appeared on the eco-political theory scene in the early 1990s. One question that has not been considered in such depth is why be an environmental citizen – that is, the question of motivation.

The following survey of environmental citizenship theory attempts to draw together the disparate views and analyses of the major theorists in the field. This thesis does not aim to settle on any particular theory advanced by any of the authors reviewed, but to find a way through them all to evaluate the meaningfulness of environmental citizenship as a political tool. As noted above authors use a range of terms, like ecological, environmental or green citizenship, and when discussing particular authors' work, their preferred term is used; otherwise, the default term 'environmental citizenship' is used throughout the thesis.

4.3 The origins of environmental citizenship theory

Environmental citizenship theory has dual origins: eco-political theory and citizenship theory. By the late 1970s eco- (or green) political theorists and practitioners came to accept that strengthening rather than rejecting democracy offered a more acceptable way for environmentalism to make political gains than previous paths followed or implied, for example anarchy and authoritarianism (Doherty & De Geus 1996b). As Eckersley (Eckersley 1996a) asserts, the green movement must look to the liberal-democratic framework for solutions, as that is the political system within which we live.

The combination of the global prominence of liberal democracy and the concept of sustainable development has provided rich ground for eco-political theorists and liberal theorists with an environmental interest for example Doherty & De Geus 1996a; Lafferty & Meadowcroft 1996; Barry 1999; Barry & Wissenburg 2001; Minteer & Taylor 2002; Wissenburg & Levy 2004. Environmental citizenship theory developed during this second phase of green political theory (from the mid-1990s to the present). Despite contributions by Christoff (1996a), Eckersley (1996a), and Barry (1999), Dobson (2000) comments that

no systematic attempt has been made to relate the themes of ecological politics to those of citizenship. This is surprising, given that since its contemporary re-emergence ecological politics has been habitually associated with citizenship-sounding issues such as the reinvigoration of the public sphere, the commitment to political participation and the sense that individuals can make a political difference (p 40).

By 2005 Saiz was able to comment that environmental citizenship was becoming a key contributor to debate on green notions of democracy (Saiz 2005). Economic globalisation and its environmental and social impacts has been a major influence on

the formation of environmental citizenship theory (Christoff 1996a; Dobson 2003; Saiz 2005) and the question of citizenship beyond the nation-state in recognition of these global problems is one of its major themes (Dobson 2003).

While environmental citizenship grew out of, and contributes to both green political and citizenship theory, it has become an area of theory and literature in its own right, for example Dobson's seminal *Citizenship and the Environment* (2003), the special edition of *Environmental Politics* in 2005, and Dobson and Bell's (2006a) collection, *Environmental Citizenship*. There continues to be cross-fertilisation of ideas in publications such as the journal *Environmental Politics*.

As Saiz points out, ecological citizenship is a notion that 'aims at defining its own space – both within the green democratic model and in respect of what Dobson calls the conceptual architecture of citizenship' (Saiz 2005 p. 130).

4.4 Environmental citizenship and citizenship theory

4.4.1 Background

It is citizenship that allows environmental activists in liberal democracies like Australia to pursue their aims: the development of civil and political rights over centuries means that there is an array of means at their disposal for influencing environmental outcomes – through direct political means such as lobbying, or campaigning in elections, perhaps even running as a candidate; through participating in decision-making processes; through street protests; or through the courts (Eckersley 1996). A citizen therefore can choose to exercise her or his civil and political rights in support of the environment. In a liberal democracy this is the most basic, but perhaps the most broadly accepted and practised, way in which citizenship is relevant to the environment (Bell 2005). The development of social rights also means that activists can, if necessary, rely on a basic level of state support (MacGregor 2006).

Issues flowing through to environmental citizenship theory from traditional citizenship theory, however, are much broader and deeper, and go to the heart of whether environmental citizenship is a legitimate field of political theory. They include:

- rights, duties and obligations;
- the passive or active character of citizenship;
- the virtues of citizenship;
- its public nature; and

- the territorial basis of citizenship.

In all of these issues, the environmental variant can be said to be extending citizenship theory, even to be ‘a disruptive influence’ (Dobson 2000). However, theorists would be unlikely to be of one voice on any of them: there is a rich diversity of views (Saiz 2005). As an introduction to a more detailed analysis of major theoretical approaches, therefore, this section briefly outlines the treatment of these issues in environmental citizenship theory. The structure of this analysis owes much to Dobson (2000, 2003).

4.4.2 Rights and obligations

As discussed in Chapter Two, a focus on citizens’ rights is generally associated with the liberal approach to citizenship (Bell 2005; Pettit 2000) although the arrival of ‘social citizenship’ in the early twentieth century led to the advancement of social, political and civil rights through the claims and work of many social movements, often from a socialist or social-democratic perspective (Eckersley 1996b).

The relationship between rights and responsibilities in environmental citizenship has been extensively examined, and is one of the key issues of continuing debate. Latta (2007) comments that ‘[A] concern for individual rights and obligations, relative to collective problems or a “common good”, is widely understood as the specific contribution of citizenship to ecological political theory’ (p. 378). Authors writing from the environmental rights perspective have looked at procedural rights, such as the right to participate in policy debate, and to adequate information and substantive rights, such as the right to a healthy environment (Eckersley 1996b; Bell 2005); and, more controversially, whether the environment itself has rights, or whether components of it such as animals do (; Christoff 1996a; Eckersley 1996b).

Eckersley (1996b) argues for a conception of environmental rights that comes from a human rights foundation, that is, it builds on the achievement of civil, political and social rights. She sees environmental rights as a possible fourth generation of human rights, which would apply not just to individuals but to communities as well – an environmental bill of rights would fulfil this objective. Dean (2001), though, points out that the interdependency of humans and the environment tends towards redefining *social* citizenship rights in the context of the limits to economic growth, rather than the creation of specific *environmental* rights.

Christoff (2000) argues that there are two types of environmental citizenship rights: environmental and ecological, with the former taking an anthropocentric perspective, in favour of ensuring outcomes – even spiritual or aesthetic ones – for

human beings, while the ecological rights approach is more ecocentric – seeking rights for other species, and also for humans living in other countries and in the future. This type of right clearly involves its advocates in claiming responsibilities, that is, people have a ‘moral imperative and custodial responsibility to consider our impacts on defenceless and absent others’ (Christoff 2000, p. 206). Generally, as Eckersley (1996b) and Dean (2001) point out, green theorists (and activists) have not focused on arguing for human environmental rights, but rather have generally sought to extend human responsibility (Saiz 2005).

Like traditional citizenship theory, recent environmental citizenship literature has moved from focusing on rights to duties or obligations; it takes, however, a very different approach. Contrary to recent social citizenship discourse, in which responsibilities and rights have a directly reciprocal relationship, for example mutual obligation in the welfare context, in environmental citizenship the responsibility is for something outside the individual citizen – the environment (and more broadly the humans who depend on it). As Dean notes, ecological considerations do demand specific responsibilities to protect the environment: ‘responsibilities for which there can be no directly correlative rights’ (2001, p. 494) – a theme which is very strong in Dobson’s work (2003), discussed in detail in section 4.5.1.

4.4.3 The active/passive divide

Environmental citizenship is an essentially active notion: a person is an environmental citizen if she practically enacts her commitment to the environment. However, as Dobson (2003) points out, the line between active and passive citizenship is not clear-cut: a person who only carries out her legal citizenly duties, has no involvement in politics or community groups, may, he asserts, still be considered an active citizen if she acts as a citizen-consumer, that is, standing up for her rights and entitlements as a consumer of goods and services, although this is one of the many debated positions within the theory. Is a person an environmental citizen if they look for more environmentally-friendly options when shopping? Or does environmental citizenship entail more overtly active behaviour, such as joining a conservation group, a local Landcare group, or becoming politically active? The vexed issue of the possible role of green consumerism in environmental citizenship will be considered in Chapter Five.

4.4.4 The public/private divide

To many who think, write and act on environmental issues, it is impossible to separate individuals' everyday actions from their environmental consequences. This is particularly important in the area of climate change, as discussed in Chapter Three. One of the major, and most disputed, aspects of environmental citizenship theory is its extension of citizenship to the private sphere (Dobson 2003; Seyfang 2005).

However, apart from its radical departure from classic citizenship, the application of citizenship to the private sphere is problematic in other ways noted even by environmental citizenship theorists themselves. The feminist critique outlined by MacGregor (2006) discusses issues around household work and the offloading of public responsibilities, as well as the potential to depoliticise the underlying causes of environmental problems by focusing on individual behaviour. This individualisation of citizenship responsibility is also raised by other theorists, and is examined in section 4.6.4.

4.4.5 Territoriality

As noted in Chapter Two the globalisation of economics and politics in recent decades has seen tentative theoretical steps towards citizenship beyond the confines of the nation-state, particularly with the development of 'cosmopolitan' citizenship (Falk 2002; Held 2002; Dobson 2003; Saiz 2005). One of the hallmarks of environmental citizenship is the *strength* with which it embraces citizenship beyond bounded territory, given the seriousness and pervasiveness of global environmental problems such as climate change (Christoff 1996a; Dobson 2003; Saiz 2005) and its emphasis on the collective responsibility of humanity for nature, thus taking citizenship beyond the limits of the nation-state Saiz (2005). Dean (2001) notes the 'celebrated Green slogan or aphorism 'think globally, act locally', which places individuals in a global context while requiring particular kinds of behaviour in everyday life: the local (p. 493). Like Dobson's (2003) post-cosmopolitan and ecological citizenship, Clarke's 'deep citizenship' crosses the public-private divide, extending the concern of the individual 'citizen-self' to economic and environmental concerns that impact on the world (Clarke 1996).

4.4.6 The virtues of environmental citizens

Theoretical consideration of virtue is as old as that of citizenship itself, and is intimately connected with republican notions of the common good and citizen duties (Barry 2006; Connelly 2006). Virtue is deeply resonant with the concept from the

environment movement, and environmental citizenship, that individuals, and communities, can make a difference. It is also intimately connected with motivation, and is considered further in section 4.6.3.

4.4.7 Summary

Environmental citizenship builds on long traditions of citizenship, both in theory and practice. It would not exist were it not for the great advances made in citizenship through the development of civil, political and social rights; however it is taking citizenship further in response to major global social, economic and environmental change. While containing elements of older traditions – liberal, republican and communitarian – it has moved beyond them, particularly in the areas of rights/duties, active/passive citizenship, public/private spheres and territoriality.

Against this background, the following section discusses the ideas of two of the most prominent theorists – Andrew Dobson and John Barry – to provide a comprehensive background to the discussion of important themes or questions arising from the theory. The work of other theorists who have contributed to the development of environmental citizenship theory, will be referred to throughout the discussion, and later chapters.

4.5 Major theoretical approaches

4.5.1 Dobson's ecological citizenship

Dobson's (2003) ecological citizenship represents a major advance in citizenship theory. Ecological citizenship is the primary, in fact the only explicit, example Dobson (2003) gives of post-cosmopolitan citizenship. He uses the concept of the 'ecological footprint'²¹ to firmly link the environmental dimension of globalisation with the social and political through citizenship obligations and virtues. Dobson sees the excess use of 'ecological space' (a large ecological footprint) as giving rise to citizenship obligations to those who have a smaller footprint, with climate change a prime example of the impact of excess usage of ecological space. It is not clear, however, who is to decide how much ecological space there is to go around, although Dobson does imply that this could be the role of an international body; his work has clear parallels with the contraction and convergence approach to climate change, and its discussion at international meetings (as discussed in Chapter Three).

²¹ Discussed in section 3.2 of this thesis.

Ecological citizens owe asymmetrical and non-reciprocal obligations to unknown others who are likely to be living in a poorer country (Dobson 2003). This is a radical departure from conventional citizenship on a number of fronts: the existence of duties without corresponding rights; the global nature of the obligations; the personal nature of the actions that lead to the obligations; and the kind of virtues that an ecological citizen is required to have. Justice is central to the obligations Dobson's ecological citizens adopt, and to the political nature of those obligations.

In Dobson's schema rights are not particularly relevant to ecological citizenship, as opposed to environmental citizenship, which is more a kind of liberal citizenship (see below). Those who are recipients of the action taken by ecological citizens to fulfil their obligations (to reduce their ecological footprint) have a right to a larger share of ecological space, but even then it is not generally the term Dobson uses to discuss the relationship between the two groups. The obligations of ecological citizens are non-reciprocal: the terminology of rights and responsibilities therefore does not fit well. While the obligations exist on all citizens of the planet who use more than their share of ecological space, it is the ecological citizens who acknowledge and act on their obligations.

Hayward (2006a) considers that Dobson's (2003) ecological citizenship is one-sided and elitist – the obligations are owed by the well-off to the less well-off, who are not ecological citizens even though they have a much smaller footprint. Similarly, while Latta (2006) approves of Dobson's approach with its focus on unjust material relations, he notes that it 'reproduces in political space the inequalities it seeks to address in ecological space' (p. 384). Dobson's (2006) response to Hayward that those who are owed ecological space are 'active recipients of justice' (p. 449) is, to Latta, 'an exceptionally narrow form of agency' (p. 384). To Connelly (2006), who writes about duty and virtue, there is no problem with this one-sided aspect of ecological citizenship:

[a]n eco-duty is derived from an assessment of the size of our eco-footprint and the extent of our departure from equality in the way we tread the earth. Ecological duties are therefore not equal; they vary between individuals and between groups and nations. Those who have already consumed (and continue to consume) most have correspondingly greater duties (p. 66).

Dobson's ecological citizenship extends from international NGO activists, such as Greenpeace, to citizens taking action in their own home or workplace to reduce its

ecological footprint: action in the private sphere is just as important as that in the public. 'Private acts can have public consequences'; the ecological footprint arises from 'the production and reproduction of individuals' lives, both of which have a private as well as a public dimension' (p. 135). 'Ecological citizenship ... is *all about* everyday living', in contrast to the freedom of the civic republican citizen from such matters (p. 138). Dobson offers little by way of specific guidance to intending ecological citizens, but his concept of the obligation to reverse inequalities in ecological space offers a broad objective to work towards.

Dobson contrasts ecological citizenship with *environmental* citizenship, which is a conventional form of (liberal) citizenship: it deals in the currency of rights; is conducted exclusively in the public sphere; its principle virtues are liberal ones like reasonableness; and it is focused on the nation-state. It is complementary to ecological citizenship, neither being more important than the other in the effort to achieve sustainability. While Dobson's distinction between environmental and ecological citizens is that the former are created in direct proportion to their exposure to environmental breakdown, he does not clearly specify what motivates people to become ecological citizens. In Hayward's (2006a) view, the distinction between the two is unnecessary and ecological citizenship itself is also a form of conventional citizenship.

To Hayward, a much more useful approach would be to attempt to transform the inequalities in the current distribution of rights in the transnational economic system rather than to disengage from the sphere of rights. Dobson does refer to the 'correlative right to sufficient ecological space' (p. 121), and Hayward stresses that ecological space as *both* a right and a duty is worth pursuing (2006a, 2006b). It also seems clear that while he does not focus on rights as such, Dobson's approach is equally focused on redressing international inequalities, but his approach gives citizens a much greater role than would be the case if dealing with the negotiation of rights at the international level. It is this focus on the role and actions of citizens that gives environmental citizenship as a whole its relevance to modern environmental politics.

However, a major problem with Dobson's conception of ecological citizenship is that while it is essentially about the impact of what people in wealthy countries do every day, it does not carry with it a sense of being readily applicable to the general populace, who must understand and then act on their understanding of themselves as users of too much ecological space. Dobson (2003) devotes a whole chapter to education, so it is very important in his schema, but this makes ecological citizenship

very much a long-term prospect. If it is to make a practical difference, for example with regard to climate change, which needs to be addressed urgently, ecological citizenship will have to be made more relevant to the everyday. The next two chapters will discuss case studies of environmental (or ecological) citizenship in the context of sustainable consumption, which is essentially the way in which it will need to be applied if citizens are to reduce their impact on the climate.

Saiz (2005) criticises Dobson's notion of ecological citizenship as relying too much on 'individual agency', that is, 'the motif of his work is the individual citizen striving to be a better citizen', leaving aside important structural issues (p. 176). The instrumental nature of environmental citizenship theory and the individualisation of citizenship responsibility are major issues, discussed in section 4.6.4.

4.5.2 Barry's green and sustainability citizenships

John Barry is also a significant contributor to the debate on environmental citizenship, his two most recent conceptions being 'green' citizenship as part of 'ecological stewardship' (2002) and 'sustainability citizenship' as part of a continuum of 'green citizenship' (2006). Barry's 2002 contribution is an attempt to create an all-encompassing stewardship approach to human relations with the environment and each other, based on the concept of 'vulnerability and dependency'. Politics and democracy are key parts of this relationship, with the domestic and economic spheres being seen as political, and therefore a legitimate site for both citizenship and state regulation. Citizenship is central, due to the 'green contention ... that macro level reorganization needs to be supplemented with changes in general behaviour (weak green citizenship) and values and practices (strong green citizenship)' (Barry 2002, p. 147).

Barry (2002) distinguishes his own concept of green citizenship from Dobson's ecological citizenship; taking issue with the latter's non-reciprocal nature, and hence doubting its 'applicability and practicality within modern societies' (p. 146). His own work, Barry contends, comes from a more realistic perspective, recognising that humans need to use aspects of nature; this does not, however, prevent him from identifying a 'community of dependence and vulnerability' between humans and nature (p. 146), a position which Dobson finds unconvincing (2003, p. 122). Green citizens act both in the private sphere (for example recycling, composting) and in the public sphere.

Barry's (2006) 'sustainability citizenship' is derived from the republican citizenship tradition, which he finds inspiring for its focus on active citizenship, on the common good (without defining any particular common good), on discipline and commitment and its openness to 'virtue-based moral/political perspectives' (p. 22, 26-27). Barry adapts civic republicanism to the 21st century through extending it to the private sphere, adjusting its militarism to dedication, commitment and solidarity (qualities of green political activists) and finding a role for the state in 'creat[ing] the conditions for green citizenship' (2006, p. 28).

Sustainability citizenship is also derived from the full meaning of the term 'sustainable development'. To avoid the fate of that concept, which has been interpreted in so many ways as to become almost meaningless, Barry links sustainability citizenship to the original meaning of sustainable development: 'a commitment to a different type of society, at the heart of which is a commitment to a new view of development that includes economic, environmental and social bottom lines' (2006, p. 24). Barry explicitly links this wider approach to sustainable development with a 'green political approach' (p. 21).

Barry argues for the need to move beyond 'environmental' citizenship, which has the tendency to be co-opted by corporations and public bodies to, at most, 'address the environmental effects rather than the ... political, structural, and economic causes of – unsustainable development' (2006, p. 23). Barry here is referring to the potential (indeed the fact) of environmental citizenship being used as a form of voluntarism – people being encouraged to 'do their bit' for the environment (Latta 2006), discussed further in section 4.6.4.

There are two 'arms' of sustainability citizenship: 'sustainability service', that is, work on, or involvement in, community or state programs aimed at achieving environmental and social sustainability – this could (possibly) be compulsory, but participation is more likely to be either voluntary, or the result of incentives or disincentives through taxes or charges; and 'corrective' or 'oppositional' work – political and other forms of resistance challenging the underlying causes of unsustainable development (Barry 2006, p. 32). He does not mention other ways in which citizens can work towards sustainability in the private sphere, such as changing consumption practices, or choosing to work in environmental or sustainability-related fields.

In his analysis of ecological citizenship, Light (2002) also highlights the importance of the kind of 'maintenance work' Barry refers to, concluding that 'participation in dirty hands activities' is an essential component of a broader

ecological citizenship, which not only aims to produce good outcomes for nature but also at forming stronger bonds between citizens at the local level (p. 168).

Participation in restoration work along democratic lines is one way in which he distinguishes between ecological 'citizenship' and 'identity'. He points to the inclusivity of citizenship, contrary to what many authors have stated (and Light acknowledges the historical debate between inclusivity and exclusivity in citizenship), as opposed to the often exclusive nature of identity politics, which can marginalise its exponents as a 'special interest' group: therefore he contends that a truly democratic green politics must be one of citizenship rather than identity. Like Barry, Light draws inspiration from the modern incarnation of republican citizenship; while his focus is restoration work, he finds a role for environmental activists in pursuing a broader strategic framework in which democratic, community-based environmental work can take place.

Barry's sustainability citizens form one end of the continuum of 'green citizenship': at the other end are the more passive environmental citizens, who have the potential to move along the continuum; Like Dobson (2003) Barry thus adapts what he sees as one of the strong points of civic republicanism – its recognition that 'citizens are made [through their own efforts], not born' (2006, p. 26).

4.6 Issues in environmental citizenship theory

4.6.1 Background

Environmental citizenship is a specifically Western concept, aiming at reducing the impacts humans have on the planet, and through that, on each other. It therefore seems reasonable that environmental citizens are those who are both in a position to accept the responsibility to reduce those impacts, and who take action to fulfil that responsibility.

One of the most important, and contentious, aspects of environmental citizenship, which relates back to this voluntary assumption of responsibility, is the extension of citizenship to the private sphere. Republican citizenship involves citizens acting in the common good, often making some sort of sacrifice to their own interests to do so. This sense of undertaking actions which have wider benefits than oneself (or perhaps even some detriment to oneself) can easily be applied to actions environmentally conscious citizens may take in their own lives in order to, for example, reduce the GHG associated with their day-to-day consumption. For example, they may decide to forego a favourite food because of the embedded energy in its

transport, that is, 'food miles', or to go on holiday locally rather than flying long distance. It is not difficult to see such actions as citizenly, in that they are being undertaken in the interests of the common good. Nevertheless, the extension of citizenship to the private sphere raises contentious issues, discussed below.

This section identifies four major themes which dominate the theoretical literature, and also moves analysis of the theory towards consideration of its relevance in practice. This discussion takes the position that the rights and responsibilities of environmental citizens are to use the civil, political and social rights developed over the past few hundred years in advanced liberal democracies to work towards redressing the imbalance between exploitation and preservation of the planet's natural resources, and concomitantly, between humans' differential use of ecological space. It also takes the position that this citizenship takes place in both the public and the private spheres – that the personal is indeed political in the environmental context at least. Against this background, this section focuses on the following questions:

- What is the 'political space' in which environmental citizenship exists?
- Does the extension of citizenship to the private sphere depoliticise environmental action?
- What motivates environmental citizens, and how does this relate to virtue?
- What are the barriers to environmental citizenship?

4.6.2 What is the 'political space' in which environmental citizenship takes place?

Environmental citizenship can be conceived of as taking place through green politics, environmental NGO activism, community-based projects, and in citizens' own homes and work places. However, the extension of citizenship beyond the traditional confines of territorially defined polity by environmental citizenship theorists has been contentious (Hayward 2006a).

Dobson's ecological citizenship is perhaps the most refined attempt to pin down the way in which environmental citizenship can have a global application. However, like much global citizenship theory before it, it is open to the criticism that there is no defined or 'bounded' polity which applies to citizenship beyond the nation-state (Williams 2002), though attempts have been made to outline a system where citizens could be represented and participate at all levels from the local to the global (Held 2002). The obligations on ecological citizens may exist objectively, as Dobson

says, but if their existence is not acknowledged as part of a political system then where does that leave them?

Hayward (2006a) points out that citizenship, as conventionally defined, depends on there being a polity of which the citizens are members. Dobson goes much further with his concept of ecological citizenship, in which the citizens are not contained within any polity at all: they belong to a 'political community' which, he states, is 'created by the ecological footprint' (2003, p. 116). In fact, Dobson specifically rejects the notion of a defined polity in relation to ecological citizenship, as it would imply membership, which in turn implies entitlement – and ecological citizens have only responsibilities, not rights.

To Hayward, Dobson's equating of ecological space with political space is a 'category mistake' (2006a, p. 438). He argues that ecological space is akin to biophysical space, not the kind of 'space' in which people have political relations. He also insists that the relations between those with excess ecological space and those with a deficit cannot be said to be political relations. In a complex argument, Hayward (2006a, 2006b) maintains that the obligations at the heart of Dobson's ecological citizenship are moral obligations, contrary to what Dobson has been at pains to point out throughout his book. According to Hayward, as moral obligations they cannot be part of a citizenship relationship, which must be of a political, not moral, character (agreeing on this latter point with Dobson).

Hayward (2006a) regards the lack of a defined polity as a fatal flaw in Dobson's conception of ecological citizenship: only in a polity are the relations between people sufficiently political to result in political obligations, and hence citizenship. 'Civil society – whether global, national or subnational – lacks power, authority and institutions and so is not political in the sense it would need to be to generate political obligations' (Hayward 2006a, p. 437).

In Connelly's (2006) view, on the other hand, 'we have to act *as if* (at the very least) we have global citizenship responsibilities for the simple reason that environmental problems are not locally containable'; also, that if our responsibilities extend as far as our community, and if that is increasingly globalised, then it is reasonable to claim that citizenship is non-territorial (p. 63). To Dobson, and other theorists like Barry and Dean, acting locally is also a valid way of acting on a global issue.

Despite his major criticisms of it, Hayward 'agrees in substance' with Dobson's ecological citizenship; his critique is aimed at enabling green political theory to reach a broader audience, to be more relevant in the real world. One of his conclusions is

that due to its internal contradictions and other problems ‘much of Dobson’s substantive discussion could make perfect sense as relating to citizens – as understood conventionally – as citizens of a polity – trying to be more ecological, and also trying to get the polity to be more ecological’ (Hayward 2006a, p. 441).

To other theorists, though, environmental citizenship has broadened the political space or community in which citizenship is traditionally considered to take place: ‘[i]t covers different forms of political engagement in different parts of the public and private spheres’ (Connelly 2006, p. 65). While this debate goes to the heart of whether environmental citizenship is a new ‘form’ of citizenship, to some extent, as Hayward implies, the outcome is the same – citizens striving towards a more ecological society.

One of the most significant theoretical issues, related to political space, is whether the focus of environmental citizenship on individual, personal activity, such as consumption, may be detracting from its potential value as a political tool, as discussed in section 4.6.4.

4.6.3 What motivates environmental citizens, and how does this relate to virtue?

Motivation for environmental citizenship is a neglected area of the theory. Indeed, Dobson notes that ‘[e]cological citizens care because they want to do justice – though of course the question of why on earth they might want to do justice is one that has taxed better minds than my own (2003, p. 123). This section considers the question of motivation and its relationship to citizenship virtue, which has been associated with republican citizenship since ancient times.

To Connelly (2006), achieving an ecologically sustainable society requires the supplementation of legal and economic instruments with environmental virtues. ‘Virtuous eco-citizens will internalize the purpose and value of good environmental practices, and their obedience will thus transcend mere compliance, going beyond it toward autonomous virtuous activity’ (p. 49). These eco-virtues are directed outwards, toward achieving a ‘sustainable environmental common good’ (p. 50); if they also result in the citizen feeling a sense of happiness or well-being, so much the better, but that is not the direct focus. As Beckman (2001) points out, however, a citizen can be motivated to act in a certain way by the desire to be virtuous.

There is much esoteric debate in the literature about what constitutes an ecological virtue, whether virtues are ‘dispositions of character’ or of a political nature (Barry 2002, 2006; Dobson 2003; Connelly 2006; Hayward 2006a). Barry (2002)

considers that 'moral dispositions' such as care and compassion are citizenship virtues. Dobson (2003), consistent with his notion of the ecological footprint and the obligations owed by those with excessive ones, introduces 'justice' as the primary virtue of the ecological citizen, supported by 'care' and 'compassion' (p. 133).

However, the more important question is the object of virtue, that is, to what end is virtue directed, and the question of motivation to act. To Dobson the answer is clear: the end is the evening out of ecological footprints, and justice is the principle virtue involved. To both Barry (2006) and Connelly (2006) virtue is closely related to the common environmental good.

Hayward (2006a) asks why someone would take on the onerous obligations – the sacrifice – involved in drastically reducing their ecological footprint? He attempts to turn this argument around by finding a virtue that anyone can have or develop, but which as well as having potentially beneficial environmental applications, fits well within a liberal-democratic framework – resourcefulness. Unfortunately, as Dobson points out in his reply to Hayward, there is no necessary connection between resourcefulness as a virtue and any environmental benefits (Dobson 2006) .

Connelly (2006) points out the intimate connection between virtue and motivation: 'an eco-virtue is an internally motivated thoughtfulness leading to action' (p. 66). To Connelly, therefore, virtue both comes from and can lead to motivation. It is vital, in order to foster environmentally virtuous behaviour, for voluntary action to be encouraged and facilitated. The state therefore has a key role in ensuring that those who are not already environmentally virtuous become motivated to act. Connelly also points out that for virtues to work in a transformative way there needs to be basic agreement on the human good to be attained; thus there is a direct link between virtue, motivation and political participation.

4.6.4 Does the extension of citizenship to the private sphere depoliticise environmental action?

As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, the neo-liberal ascendancy has seen a shift away from the social-democratic focus on the good of the collective to a focus on the individual. Many scholars are concerned about the individualisation of citizenship responsibility, in which the supremacy of individual choice has been extended to action around social and environmental issues: citizens are expected to make a difference to issues they are concerned about, like climate change, by taking action in their own lives or their households. The danger with such individualisation of

responsibility is that it takes place at the expense of collective, including political, action. The extension of citizenship responsibility and action to the private sphere risks being complicit in this depoliticisation of environmental concerns.

Latta (2007) points out the normative or instrumental (he uses both words) character of much of the recent theory, which tends to 'focus on the challenge of cultivating "green" attitudes and behaviours in individual citizens' (p. 378), an approach which, he states, is not without merit but is only *part* of what the debate should be about. In particular, questions of 'democracy and collective action [are left] on the sidelines' (p. 378). This focus on green outcomes has, in Latta's view, 'come at the expense of not appreciating how the turn towards citizenship might revitalise a concern for democratic politics in ecological thought' (p. 377). This has resulted in the exclusion of 'subaltern voices', that is, to Latta, ecological citizens seem to be a middle class lot full of good intentions towards the environment and the disadvantaged: the latter do not come under the ecological citizenship umbrella. As noted above, Hayward (2006a) made a similar comment in relation to Dobson (2003).

To Latta, these deficiencies in the political approach of most ecological citizenship theorists could be corrected by the inclusion of 'environmental justice' as part of environmental citizenship, a position, he points out, that is rejected by theorists of both kinds. Environmental justice theory and practice originated in the civil rights movement in the USA, and is 'typically a grassroots or "bottom-up" political response to external threats' (Agyeman & Evans 2006, p. 187). To Dobson (2003), there is no necessary link between ecological citizenship and environmental justice, which seeks to 'have environmental "bads" more fairly distributed across the country' (p. 85).

Agyeman and Evans (2006), while broadly supportive of Dobson's ecological citizenship approach, state that '[e]nvironmental citizenship is not, in our view, a particularly useful term on which to base political action' (p. 186), arguing instead that the 'broader political and policy dimensions of the environmental justice discourse, linked to current debates on governance and sustainability' provide a better context for environmental (and ecological) citizenship theory.

It should be noted, however, that Dobson's ecological citizenship with its focus on unequal ecological footprints, has justice as its major virtue. By turning around its focus on obligations, towards the perspective of those with a smaller footprint, it could be seen as compatible with environmental justice. MacGregor *et al.* (2005) also note the importance of justice in environmental citizenship. One major difference, however, is in the breadth of the ecological footprint concept, compared to the very

specific focus of environmental justice on particular instances. Environmental citizenship of the more liberal, rights-asserting kind as contrasted by Dobson (2003) with ecological citizenship, would seem exactly suited to the kind of issues subsumed within environmental justice. Indeed, environmental citizenship in the broad conception used in this thesis would be capable of encompassing all kinds of environmental issue, as long as citizen action is involved.

Returning to the instrumental nature of environmental citizenship theory, this point is noted by other theorists, for example as noted above, Saiz (2005) criticizes Dobson's ecological citizenship for being too reliant on individual action, lacking a political focus. Luque (2005) is concerned that using the ecological footprint as the rallying point for citizen action could be potentially depoliticising: citizens could focus on reducing their footprint through private – essentially consumption – actions, while what is really needed is political action to change the structural economic and political factors which lead to the global imbalance in ecological space. As Christensen *et al.* (2009) conclude with regard to their revealing Danish study of sustainable consumption policy: progress in consumer-oriented environmental policy is limited to areas which are easy, are not strongly related to social status or mobility and do not conflict with economic growth policy.

It is difficult not to accept that the extension of environmental citizenship to the private sphere does to some extent individualise responsibility (Kent 2009; Maniates 2002b), as citizens are urged by governments and NGOs to adopt measures in their own lives to reduce the environmental impacts, particularly GHG emissions, associated with their everyday activities like power usage and transport. These campaigns, however, do not question consumption (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a; Michaelis 2004). In fact, many environmental organisations promote 'green' consumption, in order to give supporters something that they can easily do 'to make a difference', promoting '12-point programs that steer well clear of confronting institutions and interests that erode the capacity for restraint' (Maniates 2002a, p. 212) or in order to raise money for their campaigns. What strikes Conca (2002) in this 'commodification of nature' is the absence of recognition that consumption patterns are part of the problem (p. 133).

To MacGregor (2006) extending environmental citizenship to the private sphere (that is directing it towards attitude and behaviour change) furthers the bias in citizenship against women, as it is likely to be women who have to do the extra work involved in reducing the environmental impact of households, and therefore would be even less likely to be able to be active in the public sphere. In addition, it potentially

supports the neo-liberal offloading of responsibilities from the public sphere to the private, and tends to de-politicise environmental issues. Despite these criticisms MacGregor (2006) still sees value in environmental citizenship, finding it a 'potentially radical ideal' and that 'there is something attractive about the civic republican tradition wherein citizenship is a specific kind of universal political identity, and politics is a realm where freedom, equity, and human excellence may flourish' (p. 103-4).

While much of the literature does adopt an instrumental approach, and environmental citizenship has been adopted in this individualising way by governmental and other institutions, it is also clear that the extension of citizenship responsibility is just that – an extension: it does not detract from the citizenship responsibility in the public sphere but adds an extra dimension. Indeed, the theoretical environmental citizenship literature grapples with issues of democracy and the role of the citizen *vis a vis* the state in a number of ways. Barry (2006), for example, is forthright about the political role of environmental citizens: '[t]o exaggerate, in the struggle for more sustainable, just, and democratic societies, we need civil disobedience before obedience, and more than ever, we need critical citizens and not just law-abiding ones' (p. 40).

Dobson (2003) has no qualms about including in citizenship everyday activities to reduce one's ecological footprint, or the voluntary nature of such activity, pointing out that he does not 'subscribe to a naïve voluntarism that ignores the powerful political and economic interests that structure the world in unsustainable ways' (p. 103). Individualised acts of citizenship, such as 'buying ozone-friendly products' or 'burning less fuel ... will inevitably bring individuals into conflict with political and economic structures whose intentions are profoundly unsustainable, and it is at this point ecological citizenship will demand collective as well as individual action' (p. 103). The political nature of such action lies in its relationship with justice, and the intention of redressing the global inequality of ecological space. Also in this vein, Luque looks to conversations expressing 'the ability to draw connections between the intimate sphere, and the local and the global, which is enhanced in the process of finding out about the conditions of production and distribution of consumption goods', as a particular instance where the private and public collide (p. 216). However, whether such actions, intentions and conversations necessarily lead to collective action is not clear from the theory, as discussed further in Chapter Five.

Closely related to the privatisation or individualisation of responsibility is the concept of the 'citizen-consumer': consumers have been assigned the role of

challenging corporate and governmental decisions and actions which have adverse impacts on societies and the environment (Trentmann 2007). Curiously, the extensive literature on citizen-consumption has rarely crossed paths with that on environmental citizenship, even though there are clearly similarities in the use of citizens' private sphere activities to work for social or political change. However, there is a large area of cross-over between environmental citizenship, citizen-(including green) consumerism and sustainable consumption, and similar questions are raised, as discussed in Chapter Five.

These are complex issues, which are central to action on climate change and are considered further in the remainder of this thesis, including a case study which examines the environmental citizenship of a specific group – members of the Tasmanian Greens party – and directly addresses the issue of the cross-over between personal and political action (see Chapter Six).

4.6.5 What are the barriers to environmental citizenship?

There are many deep-seated barriers to environmental citizenship in modern liberal-democracies; most of them relate back to the structural, social and political factors discussed in Chapter Four which also militate against more sustainable consumption.

The lack of specifically environmental rights represents a significant barrier to environmental citizenship: as Eckersley (1996b) points out, with no rights as such to rely on, environmental arguments simply become one more 'interest' to be traded-off in the policy process. As Smith (2005) notes, there has been little focus in the theoretical literature on what kinds of institutions actually *enable* rather than discourage environmental citizenship, although Connelly (2006) argues that if governments put the conditions in place to allow virtuous environmental practice to take place, for example recycling bins, the practice will become second nature, and the virtue and motivation internalised, resulting in the development of environmental citizenship. Horton (2006) identifies a particular green culture in which the lives of committed environmental activists in his study take place; he advocates expanding aspects of the 'architecture' of that culture so that environmental citizenship becomes more accessible to the broader community.

MacGregor *et al.* (2005) also note the importance of access, infrastructure and equity for environmental citizenship. 'For environmental actions to become shared, and part of citizenship, they need to be accessible and affordable to all. Citizenship as well as environmental citizenship are undermined if acting on principle is reduced to

a “lifestyle choice” for the few’ (p. 10). As well as access to affordable facilities, they note the scarcity of time in busy lives, the burden of extra environmental household duties and the necessity for work structures that allow time for public participation, as well as child care and public transport to enable access.

As well as physical, infrastructural and access barriers, there are motivational barriers to environmental citizenship as well. As noted above, motivation is not well addressed in the environmental citizenship literature, other than in the context of the role of the state providing infrastructure and incentives to facilitate people’s entry into the world of environmental behaviour (Barry 2006; Connelly 2006), some mention of the moral imperative versus political obligation to act (Dobson 2003) and the discussion of environmental virtues that motivate people to act (Barry 2002, 2006; Dobson 2003; Connelly 2006; Hayward 2006a). The question of why people would want to act virtuously in the environmental context is rarely, if ever addressed.

Surveys consistently show a gap between environmental beliefs and willingness to act (discussed further in Chapter Five), so the question of motivation is a crucial one if environmental citizenship is to make inroads into serious environmental issues like climate change, especially given the huge forces working against the kinds of structural changes needed if effective action is to be taken (as discussed in Chapter Four).

Barriers to environmental citizenship, including motivation to act, will be discussed further in the following chapters.

4.7 Definition of environmental citizenship

As noted at the outset of this chapter, there is no one ‘environmental citizenship’ (Dobson & Saiz 2006). There also is no one single definition of environmental citizenship: different authors have different perspectives, as discussed in this chapter. However, in order to continue with this thesis’ task of evaluating environmental citizenship as a framework for citizen action on climate change, it is necessary to provide a definition around which to base the thesis’ analysis and evaluation of environmental citizenship.

One way of defining environmental citizenship could simply be *‘acting on a commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society’*.

Having an environmental commitment entails an internalised belief; acting on it could involve either personal action, such as reducing consumption, or action in the public sphere, or it could require both. An ecologically sustainable society would necessarily be one in which global environmental issues like climate change have been rectified,

and that necessarily entails redressing imbalances among human beings: the levelling out of ecological footprints. This utilitarian definition will therefore be used to guide the empirical work carried out in this thesis.

4.8 Environmental citizenship in practice

Much of the environmental citizenship analysis has been at an abstract theoretical level (Smith 2004). Dobson comments on the need to analyse actual practices and contexts of citizens' behaviour and activity: '[c]itizenships are not created ex nihilo; they are rooted in particular times, places and experiences' (2000, p 57). Until very recently there has been a lack of empirical work on environmental citizenship, with notable exceptions being Horton (2006), Nash and Lewis (2006) and Seyfang (2006), with recent contributions such as Jagers (2009) and Wolf, Brown & Conway (2009). There are numerous other empirical studies which could be related to aspects of environmental citizenship but which do not use it as a theoretical framework, for example Evans & Abrahamse (2009). There is a paucity of empirical studies of environmental citizenship in Australia, as discussed Chapter One. One of the aims of this thesis is to add to this empirical work by looking at the environmental citizenship practice of one segment of the Australian population (see Chapter Six).

From a theoretical perspective, the issue of how environmental citizenship manifests in practice encompasses all of the issues discussed so far. For example, does it consist only of practices aimed at reducing one's ecological footprint, or contributing to maintenance of local natural and human communities? Or must it be much broader, requiring political activity to bring about the kinds of structural economic, political and social changes needed for a truly sustainable society, that is: is it transformative, or palliative?

Here the question comes back to the *purpose* of environmental citizenship. If it is a purely instrumental concept, to be used by policy-makers to encourage sustainable lifestyles, perhaps the theory has already achieved its aim, as governments and NGOs exhort citizens to do their bit for the environment by installing insulation or solar panels, or using public transport. At the same time, however, as Jackson (2009) and others point out, and as discussed in Chapter Four, the structural reliance of liberal democracies on economic growth and consumerism, shows up the futility, if not the hypocrisy, of such programs. It seems clear that while lifestyle adjustments are an important aspect of environmental citizenship, they are only one, and that much more is involved. Perhaps the key lies in Dobson and Bell's (2006b) contention that environmental citizenship involves a change in *attitude*, not

just behaviour – that is, internalising environmental sustainability, being mindful of one's ecological footprint, not just responding to exhortations to live sustainably, which become just one more demand on busy lives. This could, perhaps should, involve or at least lead to increased community and political involvement as well as changed life practices: that is, Barry's (2006) continuum from environmental to sustainable citizenship.

4.9 Conclusion

4.9.1 Conclusion to Chapter Four

At the end of this survey of environmental citizenship theory it is apt to conclude, as the chapter commenced, that there is no one environmental citizenship, as theorists have different perspectives and the theory remains unsettled. The only commonality among the variants of the theory is that they all deal with the relationship between citizens and environmental harm. The central disputes among and issues raised by theorists surround the instrumental nature of the work of much of the recent theory, whether responsibility-based environmental citizenship takes place within 'political space' and therefore whether it is truly citizenship, and whether the extension of citizenship duties to the actions of individuals and households has the effect of depoliticising environmental action.

Having analysed the various criticisms and arguments of theorists, this thesis leans towards the instrumental, indeed normative, theory advocated by Andrew Dobson, with the caveat that some aspects of it are incomplete and will be further addressed by this thesis. It also finds much in common between the work of Dobson and John Barry, at the macro level, that is that environmental citizenship is an essentially active, responsibility- rather than rights-based citizenship, whereby individual citizens act on their environmental concerns and commitment to an ecologically sustainable society. Dobson's (2003) radical notion of the responsibility of citizens of wealthy industrialised countries to reduce their ecological footprints is a particularly relevant and convincing theoretical response to global environmental and social harm like climate change, while Barry's (2006) notion of the continuum from environmental to green or critical citizenship is a useful metaphor which will be incorporated into the thesis' analysis.

At the end of the theoretical analysis, the chapter presented a working definition of environmental citizenship to be used to guide the thesis' empirical work (see section 4.7).

4.9.2 Conclusion to background and theoretical literature analysis

Through the analytical framework used so far in the thesis, the following understanding of the relationship between individualism, consumerism and climate change has emerged:

- the rise of individualism and neo-liberal politics is arguably associated with the loss of civic engagement by individuals, and clearly with the increasing importance of consumption politically, economically and socially;
- rising consumption levels in the West are directly implicated with climate change;
- the international policy response to Western over-consumption, 'mainstream' sustainable consumption policy, has been inadequate to redress rising consumption levels and associated greenhouse gas emissions;
- liberal-democratic governments, particularly those with short election cycles and/or fossil fuel dependent economies, have been reluctant to introduce climate change measures that could be perceived of as negatively affecting individuals and households;
- there has instead a focus by governments, and many NGOs, on voluntaristic, consumption-based policy and action, consistent with an economic growth paradigm; and, many scholars argue, deflecting citizens away from political action to redress the structural causes of environmental problems like climate change;
- environmental citizenship theory addresses the relationship between over-consumption in the West and global environmental problems like climate change, with the responsibility-based approach argued for by theorists such as Andrew Dobson and John Barry the most convincing;
- but there are a number of issues with the theory, including its focus on potentially depoliticising individual action.

Some of the issues identified in environmental citizenship theory have a direct bearing on its potential as a framework for citizens' action on climate change. In order to evaluate the theory's potential, empirical studies are needed to interrogate just how the theory might translate into practice. This is the task of the next two chapters, with

Chapter Five initially outlining the analytical framework to be used, and the precise issues which the empirical analysis is seeking to illuminate.

Chapter Five Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption: dealing with climate change in practice

5.1 Introduction

Based on the framework for analysis used so far in the thesis (summarised at the end of Chapter Four), this chapter examines studies of citizens' everyday lives, and attitudes, to build up an understanding of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption as manifested in practice. As noted in Chapter Four, empirical studies are necessary as environmental citizenship is a normative theory; and in order to evaluate whether the theory is suitable as a framework for citizens' action on climate change, it must be examined in a practical context, to determine whether issues arising from the theoretical analysis are relevant in a practical context, and to identify any further issues that need to be resolved.

Central among these issues are:

- whether environmental citizenship can consist only of practices aimed at reducing a citizen's own ecological footprint, or is it necessarily broader, encompassing community-based and political action to bring about structural change towards a sustainable society?
- does focusing on private sphere activities, specifically consumption, mean the structural foundations of unsustainability are necessarily neglected?
- what, if anything, connects personal and public environmental citizenly action?
- what motivates environmental citizens to act?

First, the chapter examines a field of theoretical and empirical literature that seeks to combine consumption and citizenship: the citizen-consumer. This examination narrows down the situations in which environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption can be seen as clearly consistent, theoretically and empirically – through citizens practising consumption in a political, critical or conscious way, aware of the implications of the global production-consumption-waste chain that perpetuates environmental and social harm.

As noted in Chapter Four, for the purpose of the thesis' empirical analysis, a necessarily utilitarian definition of environmental citizenship has been adopted, derived from a synthesis of the theoretical literature:

‘acting on a commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society’ (section 4.7).

This definition guides the analysis of the empirical studies examined below, and also the thesis’ own case study, discussed in Chapter Six.

The analytical framework used in this chapter is based on the analysis of background and theoretical material examined so far. It initially examines:

- studies of ‘pro-environmental behaviour’ which, while not mentioning environmental citizenship, are highly pertinent to a concept which involves translating environmental concern into action; then progresses to
- expressions of environmental citizenship through the everyday practices of citizens;
- motivations for such behaviour;
- the barriers that limit or prevent environmental citizenly behaviour;
- contradictions and inconsistencies evident even in the behaviour of committed environmental citizens; and finally
- individual agency and the relationship between the individual and the collective, a crucial aspect of environmental citizenship (Luque 2005).

These studies, which come from a range of disciplines, perspectives and countries, show that the concept of expressing environmental citizenship through consumption practices is extremely complex and is deeply enmeshed in societal, cultural and political factors. The analysis undertaken in this chapter informs the analysis of the case study results in the following chapter, and both of these empirical chapters feed through to the evaluation of environmental citizenship theory in Chapter Seven.

5.2 The ‘citizen-consumer’

As discussed in Chapter Three, consumption and consumer confidence are central to economic growth, and consumers play an essential part in governments’ strategies to deal with environmental problems by purchasing ‘greener’ products (OECD 2002, 2011). There is a vast literature on the role of consumers in attempting to bring about social, economic and more recently, environmental, change, and it is not possible in the space available to do justice to the range of issues raised. It is necessary, however, to raise some key issues from the literature that are relevant to the discussion of sustainable consumption and environmental citizenship in the rest of the thesis.

As an essentially private activity, consumption has historically been regarded as existing in a different realm to citizenship (Trentmann 2007) and as belonging

principally to the domestic, female domain (Jubas 2007; Kroen 2004). This private/public divide, however, has never been a truly distinct one (Hilton & Dauntun 2001) and over the centuries the grey area where the public and private spheres intertwine has become increasingly large: as this thesis has emphasised, the overlap between consumption, economics and politics is ubiquitous in modern Western life. As discussed in Chapter Four, the extension of citizenship to the private sphere, of which consumption decisions are a major part, is a contentious aspect of environmental citizenship, however citizens have long attempted to use their power as consumers to change political and economic decisions and practices, starting at least with the slavery abolition movement, when British women boycotted sugar (Kroen 2004; Jubas 2007).

In the last decade or so, the 'citizen-consumer' (Trentmann 2007) has been assigned the role of challenging corporate and governmental decisions and actions which have adverse impacts on societies and the environment: the fair trade movement being a prime example, where consumers are able to buy products like coffee in the belief that they are not complicit in the exploitation of workers (Clarke *et al.* 2007). Citizen-consumption includes 'political consumption' (Micheletti 2003), like the campaign against Nike's use of sweatshop labour to produce its shoes which involved a boycott and other forms of public pressure; as well as 'critical' or 'conscious' consumption which are broader: they could be part of a specific campaign involving boycotts or 'buycotts' (where people favour certain products), or they could simply involve consumers thinking about the implications of their consumption decisions, and using their purchasing power to bring about change (Sassatelli 2006; Johnston 2008).

However, there are many areas of conflict and uncertainty about citizen-consumption, with some scholars finding the combination unlikely to result in any significant political and economic change, and even complicit in continuing the consumerist status quo (Luke 1997; Smith 1998; Maniates 2002b; Hobson 2004; Seyfang 2005; Jubas 2007; Johnston 2008). The 'green' consumer, perhaps the best known of these citizen-consumer hybrids, is the broadest category, because such consumption may be inspired by a number of different concerns, such as individual and family health (Sassatelli 2006), identity creation (Connolly & Prothero 2003) and even status (Woodside 2011).

There is no clear match between the reduction of GHG emissions and citizen-consumption as a political activity: given the ubiquitous and complex nature of GHG emissions, it is not something that can be easily associated with particular products or

companies. A search for 'climate change' on the website of the UK NGO Ethical Consumer, for example, comes up with 1623 product and 698 company results but no specific boycott category (Ethical Consumer 2011). On the other hand, there are many ways for people to contribute less to GHG emissions by investing in energy efficient appliances and renewable energy technology, if they can afford to, and there is a boom in information, advice and products to help householders to reduce their carbon footprint through their consumption decisions, for example the Australian Government's 'Your Home' website (DCCEE 2011e). Green consumerism, then, fits firmly within the mainstream, weak ecological modernisation approach to sustainable consumption, discussed in Chapter Three. For example, the OECD's policy framework bases its approach on technology and market-based mechanisms including 'the availability of a range of environmentally friendly goods and services', education, and information to motivate and enable 'consumer action' (OECD 2002).

There are complex questions involved in whether a product is truly sustainable, when viewed from an ecological perspective: many, if not most, of the products labelled or considered 'green' still exist as part of the globalised commodity chain in which there are many decisions, power relations and practices that are obscured from the end consumer (Dauvergne 2008; Princen 2002b). Questions arise, for example, the embedded energy in all sorts of products and food, including organic and fair trade food, from both production and transportation, and whether 'carbon neutral' labelling is genuine: questions which it is extremely difficult for most consumers to be able to judge. Even if there is a labelling scheme such as provided by the Forest Stewardship Council (Gale 2000), the scheme may not take into account factors particularly relevant to climate change. Green consumerism can be superficial and many authors regard it as potentially depoliticising: it offers a way for citizens to shop, or dispose of recyclable waste, 'with a clear conscience' while not thinking deeply about the issues involved or about taking collective action (Luke 1997; Smith 1998; Maniates 2002b).

José Johnson's theoretical examination of the 'citizen-consumer hybrid' (Johnston 2008), elaborated through her empirical study of the giant US chain, Whole Food Market (WFM), explores the intrinsic contradictions between the 'competing ideologies of consumerism (an idea rooted in individual self-interest) and citizenship (an ideal rooted in collective responsibility to a social and ecological commons)' (p. 232). Johnson points out that the citizen-consumer hybrid has gained widespread acceptance both academically and by activists as a way in which people can satisfy their consumption desires while 'feeling good about their responsibilities to other

people, other species and the environment'; and shopping is often put forward as an 'entry point to larger political projects associated with citizenship' (pp. 230-1). However, Johnson's study exposes WFM practices which manipulate its customers' ethical concerns, without necessarily resulting in genuine environmental and social gains.

While exhortations and information on mainstream sustainable consumption have 'partially shaped the meanings attached to being a good citizen in contemporary high income societies, framing how individuals are normatively expected to respond to sustainable consumption messages' (Hobson 2002, p. 99) relying on consumer choice ignores a whole range of factors, discussed in section 3.3.5, which point to the opposite conclusion – to a *lack* of consumer choice, and power. In addition, even when consumers would prefer to consume sustainably, they may not be able to for a range of reasons, including 'affordability, availability and convenience of sustainable products' (Seyfang 2005, p. 297).

Thus, Seyfang (2005) asserts, it is a 'category error [to pit] individuals against global institutions to solve global problems' because 'mainstream sustainable consumption policy' relies on the acts of atomised individuals to address global environmental problems such as climate change; meanwhile unsustainable consumption is 'propagate[d]' by global institutions such as the World Trade Organisation (Seyfang 2005, p. 297; Dauvergne 2008) and truly sustainable consumption is marginalised. The 'alternative' approach to sustainable consumption (Seyfang 2005), on the other hand, involves questioning the whole of the globalised production-consumption-waste disposal chain, and to a large extent staying as far as possible outside that chain, for example shopping at local co-operatives (Seyfang 2006), participating in schemes like LETs (Seyfang 2005; Williams 2005), networks promoting more sustainable living, like permaculture (Michaelis 2004), and generally voluntarily consuming less (Hamilton 2003; Maniates 2002a).

Sassatelli's (2006) 'critical consumerism' turns the doctrine of consumer sovereignty on its head: rather than consumption purely for individual satisfaction, critical consumers look to the good of the community. It is presented in terms of active citizenship: as individual consumer choice is

charged with power, it appears to be defined less in terms of rights and more in terms of duties. Consumption is seen less as the sphere of negative freedom par excellence and more as a sphere for the exercise of positive freedom, less as a private sphere where the consumer can think only of him/herself ... and more as a public domain defined by consumers'

freedom to voice their own moral commitments in order to change politics and the economy (p. 235).

Sassatelli's critical consumerism emphasises being satisfied and happy while consuming less, shortening the commodity chain through the use of local and alternative production and distribution networks, and reappraising the 'separation between production and consumption which is associated with the entrenchment of the public/private divide' (p. 233). It is thus very much part of the 'alternative' approach to sustainable consumption.

However, not everyone is in a position to become politically active or to opt out from mainstream consumption practices. Many people are, though, keen to make a difference in other ways (Kent 2009), however small, in a world in which massive environmental and social problems, and the political and institutional structures that perpetuate them, may otherwise seem overwhelming (Macnaghten 2003). The crux of these issues, where the private sphere intersects with the public, is where environmental citizenship overlaps with sustainable consumption.

5.3 Environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption in practice

5.3.1 Introduction

Dobson (2003) points out that empirical studies are necessary to explore how environmental citizenship may be expressed in practice. One of the most fundamental ways in which environmental citizenship can be looked at is that it actually consists of practice: that environmental citizens act on their environmental concerns, beliefs and attitudes; that their behaviour is consistent with their values (Horton 2006). In Chapter Four, a working definition of environmental citizenship was proposed: *acting on a commitment towards an ecologically sustainable society*. An important, and accessible, area in which citizens can act on their environmental concerns is through their consumption practices, in order to reduce their ecological footprint. Much of the empirical work in this area focuses on the 'attitude (or values)-behaviour gap' (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002) between peoples' expressed environmental concern and their behaviour; a gap which often becomes apparent even in studies which are not ostensibly looking for it. The discussion here follows this lead, before turning to specific studies of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption in practice.

5.3.2 Environmental concern and behaviour change

There is a wealth of research covering more than thirty years on ‘pro-environmental’ attitudes and behaviour, and the relationship between them, in particular the ‘attitude-behaviour gap’ (Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002). These studies are usually not focused on environmental citizenship *per se*; nevertheless if environmental citizenship consists of translating concern into action it is important to look at studies showing whether and how people view their connection with the environment, and their willingness to act to limit their impacts.

Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) surveyed the dense field of socio-psychological and sociological research and came up with their own model of how pro-environmental behaviour is formed, in which ‘environmental knowledge, values, and attitudes, together with emotional involvement [make] up a complex [they call] “pro-environmental consciousness”’ (p. 256). Personality traits and personal values as well as external factors including demographic, political, socio-economic (such as income) and infrastructure factors (such as availability of public transport or recycling facilities) shape this mindset. They also note that different influences would play greater or lesser roles at different stages of people’s lives, and that education is a major influence, though it does not necessarily lead to pro-environmental behaviour.

Leaving aside external factors which often come into play *after* development of concern for the environment; for example someone concerned about GHG emissions from food miles may, due to either location or income, have no option but to shop at a large supermarket which stocks no local produce, many studies have focused on the factors that contribute to a person’s environmental concern. These factors are identified by Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) as:

- environmental values – developed through a person’s life experiences such as family, peer group, exposure to media and politics, and cultural context;
- awareness and attitudes, which include both knowledge (greatly assisted by education to facilitate a deep understanding of often complex natural systems) and emotional involvement (as opposed to negative emotional responses such as denial, delegation and apathy); and
- a strong internal ‘locus of control’, a perception by an individual that his or her actions can bring about change (discussed further in section 5.3.5).

These factors in turn lead to a sense of responsibility, which is one of the fundamentals of environmental citizenship.

In terms of political, cultural and social influences on citizens’ behaviour, Kilbourne, Beckmann and Thelen (2002) focused on the ‘dominant social paradigm’ (DSP) which they define as ‘the values, metaphysical beliefs, institutions, habits, etc.

that collectively provide social lenses through which individuals and groups interpret their social world' (quoting Milbrath²² 1984, p. 7). The paradigm currently dominating western society is that which was engendered during the Enlightenment and manifests as the 'hegemony of productivism' identified by Smith (1998) or a belief that technology will solve all our environmental problems (Nash & Lewis 2006). The results of the authors' survey of university students in seven countries (including Australia) confirmed their hypothesis that 'as one's belief in the DSP increases, their expressed concern for the environment decreases. ... as their concern for the environment increases, their perception of necessary changes and willingness to change to achieve environmental balance will also increase' (p. 193). The authors conclude, however, that 'effective and enduring environmental policy may require more than measures to increase concern: it might also require more fundamental institutional changes at the DSP level ...' since belief in the DSP militates against citizens actually changing to more environmentally benign behaviour' (p. 202). Heath and Gifford (2006) further this line of research with their finding from a survey of 185 Canadians that '[s]upport for free-market ideology indirectly influences disbelief in global climate change, by fostering environmental apathy' (p. 62). Support for free market ideology was a significant predictor of not taking action to address the negative effects of global climate change. However, the deeper question is what influences, or motivates, a person to believe, or not, in the DSP, which arguably would involve consideration of the factors Kolmuss & Agyeman (2002) identify above as contributing to pro-environmental consciousness.

Other studies considering cultural and social influences on citizens' behaviour focus on 'post-material' values, a concept put forward by Ronald Inglehart (see section 3.4.2). Post-material values have been found to exist among at least a proportion of Western populations, although not the major proportion as might have been expected if such values had developed since WWII in the way posited by Inglehart. Post-materialism is a very specific concept measured in a specific way: more general surveys of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours have resulted in widely varying levels of concern and action, which Macnaghten and Urry (1998) attribute to the way in which surveys divorce people's environmental attitudes from the reality in which they live their lives (see also Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002).

One way in which the expression of post-materialism has been examined (Ivanova & Tranter 2009) is through assessing people's willingness to act or pay for

²² Milbrath, L, *Environmentalists: vanguards for a new society*, Albany, New York, University of New York Press, 1984.

environmental protection. As Jagers (2009) points out, willingness to pay (or act) can also be used as a measure of environmental citizenship; that is, environmental citizens would presumably be more willing than others to pay more taxes, higher prices or accept cuts in their standard of living in order to protect the environment, although willingness to pay or act does not always translate into reality (the attitude- or values-behaviour gap). As noted in Chapter Three, any serious policy effort to mitigate climate change must involve measures to reduce consumption of fossil fuel-based products; this is likely to mean increases in at least power prices and petrol, and therefore willingness of the public to accept such costs is a major factor for governments to consider in developing such policies.

With this in mind, Ivanova and Tranter (2009) analysed the results of surveys in twelve countries, including Australia, to determine the willingness of people to pay higher taxes, higher prices or cuts in their standard of living in order to protect the environment. They found that willingness to pay had decreased between 1993 and 2000 (2003 in the case of Australia), as the environment became a mainstream political issue – ‘routinisation’ – and people increasingly expect the government to take responsibility for it (p. 171). In almost all the countries studied, the factors increasing willingness to pay were tertiary education, post-material values, left political orientation and concern about the environment, in particular climate change. Income, gender and age were not found to be important factors.

The OECD’s (2011) international study into household behaviour and policy changes also found a disappointing level of willingness to pay for some types of environmental improvements. Overall, relatively few households were prepared to spend more than five percent extra for green energy, and almost half of them were not willing to pay anything. Similarly, most people were unwilling to pay more than fifteen percent extra for organic food, with thirty percent of respondents unwilling to pay any extra at all. Very few respondents disagreed with the statement that each individual or household can contribute to a better environment, with Australians expressing the most disagreement, though still only 4.7 percent (Norway is next at 3.1 percent). Australians were also among the most likely to be members of, or contribute to, environmental groups – at fifteen percent of respondents. Demographic results include: higher income classes tended to rank environmental concerns relatively higher than other concerns, though interestingly the fourth highest (seventh) income class was almost equally as concerned about the environment, and concern again rose somewhat at the lowest income level. Educational attainment was found to be

consistently an important characteristic associated with pro-environmental values, attitudes and behaviour.

Jagers (2009) in his Swedish survey sought to 'operationalise' the concept of ecological citizenship, through questions about willingness to pay taxes for environmental and poverty-reduction projects outside Sweden, and willingness to accept low or no economic growth in order to have a more environmentally friendly society. He found that a group of around 25 percent of respondents 'at least *overlap* some of the ecological citizenship standards (that is, willingness to act) argued for by theorists like Dobson (2003)'. The main characteristics identified through detailed analysis were: ideology – the more left-wing, the more willing to act; interest in the environment; perceived severity of the environmental threat – the strongest factor; and age – the younger the person, the more willing to act. Middle class background was also found to have a significant effect (though much smaller than that of the other factors). Interestingly, the age result is different to that found by Ivanova and Tranter (2009). The range of contradictory results found in surveys such as these perhaps indicates differences in methodology (Ivanova and Tranter 2009), however it makes it difficult to make conclusive statements. Unlike Horton (2006) who studied activists, Jagers found car usage not to be a relevant factor in identifying people who were willing to act. This confirms the observed tendency of people in surveys of willingness to act for the environment to draw the line at limiting their travel options (Witherspoon 1996).

Jagers & Matti (2010) examined whether the results of a survey of 4,000 Swedish households showed the existence of ecological citizenship among that population. Their aim was to establish a way of testing empirically for ecological citizenship, and then to use the results to make observations about the usefulness of ecological citizenship as a theoretical model for bringing about pro-environmental behavioural change. They based their methodology on the understanding that '[w]ithin environmental psychology, it has long been established that a person's basic value-priorities and general environmental beliefs form the core elements of a causal value-belief-norm (VBN) chain, leading up to a range of private sphere behaviors and to pro-environmental policy support' (p. 1061). In addition, on the basis that Swedes have been found to be particularly environmentally aware, the authors point out that if ecological citizens 'are not found in the Swedish population ... they are not likely to be found anywhere' (p. 1061).

The authors identify a set of values emphasising 'non-territorial altruism and the primacy of social justice' (a universal value orientation) to signify the existence of

ecological citizenship. They then go on to test for general environmental beliefs regarding both the 'seriousness of the environmental situation, as well as the impact of private (and indeed personal) activities on global environmental problems' (p. 1061). In order to determine 'whether an orientation towards other-regarding values also drives the practice of [ecological citizenship]' (p.1072) they test respondents' willingness to change certain types of behaviour – sorting household waste, using their car less and buying more eco-labelled products – where change could affect their socio-economic status. Finally, they examine respondents' attitudes to a range of potential policy measures aimed at changing individuals' (pro-environmental) behaviour.

The authors found that 40 percent of respondents could be identified as ecological citizens from their universal value orientation, and a further one third of respondents' 'social' value orientation indicates that they are at the start of a journey towards 'a transformed ecological consciousness' (p. 1068). The results also indicate that a large majority of respondents recognise the rights of other species, and that there is a highly serious environmental problem caused by human activities in general and also private, household activities. While the authors found that respondents' willingness to change the behaviour types tested for was higher among respondents with a universal value orientation, they also found that even these respondents were more likely to be willing to change activities with little conflict between socio-economic and environmental outcomes (that is, sorting household waste). Here the authors note the structural and 'habitual' constraints around changing from private car use to public transport. With regard to policy measures, respondents were on average less supportive of measures aimed at pushing (that is, financial disincentives) than those encouraging behavioural change, although again a significant relationship was found between respondents with a universal value orientation and most types of policy measures, including one 'push' kind: a tax on non eco-labelled goods. While they strongly supported improved public transport, there was only weak support among even these respondents for a higher tax on petrol. The study provides a methodology for identifying environmental citizenship among a population; it also confirms the findings of other studies that even the most environmentally conscious citizens balk at some restrictions in the name of environmental protection, for example making it more difficult or expensive to use private cars.

The attitude-behaviour gap, while not referred to by that term, is clearly identified in Martinsson & Lundqvist's (2010) Swedish study, although perhaps with surprising results given Sweden's reputation for environmentally aware citizens. The

study divides citizens into four categories depending on the consistency, shown in survey results, between their environmental attitudes and their 'ecological practices':

- 'believers' whose practices are consistent with their environmental attitudes (3%);
- 'coverts' who undertake pro-environmental practices, but do not have matching attitudes (11%);
- 'hypocrites' who have pro-environmental attitudes but not practices (5%); and
- 'diehards', who do not have pro-environmental attitudes and whose practices are consistent with their attitudes (81%).

The authors use these results to challenge Dobson's (2003) and others' assertion that ecological citizenship is a matter of deep attitudinal changes, or virtues. The proportion of 'coverts', especially, leads them to the conclusion that beliefs and attitudes are not such an important requirement for the kinds of behaviour needed to achieve sustainability. This could provide some hope that environmental citizenly *practices*, at least, can become more widespread, however a note of warning is sounded by other theorists such as Dobson (2007), who cast doubt on the capacity of practices to endure when they are not consistent with attitudes or belief (see also Barry (1999); Kolmuss & Agyeman (2002) and Jagers and Matti (2010)). In their empirical study of environmental practices and attitudes, Berglund and Matti (2006) also conclude that 'without acknowledging the role for intrinsic motivations and behaviour patterns founded in the personal moral obligations of the *citizen*, there is an evident risk that new environmental policies will contribute only to a short-term reform of specific activities' (p. 551). Motivation is discussed further in section 5.3.3.

Flynn, Bellaby and Ricci (2008) looked for evidence of how environmental citizenship might be expressed in a practical way. Through focus group discussions with people in areas of the UK where hydrogen energy was already being produced, they examined energy and environmental issues and acceptance of hydrogen technology. The results essentially confirm the 'attitude-behaviour gap'. The authors found high levels of awareness about climate change and the fossil fuel 'crisis', but a general attitude that adoption of hydrogen technology would only follow demonstrated benefits to consumers in terms of cost and convenience – environmental benefits were a secondary concern. While there was some recognition of sustainability as a worthwhile goal and some intention on participants' behalf to

make changes in their own lives, these were generally only where the changes were of immediate benefit to individuals and households.

In their Canadian study comparing households' indoor greenhouse-reducing behaviour with their vehicle GHG emissions, Ngo, West and Calkins's (2009) note that behaviour such as purchasing energy-efficient light bulbs, reducing indoor heating and recycling are low-cost, maintenance activities, while vehicle use choices, particularly as concerns energy use, are regarded as high-cost and related to investment (there is no mention of higher-cost household energy measures such as installing solar panels). Not surprisingly, they found personal obligation and activism (which they defined as boycotting and donating money to environmental groups, a fairly low threshold for activism) to be significant determinants of both indoor and vehicle greenhouse gas-reducing behaviour. 'Green attitudes' were modest determinants of indoor behaviour, while worry was a more significant determinant; however neither was a significant determinant of vehicle emissions reduction.

The authors conclude that while psychological factors such as environmental attitude and worry are dominant factors in predicting indoor greenhouse gas reducing behaviours, when it comes to reducing vehicle emissions they 'play a subordinate role to the individual's socio-demographic profile, such as education, income, lifestyle and the need to travel' (Ngo, West & Calkins 2009, p. 150). Interestingly, the authors refer to the 'need' to travel; although income is an important factor, they do not mention respondents' *desire* to travel, which has been found in other studies to override professed concerns for the environment (for example Witherspoon 1996).

Introducing their qualitative study of environmental attitudes and behaviour, Macnaghten & Urry (1998) point out the 'significance of embedded social practices' especially 'people's dwellings, which produce, reproduce and transform different natures and different values' (p. 2). The ambivalence they note between participants' expressed concern about the global, and especially the local, environment and their behaviour (not making changes to their own behaviour which contributes to these environmental concerns) is particularly strong with regard to vehicle use: using a car while criticising car use for the traffic and pollution it creates is linked, they say, to a 'model of personal agency'; that is, 'how one conceives of one's sense of power to effect change either directly or through trusted institutions' (p. 238). This important point is taken up below (sections 5.3.5).

Connelly and Prothero (2003) in their qualitative study of Irish consumers point out that while people are keen to make a difference to the environment they generally do not understand the complex connection between consumption *per se* and

environmental degradation, and that efforts are generally concentrated on recycling, waste disposal and green consumerism – areas of consumption that make little if any difference to the overall need to reduce consumption in Western societies. As noted above, this chapter focuses more on ‘alternative sustainable consumption’, put forward by Seyfang (2005) as more genuinely directed to reducing human impacts than the ‘mainstream approach’, to which green consumerism is integral and which relies on technology and stays within an economic growth-productivist paradigm.

The next section discusses studies of people who attempt to put their environmental beliefs into practice in their daily lives.

5.3.2 Everyday lives: environmental practice and individual responsibility

In his study of the everyday rather than the campaigning activities of environmental activists in Nottingham, UK, Horton (2006) furthers Dobson’s view of environmental (that is, ecological) citizenship: that it is found not in the ‘institutions of the nation-state but with the cultural and political spaces of contemporary environmentalism’ (Horton 2006, p. 128). The activists live their lives as part of a particular ‘green’ culture, through which they assemble their ‘awareness of environmental risks, rights and responsibilities’ into ‘their diverse everyday practices, from the most “personal” to the most “political,” into a coherent whole’ (p. 127). This green culture is maintained and reinforced by the social, political and material activities of a network of activists who tend to live their lives in similar ways: cycling and walking; rejecting television in favour of meeting and socialising with fellow activists; buying local, organically grown food wherever possible or growing their own; and buying ‘ethical’ products – in other words they seek to make their personal lives consistent with their political positions. Living essentially local lives, due to their non-use of cars, the activists’ green practices are constantly reinforced through ‘weak ties’, that is, through shared habits such as dress and diet, and through attendance at shared political and social events such as festivals and protests.

Horton identifies four concepts which encompass the ways in which the activists’ green lifestyle practices are created and maintained: green networks; green spaces – the availability of places where activists meet, socialise and shop; ‘materialities’ (the way their lifestyles are materially organised, for example transport and shopping); and green times, that is, times in their lives when activists are more likely to be able to devote themselves fully to living green lifestyles: when they are not working or full-time and not fully responsible for children.

Seyfang's (2006) mixed-method study of producers and consumers involved in an organic farmers' co-operative network (called Eostre) in Norwich, UK brings together the theoretical concepts of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption. Seyfang's hypothesis was that 'ecological citizenship is a driving force for "alternative" sustainable consumption, via expression through consumer behaviour such as purchasing local organic food' (2006, p. 383). What she found, perhaps unsurprisingly, was that the relationship is not so linear: the co-operative itself undertook educational and outreach work that resulted in a more dynamic relationship with ecological citizenship.

Perhaps Seyfang's major finding, which ties together sustainable consumption and ecological citizenship, is that through their choice of local organic food, which is often more expensive, these respondents *internalise* the currently externalised costs and benefits of such food, that is, they are making a personal sacrifice in order to live consistently with their beliefs and through such personal action helping alternative sustainable consumption to grow and thrive.

Wolf, Brown and Conway (2009) undertook targeted interview and focus group discussions in a part of British Columbia, Canada, where many people are involved in local sustainability organisations, and around half the respondents were chosen for their involvement in such organisations. The vast majority of respondents shared 'a sense of individual responsibility for both causing and ameliorating climate change'; they also recognised the importance of individuals' activities and felt responsible in a non-reciprocal way to future generations and existing people living elsewhere (Wolf, Brown & Conway 2009, p. 513). Only one respondent (out of 86) was identified as a climate change sceptic.

Participants tied their sense of responsibility for climate change to their behaviour as consumers, both in terms of their well-off lifestyles in global terms, and as a means of wielding influence. They thus expressed both political and economic agency (discussed further in section 5.3.5) and responsibility. Expression of responsibility, however, is not the same as acting upon it, as noted with regard to the 'attitude-behaviour' gap studies in section 5.3.2). The authors, however, found that their participants *did* act on their sense of responsibility, albeit mostly by taking simple actions in areas of life that are not 'resistant to change' and including actions that have little effect on reducing GHG emissions, like recycling more (Wolf, Brown & Conway 2009, p. 517). Participants still tended to undertake the most emission-intensive activity, flying, (Monbiot 2006) and not to make big lifestyle changes that

would reduce energy or fuel consumption, though they tended to be involved in local, community-based sustainability initiatives, in many cases co-ordinating them.

Evans and Abrahamse's (2009) qualitative study of 28 people who live or are attempting to live in a sustainable way in south-east England makes the important point that living such a lifestyle involves more than changing particular practices: 'it makes sense to think of sustainable lifestyles as an ongoing process, requiring constant negotiation and maintenance across a range of social practices' (p. 491); with these processes often being fraught with inconsistencies and contradictions (see section 5.3.4).

The participants in Horton's (2006) and Seyfang's (2006) studies are easily identified as environmental citizens: they put into practice in their daily lives and (in the case of Horton's study, their political activities) their environmental values. They demonstrate the consciousness and commitment (Nash and Lewis 2006) which is the first step towards, and a continuing component of, environmental citizenship. However, it is clear from the studies discussed in this chapter that such citizens are the exception: mostly, even if people have environmental concerns, they often only take the easiest options, whether because they are unable to take more expensive or difficult options, or because their environmental concerns are outweighed by other important values or simply desires. The following section discusses the motivations of people who are able to act consistently with their environmental beliefs.

5.3.3 Motivation for environmental citizenship through sustainable consumption

Revealing motivations for people to express environmental citizenship through consumption practices is consistently shown to be either a missing element of the research or, when attempted, to be difficult and not always edifying. A number of researchers, however, emphasise that only through understanding the motivations for particular consumption behaviour will it be possible to design public policy adequate to the task of tackling related environmental problems such as GHG emissions (Connolly & Prothero 2003; Berglund & Matti 2006; Pepper, Jackson & Uzzell 2009).

Seyfang's (2006) respondents' expressed motivations for their participation in the Eostre co-operative clearly link their political beliefs, about avoiding third world exploitation, or wanting to contribute positively to environmental protection and developing a local economy, with their everyday practices. They are, therefore, in Dobson's (2003) terms actively seeking to reduce their ecological footprints, and

linking their personal practices with their potential impact on other people and the planet. They thus fit within Dobson's concept of ecological citizenship.

However, as Seyfang points out, environmental citizenship theory is descriptive and normative; it is not explanatory. The theory, as acknowledged by Dobson (2003), does little to explain what motivates ecological citizens. Seyfang goes further than this by exploring the motivations of Eostre's customers: participants express the connection between their political beliefs and personal lives as something they feel strongly about, for example one 'can't bear to think' about the exploitation of third-world workers by supermarkets; another 'feels happy' to forego cheaper food in order to support environmentally and socially sustainable enterprise (Seyfang 2006, p. 391). It is this *feeling* that seems to connect the respondents' politics and personal lives, and motivates them to act on their knowledge about the impacts of unsustainable forms of consumption. In Luque's (2005) terms, these citizens are engaged in conversations and activities which enable them to link the local and the global.

Wolf, Brown and Conway (2009) argue that their study 'presents strong evidence that practising ecological citizenship motivates individuals' responses to climate change' (p. 519). It would seem more correct, however, to view individuals' climate change responses as an *expression* of their ecological citizenship; that they are part and parcel of the same thing. The *motivation* for their citizenly behaviour in the context of climate change, therefore, must lie elsewhere.

The list of factors found by Jagers (2009) to be significantly associated with willingness to act does not seem to advance very far the search for what motivates environmental citizens: interest in the environment and perceived environmental threat could be assumed to be an inherent characteristic of ecological citizens – the real question is *why* do some people have this interest and perceive this threat much more than others. Education often comes out on top of the list of factors found by researchers to increase citizens' willingness to act for the environment (for example Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002; Ivanova and Tranter 2009; Tranter 2011; cf Jagers 2009). As Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) note, however, education is not *necessarily* linked to pro-environmental attitudes: there are many highly educated climate sceptics, for example.

As Beckman (2001) suggests, people can be motivated to act out of a desire to be virtuous, and a sense of well-being is a recognised side effect of virtuous behaviour (Connelly 2006). It is arguable, therefore, that environmental citizens may be motivated by the feeling of satisfaction that comes with behaving in a virtuous

manner; that is, acting in accordance with their commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society.

It is pertinent here to look at the issue of whether an ecologically sustainable lifestyle is incompatible with a happy, satisfying life, as proponents of the economic growth-consumerism mantra would have it (Brown & Kasser 2005). Research into happiness and well-being in recent decades finds although material wealth has increased substantially in Western societies in the past 50 years, reported levels of happiness have been static, or declined, and that the most important sources of satisfaction in life are non-material (for example Hamilton 2003; Layard 2005). This work has been complemented by empirical studies whose findings suggest that 'subjective well-being (SWB) and ecologically responsible behaviour (ERB) may be compatible pursuits' (Brown & Kasser 2005, p. 350). Brown & Kasser (2005) sought to determine the role of three factors in promoting both SWB and ERB: 'intrinsic' values, which are 'oriented towards personal growth, relationships and community involvement'; 'mindfulness', in which individuals are attentive and aware of 'ongoing internal states and behavior'; and a lifestyle of voluntary simplicity (pp. 351-2). Their findings confirm that there is indeed a correlation between subjective well-being and ecologically responsible behaviour, and that this compatibility is explained by intrinsic values and mindfulness. The study did not look into whether there is a causal relationship between mindfulness, intrinsic values and well-being and ecological behaviour, however the authors stress that there nevertheless is a clear association between them, which tends strongly against the widespread assumption that an ecologically-oriented lifestyle is one of restrained desires and ultimately unhappiness (Brown & Kasser 2005).

Berglund and Matti (2006) looked into whether consumers are only motivated to pro-environmental behaviour by external factors such as economic incentives and legal requirements. They use a value-inventory scale²³ to identify two opposing value types: self-enhancement (SE) and self-transcendence (ST), which correspond to the separate roles of consumer and citizen and also have a strong connection with the process of shaping pro-environmental behaviour. ST is made up of two 'motivational values types': benevolence, which is directed towards people with whom one is in frequent personal contact, and universalism, which is defined as '[u]nderstanding,

²³ From Schwartz, S 1992, 'Universals in the content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries', *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 25, pp 1-65.

appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature'²⁴ (sic). They found that 'the values most closely connected with [pro-environmental behaviour] are located within universalism' (Berglund & Matti 2006, p. 562). Internal factors, especially an altruistic values orientation, were important motivators that could be 'crowded out' by external factors such as incentives; that is, the authors found that while there is a place for economic incentives to persuade people to act, there is the potential for internally motivated, other-interested behaviours to be diminished by policies that appeal only to the individualised rational consumer. The study, though, focused on sorting of waste for recycling, which, as noted above is one of the easiest behaviours to adopt – more difficult behaviours could require more of an external motivation.

Motivation to undertake an environmental action, according to Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002), increases when feelings of environmental responsibility align with personal priorities (in relation to their own and their families' well-being), for example buying organic food; and actions are less likely to be taken if they conflict with such priorities, for example living in a small house although one can afford a large one. However, it is a hallmark of environmental citizenship that such citizens are more likely to take the environmentally responsible route even though it may involve some sacrifice (Dobson 2003) – for example, an environmental citizen might live in a small house even though it is cramped, and even though they can afford a larger one. It seems, then, that the 'personal priorities' of environmental citizens are somewhat different to those of other citizens who may take some pro-environmental behaviour but not to the extent that it is costly or inconvenient. The question is *why* some people are motivated to transcend the costs or inconveniences of acting in accordance their beliefs, and many, if not most, are not.

Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) recognise emotional involvement, or 'the ability to have an emotional reaction when confronted with environmental degradation' as being 'very important in shaping our beliefs, values and attitudes to the environment' (p. 254). The question is, though, as they point out 'Why is it that some people care [about the environment] and others do not?' (p. 254). This is clearly a complex issue that is highly relevant to motivation for environmental citizenship. Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) note that environmental knowledge and awareness clearly play a role, but are not enough to lead to emotional involvement; even the experience of an emotional reaction does not always lead to pro-environmental action – there are

²⁴ Quoting Rohan, M 2000, 'A rose by any name? The values construct', *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4, pp 255-77.

many ways in which people can put aside their emotional reactions to environmental harm, for example denial, apathy, resignation and delegation, that is blaming others. However, when emotional involvement coincides with a strong 'internal locus of control' pro-environmental behaviour is likely to result. They do not, however, discuss how such a locus of control is developed.

It is at least arguable that the broad factors identified by Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) and Berglund and Matti (2006) as leading to pro-environmental behaviour – an altruistic, universal value orientation; a level of knowledge that allows connections to be made between sometimes complex factors and events; the ability to experience emotional reactions to environmental harm; and the key factor of a strong internal locus of control – must be highly relevant as well to motivation for environmental citizenship, given that behaving pro-environmentally is an important component of it. Chawla²⁵ (discussed in Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002, pp. 251-2) studied the sources of 'environmental sensitivity', that is 'a predisposition to take an interest in learning about the environment, feeling concern for it, and acting to conserve it, on the basis of formative experiences' among professional environmentalists (p. 251). She found that a combination of factors sensitises people's environmental awareness, among them: childhood experiences in nature; experiences of environmental destruction; values held by family; pro-environmental organisations; role models; and education. Exposure to environmental information and messages in the media has also been found to be associated with pro-environmental values, attitudes and practices (Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002; Lee 2011).

However, comparable empirical work specifically on environmental citizenship, and the foundations for motivation, has not been evident to date, and the studies that do exist tend to focus on ecologically-oriented behaviour in only one facet of people's lives. A start is made with the empirical study for this thesis, discussed in the next chapter.

Kolmuss and Agyeman (2002) distinguish between 'primary motives', those that influence a whole way of life, and 'selective motives', those that influence specific action and concern our own needs. They hypothesise that selective motives often 'cover up' primary motives, so that people engage in specific behaviours that conflict with their broader belief systems (p. 250). Such selective motives represent internal barriers to pro-environmental behaviour, there are also many external factors that militate against such behaviour, as discussed in Chapters Three and Four, and below,

²⁵ Chawla, L 1999, 'Life paths into effective environmental action', *The Journal of Environmental Education*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 15-26.

where empirical studies of barriers, contradictions and trade-offs that influence the behaviour of even those with strong environmental beliefs are discussed.

5.3.4 Barriers, trade-offs and contradictions

For people who are committed to living environmentally conscious lives, such as Evans and Abrahamse's (2009) respondents, there are inevitably contradictions and inconsistencies, because of the temptations of non-sustainable products and experiences (for example flying for holidays) or because of the many pressures and difficulties involved in going against the mainstream society, for example wanting to eat sustainably but being unable to afford organic food or living where the only organic food available must be bought from big supermarkets and likely to have travelled a long distance. The multiplicity of issues involved makes it a difficult process, fraught with inconsistencies and dilemmas, and trade-offs for some, though some respondents also noted the joys found in living a more simple, healthy and ethical life. Respondents made the point, however, that the inconsistencies and contradictions they face are the result of the structural and social limitations of the society in which they live.

In 2009, the Waterworks Valley community in Hobart, Tasmania, began a project to raise awareness of ways in which individuals and households could reduce their carbon footprint; as part of this project they surveyed (online) a range of sustainable behaviours, with over 400 respondents (Waterworks Community 2010). The group identified ten barriers to more sustainable behaviour: lack of time, for example to grow vegetables or walk children to school; excess disposal income encouraging expenditure on things like overseas trips and unnecessary house renovations; the cheapness of energy; disempowerment, that is the feeling that one can't make a difference; intangible rewards, that is reducing GHG is invisible; being trapped in consumer culture; technology fixation – the belief that using renewable energy technology means there is no need to reduce consumption; social pressure; and 'Western individualism', that is, individual ownership and lack of resource sharing, for example resistance to using public transport. In an addendum to the survey, respondents were asked to identify which of those barriers applied most to them: time poverty was by far the most popular option (around 21 percent) followed by Western individualism (around 17 percent). The study confirms that the kinds of economic, social, cultural and political factors identified in the academic literature and

discussed in Chapter Three are the most significant barriers to more sustainable living, including reducing GHG emissions.

The participants in Szmigin, Carrigan and McEachern's (2009) study of 'conscious consumers' were aware of their consumption choices, yet their decisions were subject to 'other social and economic forces ... (e.g. family, convenience, price) such that positive ethical choices are not always made' (p. 224). Starting from the position, derived from the literature, that ethical consumers 'possess strong feelings of obligation and accountability for others that impact on their purchase choices', the authors point out that flexible decision-making, that is, trading off factors such as price and convenience against ethical factors, creates a situation of dissonance: 'inconsistency between the self-concept and behaviour' (p. 226). To maintain their 'moral and global integrity', their self-image, consumers then engage in self-affirmation, rationalising and justifying their behaviour or leaving it unrationalised and affirming some other aspect of their behaviour that supports their self-image.

However, despite most of the study participants freely admitting the inconsistent and contradictory nature of their purchasing decisions, only one rationalised what he saw as his possible hypocrisy. The authors advance a number of reasons for the lack of self-affirmation in the face of inconsistency with the respondents' expressed principles, including that while the respondents were reluctant to 'take the moral high ground' they nevertheless felt their behaviour was better than most, so their self-image was not harmed; also that the inconsistencies in their behaviour were simply not considered important enough to create dissonance. The authors conclude that while 'ethical consumption is indeed embedded in relationships of obligation', consumption decisions are part of the 'complex balance of personal values and daily life' which vary among the diverse circumstances of conscious consumers (Szmigin, Carrigan & McEachern 2009, p. 229).

Horton (2006) noted that activists with child-rearing or full-time work responsibilities find it difficult to find the time and space in their lives to continue to participate politically or socially in the green network, leading to 'a decline in performances of green identity and the gradual disassembly of a green lifestyle' (Horton, 2006 p. 143). From his observations of the activists' lives, Horton concludes that there is a certain kind of 'architecture' to them, that is, certain structures and resources available to the activists which enable them to live consistently with their political beliefs. Such an architecture is generally only available to those who have the time and who have deliberately sought it out; it is not available to the broader

population due to many social and structural factors, and will need to be made more available if the practice of environmental citizenship is to become more widespread.

Wolf, Brown and Conway (2009) refer to the 'barriers that stem from current socio-cultural norms and structures' which prevent or discourage even citizens who express a sense of responsibility to act on climate change, from taking measures that lead to substantial emission cuts (p. 518). Such barriers, referred to in numerous studies and discussed in Chapter Three, arise from the way in which modern industrial society is organised (infrastructure), for example the lack or inconvenience of public transport in many areas and the expense or lack of availability of renewable energy; social, psychological and cultural factors, such as the desire to fit in with the mainstream and the need to keep in touch with family which, especially in large countries like Australia with many immigrants, may mean flying; political and economic factors, such as the fact that flights are so cheap in comparison to other forms of public transport, which are also often not as convenient (Monbiot 2006). These factors, in turn, arise from the political-economic system in which we live, which for the past few decades in Anglo-American countries at least has become increasingly under the sway of neo-liberalism and associated individualisation.

Nash and Lewis (2006), in their examination of the DSP in the context of ecological citizenship, found that the DSP was at its strongest in relation to global issues, whose size and complexity lead people to place their faith in dominant institutions, as individual action, they reason, will achieve little. When confronted with immediate, local environmental issues, however, people in their study were able to transcend the influence of the DSP – in particular their belief in the 'techno-fix' and the liberal political system, that is, that the role of government is not to interfere with the market economy. The economic dimension of the DSP in terms of the respondents' own lives, however, remained strong, reflecting the important role that individuals' economic interests play in determining their environmental attitudes. Macnaghten and Urry (1998) and Macnaghten (2003) also emphasise the importance of the connection to people's everyday lives for them to feel a level of concern which will translate into changed attitudes and actions.

5.3.5 Individual agency and individual/collective action

An important part of environmental citizenship theory is the connection between the personal and the political, or the individual and the collective (Luque 2005), as evidenced in the studies discussed above where citizens did behave consistently with

their environmental beliefs. A significant finding by Berglund and Matti (2006) is that respondents with a high score for altruism 'to a larger extent make explicit reference to acting collectively rather than as individuals' (p. 565). Although in a context focusing on an individualised action, sorting waste at the household level, this strong identification with the collective is an indication of citizens' recognition of the public implications of personal actions, and supports the personal-political dimension of environmental citizenship.

Wolf, Brown and Conway (2009) examined the argument by critics of environmental citizenship theory that reliance on individuals to take on citizenly responsibilities ignores the social, economic and institutional context in which citizens find themselves, and that structural change must be the object of individuals' actions if they are to have any effect. Their findings concerning attitudes towards climate change and consequent behavioural changes strongly endorse Dobson's (2003) theoretical position. The authors find that the participants express a civic responsibility to act on climate change: this responsibility is not merely individual, '[r]ather, it relates to how people perceive themselves as part of a local community, the nation-state, and global society, in which sustainability is a key objective' (Wolf, Brown and Conway 2009, p. 514). It is thus a collective responsibility, and governments and individuals are equally obliged to act: they should not wait for each other. They also use the language of justice; suggesting, as asserted by Dobson (2003), that climate is a political, not moral, issue.

It is clear from Wolf, Brown and Conway's study that participants feel a sense of responsibility for climate change; a collective responsibility that arises from 'the asymmetric allocation of ecological space' (p. 518). Participants change their behaviour, to a degree, to reduce their contribution to climate change, and also engage politically through informal community networks which form as a result of the government's failure to fulfil its responsibility.

Seyfang (2006), too, found this connection between individual consumption decisions and social connection or solidarity; such connection is felt strongly by the respondents, who value the sense of community built through knowing where the food has come from and being able to make tangible connections with producers, retail staff and other consumers. Through this sense of local and global community Seyfang finds the expression of solidarity, commitment to fairness and justice and reduction of ecological footprints so central to Dobson's (2003) theory. Seyfang concludes that 'ecological citizenship bridges the divide between individual and collective action' (p. 394). However, while such a connection was found in abundance

in her case study, she also points out that there is no inevitable link between 'actions in the private realm' and 'collective activities' (p. 394), thus raising another significant gap in the theory: while individuals may and do act strongly in the private sphere to reduce their ecological footprint, which automatically reduces society's footprint, there is nothing in the theory that indicates how this is to happen. In addition, there is no necessary link between privatised actions and an awareness of and reaction to the household's contribution to climate change and global inequality: many such actions can be taken purely for rational economic or health reasons.

Because they were aware of the inconsistencies and contradictions between their environmental beliefs and their consumption behaviour, Evans and Abrahamse's (2009) respondents considered that voluntary lifestyle changes – even if widespread – would not be enough: that what is needed is 'top-down' action from government and business, to change the systems, for example transport infrastructure, within which people are striving to make changes to their own lives. Beyond this, however, the respondents showed a desire for 'structural and social change in its own right' (p. 499), and many were involved in local political (the Green Party) and activist networks towards this end. Despite this sense that living more sustainably is not enough on its own, all respondents felt that they '*had to*' continue with their own sustainable lifestyle projects (p. 499), although the article does not indicate any inquiry into *why* the respondents feel this need to continue.

Similarly, in their pilot survey of political consumers, that is people who express their political views – including environmental – through their consumption choices, Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti (2005) found that political consumers 'have strong feelings of internal efficacy: '[a]part from voting, they scored higher on every form of political participation than non- or moderate political consumers (p. 261). However 'even those practising [political consumerism] most rigorously do not believe that [it] is the most effective way of bringing about political and social change: they too see voting and volunteering as more effective ways to influence society' (p. 262). Nevertheless, the activism of political consumers extends much further than conventional political acts: into the market place and into everyday life.

Flynn, Bellaby and Ricci (2008) in their study of attitudes to hydrogen energy were interested in whether 'individual self-interest coexist[s] with expressed concern for collective welfare, and how might this affect environmental citizenship and sustainability' (p. 770). While respondents were generally prepared to make pro-environmental changes which were of immediate benefit to individuals and households, there were few signs that people's collective welfare was a primary

concern. Rather, 'attitudes seemed to converge on instrumental and privatised outlooks' (p. 781). They conclude that due to the dominance of everyday, immediate and localised concerns and the lack of evidence of 'collective values and solidaristic objectives' concerning energy and environmental issues, 'in this field at least environmental citizenship remains latent and ecological citizenship is yet to evolve' (p. 781) (using Dobson's (2003) definitions of environmental and ecological citizenship – see section 4.5.1).

As well as the attitude-behaviour gap, there is, it seems, also a gap between local and global environmental awareness. As Rathzell and Uzzell (2009) conclude from a 1990s study: '[i]ronically, then, although people feel that they are responsible for the environment at the local level this is precisely the level at which they perceive minimal problems. The areal level which they perceive has the most serious environmental problems [the global] is the areal level about which they feel least personally responsible and powerless to influence or act' (p. 328). Although people may express concern about the environment, responsibility for environmental destruction, degradation and remediation was seen in many cases as outside the control of individuals or their community. In their update of this study, in open-ended questions individual behaviour was seen as the most important cause of environmental degradation: British respondents, though, described individuals as selfish, lazy and consumerist while Swedes emphasised structural causes like Western lifestyles and market society. The authors put this difference down to the British experience of three decades' exposure to disempowering neo-liberal policies.

Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) note that a person's 'locus of control' – whether internal, where they feel they can personally influence outcomes, or external, where they do not have such influence – is an important indicator of pro-environmental behaviour. Macnaghten and Urry (1998) see a lack of agency as fundamental to the mismatch between people's expressed environmental concern and their lack of action: like Rathzell and Uzzell (2009) they put their respondents' lack of environmental behaviour, despite their awareness of and concern about environmental problems, down to a feeling of disempowerment due to the overwhelming nature of the institutional forces responsible for the environmental degradation and the structure of their society.

In Macnaghten's (2003) focus groups, too, '[i]ndividual action was seen as largely ineffective, both due to the global scale of the problems and to the perception of powerful commercial interests intractably embedded in systems of self-interest antithetical to global sustainability' (p. 77), leading to non-engagement with issues

portrayed as global problems requiring solution through a global 'community'. This lack of faith in institutions extended to NGOs who advocate simple solutions to what are obviously huge, complex problems. However, respondents were much more engaged around global environmental issues, including climate change, when they were 'expressed through lived particulars in ... local terms', for example pollution affecting waters where an angler fishes, or a mother takes her children (p. 81). While acknowledging explanations that individualisation and the stressing of personal solutions to structural problems 'is leading to withdrawal, apathy and resignation'²⁶, Macnaghten (2003) finds a more complex picture, and that there is hope in strategies that focus on people's concern for themselves, their families and localities as 'points of connection' to global environmental issues (p. 81). In Australia the high level of concern about climate change has been linked to drought, water shortages and devastating bushfires, and now floods (see Chapter One), all of which affect people's lives: perhaps this heightened awareness has resulted in the rush of applications for government schemes subsidising household renewable energy systems (Vincent 2010).

5.4 Conclusion

All of the factors discussed above show that there are powerful forces at work influencing, often negatively, the possibility of citizens acting consistently with their environmental beliefs in their everyday lives. However, many of the studies show that environmental citizenship through sustainable consumption does exist; pointing to the importance of awareness or consciousness of the impacts of one's behaviour and the need to do something about it, and the willingness and agency to act accordingly; however such consciousness and agency is not available to everyone and is not automatic, pointing to the relevance of Barry's (2006) concept of a continuum of environmental (sustainability) citizenship behaviour (see Chapter Four), and the idea suggested in Chapter Two of a matrix of citizenship behaviour.

According to the theory, environmental citizens are aware of the link between global environmental problems like climate change and their own ecological footprint: they are people able to transcend the attitude-behaviour gap, at least to a greater extent than most people. Environmental citizenship has been criticised for its focus on the individual, and many of the participants in the studies above who are living or trying to live sustainable lives were also aware of the limitations of such actions, yet they still felt the need to live consistently with their beliefs. They were also aware of

²⁶ Referring to Bauman 1995, 1999; Beck and Beck-Gernstein 2002.

the need for change at the structural, political and economic levels, and many were involved in community and political activity. Perhaps it is this awareness of the interconnectedness of the environmental, social, political and economic that marks environmental citizens apart, however unless they are able to bring their commitment and consciousness to bear at a level broader than the individual – to work for change in the public sphere to break down the structural barriers noted above – the theory, and its practice, has limited value.

The following chapter discusses the empirical study of presumed environmental citizens carried out for this thesis. In examining the personal, consumption-related, practices of members of the Tasmanian Greens party as well as their community and political involvement, the chapter presents in microcosm the complex issues arising around the cross-over between private and public sphere responses to climate change.

Chapter Six Case study of Tasmanian Greens members

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter empirical studies exploring the relationship between environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption were reviewed against a number of themes drawn from theoretical and background literature. This chapter contributes a new case study. As explained in Chapter One, the case study evaluates environmental citizenship theory in the real-life context of the consumption habits and political and community involvement of Tasmanian Greens party members in relation to their concern about climate change.

This chapter describes the backdrop to the case study in the form of the development of Tasmanian Green politics; justifies the case study population; and outlines aims, methodology and framework for analysis. It then presents the results, and related theoretical analysis, on individual responsibility and consumption. Further results, including those on community and political involvement, are discussed in Chapter Seven, which continues the analysis of environmental citizenship theory in the light of empirical studies.

6.2 Background to the case study

6.2.1 The development of Tasmanian Green politics

Tasmania is an island around the size of Ireland to the south of the Australian continent. As an isolated, forested, mountainous (by Australian standards) island with a cool-temperate climate, and a small population largely reliant on primary industries, the natural environment has perhaps dominated Tasmanian economics and politics more than some other states, especially so since the 1960s.

The most contentious environmental political issues have concerned hydro-industrialisation and, more recently, forestry. It was the Hydro Electric Commission's (HEC) proposal to flood one of the most beautiful lakes in Tasmania's iconic south-west wilderness, Lake Pedder, which brought about the politicisation of the conservation movement and ultimately the formation of the Tasmanian Greens (Crowley 2008; Hall, C 1992).

The story of Lake Pedder is told in detail elsewhere (Gee & Fenton 1978; Thompson 1981); suffice it say here that while the Pedder campaign was ultimately

unsuccessful it saw the formation of the United Tasmania Group (UTG), the world's first green party (Mulligan & Hill 2000), the forerunner of the Tasmanian Greens.

In response to another HEC proposal, to flood the Franklin River, in 1976 a small group of campaigners formed the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (TWS), destined to fight one of the world's great environmental battles (Hall 1992; Mulligan & Hill 2000; Law 2008). The intensity of the Franklin Dam campaign caused massive social and political upheaval in Tasmania, including the resignation of a premier and a change of government, and culminated in the famous blockade of the construction site on the river in the summer of 1982-83 (Hall 1992; Mulligan & Hill 2000; Law 2008). All of TWS' campaign efforts, however, appeared to be futile as construction proceeded. It was then that TWS delivered what is perhaps the most defining moment in Australian environmental political history: its campaign on behalf of the Franklin in the 1983 Federal election, which contributed to the win for the Australian Labor Party under Bob Hawke, who fulfilled his pre-election promise with legislation to protect the river (Hall 1992). Tasmania lost its ensuing High Court challenge, but received a massive compensation payment (Hall 1992; Mulligan & Hill 2000; Law 2008).

The Franklin campaign marked the beginning of a new political era in Australia, and especially Tasmania. Uniquely in Australia, Tasmania's lower house (the House of Assembly) uses the Hare-Clark voting system, which consists of five electorates with five (previously seven) representatives each. As a proportional representation system, Hare-Clark provides a greater chance for independents and minor parties to be elected than the standard preferential system used in Australia (Crowley 2008). The UTG had no electoral success, however the controversy, conflict and impetus to the environment movement provided by the Franklin campaign enabled Bob Brown, Director of TWS, to be elected to the Tasmanian parliament in 1983²⁷, the first 'Green' (although he was known as an independent) member of any parliament in Australia and one of the first in the world (Crowley 2008).

The 1980s saw more conservation battles in Tasmania, and the number of Green independents elected reached five in 1989. These MPs held the balance of power during a tumultuous period of Labor government (1989-91) – the world's first Green-supported government – and later supported a Liberal minority government (1996-98) (Crowley 2008). During the following twelve years the number of Greens MPs first plummeted to one in 1998, due to action by the majority parties to reduce the number of MPs in Parliament, but then quickly increased to four in 2002. In 2010 a

²⁷ On a count-back when Australian Democrat MHA Norm Sanders resigned in protest at the Gray government's handling of the Franklin Dam issue (Mulligan & Hill 2000).

fifth was elected and the party narrowly missed out on a sixth, with a record 21.3 percent of the vote (ABC News 2010a; Neales 2010), and a dramatic illustration of the extent to which the Greens have become a major force in Tasmanian politics. The Greens again hold the balance of power, having two Cabinet ministers in the minority Labor government: another historic event for Australian politics (ABC News 2010b).

Nationally, Tasmania has stood out as having had the most Green representation at the state lower house level, helped by the Hare-Clark system and, no doubt, by the central place of the environment – the ‘politics of place’, in which ‘environment-versus-development conflicts force the major parties together and create the space for green politics to flourish’ (Crowley 2008, p. 13). While born out of conflicts over dam building in wilderness areas and further environmental conflicts, especially over forestry – classic ‘green’ issues (Pakulski and Crook 1998) – the Greens from the start have presented an alternative environmental, economic and social vision for Tasmania; also pursuing transparency of government and campaigning on the other major issues of the day, such as health and education (Mulligan & Hill 2000; Crowley 2008). Climate change has also been an important part of Greens policy and campaigns in recent years.

6.2.2 Tasmanian Greens, climate change and sustainable consumption

At the state level, it has been a challenge for Greens and other groups concerned about climate change to have serious action taken, especially since Tasmania relies on hydro-electricity (regarded as renewable energy) for most of its power, although since the ‘Basslink’ under-sea cable from Victoria commenced operation in 2006 the state has become reliant to some degree on coal-fired power, significantly so during the recent drought (TPC 2009). The Basslink proposal raised complex environmental and economic issues and the Greens’ campaign against it was unsuccessful (Duncan 2004). The major political issue in Tasmania concerned with climate change has related to forests: both the production of CO₂ from burning practices, including for power production, and more recently their potential as carbon sinks, lost due to logging (TWS 2010). The Tasmanian Labor government from 1998 to 2007 was considered by many environmentalists not to take climate change seriously (Woodfield 2007). It did, however, legislate in 2008 for a 60 percent reduction of 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, only the second Australian state to introduce such legislation, and established a Tasmanian Climate Change Office (TCCO) in 2007 and independent

Tasmanian Climate Change Action Council (TCCAC), one of whose tasks is to identify interim emissions reduction targets, in 2009.

However, unlike the federal government, other states and some Tasmanian councils, the Tasmanian government has introduced no subsidies or other schemes to encourage householders to install alternative energy sources (TCCO 2010), and is the only Australian state to exempt its citizens from the national phase out of new electric hot water systems, which commenced in other states in 2011 (DCCEE 2012). Through the TCCO, though, it does fund grants for community groups to undertake climate change-related projects (TCCO 2010).

The Tasmanian Greens have not generally been associated with efforts to have individuals and households change their lifestyles to be more sustainable, apart from occasional articles in its magazine, although Greens local government councillors, for example in Hobart, have been very active in attempting to bring climate change considerations into planning decisions, and in providing subsidies for households. At the state level, the climate change policy does not advocate subsidies for household-based renewable energy technology, but focuses on social and economic structural changes, with education also mentioned (see Appendix Two).

In the absence of government leadership, there has been a marked increase in local community groups focusing on bringing in changes at the local level. These groups have formed a loose coalition under the Transition Towns banner (Transition Tasmania 2010). The NGO Sustainable Living Tasmania also works with government, business, community groups and households to develop sustainable practices (SLT 2009). Apart from The Wilderness Society's²⁸ forest carbon campaign, to a large degree, then, climate change has been seen, or at least pursued most successfully in Tasmania at the local level. The Greens, especially nationally, have provided leadership in the pursuit of macro-level, structural change, being instrumental in the achievement of carbon price legislation, which while it will ultimately affect how Australians live, will do so at the level of government policy and regulation. (See sections 1.8 and 3.4.2).

Given the party's origins in radical green politics and core support from a 'healthy diverse, active and sustained green civil society' (Crowley 2008, p. 18), and its lack of attention to individual and household efforts to mitigate climate change, the case study here examines whether Greens party members themselves have taken these issues to heart, whether their actions link the personal with the political.

²⁸ The Tasmanian Wilderness Society changed its name in 1983 to reflect its now national campaign focus.

6.3 Justification of case study target population

Given the location of the case study, Tasmania, the Australian origin of environmental politics, the tentative view was taken Tasmanian Greens members would make ideal subjects to enable an in-depth investigation of environmental citizenship in practice. In order to test this tentative view, a threshold examination was undertaken to determine whether the proposed target population does indeed consist of environmental citizens. This examination, based on Jagers & Matti's (2010) first, macro-level, survey stage (see Chapter Five, 5.3.2) tests for the existence of environmental citizens on the basis of their universal values orientation. A universal value orientation does not 'make any sharp distinctions between members of the in-group', that is, 'people with whom one is in frequent personal contact' and 'out-groups when developing criteria for welfare distribution' (p. 1066). Such a value orientation correlates closely with the 'morality and non-territoriality of the post-cosmopolitan ecological citizen' (p. 1066).

Jagers & Matti (2010) go on to identify a more specific value orientation, 'non-territorial altruism and the primacy of social justice' (p. 1066), as signifying ecological citizenship. However, as outlined in this thesis' working definition – *acting on a commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society* – which is based on a thorough examination of the theory, ecologically rather than social justice-oriented non-territorial values would seem to more accurately reflect the normative content of environmental citizenship theory. While redressing the global imbalance of ecological footprints necessarily has social justice implications, the overarching aim of environmental citizenship theory is to reduce the impact of humanity on the earth, while at the same time reducing global inequality among humans (Dobson 2003). The representation adopted here of values signified by environmental citizenship, then, is the universal value-orientation of *non-territorial altruism aimed at reducing environmental harm*, which still includes an orientation towards social justice, as altruism means seeking the welfare of others (Macquarie Dictionary 1997, p. 54).

The Tasmanian Greens' Charter (see Appendix Two) was evaluated in the light of the values orientation outlined above. New Green members are required to sign a statement to the effect that they agree with the tenets of the Greens' Charter, which appears on the membership form. There can be no clearer indication of the values which Greens hold and seek to implement through the party's political activities. Through the Charter the Greens commit to working towards: reducing the impact of human activities on biodiversity and ecological systems; reducing dependence on

non-renewable resources; ensuring global peace and ecological sustainability; and safeguarding 'the planet's ecological resources on behalf of future generations'.

The charter clearly expresses a universal, other-oriented, altruistic value orientation; it clearly represents non-territorial altruism aimed at reducing environmental harm. The case study is therefore justified on this basis to use Tasmanian Greens members as its target population. In addition The Tasmanian Greens' climate change policy was examined (see Appendix Two) as climate change is an ideal context in which to demonstrate the operation of environmental citizenship; it would also be an ideal context in which to implement the Charter's environmental, social and economic principles. The policy asserts the scientific fact of climate change and that a significant proportion of it is human-induced. Without actually using the word 'responsibility' it goes on to outline measures by which Tasmania can contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and also mentions taking in people from elsewhere displaced by climate change. It is therefore consistent with the responsibility-based approach to environmental citizenship adopted by most theorists, and this thesis. As noted in section 6.2.2, though, it does not mention the responsibility of individuals; the case study goes on to examine whether this aspect of environmental citizenship does in fact exist among Greens members.

By focusing on a group of people identified as environmental citizens using the process outlined above the case study in effect asks the question: if environmental citizenship is not a present and relevant factor in these citizens' lives, then where would it be relevant? This is similar to the approach taken by Jagers & Matti (2010) in their broad study of Swedish citizens: given the known environmental consciousness among Swedes, if environmental citizenship is not present among them, then where would it exist?

However, a more positive and important reason for choosing a group of 'already existing' environmental citizens for the case study is that it allows the immediate examination of environmental citizenship in a real-life context, to continue the interrogation of the theoretical issues commenced in Chapter Five. The fact that this group is considered to consist of environmental citizens does not necessarily mean that the results – what they do, their attitudes and values, must be applicable to all environmental citizens. As an exploratory case study its findings do not necessarily have to be generalisable (Gerring 2004). Environmental citizenship is a broad concept, and the point of the empirical study is not to *confine* it to certain ways of being, but, through examining how a group of environmental citizens behave and think on certain issues, to make observations about, and hopefully refine, the theory.

6.4 Aims of case study

As noted in Chapter One, the investigation aimed to use the views and experiences of members of the Tasmanian Greens

- to build on environmental citizenship theory, in particular with regard to the relationship between personal consumption decisions and political engagement; and
- to evaluate the potential of environmental citizenship as a theoretical framework for citizen action on climate change.

6.5 Methodology

6.5.1 Strategy:

As noted in Chapter One, empirical studies are necessary in order to complement and inform environmental citizenship theory, which is both normative and under development. A case study of people who, in the light of such theory, could be regarded as environmental citizens by dint of their membership of an explicitly environmentalist political party was selected as an appropriate way to obtain insights into the lives of presumed environmental citizens. Practical and theoretical factors contributed to the decision to use a mixed method approach, undertaking separate quantitative (survey-based) and qualitative (interview-based) phases of the study: while survey questions are of necessity structured, they allow a broad range of issues to be raised which can then be used both to compare with other studies and analyse the theory, as well as to help in devising a strategy and questions for the in-depth, qualitative phase of the study: the interviews (Creswell 2009). As de Vaus (2002) points out '... in-depth interviewing can give the researcher insight into the meaning of behaviour and attitudes expressed in questionnaires. This can help make more intelligent interpretations of the patterns discovered in the analysis of questionnaire data' (p. 54). In addition, since there are methodological problems such as the potential for survey respondents to respond in the way they believe would put them in a more favourable light to the researcher and the tendency for surveys to divorce people's environmental attitudes from their social reality (Macnaghten & Urry 1998; de Vaus 2002; Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002) it is prudent to provide two different methodologies in the case study to enable the results to be compared or validated against each other (De Vaus 2002; Mason 2006).

Mason (2006) points out that the use of mixed-method research techniques in empirical studies, like this one, looking at ‘social experience and lived realities ... offers enormous potential for generating new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of social experience, and for enhancing our capacities for social explanation and generalization’ (p.10). The multi-dimensional nature of real life calls for research that is able to go beyond a single dimension, for example, a purely quantitative approach that assesses the number of times something happens, to a qualitative approach that looks at ‘everyday or interpersonal interactions, life experiences ... and so on’ (p.15). Combining these approaches informs researchers not only about personal experiences but about the broader social and economic conditions in which they are lived; it allows the research to focus on how ‘social experience and “real lives” are simultaneously or connectedly “big and little”, global and local, public and private, and so on’ (p. 15). Results from such research can then be fed back into the theoretical level, to make macro-level theories, like environmental citizenship, more meaningful at the everyday level.

Environmental citizenship theory was used as a framework for the design of the empirical study (see 6.5.3) (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005), which aims to evaluate the meaning of the theory in a real-life situation.

6.5.2 Procedures:

The permission of the Tasmanian Greens party was obtained to conduct an anonymous, confidential survey of all members, and to invite respondents to take part in a follow-up interview. The survey was then developed, and human ethics approval obtained.

The questions in the survey²⁹ drew upon environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption literature, as well as websites and other information about the Transition Towns movement and other sustainable living initiatives³⁰. They aimed to elicit answers concerning consumption, community-based and political responses to climate change as well as attitudes and beliefs relevant to environmental citizenship. The questions were mainly closed, with multiple-choice options using Likert scales, sometimes with ‘other, please specify’ options which allowed a short written response. Both a paper and a web-based version of the survey – using

²⁹ The questionnaire and associated documents are provided in Appendix One.

³⁰ For example SLT 2009.

Limesurvey software – were developed. The questionnaire also invited respondents to volunteer for a follow-up interview. With the assistance of the Tasmanian Greens, and especially the Australian Greens Senator Christine Milne who provided a letter introducing the survey, the questionnaire was sent in August 2009 to all 1122 members: 910 by email and 212³¹ by mail, allowing respondents around three weeks to return it. The email linked to the web-based questionnaire. A total of 255 responses were received: a 22.7 percent response rate³².

The web-based questionnaire responses were translated from Limesurvey into the SPSS statistical analysis program and the paper responses were manually entered, using coding developed from themes derived from the literature, to allow both descriptive and more detailed analysis of responses to all questions.

More than 100 survey respondents volunteered to be interviewed, providing their contact details, which were immediately recorded separately from the survey responses to ensure anonymity. Interviews were conducted in the greater Hobart area, with interviewees chosen on the substantively random grounds of ease of contact and travel. Qualitative studies often include only small numbers of participants (Mason 2002), and in this study the qualitative component of fieldwork was a supplement to a quantitative survey. The aim of the qualitative research was to provide indicative and evocative information about the lived contexts and reasoning underlying survey responses (Mason 2002). Interviewing ceased when those conducted, thirteen in all, adequately covered the range of responses observed in the survey and the range of theoretical themes raised in the literature analysis reported in the early chapters of this thesis.

Interviews were semi-structured, with broadly framed questions guiding conversation so as to allow participants the opportunity to provide richer, more revealing responses than possible with questionnaires or structured interviews with closed questions (Mason 2002). Two photographs were also used to help elicit responses from interviewees³³. Interviews were conducted in the interviewees' homes to ensure they were comfortable and also so that the interview took place in the most relevant context to the subject matter; that is, participants' everyday lives (Mason 2002). The interviews were loosely structured (see guide in Appendix Four) to proceed from a general discussion about consumption practices to more probing

³¹ Membership information current as at 10 August 2009; provided by Tasmanian Greens Party Administrator.

³² This rate would likely have been much higher if a problem with the software had not blocked an unknown number of respondents from completing and submitting the survey.

³³ The interview guide and photographs are reproduced in Appendix Two, along with participant information and consent forms.

questions about motivation and political beliefs, such as what membership of the Tasmanian Greens means to participants. The approach taken was to wait for the participants to express their own concerns and reasoning about climate change in relation to their household consumption, community and political involvement, with the interviewer only drawing attention to climate change towards the latter part of the interview, if the participant failed to mention it³⁴. The aim of this approach was to avoid leading questions, thereby enabling participants to offer responses more reflective of their own views and concerns (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005).

The interviews were transcribed and themes identified by listening to the interviews, reading and re-reading transcripts, and coding responses according to ideas arising from the literature review as well as new ideas identified in the transcripts themselves.

6.5.3 Framework for analysis of survey and interview responses

The framework used in the analysis of the participants' responses is derived from the analysis of environmental citizenship theory in Chapter Four, and builds upon that used in Chapter Five's analysis of empirical studies. It addresses:

- expressions of environmental citizenship through the everyday practices of citizens;
- motivations for such behaviour;
- the barriers that limit or prevent environmental citizenly behaviour;
- contradictions and inconsistencies evident even in the behaviour of committed environmental citizens; and finally
- to individual agency and the relationship between the individual and the collective, a crucial aspect of environmental citizenship (Luque 2005).

The analysis feeds into the thesis' consideration of particular theoretical issues, identified in Chapter Five (section 5.1), essentially concerning the relationship between private and public sphere action and the motivation for environmental citizenship.

In the analysis that follows interviewees are given pseudonyms, and identifying details are avoided, to ensure confidentiality³⁵. Where possible, results of other Australian studies are included for comparison. There are few comparable surveys; the most useful one is the CSIRO's national study of lifestyle and consumption

³⁴ The relevance of climate change to the interview would have been apparent to interviewees from the consent and information sheets presented to them immediately before the interview.

³⁵ See Table A11 in Appendix Five.

patterns of Australian households (Graham, Schandl and Williams 2009). Survey participants were recruited via email and internet advertisements, mainly targeting scientific networks, Landcare-type groups and other community networks, and rural radio stations. The online survey was completed by 2,171 respondents.

6.6 Climate change and the responsibilities of environmental citizenship

Environmental citizenship, as argued by most recent theorists, and accepted by this thesis, is a citizenship of responsibility. In particular, environmental citizens are conscious of, and committed to reducing, the global environmental harm caused by excessive resource use and consumption in wealthy industrialised countries. All of the interview participants and nearly 90 percent of survey respondents in general believe that climate change is one of the major challenges of our time, if not the ultimate challenge; substantially more than recorded in ANU Poll (2008), in which 39.4 percent of respondents regard 'global warming' as 'the most serious threat to the future wellbeing of the world'. It is worth noting, however, that a similar proportion (84.8 percent) of the ANU participants as those in the present study accept that climate change is a very serious or serious concern.

Respondents in the present survey also overwhelmingly agreed with the statements: 'I feel a sense of duty as a citizen to take action on climate change' (93.6 percent) and 'I feel a moral obligation to reduce my carbon footprint' (95.6 percent)³⁶. Respondents, therefore, barely distinguish between a sense of citizenly duty and a moral obligation in the context of taking action on climate change – thereby showing that this distinction is one largely used by theorists. A small number of interviewees, however, balked at the idea of being seen as doing the things they do out of a sense of an externally imposed duty, rather than from something intrinsic to their own commitment to a way of life. As Simon responded:

I guess it's... my philosophy is try and live in a better way. At the same time I don't think it is... Like it's not a burden. I think people see it, you know living in a sustainable way, as a burden, but it's not, it's a better way of life. And walking to the shop is more, it's better for your soul than driving to the shop. Cause as you walk you say hello to people, you see the dogs, and the cats, and the flowers, and... It really is a better way to live.

³⁶ Questions B 8. (d) and (e) in the questionnaire.

The responsibility of individuals to take action on climate change is self-evident in the view of most of the study participants; but what does that responsibility entail? Despite its normative nature, it is not clear from the theory how responsibilities are to be applied to citizens and how they are to fulfil them. As Smith (2005) notes, there has been little focus in the theoretical literature on the kinds of institutional settings in which environmental citizenship may be practised and developed. Of course, environmental citizenship is practised and developed in campaign-based environment groups, at least to the extent of publicly campaigning for protection of the environment. However, only a very small proportion of the population is actively involved in such groups (Tranter 2010). Luque (2005) looks to the everyday practice of environmental citizenship, expressed through speech and seeking out knowledge, as much as action, and Dobson (2003) advocates the reduction of ecological footprints, including through citizens' private actions, as an essential component of ecological citizenship, thus identifying one of the principle points on which it differs with traditional citizenship. The next sections present the results of the case study, followed by analysis of the theory in light of the empirical results.

6.7 Acting on individual responsibility

This section examines the ways in which participants have responded to climate change as individuals and households, that is, through their consumption practices.

6.7.1 Consumption decisions

As noted above, almost all survey respondents feel a moral obligation to reduce their carbon footprints. Among Australians in general, there is also a strong sentiment that individuals should make changes in their own lives to prevent further climate change. The Climate Institute (TCI 2008) national study, which draws results from a number of national surveys but primarily from 1,005 online interviews, found that 50 percent of respondents believed that they as individuals should make small changes; 34 percent large changes and 9 percent very large changes. The difference with the current study is that participants were asked what they had actually done, rather than what they thought they should do.

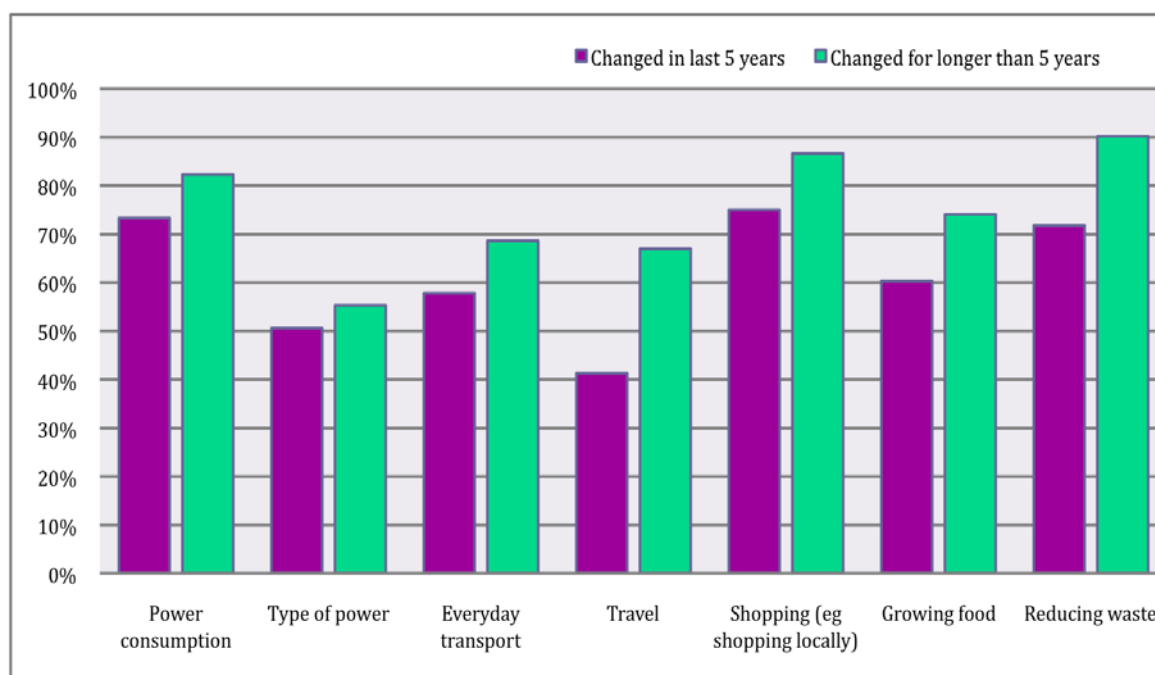
The questionnaire asked respondents whether they had made changes in a number of areas of everyday life (consumption) in response to climate change, in the last five years. Results are shown in Figure 1.

As noted in Chapter Five, environmental concern and willingness to pay or accept changes to standard of living do not always translate into people making voluntary changes, especially where some difficulty or expense is involved, for example buying a more fuel-efficient car or using public transport (Ngo, West & Calkins 2009; Wolf, Brown & Conway 2009). This trend is confirmed by ANU Poll's (2008) results, where only 29.6 percent of respondents use public transport, despite the high level of reported concern about climate change (discussed above). Graham, Schandl and Williams (2009) conclude that there is 'greater uptake of strategies that require little change, such as installing energy efficient lights, and less uptake of more permanent and expensive changes, such as double glazing' (p. 31). This finding was broadly borne out in the present study where changes in power consumption (82.3 percent over the long term) and waste (90.2 percent) were more prevalent than changes related to household energy source (55.3 percent), transport (68.6 percent) or travel (67 percent). However, on measures that involve considerable expense or inconvenience, to the extent that the results allow comparison, participants in this study are much more likely to have made changes than those of other relevant Australian surveys (ABS 2008, 2009d; ANU Poll 2008; Graham, Schandl & Williams 2009;) in response to their concern about climate change.

To all of the interview participants, it was important to take actions to reduce GHG emissions related to their domestic lives, as far as possible. Some found the commitment to reduce their carbon footprint to be a bigger part of their lives than others. Sally, for example, because of her awareness of 'food miles', the GHG associated with the transport of food, made a commitment three years ago to only buy and prepare food produced in Tasmania, which she buys from locally owned shops. Most of the other interview participants are also conscious of climate change issues surrounding food and tailor their food shopping around buying local products from local shops (that is, not from large supermarkets) as much as possible, and some buy bulk wholefoods, and organic fruit and vegetables.

Avoiding shopping at large supermarkets is unusual consumer behaviour in Australia, where the food retail industry is highly concentrated, with the two largest chains, Woolworths and Coles, accounting for 80 percent of all sales of packaged groceries (Smith 2006). Apart from Jim, who shops there to save money, all of the participants who shop at the large supermarkets only do so because in their particular circumstances, for example where they live, or lack of mobility, other options are too difficult.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents who have changed various areas of everyday life in response to climate change.



Jack articulated the concerns of many of the participants:

It's got everything to do with the centralisation and getting food from far off places, and it detracts from encouraging local production of food. And ... the supermarkets really tak[e] advantage of their size in negotiating very low prices to the growers, so the growers aren't getting a fair price for their product, which once again is discouraging local growers.

Like the concerns those expressed by Seyfang's (2006) respondents, these concerns, and others expressed by the interviewees, show an awareness of the broader economic setting in which social and environmental harm takes place, that characterises environmental citizenship. The questionnaire did not ask specifically about food shopping, but rather considered shopping practices as a whole, asking whether respondents had changed their shopping habits in response to climate change, mentioning local shopping and buying second-hand items as examples. The majority of respondents had changed their shopping habits in the last five years in response to climate change (75 percent); increasing to 86 percent when those who had changed over a longer period are included. A large percentage of respondents also grow at least some of their own food (60.3 increasing to 74.1 percent), as do most of the interviewees. Four percent of the CSIRO survey respondents always (and 43.7 percent frequently) buy locally-grown food products (Graham, Schandl & Williams

2009), however there is no indication as to whether the respondents avoid large supermarkets or focus exclusively on local products. The questionnaire also asked about factors taken into account when considering a purchase, as discussed further below.

Over fifty percent of survey respondents have changed the source of at least part of their household energy, in response to climate change in the last five years. This is a remarkable result when compared with the less than five percent of Tasmanians as a whole who have changed the source of their household energy to solar thermal, photovoltaic electricity or gas between 2005 and 2008³⁷ (the latest figures available). This finding bears out the claim that while a majority of Australians recognise a need for household change in response to climate change, the survey respondents are considerably more likely to act on this recognition.

Anna's family, for example, have reduced their power consumption by 18 percent in each of the last three years through changing daily habits (for example turning lights off when leaving rooms), making simple modifications to their house (such as installing pelmets above curtains) and by installing a solar hot water system. In fact, the majority of interviewees had installed renewable energy or energy efficient technology, often in addition to making modifications such as installing insulation or new window treatments. By comparison, while almost 90 percent of the respondents to the CSIRO's national survey (Graham, Schandl & Williams 2009) reported that they were trying to limit their personal energy consumption at home, almost half of them believed that their energy use had stayed the same as the previous year, and 7.8 percent believed it had increased. Almost twice the national average of households in the sample, however, had solar hot water heating (13.3 percent) and 5.2 percent had photovoltaic power (solar panels)³⁸. Like the sample of Tasmanian Greens members in the present study³⁹, the CSIRO sample is highly educated, however respondents are on average younger and have higher incomes than the present sample.

With respect to transport, the respondents in the present survey are again distinctive, with 57.8 percent reporting having changed their means of everyday transport in the last five years, as a response to climate change. The majority of the

³⁷ Only 3.3 percent of Tasmanian households used solar power (hot water and PV panels) in 2008 (though more than double the 2005 figure) – ABS (2008) recommends caution with this figure; a further 2.8 percent used mains gas, again a very substantial increase over 2005; and 13.4 percent used bottled gas, which had not increased much since 2005 (ABS 2008). Mains (natural gas) was not included in the 2005 figures due to its more recent introduction to Tasmania.

³⁸ ABS 2008 does not give separate solar hot water and solar photovoltaic usage figures; the 7% Australian average bundles together both types of usage.

³⁹ See Appendix Five for demographic results and section 6.7.3 for discussion.

interview participants use transport other than private car to move around on a day-to-day basis, whether for work or other activities, although all report using a car for some activities. By comparison, of the respondents in the CSIRO's (2009) study, who are also much less car-dependent than the national average⁴⁰, 57 percent rely on cars for travel to work or study and an average of 75.9 percent for other activities, while the ANU Poll national survey reports that only 25.8 percent of respondents cut back on driving a vehicle for environmental reasons always or often (ANU 2008).

Travel (that is, using transport beyond everyday usage, for example travelling interstate or overseas for holidays) has been found in a number of studies to be the area of consumption most resistant to change in the context of reducing GHG emissions (for example Witherspoon 1996; Ngo, West & Calkins 2009). While only 41.3 percent of respondents to the present survey have reduced their travel in response to climate change in the last five years, this increases to 67 percent when accounting for changes prior to the last five years. Interestingly, after waste, travel was the area in which most people had been making changes for more than five years. The largest proportion of the respondents were over 65 years of age⁴¹ and this group is also the most likely to have reduced travel (see Table 1, section 6.7.3), so this could be an age-related trend, and it is also those in the lowest income groups who are most likely to have reduced travel⁴². Travel was also the survey question with the largest number of 'other' explanations for respondents not having changed⁴³, perhaps indicating that this is an area in which people feel some conflict with their perceived sense of responsibility. The survey results support the finding in other studies, such as Ngo, West and Calkins (2009) that more highly educated and affluent people are less likely to have reduced their travel – see Table 1 where a range of demographic factors are cross-tabulated with consumption, though most results are not statistically significant. Appendix Six, Figures A12-A13 also show that respondents with incomes over \$80,000 were much less likely than those on lower incomes to have changed their travel practices; however those most likely to have reduced travel in response to climate change within the last five years were not those in the lowest income group. Beyond five years, though, this result changes to the lowest income group.

⁴⁰ For Tasmania as a whole, 89.4 percent of people travelled to work or full-time study by car in 2009, and 92 percent use a car for other day-to-day trips, supplemented by other forms of transport (ABS 2009d). Tasmanians are the most car-dependent people in Australia, where the average is 79.6 percent using cars for travel to work and 86.5 percent for other uses (ABS 2009d).

⁴¹ See Table A4 in Appendix Five.

⁴² See Appendix Six – Figures A12-A13.

⁴³ See question 2 of the survey (Appendix Three) for options offered, which include lack of suitable alternatives. See Figure A9 in Appendix Six for 'other' responses.

The other Australian studies reviewed did not include figures showing whether people have reduced their travel activities in response to climate change. Certainly, plane travel overseas and within Australia has been increasing in recent years (Macintosh & Downie 2008).

The majority of interviewees, including the two oldest participants, were not prepared to travel less, with several having family overseas, however a few expressed their determination not to fly overseas any more due to their concern about climate change. Anna in fact had signed a pledge as part of an NGO climate change campaign not to fly in jet aircraft at all except in family emergencies. Jack will not travel overseas any more but still flies to visit his family interstate, referring to this kind of travel as 'love miles', a quote from George Monbiot's *Heat* (Monbiot 2006).

When asked in the survey about factors that they take into account when shopping, including making travel bookings (Figure 2), the vast majority of respondents indicated that they 'always' or 'almost always' consider 'need', with 'non-purchase alternatives eg repair, reuse, going without' (which of course does not apply in the case of items such as basic food) the second most popular factor. The importance of these criteria greatly exceeds that of any of the other factors, with 'other environmental impacts' the next-most important factor, closely followed by GHG.

'Need' is very much the major criterion when it comes to the interviewees' purchasing decisions. Nearly all of the interviewees shop for second hand goods at 'op' shops (second hand, often charity-run, opportunity shops) or tip shops, and receive hand-me-downs from friends and family. All of the participants expressed some reluctance about buying new items. Jack refers to himself as a 'marketer's worst nightmare': he fixes, makes or restores much of what his family uses. The only participant to show little interest in second-hand shopping was Donna who has very little time for shopping. Convenience was very important to the oldest interviewees, Olive and Edith.

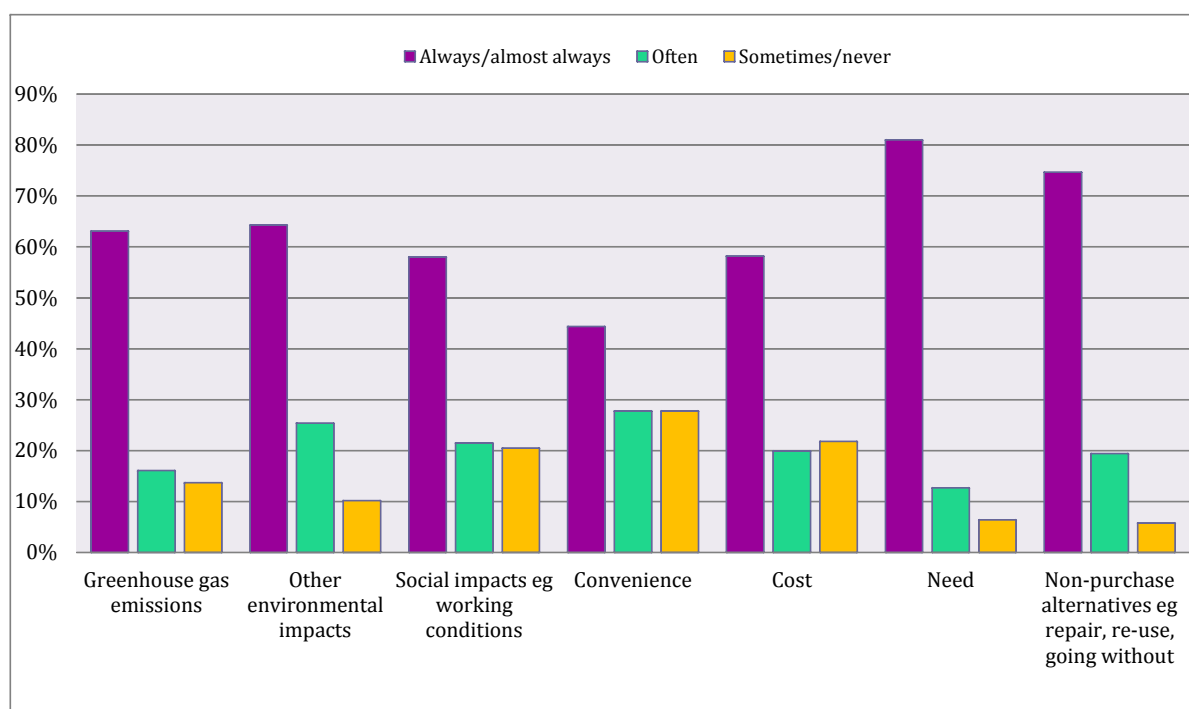
The CSIRO also asked about the types of issues respondents take into account when making purchasing decisions; 49.5 percent always or frequently try to consider how their use will have effects on the environment and 'other consumers' and 69.6 percent rarely or never buy new products when the old ones are functioning well, with a similar percentage buying high quality and durable products even though they can be more expensive (Graham, Schandl & Williams 2009). It is clear that respondents to the present survey take much greater account of environmental and

social factors than the CSIRO respondents; need and non-purchase alternatives are also more important factors to the present respondents.

As to products labelled 'environmentally friendly', of the ANU (2008) respondents 73.8 percent buy biodegradable cleaning products, while 66.7 percent of the CSIRO respondents make a special effort to buy environmentally friendly household chemical products. While not directly comparable with the present survey, these figures are slightly higher than those in the present survey for environmental concern. The interviews shed light on this result: all of the interviewees regard labels such as 'environmentally friendly' with a great deal of scepticism, making up their own minds about the sustainability of a product. With her scientific background, Donna is aware of the myriad factors that influence the environmental or social impacts of production processes, which apply to just about anything that people buy:

'I don't think any of us understand the implications of our personal choices ... even if you'd like to understand them.'

Figure 2: Degree to which respondents consider various factors when shopping (percentage).



6.7.2 Conclusions and analysis: changes in personal consumption practices

Analysis of the consumption results and comparison with the limited data available suggests that respondents to the present survey are as a group making a more serious

effort than the Australian population as a whole, as represented by respondents to nation-wide surveys, to reduce their carbon footprints. This is especially because of the participants' tendency to resist buying new products and their perception of issues associated with food (such as food miles), and their propensity to grow at least some of their own food. In the Tasmanian context, where a higher proportion of the state's GHG emissions comes from transport than from stationary energy (DPIW 2006), the study participants' changed transport habits in response to climate change also contribute to their lower carbon footprints.

When the study participants feel they *have* to buy something, environmental and to a lesser extent social factors are important to them; in the latter case, more so than is indicated by other relevant Australian surveys (Graham, Schandl & Williams 2009; ANU 2008). However, the overwhelming importance of need and non-purchase alternatives perhaps indicates that the majority of respondents seek to live outside, or at least at the margins of 'consumerism', as defined in Chapter Three: that is, they seek to resist a social order that places market-based purchasing at the centre of everyday life, and explore alternative ways of producing and consuming the resources needed for a sustaining way of life. This finding is reinforced by the interviewees' rejection of consumer labelling aimed at convincing consumers of the 'environmentally friendly' nature of a product, although, interestingly most accept the fair trade label. Of course 'need' is a very subjective concept: someone might consider that they 'need' a new television or an overseas holiday, but the significance of non-purchase alternatives indicates that the respondents tend to think first before automatically buying new *things*.

The responses on individual responsibility, moral obligation, consumption, the importance of various factors to purchasing decisions, and interviewees' explanations of their shopping habits clearly demonstrate that this group of respondents practises environmental citizenship: they accept that they have a sense of responsibility as citizens of a wealthy Western country to reduce their carbon footprints and they act on that commitment by making changes to consumption in ways that will reduce GHG, at least to a greater extent than respondents to other Australian surveys.

6.7.3 Demographic context of consumption changes

As discussed in Chapter Five, a number of studies have examined the demographic factors influencing pro-environmental behaviour and willingness to pay for environmental protection, with the most consistent finding being that education is an important influence; the influence found from other factors, such as income, gender and age has varied. Here, the demographic results (see Appendix Five) reveal that the majority (58 percent) of respondents were university-educated, with a preponderance of postgraduate qualifications. This makes them unusually highly educated among Australians as a whole, 23 percent of whom have a bachelors degree or above (ABS 2009b)⁴⁴, and confirms findings of other studies associating high levels of education with people with pro-environmental attitudes (Graham, Schandl & Williams 2009; Ngo, West & Calkins 2009; Tranter 2011). The respondents are mostly over 51 years old, with 29.3 percent over 65 years old: much higher than the 13.3 percent of Australians over this age (ABS 2009a). They are also most likely to be working part time or retired, have below average income,⁴⁵ have no children living with them and live outside major urban areas. The latter result indicates that the respondents are not representative of Tasmanian Greens members as a whole, as the largest number of members reside in the electorate of Denison (Hobart) (Tasmanian Greens 2010b), which is also the most urbanised⁴⁶. The results indicate that it is the people who are likely to have more spare time, not working full-time and with no children, who were most likely to fill out the survey. However, given the over-representation of postal surveys⁴⁷ as well as older and retired respondents, it is likely that potential on-line respondents with little spare time, for example younger people, people working full-time or with children, were put off by the problem with the software, which also required the survey to be taken off-line temporarily.

The demographic characteristics of the interviewees (see Table A11 Appendix Five) are similar to those of the respondents as a whole, except for the area where participants live, which cannot be compared because interviews were only conducted within Hobart and nearby towns.

⁴⁴ ABS 2009 figures are used for comparison, as the survey was conducted in August 2009.

⁴⁵ 54% of respondents have up to \$40,000 income, compared to \$934.70 average weekly earnings (ABS 2009c) (\$48,604.40), though the ABS figure refers to employees' earnings, rather than average income for the population as a whole.

⁴⁶ See Appendix Five for a brief comparison with Greens' membership records.

⁴⁷ 170 on-line and 85 paper questionnaires: a response rate of 18.7 percent for the on-line survey and 40.1 percent for the postal survey.

Table 1: Percentage of respondents who have changed various types of consumption in response to climate change, by demographic categories (includes respondents who are satisfied with changes already made, more than five years ago, or see no reason to change).

Demographic group	Power consumption changed	Power type changed	Everyday transport changed	Travel* changed
Not university educated	86.8%	58.9%	73.6%	64.4
University educated	81.7%	54.3%	70.5%	58.9
Income < \$50,000	86.5%	57.6%	70.7%	64.5
Income > \$50,000	82.5%	55.2%	72.9%	50.8
Female	84.6%	54.2%	74.6%	67.2
Male	85.7%	61.0%	67.9%	52.4
No children	87.9%	55.7%	67.2%	62.9
Has children	77.6%	60.3%	73.2%	55.2
Age 17-35	84.6	38.5%	92.3	69.2
Age 36-65	85.8	59.8	68.5	55.1
Age 66+	81.8	53.7	75.0	73.7 .048^
Area: Rural/village	85.9%	65.8%	62.8	63.3
Large town	85.9%	46.7%	70.0	80.0
Urban/urban fringe	84.9	53.8	79.6	52.7 0.24^
Employment: In paid work / studying	83.5	58.7	66.9	54.5
Not in paid workforce	87.2	55.8	78.5	70.0
Occupation: Manual/trade	77.8	88.2	77.8	72.2
Service ⁴⁸ including essential services like healthcare	83.6%	48.3	60.0	54.1
Professional/managerial	87.4	58.3 .013^	76.9	62.8 .041^
Employment sector: Private	88.3%	62.0	74.5	60.0
Public	82.7	54.3	69.5	61.9

^ Denotes statistically significant result (Pearson chi square < .050). *Figures do not include respondents who reported in 'other' reasons for not changing travel, that they travel little or not at all (around 13 respondents) – see Table A12 and Figures A8-A9 in Appendix Six.

⁴⁸ The relevant options provided in the question (C 14. g) were 3. Service: eg clerical/retail/tourism/restaurant; and 5. Essential service, eg healthcare.

Table 1 presents the demographic context for consumption changes made, including changes made more than five years ago, by respondents. Other studies, such as Ivanova and Tranter (2009, 2011) and OECD (2011), have found willingness to pay for environmental protection correlated with higher education qualifications, and some have found a correlation with higher income (Ngo, West & Calkins 2009). Table 1 indicates that those without tertiary qualifications and those on incomes below \$50,000 were more likely to have made changes in all areas presented; however these results are not statistically significant. More detailed analysis confirms that those on higher incomes are slightly less likely than those on lower incomes to have changed consumption practices: it is the income groups \$40-60,000 and \$20-40,000 which are the most likely to have made changes, however there was no statistically significant relationship, other than for travel (see Appendix Six, figures A12-A13).

As noted in Chapter Five, stage of life has been found to have an impact on people's ability to engage in the types of behaviours that constitute environmental citizenship (MacGregor & Szerszynski 2003; Horton 2006), and their willingness to pay for environmental protection (Ivanova & Tranter 2009; Jagers 2009). While Ivanova and Tranter (2009) point out that the relationship between age and willingness to pay is not straightforward, and found only a weak association between them in Australia, Tranter (2011) found a stronger association: younger respondents were much more likely to be willing to be pay more for renewable energy. While there is a weak association found in this study between age and various types of consumption changes, only the results on travel, with the middle age group least likely to have changed, are statistically significant.

Other demographic categories which have been noted, for example by Horton (2006), to have an effect on citizens' ability to live consistently with their environmental beliefs are the area where they live, whether or not they have children, and whether they are working full-time. In 2007, the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF 2007)⁴⁹ found that the inner cities in every Australian state, followed by the inner suburbs, have the largest environmental impact in terms of household consumption, despite higher housing density and lower reliance on cars. The results of the present survey and interviews do not show a consistent trend in relation to location, having children or employment status, although respondents in manual or trade occupations were more likely than those in either service or

⁴⁹ The report finds that for the average Australian household, the majority of greenhouse gas pollution is associated with consumption of food (28.3 percent) and goods and services (29.4 percent), rather than with transport (10.5 percent) and direct use of energy by households (20 percent) (ACF 2007). See Appendix One, Figure A4.

professional/managerial positions to have changed household consumption practices related to energy source and travel.

While a start has been made in this chapter, further analysis is required to compare the results of the current survey with those of other studies examining the correlation between lifestyle changes or willingness to pay for environmental protection, and demographic characteristics. The following section analyses the theoretical issues surrounding citizenship as expressed through consumption changes; and they are taken further in the analysis in Chapter Seven.

6.8 Extension of citizenship to the private sphere

As discussed in Chapter Four, the assignment of responsibility to citizens to change their behaviour in order to reduce environmental harm makes environmental citizenship susceptible to being seen as part of the same neo-liberal individualisation that many scholars, including proponents of environmental citizenship, regard as fuelling serious environmental destruction such as climate change. Government and NGO programs exhorting citizens (consumers) to 'do their bit' are argued to be complicit in delegating to citizens the responsibility to reduce environmental impacts (for example Maniates (2002b), Hobson (2004), Seyfang (2005) and Kent (2009)). Such programs are consistent with 'weak' ecological modernisation and the 'mainstream' sustainable consumption policy approach, which rely on new technology and 'green' consumerism to reduce environmental damage, while arguably allowing current levels of production and consumption to continue, and supporting economic growth (Hobson 2004; Seyfang 2005).

Indeed, the first official use of the term environmental citizenship was in the Canadian government's *Green Plan*, produced in 1992 to coincide with the Rio conference (Darier 1996), and over the following years many other governments introduced similar plans in an effort to 'green' their citizenry, without imposing new regulations (Lafferty & Meadowcroft 2000). It has been argued, however, that the ecological modernisation approach to environmental policy has not made significant inroads into GHG and other environmental impacts (Monbiot 2006; Christensen *et al.* 2007; Jackson 2009). Placing the major responsibility for reducing environmental harm in the hands of individuals through programs promoting green consumption arguably delegates the responsibility for the issue to the private sphere rather than providing government leadership and public accountability, and depoliticises a 'divisive and all-encompassing issue' (Hobson 2004, p. 135). Vacating the political field also ignores the many factors which stand in the way even of individuals who are

keen to consume sustainably, factors which are integrally tied into the fabric of modern Western society.

In Australia there is no sustainable consumption policy, however the Federal climate change department's website under the heading 'Living Greener: How to save energy and water, reduce waste and travel smarter' outlines a range of ways in which consumers can reduce their environmental impact, and 'Your home' is a joint government-industry information package providing a wealth of information for house buyers and renovators on energy efficiency and other ways to reduce the environmental impact of home ownership (DCCEE 2011e). The government's policy includes 'supporting' householders to reduce their 'carbon pollution', through 'investing in helping Australians change the way we act to help reduce carbon pollution' (DCCEE 2011d), although its efforts in this regard have been disrupted and inconsistent⁵⁰. The government could be argued to be taking the classic weak ecological modernisation approach: making some efforts to assist households to reduce their contribution to GHG emissions by focusing on new technology, and, very recently, adopting a market-based instrument (a carbon price, leading to an emissions trading scheme) to drive the take-up of new technology by industry, while continuously pushing towards greater economic growth and 'consumer demand'.

It could also be argued that the current Australian government has not explicitly placed responsibility or obligations on consumers to reduce the country's GHG emissions by instituting a 'you can do your bit'-style program and therefore has not delegated responsibility to them. However, Australian governments in effect vacated the field of serious climate change policy from 1992 until very recently, ignoring the increasingly urgent concerns of many, at times the majority of, citizens (ANU 2008). Faced with government apathy and inaction, Australians concerned about climate change and determined to do something about it have responded largely with what is familiar and within their control: the domestic, including home modifications (Davison 2011; Mackay 2007). Even with the recent measures, the government has been at pains to point out that the carbon price is not aimed at transforming Australians' way of life (Kelly 2011).

⁵⁰ For example, in early 2011 the government cut back or stopped a number of solar and energy efficiency programs to divert money, ironically, to rebuilding efforts in the wake of devastating cyclone and floods in Queensland. As Greens Senator Christine Milne noted 'It beggars belief that the government would choose to cut climate change programs like Solar Flagships, energy efficiency and the solar hot water rebate to fund disaster relief when such disasters will be made worse by climate change' (Milne 2011b).

6.9 The depoliticisation of citizen responsibility?

While agreeing with Dobson (2003) that justice has a central role in environmental citizenship Luque (2005) argues that 'citizens motivated by justice will tend to work towards structural change' and that using 'the ecological footprint as the organising metaphor for justice' is potentially depoliticising (p. 215). It is possible that citizens could feel that they have discharged their responsibility as ecological citizens by reducing their own footprint; therefore, 'doing one's share', Luque asserts, contrary to government and business campaigns, should focus '*most of all* on bringing about structural change' p. 216. As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, other theorists are also concerned about the depoliticising potential of essentially top-down programs that focus on individual and household efforts to change consumption patterns (Luke 1997; MacGregor & Szerszynski 2003; Maniates 2002b).

The participants in this thesis' case study have no qualms about acknowledging and accepting a responsibility to reduce their ecological footprints, a responsibility they relate to both the physical need for emissions to be reduced if catastrophic climate change is to be averted, and the global imbalance and injustice between high-emitting and low-emitting countries. They are therefore firmly in Dobson's camp in terms of accepting the global nature of their responsibility. However, as Luque (2005) points out, Dobson uses the 'liability model', which 'marks out and isolate[s] those who are considered responsible' p. 216 (quoting Young 2003⁵¹). The 'political model' of responsibility, instead, looks to involvement in public discourse, where 'we try to persuade one another about courses of collective action that will contribute to social change' p 216 (quoting Young 2003⁵²). The case study participants' involvement in public responses to climate change is discussed in Chapter Seven.

In her interview for this thesis, Anna said 'Greens thrive on guilt'. Perhaps the desire to take on environmental responsibilities is a form of collective guilt, which may go some way towards explaining why 'demands for new ... environmental rights [by environmentalists] ... have been virtually absent' (Dean 2001, p. 492). The major focus among environmental citizenship theorists, too, at least since the mid-1990s⁵³ has been on responsibilities, obligations, or duties, rather than rights. Perhaps the emphasis on responsibilities comes from most theorists' focus on the environmental common good. Paradoxically, however, the focus on responsibility has led to some of

⁵¹ Young, I (2003) 'From guilt to solidarity', *Dissent* 50(2): pp. 39-45, p. 42.

⁵² Ibid, p. 42.

⁵³ Christoff (1996) and Eckersley (1996b) wrote articles on environmental rights.

the most serious criticisms of environmental citizenship, the potential for individualisation of citizen responsibility, one of the major criticisms of the theory (discussed in section 7.5).

The empirical studies discussed in Chapter Five, and this one, reveal that many people who are concerned about climate change attempt to limit their own ecological footprints, and some go further than that and are active at the community and political levels to bring about an ecologically sustainable society, as discussed in Chapter Seven. A greater proportion of the case study participants here have made more of the expensive and difficult changes than found in most of the empirical studies in Chapter Five, and all of the other relevant Australian studies.

However, as clearly demonstrated in the case study, even the most aware and committed environmental citizens are enmeshed in the political, economic, and cultural contexts of the societies in which they live: the theory therefore benefits by examining the broader context in which such citizenship must take place, including the many barriers to citizens being able to become more 'environmental', as discussed below.

6.10 Barriers, contradictions and inconsistencies in personal consumption decisions

Concern about and commitment to ensuring environmental protection do not always result in individuals acting in ways that limit their own contribution to environmental harm, such as climate change. This attitude (or values)-behaviour gap has been identified in many empirical studies, as discussed in Chapter Five. Barriers can be internal, relating to motivation or conflicting desires, or external, due to physical and structural constraints. The case study survey was designed to enable respondents to identify the reasons that they have not changed particular behaviours to produce less GHG, and barriers and inconsistencies were also discussed in the interviews.

Despite their commitment to reducing their carbon footprints as much as possible, study participants experienced a number of barriers to doing so, and, like participants in other studies, were not always consistent in their consumption decisions. After briefly noting the barriers to change this section explores the contradictions and inconsistencies experienced by participants in trying to live according to their ideals.

As found in the studies discussed in Chapter Five, many of the reasons for respondents not changing their consumption habits in response to climate change relate to economic, social or cultural factors over which the participants have, or

perceive that they have, little control, for example the lack of efficient public transport, or the expense of switching power type⁵⁴. Other reasons relate to time, and the state of participant's health. Occasionally respondents showed a refreshing honesty, admitting to being lazy or selfish, or in the case of travel, liking it too much to change. Interestingly, very few respondents opted for the 'why should I, when other people don't?' response and none to the 'climate change is the government's responsibility' response, although one consistently responded in 'other' that he will not be making any changes until multinationals and governments take their responsibility seriously. The majority of 'other' responses⁵⁵ (where reasons were given) related to housing, or the sustainability of other areas of the respondent's consumption, presumably making up for their lack of sustainable practices in the area of life in question. This response is a graphic illustration of 'self-affirmation' in the face of 'dissonance' referred to by Szmigin, Carrigan and McEachern (2009), that is, where the respondents' self-image is challenged by inconsistent behaviour they affirm their consistent behaviour. A small number pay carbon credits, regarded by some authors, such as Monbiot (2006) as a form of payment to assuage guilt, with most of these for travel.

The interviews allowed a more in-depth and nuanced examination of the complexities surrounding personal practices in the context of climate change. Donna and Alex emphasised that they are part of a family or a partnership, and that the purchase of major consumer items like a large television set is not always their choice. The issue of contradictions between consumption practices and concern about climate change came up most obviously with respect to air travel, and also with car-based commuting for a couple of respondents, especially Donna:

The obvious thing to do would be to live much closer to where we work and go to school, and walk and ride a bicycle. Then of course you'd have to ask yourself who did you sell the house to? And what do they drive?... If we moved into town to be more sustainable, and sold the house to someone who drives an SUV... you know, did we do the right thing for the environment?

Sally, who flies to England and interstate to visit family, identifies the contradiction between air travel and environmental responsibility:

I find the issue of air travel the most difficult to come to grips with because it's the worst thing you can do for the environment, yet here we

⁵⁴ See Figure A8 in Appendix Six.

⁵⁵ See Table A12 in Appendix Six.

all are, changing our light bulbs, and doing whatever, and then you blow it all out of the water by flying anywhere. And I don't think it will change until the air fares reflect the sort of value of what is going on. And air travel is ridiculously cheap, it's astoundingly cheap to fly... I was fully expecting that by now the cost of air travel would have catapulted.

Donna, whose family also travels to England every few years to visit extended family, acknowledges their 'massive carbon footprint', however her attitude is that change needs to happen at an economy- and society-wide level. So, she says, while people should do their bit at home – 'even though what we do is piss paltry I'm sure' – it is political change that is really needed. It seems, therefore, that she does not feel her responsibility extends to taking on difficult changes in her own and her families' lives that are essentially the result of political and economic factors.

Jack used to feel despair and a sort of paralysis from knowing about the environmental impacts of things he wanted or needed to do or to buy, and had no sustainable alternative. Now, while he lives as consistently as he can with his environmental beliefs, he accepts that there will be inconsistencies and his advice is

It might not be as green as you like, but take your life back, stop being paralysed by it. Get over it, just buy it, and if you want to, start a campaign [about local production] ... that sort of thing.

Jack, then, finds that there is a limit to taking personal responsibility within the market; he regards personal and political responsibility and action as complementary.

While acknowledging minor contradictions in her own practices, and that her family can afford to buy local products, which are often more expensive, Anna points out:

Well if you don't live according to your stated beliefs they're not really your beliefs anyway. Sometimes barriers stop you but as much as possible you should hold true to them. ... It's easy to come up with excuses for not carrying out your beliefs but this can be the thin edge of the wedge where you begin to rationalise and weaken your stand saying it's all too hard.

Myra, too, is 'really annoyed with people who are only Green at the ballot box – pseudo-Greens – people who don't try hard at all'. Leanne also finds inconsistencies within members of the Greens, especially concerning animal welfare issues and eating

meat, though she does acknowledge her own contradictions surrounding transport especially.

Some of the interviewees sought to justify what they saw as contradictions between their consumption practices and their environmental responsibilities, for example Donna's comment above about her family's car use; the most frequent justification given was for flying overseas to visit family. However, this was a fairly minor element of the interviews, with most simply acknowledging that contradictions exist, or seeing none or few in their own lives. Unlike the survey responses, self-affirmation (Szmigin, Carrigan and McEachern 2009) was not apparent.

What many of the barriers, and issues around which respondents experience contradictions and inconsistencies, boil down to are 'structural': economic, social and cultural factors stemming from an increasingly globalised economy, political addiction to economic growth, and individualised lifestyles (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002a; Hamilton 2003). Paradoxically, despite the individualism with which Western culture has been imbued in the last few hundred years at least, it is simply easier, more socially acceptable and comfortable, to fit in, not to resist the demands of the mainstream economy and society (Hamilton 2003). For example, when our political-economic system makes a product or experience such as air travel so easy or cheap, despite its massive carbon footprint⁵⁶, that it meshes with the social and cultural expectations of those who can afford it, it is rare indeed for even environmentally aware citizens to deny themselves the product or experience on the grounds of its excess carbon contribution. During the interviews it was as if a curtain had dropped between the person's knowledge about the impacts of long-distance air travel and their desires and intentions, calling to mind McCracken's (2006) identification of consumer goods as 'bridges' to 'displaced meaning' (see section 3.3.5). With such a hold over the desires and social practices of much of the population, air travel, then, is an example of a contributor to climate change that can only be dealt with through structural mechanisms.

Perhaps the most important and relevant barrier to people changing their consumption practices in accordance with their environmental awareness is the powerlessness and disempowerment experienced by many people in the face of global

⁵⁶ Macintosh & Downie (2008) note that air travel currently contributes less than five percent of Australia's GHG emissions; however each instance of air travel emits far more GHG than other forms of travel over the same distance (Monbiot 2006). As emissions from other sources are scaled back, with no plans to reduce emissions from air travel, and with the forecast growth in demand, it will contribute an increasingly greater proportion of Australia's GHG emissions: up to 50 percent by 2050 with a 60 percent emissions reduction target, and up to the total of Australia's 'emissions space' with an 80 percent target (Macintosh & Downie 2008).

environmental problems and the nature of the political, economic and social system which generates and perpetuates them (Macnaghten & Urry 1998)⁵⁷. Part of this powerlessness is perhaps a sense experienced by some people who are very concerned about climate change that they should not be expected to deny themselves some types of unsustainable consumption that are so much a part of mainstream culture, and also on which, as isolated individuals, their abstention will have little impact. As Hayward (2006) points out, even ecological citizens can become demoralised when they are carrying out citizenly activities to little effect because the broader population has not acted on these voluntarily assumed obligations. The participants in the current case study did not exhibit this sense of being discouraged, burdened or overwhelmed – in fact, while many of them, like the respondents in Wolf, Brown and Conway's (2009) study, acknowledged that what they do as individuals and households is 'a drop in the ocean', they still feel a sense of obligation or responsibility to continue. It is also true, though, that very few of the interviewees at least, as noted above, are prepared to deny themselves the most greenhouse-intensive consumer activity: flying long distances for holidays. Those that do, however, forego aspects of consumption like this still express a sense of satisfaction with their lives. These issues are discussed further in section 7.4, on motivation.

While the participants generally believe that their personal consumption-related actions are important, like the participants of Wolf, Brown & Conway 2009, they recognise the need to change the collective social and political realities that limit the effectiveness of individual and household changes. The extent to which the participants' desire for change is expressed through community-based and political action is discussed in Chapter Seven, as is the related issue of the individualisation of climate change responses.

6.11 Conclusions

The empirical study was undertaken with a view to ground-truthing environmental citizenship theory in an area where the private and public spheres intersect: sustainable consumption and its relationship to climate change. Examining the survey data and interview results in the light of the major theoretical contributions and controversies, in particular the extension of citizen responsibility and action to the private, consumption, sphere, reveals this cross-over of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption to be a rich arena for Green political action. The case study

⁵⁷ Discussed further in section 7.5.

participants have made changes in their personal lives in response to climate change, more so than the general Australian population.

Even this group, who are seriously committed to climate change action at both the personal and political levels, comes up against structural and social barriers to change, as found in other studies of pro-environmental behaviour, indicating that, as found in Chapter Three, structural economic change is necessary if reductions in GHG emissions are to be possible across the board.

The importance of public sphere by environmental citizens, and to these particular citizens, is discussed in the next chapter, which also discusses some of the more contentious aspects of environmental citizenship theory in light of the case study and other empirical studies. Its discussion of the theory, and the conclusions reached, reflect on the case study results in both Chapters Six and Seven.

Chapter Seven Environmental Citizenship and sustainable consumption in theory and practice

7.1 Introduction

So far this thesis has considered citizenship theory, climate change and its relationship to unsustainable consumption, and environmental citizenship, which has been put forward as a framework for citizen action on climate change. Chapter Five discussed a number of empirical studies that have been undertaken to put environmental citizenship into the context of real lives and thereby to clarify, challenge or extend the theory. Chapter Six introduced a similar case study, undertaken for this thesis, of environmental citizenship as experienced by members of the Tasmanian Greens party, presented its results on private sphere action – consumption – and analysed them in the context of the theoretical issues raised earlier in the thesis. This penultimate chapter presents further results from the case study, relating to the respondents' public sphere responses to climate change; it also draws together the discussion of theory and practice in a discussion of theoretical issues relating to both these and the consumption results from the previous chapter.

7.2 Involvement in the public sphere

7.2.1 Community participation by case study participants

As discussed in Chapter Two, 'civic participation' has long been considered an essential element of citizenship. Civic participation shows commitment and action towards the common good and also helps citizens as individuals by increasing their self-confidence and other skills; it could consist of involvement in community groups or be more political in orientation. A focus on 'community' has also been a strong element of ecopolitical theory since its inception, although perhaps partly due to criticism of this aspect of early theorists' work (see Saward 1993; Kenny 1996), later theorists have veered away from the idealistic and potentially anarchistic direction early theory was taking (Eckersley 1996a ; Hay 2001). Nevertheless, Green politics arose from grassroots movements and has always emphasised the importance of grassroots participation in politics (Rainbow 1993). Participation in community-based activities aimed at furthering the environmental common good would therefore seem to be an ideal area in which to consider and refine environmental citizenship theory, and theorists such as Light (2002), Barry (2006) and Seyfang (2006) specifically look

at the involvement of environmental citizens in activities at the community level. The case study begins its exploration of respondents' public sphere actions by looking at their involvement in community-based activities.

The term 'community' is open to interpretation (Walker *et al.* 2007). For example, the organic growers' co-operative studied by Seyfang (2006) is community-based given that it is oriented to the public good and run as a collective rather than by private owners, without members necessarily living in the same local area, while other programs are clearly related to a particular locality (Kellett 2007) or entity such as a school (Flowers & Chodkiewicz 2009).

The questionnaire asked respondents to what degree they have been involved in community-based responses to climate change, in the last five years, with a range of options given. The response rate is lower for questions in this section than in the previous one, about activities, which is an interesting result in itself, although it possibly indicates some confusion about the meaning of the term.

In Tasmania at least, climate change-directed activities organised by community-based participants rather than government departments or professionalised NGOs are relatively new (SLT 2010), with the TCCO's 'Climate Connect' community grants program commencing in 2009 (TCCO 2010). Some community programs, projects or activities, however, have existed for many years, without being targeted specifically at climate change, for example informal car pooling, bulk buying of food by groups of neighbours and some community gardens⁵⁸; such activities take place for many interrelating reasons, such as building community, social inclusion and health as well as environmental reasons (Adams 2009; SHSC 2010). Others are much newer and aimed specifically at climate change, for example alternative energy programs where a community group arranges for a bulk purchase of solar hot water systems or solar panels, as happened in South Hobart in 2009 (SHSC 2010), and co-ordination of community responses, like local groups organising along the lines of the Transition Towns movement, which in Tasmania is a loose coalition of around twenty local groups trying to engage their local communities in reducing GHG and building community resilience in face of the changes that must come with peak oil and climate change (Transition Tasmania 2010).

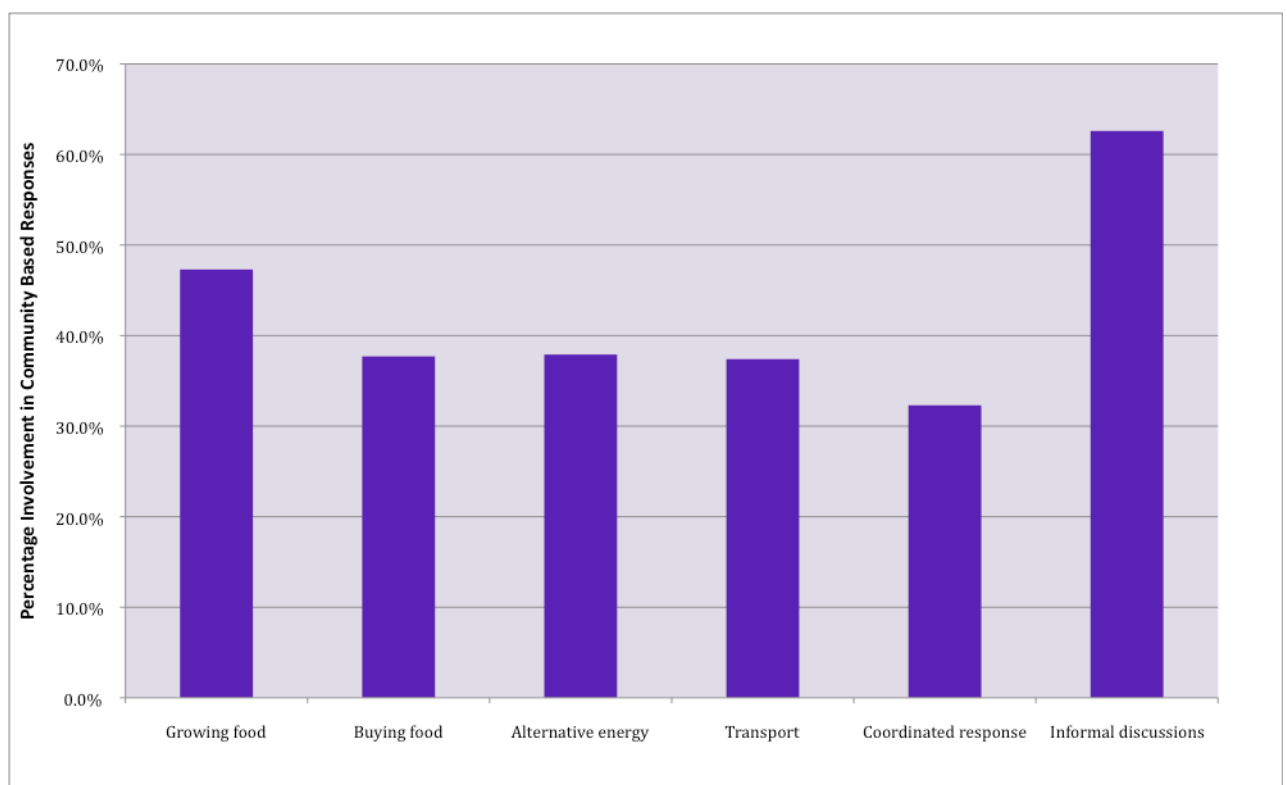
Figure 3 gives the percentage of respondents involved in various community-based responses to climate change, in the last five years. With no figures with which to compare the results, it is not possible to know whether the participation rates shown

⁵⁸ While many of the thirty (EWT 2010) community gardens now in Tasmania are recent projects, climate change is not always a major consideration in their establishment (DPAC 2011).

in Figure 3 are unusual or what could be expected, although it would seem that they must be quite high. For example even the lowest figure, 32.3 percent of respondents involved in co-ordinating a community response, must be high when considering, say, that the South Hobart Sustainable Community group has around 200 members (SLT 2010), only four percent of the suburb's population of around 5,000 (Australian Postcodes 2011), and only around twelve people are actively involved in co-ordinating the group (SLT 2010).

The interviewees varied with respect to their involvement in community-based responses to climate change. Nine of the interviewees live in areas where 'transition' groups exist: in inner or bushland fringe suburbs of Hobart, a satellite town and in a rural area. Six of these participants have had at least some involvement with these groups. Those who lived in these areas but were not involved in the transition groups cited their lack of time, or for some simply that they prefer other types of community involvement, for example Michelle is involved in the local arts community. None of the participants who lived in other areas had any involvement in community-based responses to climate change; and the transition groups were the only specific community-based responses to climate change that were mentioned by participants, although a number of them mentioned the need to support the local economy, as discussed above in the consumption section.

Figure 3: Involvement in community-based responses to climate change in the last five years.



Jack comments on the experience of living in an area where he has found a community of like-minded people:

It's certainly a comfort thing, living in South Hobart, and being surrounded by greenies who don't question what you're talking about. We're all on the same page, it's almost like we're all from the same tribe. And it's only when you go and try to talk to some other tribe that the language breaks down or the values are different, or there's something underlying that's different, and it makes for difficult communication. In my experience.

While not actively avoiding them, he finds it difficult to hold conversations with people with different values, for example,

Just zipping up to Bali for the weekend ... There's nothing bizarre about that, that's just normal, so cheap, so why wouldn't you? ... I mean I'd love to be able to say to somebody: don't you understand that this is helping to bugger up the planet and make for a harder world to live in ultimately? ... I'd love to find a better way to say all that. ... I'd rather them respond than react, but they always seem to react.

It seems that for Jack, community is very much based on shared values, as well as his local area. Through his values, though, he connects his own and his local community's actions with the global environment and people elsewhere who have lower ecological footprints than Australians. He has attempted to engage with people who are not part of his values-based community, but has found it too difficult. There is, therefore, very much a local-global dimension to Jack's citizenship, and a stronger allegiance to the earth than to the wider society he lives within.

A number of the other interviewees pointed out that they are trying to influence other people to change the way they live, for example, Sally's six-month blog on her Tasmanian-only diet; or through showing that it is possible to live a satisfying life, as Michelle says, 'without buying new stuff'; and also through subtle messages, such as Pat's invitation to friends who drive everywhere to car share to a recent event. More survey respondents engage in 'informal discussions' than any of the other community responses to climate change, however the survey does not ask whether the informal discussions are with people who have different views; it is also interesting that 13.4 percent of respondents 'prefer doing this as an individual or

family'. A small number of people pointed out that there is no point in informal discussions as they 'lead nowhere' or not many people are willing to face the truth⁵⁹.

Hamilton (2003) argues that paid employment is best understood as being part of a person's community involvement and can be an important part of an individual's response to climate change; one which has received little attention in the literature. Several of the interviewees saw their work as an important part of their contribution to climate change mitigation or preparedness. Myra and Michelle both run their businesses on sustainable lines, with low carbon footprints through sourcing second-hand materials, while Anna is a teacher who uses her own practices, such as catching the bus to work, as a role model for the students. Donna has attempted to make changes to the practices of her workplace to reduce its carbon footprint, for example through lobbying for the large number of computers used there to be turned off when not in use. Alex has started a new career in sustainable building design.

Surprisingly, given their membership of the Greens, only one interviewee, Jim, made a definite connection between politics and community involvement around climate change, through his community and professional association activism against a major road development. He is also involved in finding alternatives to car-based transport through his community involvement and his work as a planner in the public sector. After mentioning a new federal government initiative on better cities, he says

I have some hope, I keep hanging on, I've been in this job for twenty years and there's always been hope. So of course, that's why I get involved locally with the council and issues here. And with the Transition Tasmania movement, which is addressing things like growing food.

The other interviewees, even those who are involved in the transition movement, did not explicitly make the connection between the community and politics. Rather, it seems, they see community involvement around climate change as an alternative to working within the formal political system, although Alex was the only one to articulate this point:

I don't personally think you can rely on the government to do the right thing, they ultimately have a political agenda. And I don't approve the major parties' agendas, so I'd rather put energy into making local communities more self-sufficient so that they are not relying on outside resources, particularly government resources to survive. ... And there's a benefit in sort of combining the skills of a community.

⁵⁹ See Figure A10 and Table A13 Appendix Six.

However, a number of the participants are or have been involved in environmental campaigns and organisations – community-based and political at the same time – though not specifically related to climate change, for example Leanne is very active in the animal rights movement and Donna was one of the co-ordinators until recently of a major environmental campaign.

Whether political or not, community involvement is still an expression of the participants' concerns through action in the public sphere. Where climate change is concerned, more than half of the interviewees had some community involvement around climate change, somewhat more than for survey respondents.

Figure A10 and Table A13 in Appendix Six explore the reasons for survey respondents not participating in community-based responses to climate change: lack of opportunity stands out, while the numbers who had 'not thought about' the types of community responses listed are quite low. There is a high proportion of non-responses and confused responses to the questions about community involvement, perhaps indicating a lack of awareness or understanding around, for example, community gardens. Combined with the lack of opportunity this result shows that there is significant potential for further participation in community-based responses in Tasmania, at least among Greens members. However, the percentage of respondents who 'prefer doing this as an individual or family' indicates that the potential for community-based responses has a limit.

7.2.2 Political involvement of case study participants

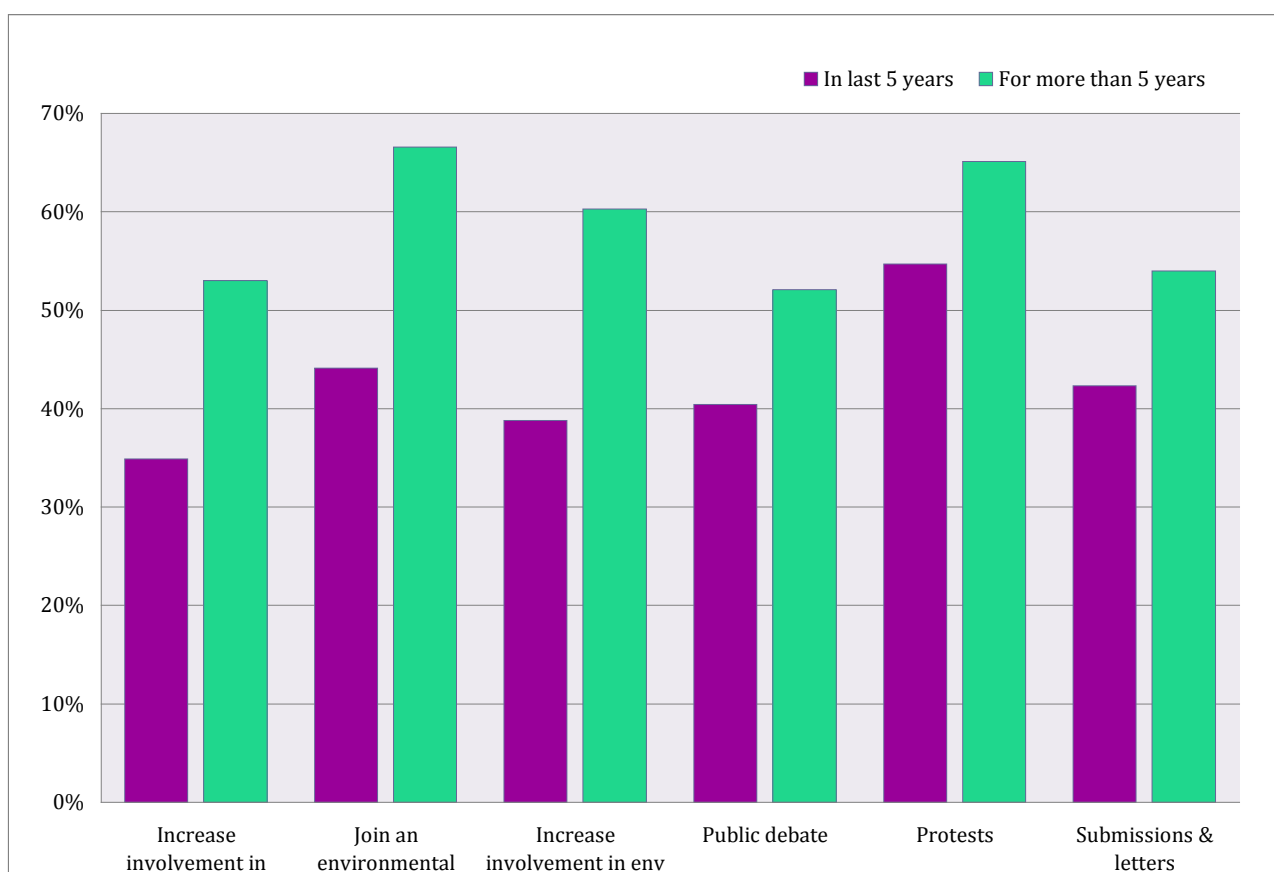
Involvement in 'traditional' politics has long been one of the hallmarks of citizenship, as discussed in Chapter Two. The issues in environmental citizenship theory needing to be clarified through empirical work concern whether such citizenship *necessarily* includes activity of a public, political kind; and what is it, if anything, that connects personal and political environmental citizenly action. Clearly, as members of the Tasmanian Greens, the study participants are politically engaged, and unusually so – only one percent of Australians are members of political parties (ABS 2010). However, the study sought to examine the extent of respondents' political activity, to gain some understanding of the political involvement of these environmental citizens, beyond simply paying membership fees, and to attempt to throw light on the theoretical issues highlighted in the thesis.

Figure 4 shows the percentage of respondents involved in various political activities in response to climate change, in the last five years.

Interestingly, the only political activity related to climate change in which a majority of respondents (a slim one) participated in the last five years was protests. In particular, only 34.9 percent of respondents felt inspired to increase their involvement in the Tasmanian Greens in response to climate change and only 38.8 percent increased involvement in an environment group. However, as shown in the second row, participation in all political activities increased once respondents who were already involved to their full capacity five years ago are added, indicating that concern about climate change has been high for some time.

Reasons for not taking particular political actions in response to climate change are presented in Figure A11 in Appendix Six. The most significant reasons for non-involvement in all the political activities listed in the last five years were: 'already involved to full capacity', 'only one way I work for change' and 'other'. 'Too time consuming' was also a significant factor for some activities, especially writing submissions and letters and increasing involvement in an environment group, and slightly less so for the Greens; 'too difficult, stressful etc' was also a significant factor with respect to engaging in public debate. 'Why bother, it makes no difference' received a negligible to very low response

Figure 4: Percentage of respondents who have taken political actions in response to climate change.



with respect to all activities, with the largest response for this category being for writing submissions and letters (9.9 percent) and attending protests (5.5 percent), indicating that the vast majority of respondents regard all of these forms of political involvement as at least potentially effective.

Table A14 in Appendix Six provides a summary of the 'other' reasons given by respondents for not participating in political activities; the high number of non-responses here is particularly noticeable. The number of respondents who ticked 'Greens fulfil this role' in relation to the various types of political activity indicates that these members consider their Greens membership (and involvement) to absolve them of the need for further political participation in these areas. As many as 24 percent consider that because they are members of the Greens there is no need for them to join an environment group which focuses on climate change, although this response is much lower in relation to attending protests and engaging in public debate. The percentage of respondents who believe that letterboxing at election times or simply being a member of the Greens is equivalent to 'increasing involvement in the Greens' is also noteworthy (11.4%).

None of the interviewees had increased their involvement in the Greens in the last five years apart from Simon who is a relatively new member, has been an office-bearer and has had some temporary work with the Greens. He is also the youngest participant. For two participants, involvement has actually declined over the years: for Anna once she had a child, and for Donna once her children grew older and she increased her work hours, and also because of her involvement in a major environmental campaign. Significantly, most were not interested in becoming more involved in the Greens: they are happy to volunteer during election campaigns by letterboxing, handing out how-to-vote cards or, for Jim and Pat, scrutineering, however they are not interested in going to regular branch meetings. All participants nevertheless believe that their membership of the Greens is valuable. To Sally, it is part of a

broader philosophy. ... I think that democracy is really important, and I just think we're so lucky to have such a fantastic democracy in Australia. So I wouldn't dream of not being politically active, so because I support the Greens' policies, it's important for me to be a member of the Greens.

Some of the participants express a sense of belonging, of comfort, in being a Greens member. Jack harks back to the feeling of isolation he used to have, of not thinking like other people:

... if you get enough weirdos, aliens together, they can form a political party and call it the Greens. And it's very comforting to know that you're not alone.

To all of the participants, their membership is a means of expressing solidarity or support, including monetarily, for the people who are actually good at working for change in the public, political sphere – the Green politicians. It also means that they can have their views taken to a broader arena, or simply be counted among those who support the Greens' ethics and policies. However they either do not have the skills themselves, do not have the time or are simply not interested in further involvement.

Despite being a Greens member, Alex openly expressed his disengagement from the political system: he is 'not a political person' he says, and his Greens membership, while it allows him to follow his conscience, is not as important to him as he thought it would be: he finds Australian politics 'appalling' and 'unsophisticated', even worse than in the US where he lived for some years. Even Simon, who has worked for the Greens and is the only participant active at the party branch level, expresses ambivalence about politics: while he is inspired by politicians like Christine Milne and Bob Brown⁶⁰ and realises that they have to work within the current political system, he often finds that system 'ridiculous'. Nevertheless, he says

It's just the system in which we work, ... I guess ... the options really are to ... sit in your own beautiful bubble or to stare it in the eye and work with it, and see what you can do.

Jim says he is a 'political person', interested in politics; however he also is only involved in the party at election times. The expression of Jim's politics is mainly through trying to make changes through his work in the public sector and his community.

It seems, therefore, that while these Greens members are very concerned about climate change, want the Greens' elected representatives to put these views forward into the political domain, and find a sense of solidarity in their Greens membership, they express a sense of alienation from the traditional political system. This is a curious finding given that these citizens have taken the unusual step of expressing their political views through joining a political party. The explanation could lie in Green politics itself; its holistic nature, in which the political does not only take place in the traditional political arena but extends to all aspects of life (Rainbow

⁶⁰ Greens Senators for Tasmania.

1993). The tensions arising from Greens parties' advocacy of participatory, grassroots democracy and the need to fit within the constraints of modern liberal democratic political structures in order to achieve electoral and policy success (Burchell 2001; Rootes 2002; Rihoux & Rudig 2006) could also contribute to these members' sense of alienation from the political process, while their commitment to Green ideals and the need for Greens in politics remains strong. And this flows through to the nature of environmental citizenship, which consists of citizens expressing in many different arenas their concerns about environmental harm – indeed, demonstrating that such citizenship takes place in a matrix.

7.2.3 The need for public sphere action

If one is truly to act on the obligations of an environmental citizen to reduce one's ecological footprint, is this possible without action in the public sphere? It is almost impossible in a Western country to extricate oneself from the production-consumption chain and from some reliance on fossil fuels: our lives are simply too reliant on complex production and distribution systems (Princen, Maniates & Conca 2002b). Even the participants interviewed for this thesis who had made heroic efforts to reduce their carbon footprint acknowledge that they are enmeshed within or still dependent on an economic system that is responsible for the production of the bulk of the world's GHG emissions.

'Political consumption' (Micheletti 2003), similar to 'critical consumption' (Sassatelli 2006), however, is put forward as a way for citizens to express their political views through their consumption practices. As discussed in Chapter Five, this is different to green consumerism, which simply means people choosing 'greener' products and can be motivated by non-political factors such as personal health. It could be argued that climate change-related sustainable consumption practices, for example installing renewable energy at home or buying green electricity, which is occurring concurrently with climate change campaigns by activists, is making a political point. However, while the message may get through to governments that people are concerned about climate change, this is a diffuse and ambiguous message, in that it could be simply saying 'we are concerned about climate change and want to do our bit'. It does not necessarily say that people want the government to take stronger action, for example through introducing a carbon tax or supporting the contraction and convergence approach internationally: indeed, it would be difficult to see how such messages could be delivered to governments through consumption or other purely private action – such messages are political, and require action in the

public sphere to be regarded as such. A prime example is the 'Say Yes' campaign in support of the Australian government's carbon price proposal (ABC Sydney 2011). As a number of scholars have argued, by focusing on domestic technological changes, even people very concerned about climate change could be seen as turning away from action required to change the economic system that drives climate change (MacGregor & Szerszynski 2003; Hobson 2004; Kent 2009; Davison 2011).

Seyfang (2005) argues that ecological citizenship must have an inherently public component: ecological citizens understand that societal well-being is not brought about through consuming more, and that a reduction of absolute levels of consumption is necessary for environmental reasons. It is an essential part of ecological citizenship, therefore, to 'challenge the commercial, political and legal forces which currently favour commodification, to produce instead locally significant social economies, where collective ownership and co-production take precedence' (Seyfang 2005, p. 300). These radical ecological citizens, politically active at the community level and beyond, would be at the end of Barry's (2006) continuum of green citizenship. They are following the 'alternative' route to sustainable consumption, identified in Agenda 21 but then largely disregarded by governments in favour of the more politically palatable 'mainstream model' (Seyfang 2005) (see section 3.4.1). Davidson's (2004) analysis of ecological citizenship comes to a similar conclusion: it is essentially participatory, with citizens striving to influence the *decisions* that affect their everyday lives, in order to fulfil their sense of responsibility to other citizens and the natural world.

Whether purely individualised consumption changes to reduce GHG should be regarded as citizenly would depend, it could be argued, on whether there is a connection with the public sphere through the contribution thereby made to climate change abatement, which can only be judged empirically through scientific measurement. Theoretically, at least, and as shown through modelling (for example Jones & Kammen 2011) it is possible for such a connection between the public and private spheres to be made and for the people who undertake such actions to be behaving as environmental citizens.

As shown in Chapter Six, the interviewees' descriptions of the ways in which they have reduced their ecological footprints show that there is no clear line where alternative sustainable consumption separates from a more technological, green consumption-based approach. Though making efforts to reduce their consumption, they are still entwined in the mainstream economy which surrounds them, for example through purchasing renewable energy technology, usually with government

assistance, and they often come up against the kinds of barriers to sustainable consumption noted elsewhere. As discussed above, many, but by no means all, of them are involved in community sustainable consumption efforts, which are consistent with the 'economy of care and connection' put forward by Manno (2002). However, the consumption practices of most of them are largely still carried on at the individual and household level, as would be expected in a country like Australia, where home ownership and the domestic have long been at the core of our cultural and even our political life (Davison 2011).

Delegation of responsibility to individuals and households is now claimed to be the norm in many fields of social policy (MacGregor 2006; Hobson 2004). Perhaps the difference with regard to environmental policy, in Australia at least, is that governments usually just *encourage* voluntary actions such as recycling and using renewable energy, while environmental citizenship places *responsibility* on citizens to act. The responsibilities of environmental citizenship are, however, abstract and, in reality, without government intervention it is still up to citizens whether they act upon, or even acknowledge, them. Indeed, it is the prospect of people being forced to pay higher prices through measures such as a carbon tax or emissions trading scheme that has made such quasi-regulatory measures so contentious, as seen by the near-hysteria in Australia at the prospect of the Gillard government's carbon price (regarded by many as a tax) (Oakes 2011; Bailey, Compston & MacGill 2011)⁶¹.

On the other hand, many people *want* to change their lifestyles in order to reduce their contribution to GHG: for example, in reinventing its magazine to reduce campaign information in favour of a 'Green Home' section, the Australian Conservation Foundation responded to interest from its members who wanted to know what *they* can do to make a difference to the big environmental issues ACF tackles (ACF 2011). As shown in the case study for this thesis, even Greens members show much more interest in ways to reduce GHG from their own activities than in being actively involved in politics.

However, given the structural realities of our modern lifestyles and economy, it is argued here that it is simply not possible for changes at the individual and household level to result in sufficient GHG reduction to avert catastrophic climate change (Monbiot 2006; Kent 2009; Daley, Edis & Reichl 2011). Governments must

⁶¹ The government, in response, states that its carbon policy is not aimed at transforming Australians' way of life; according to Climate Change minister Greg Combet, it is 'not a tax on consumers or households', who will be reimbursed for higher prices, but on large polluting companies, aimed at cutting pollution and driving investment in new technology (Kelly 2011). The Greens, who are represented on the Multi-Party Climate Change Committee, support this approach (Milne 2011a).

therefore act. In a democratic system, there must be enough political engagement from citizens for governments to feel that structural changes will be supported. This is why authors such as Luque (2005) insist that environmental citizenship consists, in the main, of public sphere activity and expression. As Luque points out, personal change in lifestyles and active pursuit of structural change are not incompatible, and may often be reinforcing, as seen in Seyfang's (2005) (also 2006) work on 'deep green' consumption, but he notes the danger of individualised consumption actions with no political connection. As Seyfang (2006) points out, however, there is no necessary link between a personal response to awareness of global conditions, through consumption decisions for example, and collective action (see also Kent 2009). This lack of a mechanism for ensuring that actions taken at the private sphere lead, eventually at least, to action in the public sphere, is a persistent conundrum for environmental citizenship theory.

7.2.4 Is public sphere action alone enough?

Is someone an environmental citizen if they act *only* in the public sphere, for example, by being active politically within the Greens party but not undertaking any private actions to reduce their contribution to GHG emissions? Such a person would be a traditional republican citizen, being involved in the public sphere to further what they regard as the common good. But if they then drive home in their four wheel drive car, fly overseas whenever they can, and eat a lot of imported food, are they an ecological citizen or, as Martinsson and Lundqvist (2010) would have it, a hypocrite?

Environmental citizenship is a citizenship of commitment (Nash & Lewis 2006) – such citizens internalise the need for humans to consider the environmental consequences of their actions (Connelly 2006), and environmental citizenship is a matter, above all, of changes in *attitude*, which should manifest in behaviour (Dobson and Bell 2006). As Anna points out, surely if someone is committed to certain beliefs, for example that climate change is upon us and we must urgently reduce GHG as the Green party espouses, those beliefs must infiltrate beyond their public persona to how they behave in other areas of life.

Of course, as discussed elsewhere, there are many barriers to sustainable practices, however it would be reasonable to expect that people concerned enough about climate change to be members of the Greens would be concerned enough to make, at least, the most obvious changes to their own consumption practices. To a large degree, the survey results fulfil this expectation; however, consistent with the studies discussed in Chapter Five, the majority of consumption changes by the

majority of respondents in response to climate change are the easiest and cheapest ones. As Monbiot (2006) notes, perhaps our lives in the West are simply too comfortable for people's awareness of the dire impacts of climate change to infiltrate beyond easy lifestyle changes. Nevertheless, a greater proportion of case study participants than those of other Australian studies had made costly or difficult changes to their consumption practices; and, of course, they have taken action through the most unusual public sphere response of all: political party membership.

7.2.5 Intersection of the public and private

The case study shows that the level at which the public sphere and consumption coincide, for most of the participants, is at the community level. This can be through participants carrying out their consumption activities at least partly as an example to others, to show it is possible to live well while reducing one's impact on the planet, or through involvement in community-based movements such as transition towns: activities such as setting up community gardens or swapping seeds produced in participants' own gardens take the private out into the public. Future research could interrogate the crossover between public and private spheres to illuminate the factors which make it most likely that ecological citizens would take serious action in both.

Public sphere involvement is also demonstrated by participants who simply discuss with others their views on climate change and what people can do to help mitigate it; at its most citizenly, and challenging (as expressed by Jack in his interview), these 'speech' situations involve drawing the connection between everyday actions and their often unexpected environmental impacts (Luque 2005). As noted by (Jackson 2004), questioning the cultural belief system on which our society is based may invite 'resounding punishment' (p. 376). Whether such activities are political is another question, concerning 'political space'.

7.3 Political space

One of the defining aspects of citizenship traditionally is that it exists inside a bounded polity: the nation-state. However, as discussed in Chapter Four, Dobson (2003) argues that basing the relationship between citizens in different countries on justice, rather than morality, leads to the creation of political space between them. It is not necessary for an actual polity to exist for these obligations of justice to apply to ecological citizens.

If, as argued by Hayward (2006a), Dobson's (2003) version of political space is a 'category error' (p. 438), how can the relations between citizens who are seeking to reduce their individual ecological footprints and unknown others with a lower footprint, be regarded as citizenly? Perhaps it is not necessary to modify traditional citizenship theory in this way in order to regard what these citizens are doing as an exercise of citizenship: they are acting *on what they believe* is their responsibility (Connelly 2006), out of their concern for the impact of climate change on the planet and on other people, present and future. As Dean (2001) argues, it is citizens' everyday understandings, and the relationships built up over time and through actions that are important in defining citizenship. However, as noted earlier, it is possible in theory for there to be a legitimate connection between purely private actions and the public sphere, in terms of reducing GHG emissions. In this sense perhaps it is not necessary to theorise about the political space in which such citizenly actions take place: arguably, if private, consumption, actions are undertaken out of a sense of responsibility to the collective and if there is a legitimate connection between those actions and the public sphere, then they are citizenly actions, taking place somewhere along Barry's (2006) continuum.

It is also argued here that community-based climate change actions such as setting up gardens, food co-operatives or car-sharing schemes are political, if and when the participants acknowledge the excessive ecological footprint involved in individualised consumption, especially of fossil fuels, and direct their activities towards redressing the global imbalance in people's GHG emissions. Even if they are not doing anything overtly political, like lobbying politicians, although that is also sometimes part of these community groups' activities, they are acting on a political obligation derived from their sense of justice. Regarded from a more traditional citizenship theory perspective, they are acting out of a concern for the common good, and there is a clear connection between their actions and the public sphere in which the common good is formed.

7.4 Motivation

As discussed in Chapter Four, the issue of what motivates people to take on the potentially onerous responsibilities of environmental citizenship and to act on them is one that has not been dealt with in any depth in the theoretical literature. In essence, environmental citizens are motivated by their desire to further the common good, which is closely associated with virtue by both Barry (2006) and Connelly (2006). Dobson (2003) argues that environmental citizens (that is, those who seek to make a

difference through traditional citizenly activities) are likely to be motivated by exposure to environmental harm, while Hay (2001) identifies a 'pre-rational' 'ecological impulse' as the basic motivation of environmental activists, arising from knowledge of environmental harm and a sense of innate connection between humans and other components of nature, which has particularly inspired environmentalists to strive for wilderness protection (pp. 2-4). Awareness of the kinds of environmental and social harm and their links to the global chain of production, distribution, consumption and waste disposal must surely be a first step towards being motivated to act as an environmental citizen of the kind that Dobson refers to as ecological citizenship, where responsibility for action is taken into the personal sphere. Dobson (2003) regards education as fundamental to developing ecological citizenship; it is also clear from many studies that a large proportion people with the highest levels of concern for the environment have higher than average educational qualifications, and this is true for the participants in this case study.

In Chapter Five it was argued that the factors identified by scholars such as Kolmuss & Agyeman (2002), Berglund & Matti (2006) and others who examine motivation for pro-environmental behaviour are also highly relevant to environmental citizenship, consisting as it does of action towards an ecologically sustainable society. These factors include an altruistic, universal value orientation; a level of knowledge that allows connections to be made between sometimes complex factors and events; the ability to experience emotional reactions to environmental harm; and the key factor of a strong internal locus of control, also identified as a sense of agency (see section 7.6).

The close connection between citizenship virtue and motivation has been identified (Beckman 2001; Connelly 2006), and it was argued in Chapter Five that environmental citizens could be motivated towards virtuous environmental behaviour by the feeling of satisfaction that comes with behaving in a virtuous manner; that is, acting in accordance with their commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society. Living a personally satisfying life has been shown empirically to be compatible with consciously limiting one's environmental impacts (Brown & Kasser 2005), while scholars such as Hamilton (2003) and Layard (2005) identify a sense of purpose or meaning in life as an important ingredient in people's level of satisfaction with their lives.

Against this background, questions on sense of purpose, hope and community engagement were included in the survey to begin exploring possible motivating

factors for individual action on climate change. The results,⁶² which show, for example, that 72.5 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that taking action on climate change gives them a sense of purpose, indicate that for the majority of respondents the senses of purpose, hope and community engagement are at least outcomes of their climate change action; it is possible that they could be motivating factors as well, however the survey design precluded such a finding. It was, however, a focus of the subsequent interviews.

As noted in Chapters Four and Five, environmental citizenship is generally regarded as involving a degree of sacrifice. In this study, most interviewees have made changes in their lives in response to climate change, some of them quite substantial changes; however none of the interviewees expressed any sense of burden or regret about the way they have taken on that responsibility, despite a couple of them pointing out that they had felt socially isolated due to their views and practices. All participants expressed satisfaction with their lives, and, rather than being disillusioned or discouraged by their awareness of the way that many other people live without regard for their impacts on climate change or the environment, they are inspired to continue with their own practices.

Simon, for example, explained that owning a car is expensive and ‘a hassle’, and that it feels ‘real’ when

[you’re] carrying three kilograms of chick peas up the hill. It’s nice to see like ... when you go to [to the local wholefoods shop] with your container and you get it filled up and can carry it back up the hill, and it just feels like it’s more part of the cycle of life I guess, whereas in Woolworths or Coles, or that sort of stuff, you go to the shop end of the factory ...

Despite seeing individual action as ‘a drop in the ocean’ Sally will continue with her practices aimed at reducing her carbon footprint:

Yeah. It’s good fun. It’s got to be fun, and social. Most things I do are for social reasons actually.

Anna, by contrast, became quite emotional when talking about her motivations for reducing her carbon footprint:

A lot of our actions in Western society do end up having a dreadful impact on people in less developed countries, but flying has such a damaging effect on the environment that

⁶² See Figure A7 in Appendix Six.

you know that you're increasing the likelihood of people suffering from flooding in Bangladesh when the ice melts and stuff like that

She added that she cares equally about the natural environment – ‘the polar bears’ – and about other people.

Jack is also deeply motivated by what he sees happening to the planet, and his sense of responsibility towards it:

Watching what we're doing to the planet now is a bit like watching something burning on the stove; it's my instinct to go and turn it off. It just isn't right, so that's the first thing. I suppose the next thing is that I'm an old man now so I've seen the world change in my lifetime, like in one lifetime I've seen it go downhill. And I guess the other thing is about the intergenerational stuff ... I've got grandchildren ... there's a sense of responsibility there for looking after the place a bit better. There's also something about valuing this planet of ours, it's such a most unlikely thing, you know that something like this would be whizzing around in space, and yet here we are doing our best to bugger it right up, so there's something bizarre, quite odd about the way we are at the moment.

There are clearly motivating factors for environmental citizenship evident in the participants' responses: the connection they see between their own lives as privileged Western consumers and climate change with its social and environmental consequences, and their sense of personal responsibility and obligation are clear evidence of an altruistic, universal values orientation. Emotional involvement with the environment (Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002), in particular in the context of climate change and its additional social dimension, is evident in many of the participants' responses. A strong internal locus of control (Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002) or sense of agency (Macnaghten & Urry 1998), is strongly connected by those studies with pro-environmental behaviour; while not per se a motivating factor, it could be argued to be essential to the kind of ongoing commitment required to practise environmental citizenship in the context of sustainable consumption. Agency is discussed in section 7.6.

Does it matter though, what motivates citizens who undertake actions to reduce GHG emissions, or other environmental harm, as long as the actions are done? As Martinsson and Lundqvist (2010) found, a much higher percentage of respondents undertook ‘ecological practices’ without having corresponding beliefs – because they

thereby saved money – than those who did have such beliefs. At the same time, most of those who did have environmental attitudes had not changed their behaviour accordingly. However, the danger of relying on people who carry out certain practices without understanding or believing in the necessity of those practices for the environment, is that the same people could possibly be swayed towards other practices if they see the personal benefit in them, or stop the ecological practices if they no longer benefitted from them (Kolmuss & Agyeman 2002; Dobson 2003). If only a small proportion of the population believe in the necessity to reduce GHG emissions, and act to do so voluntarily, then government intervention is needed to ensure that those actions are taken by the whole of the society. Barry (2006) sees a clear role for government action in making the conditions possible for people to be environmental citizens. Clearly, environmental citizens have a major role in taking public sphere action to pressure such government responses.

Is there a connection between environmental citizenship and well-being? As noted above, many of the case study interview participants expressed a sense of satisfaction with their lives, especially with the aspects of their lives in which they have adopted certain practices in order to minimise or reduce their ecological footprints. Like the participants in Seyfang's (2006) study of an organic food co-operative, the interviewees seem to feel good about the action they have taken which fulfils what they regard as their responsibility, and it is obvious that they are motivated to continue making such changes at least in part by the satisfaction they have derived. This supports the argument above that environmental citizenship could in part be motivated by a desire to live a satisfying life. This is a crucial factor which many raised in the interviews: that it is possible, indeed even easier, to live happy, fully satisfying lives with a lower level of material consumption, and ecological footprint, than found in other Australian studies. Somehow this factor needs to become clear to the broader population, if they are to be induced to reduce their ecological footprints voluntarily, or to support the sort of government measures which are needed to reduce Australia's massive contribution to GHG emissions.

As noted throughout this thesis, however, it is not a simple matter to bring about such a move to a lower-consuming society; there are complex political, economic, social and cultural factors at work. Even if they do so from a more than average level of material security⁶³, a characteristic that needs more research to

⁶³ Although many participants had a lower than average income (perhaps related to the high proportion of retired and part-time workers in the sample), the case study participants had a higher than average level of home ownership: 34-35% of Australians owned their homes outright in 2006;

determine, environmental citizens have a major role in working out how to transform society along lines which will allow the whole population to feel secure in a lower-consuming lifestyle. The authors discussed in Chapter Three such as Princen, Maniates and Conca (2002b), Hamilton (2002) and Jackson (2009) lead the way in providing ideas for such a transformation.

While the case study has made a start, to examine the factors which may contribute towards these particular people having this sense of responsibility and acting on it to the extent that they do would require a much more in-depth study, looking into possible formative influences such as the values they were exposed to when growing up, exposure to environmental damage, the influence of the media and the extent and nature of their education (as per studies discussed in Chapter Five). Indeed, there is a significant body of research on factors which contribute to individuals' environmental beliefs and practices, and extensive analysis of the approaches taken there, and adapting them to the full range of environmental citizenly behaviours – personal, community and political – would be necessary to design a comprehensive study looking at psychological and social influences.

7.5 Individualisation

One of the criticisms of environmental citizenship theory discussed in Chapter Four was its complicity with the individualisation of responsibility for climate change action, in which individuals and households take on the responsibility for GHG reduction through their consumption decisions at the expense of collective action aimed at having governments respond. The case study questionnaire sought respondents' views on whether people in high-emitting countries should reduce their emissions more than those in low-emitting countries (over 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed), whether governments should take stronger action (97.5 percent agreed or strongly agreed), and, as noted in section 6.6, whether the respondents feel a sense of duty or moral obligation to reduce their carbon footprints (both over 90 percent).⁶⁴ As noted in section 6.8, only one respondent stated that it is the government's responsibility (and that of multi-national companies) rather than his own, to respond to climate change in the context of consumption. Clearly, then, the respondents rate their own responsibility to deal with climate change almost as strongly as governments'. In contrast, while the majority of respondents to other relevant Australian surveys feel that they should be making changes at the individual

of the interview participants, 11 out of 13 owned their own homes outright, however this could reflect the age of the sample (Kryger 2009).

⁶⁴ See Appendix Six, figure A7, for graphic presentation of the results.

level, the greater level of responsibility for climate change action rests with government. For example 84 percent of respondents to The Climate Institute's (2008) survey believed that the government should be making either large or very large changes, compared to only 43 percent indicating that individuals also share this level of responsibility (TCI 2008).

The issue was broached in the interviews through a discussion of the relative importance the participants place on their personal and political responses to climate change. Most of the interviewees consider that in their own lives, their private and political responses are equally important, though a couple were definitely of the opinion that political involvement is more important on the whole. For example, Michelle values the example she can provide for young people, like her nieces, nephews and their friends, with the way she has maintained the original 1950s condition of her house through using second-hand furnishings and appliances. However, she realises that it is only through participation in the political system that substantial changes, for example putting in a light rail system, can happen. Her form of participation is to make donations so that those who are able to take on these tasks, the Greens representatives, can work towards such changes.

Sally sees taking action on climate change as a personal, but especially a community responsibility, because

ultimately individuals taking action ... isn't really going to make much difference. ... So I think there's a whole lot of really important changes and factors that need to happen. But there is no reason for me to be a part of the problem.

To Donna, as noted above, change must come at the political and economic level:

I think what's going on is there's a lot of tokenism, tinkering around the edges, there's a lot of little things that it's better to do them than not to do them ... but nevertheless the entire way in which our economy is set up is still basically driving straight towards the cliff with your foot flat to the floor, in terms of the environmental consequences.

Others believe that personal and political action are equally important. As Alex says,

I think they're both important, but not everybody is good at being a political advocate. Also when you become publicly involved in something like that then you will probably end up being faced with compromise to actually make progress.

A couple though, felt that their individual and household actions to reduce their carbon footprints had greater impact than their political involvement. To Anna,

I think it's important to have the personal impact and be part of the bigger thing, so they are both important. I think your personal lifestyle is probably more important. ...I think it is important to lead by example particularly as I'm a teacher and mother and have an influence on young people.

Considering that for all participants, except Simon, involvement in the Greens is restricted to membership plus donations and/or volunteering at election times, it is perhaps understandable that they put less value on their political involvement than their private activities. However, the overwhelming sense from the interviews was that on the whole it is vital that the Greens continue to work within the political system, and that through their Greens membership, donations and occasional volunteering, the participants are able to make a contribution to this work.

The case study participants are unusual for their strong sense of personal responsibility: they believe that action must be taken at the personal as well as at the political level. And the respondents *are* taking this action: through their Greens membership, but also through their consumption decisions, their community and broader political involvement.

7.7 Agency

As Kenny (2004) puts it 'active citizens are agents of their life chances and the development of society as a whole' (p. 73). However, many people feel disempowered by the overwhelming nature of the institutional forces, political and economic, which are responsible for environmental degradation, so they do not have a sense of their own agency or 'sense of power to effect change' regarding environmental matters (Macnaghten & Urry 1998, p. 238).

Arguably, a sense of agency is a necessary component for the kind of ongoing commitment to an ecologically sustainable society possessed, and acted upon, by environmental citizens. The case study respondents exhibit agency through the extent of the actions they take to reduce their carbon footprints and also, to a lesser extent, their actions in the community and political arenas. This is in stark contrast to the participants in the attitude-behaviour gap studies discussed in Chapter Five, where, despite their awareness of environmental problems such as climate change, few

respondents were active at the personal level, the level at which most studies were directed.

The very fact of joining a political party indicates an interest in and commitment to the political process; it is therefore interesting that the majority of case study participants are not active members, perhaps indicating a degree of disempowerment, a lack of agency within the formal political context. The tendency noted among the interviewees only to be active when they can carry out simple tasks at election time could be cause for concern in an organisation that developed out of environmental direct action and political activism, as discussed in Chapter One. With regard to environmental activist groups themselves, Tranter (2010) found that 15 percent of members of protest-based groups identified themselves as 'active members', compared to 46 percent of members of non-protest groups⁶⁵. While specifically related to increased activism in response to climate change, the results of the survey conducted for this thesis found that a much higher percentage of respondents than in Tranter's study have increased their involvement in the Greens (34.9 percent), or in an environment group (38.8 percent) in the last five years, indicating that this group of people are much more active participants than members of politically oriented environment groups in general. Nevertheless, it should be noted that only one out of the 13 interview participants (around seven percent) had been involved at the party branch level in recent years rather than only carrying out tasks at election time.

In terms of the 'attitude (or values)-behaviour gap', most of the interviewees exhibit less of a gap with respect to their private than their public activities; that is, they are more engaged with respect to responses at the personal than the political level. A number of the interviewees also expressed a strong sense of belief that what they did at the personal level makes a difference publicly, that is, to the level of GHG and also as an example to others. McNaghten and Urrey (1998), by contrast, point to the lack of agency shown by their respondents – not members of environment groups or the Greens – in the face of the overwhelming forces perpetuating environmental problems.

There are obviously factors at work that distinguish the Greens members from many, if not the majority, of other people in terms of their belief in their own ability to make a difference, through personal actions at least. These would arguably be the kinds of factors pointed out by Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002 relating to background,

⁶⁵ In the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes 2007, which Tranter (2010) analyses, 'protest oriented' groups were identified as 'e.g. Wilderness Society, Greenpeace etc.' and 'non-protest oriented' groups as 'e.g. Landcare, Bushcare, etc.' (p. 418).

values and demographic factors such as education, that narrow the attitude-behaviour gap. The case study for this thesis made a start in looking at these factors, finding, for example, that the respondents have a much higher level of education (33 percent with postgraduate qualifications) than the broader Australian population. More detailed examination of the statistical results could further elucidate factors that lead to such a strong sense of agency. Luque (2005) regards knowledge, and the ability and aptitude to seek it out, as one of the keys to environmental citizenship; similarly Dobson (2003) sees education as crucial to putting ecological citizenship into practice. It should be noted, however, that while they have a much higher level of education overall than the Australian population, there was no association found in the case study between university education and changes to consumption practices; in fact, though not statistically significant, the results generally found a slightly larger association between non-university education and changes to consumption. While some studies have found higher income and changed consumption practices to be related, such a relationship was not found to exist for the case study sample⁶⁶. Further analysis would need to be conducted to validate these results and to extend the enquiry to activities in the public sphere.

Macnaghten (2003) found that people are much more engaged around global environmental issues where they can see a connection with their own lives, their families or their localities. As discussed in Chapter One, although the level of political awareness and activity around climate change has dropped since its height in 2007-8 (The Climate Institute 2007, 2008, 2009b, 2010), there has been a rush by householders to install government-subsidised renewable energy technology (Vincent 2010). A sense of agency, then, is perhaps much more readily felt and acted upon at the personal level in the face of global issues like climate change than at the political level, which is much more remote from people's daily lives. Although they have taken the step of joining a political party, it is likely that this observation applies to the case study respondents as well. It is also reasonable to assume that the community level is much closer to participants' everyday lives, and they are therefore able to more easily see both the ways in which they can be meaningfully active at that level and the results of such action, than at the formal political level.

People may be responding to climate change through personal changes rather than overt political action, simply because they are simply more interested in what they can do in their own lives. As a number of the interviewees noted, they have no

⁶⁶ As shown in Figures A12-A13, Appendix Six, respondents in the middle income group were more likely to have made consumption changes than those in the highest group.

interest in the political process itself; they are Greens members simply to support those who are active politically and to have their views represented. As Kymlica and Norman (1995) point out in response to arguments that people have become increasingly disempowered and disengaged from the political system, most people in advanced liberal democracies have richer personal and social lives than ever before, making political involvement less attractive. As noted in Chapter Two, there is a wealth of ways in which citizenship can be expressed through civic involvement; it does not have to be through traditional civic or community groups (Smith 2002; Schudson 2006). Given the urgency with which climate change needs to be treated, however, the increase in GHG emissions during years of voluntaristic policy responses in Australia and elsewhere since the neo-liberal ascendancy is a cause for significant concern (Kent 2009; Crowley 2011). Nevertheless, as Davison (in press) points out, noting the recent Australian obsession with renovation (see also Mackay 2007), it is at the level of the domestic that '[p]otentially overwhelming problems about climate change, the end of cheap fossil fuels and the availability of freshwater in the Earth's driest continent' resonate (p. 45). Individual and household consumption, therefore, are indeed important to the effort to reduce GHG emissions, if only because it is at this fundamental level that government policies best connect with citizens.

It could be argued that the case study respondents who are not active in the community or within the Greens party have delegated their political involvement to the party itself and that they are not acting as true ecological citizens, that is, in both the private and the public spheres. However it must be borne in mind that these respondents have expressed their environmental and other views and concerns through joining the Greens party, while 99 percent of the Australian population are not members of any political party (ABS 2010). What is it, then, that makes Greens members, and environmental citizens generally, so different? There have been few attempts to identify psychological, social and socio-demographic factors that set such citizens apart: there is a need to combine qualitative studies of environmental citizenship in practice with analysis of such factors. A start was made with the case study for this thesis, however as this study suggests there is a need for more in-depth analysis in future studies.

As shown in the survey results, there are numerous obstacles to respondents increasing active party membership, the most prevalent being time and capacity for further involvement. With regard to the lack of community involvement of many of the respondents, the survey found that the main barriers were lack of opportunity and a preference for the individual or household as the site for the particular activity.

These two reasons for non-participation show a balance among the respondents between a desire for community involvement and a satisfaction with current, individualised, patterns. With respect to the interview participants, however, there was a clear preference for community engagement over political activity, and for personal and household activity above either.

7.8 Conclusions

At heart, the question of whether or not environmental citizenship theory is meaningful in the context of modern politics is, in the case of climate change politics at least, a debate about whether citizens must act politically in order to have any impact on climate change. Is the extension of citizenly action to the private sphere a legitimate one?

The case study participants, members of the Tasmanian Greens party, were found to be environmental citizens on the basis of their awareness of the global environmental and social impacts of high-consuming Western lifestyles and their commitment to redressing that impact. These citizens regard their political activities as at least equally important as their private sphere, consumption-related, activities, but in reality most seem to put more emphasis on, and more effort into, their responses to climate change through their private sphere activities. Many are also more engaged at the community than at the formal political level. Analysis of the case study results showed clear evidence of motivating factors found in studies of pro-environmental behaviour, such as an altruistic, universal values motivation, emotional involvement and a sense of agency. These factors are highly relevant to environmental citizenship as well, and, while environmental citizenship is broader than pro-environmental behaviour, which focuses on the private sphere, it is argued here that the theory would benefit from the consideration of motivation and formative influences that is found in psycho-sociological studies.

Given that environmental citizenship, in the context of climate change, aims at reducing GHG so that catastrophic climate change is averted, and it is simply not feasible for that to be achieved through private sphere action alone, environmental citizenship must involve acting in the public sphere in order to change the conditions which make our society so GHG emissions-intensive. Without public pressure democratic governments would not have reached the stage of international agreement or national measures taken so far, inadequate though they are in many cases, and it is only with continued public pressure that future policy changes will be made. Public sphere action is a broad concept, including local community actions, the workplace,

easy political actions such as attending protests, or much more intense political activity like running as a candidate for election or co-ordinating a campaign to influence politicians. Environmental citizenship consists of the whole gamut of public sphere actions aimed at protecting the environment in which humans live.

Sustainable consumption is extremely difficult to achieve in the current political/economic system which is driven by economic growth and consumerism; it is therefore necessary for environmental citizens to lead the way by consuming sustainably as much as possible themselves, while working in the public sphere for political, economic and social change. There are many nodes along the continuum of citizenship action (Barry 2006) where people concerned about climate change may act: not everyone is able to participate fully in the public sphere, and so extending citizenship action to include changing consumption to reduce GHG gives meaning to the efforts of the many people who are concerned about climate change but are unable or unwilling to act politically. It is also at this everyday level that programs mean the most to individuals and households (Macnaghten 2003), so giving legitimacy to private sphere actions will help prepare the ground for a future in which consumption is a much lower contributor to total GHG emissions. In order for governments to make these changes, though, it is essential for climate change action to be taken at the community and more formal political levels as well.

As Dobson (2000) notes, some of the main themes of eco-political theory – reviving the public sphere, a commitment to public participation and ‘the sense that individuals can make a difference’ (p. 40) – are citizenship-sounding themes. These three themes have been central to the theoretical and empirical work undertaken in this thesis. The definition of environmental citizenship proposed in Chapter Four, ‘acting on a commitment to ensuring an ecologically sustainable society’, to be used to guide the thesis’ empirical work, is appropriate because environmental citizenship consists of action, and it is because of their commitment to the environment that people act. In its simplicity it does not specify where or how that action must take place: this thesis has found that environmental citizenship in the context of climate change takes place at many levels and in many situations, from everyday activities like gardening, shopping and conversing, to involvement in community transition initiatives and political campaigning.

Tentative findings were made about factors which may enable connections to be made between the private and public spheres of environmental citizenly action: emotional reactions that motivate people to connect private activities such as shopping with their political beliefs; community-based action in areas such as food

and transport which bring private actions out into the public; knowledge about the global environmental and social impacts of high GHG emissions combined with a sense of commitment and the agency to do something about it; the sense of satisfaction and meaning in life that comes to many who make that connection and take that action, including reducing their ecological footprints; and the link sometimes found between global environmental harm like climate change and people's own lives, which enables them to connect the local with the global. While there is still theoretical work to be done on how private actions are connected with the collective, these are all factors and mechanisms found in empirical studies, including this case study, that can provide a basis for such consideration.

It is important that the theory be broadened by incorporating findings and analysis from the pro-environmental behaviour and sustainable consumption literature, as has been done in this thesis. Such consideration lends a sense of reality to the largely theoretical basis of environmental citizenship. It leads to the conclusion that environmental citizenship is a useful theoretical model for citizen action on climate change. This thesis has found that people at different stages of their lives may engage in different expressions of environmental citizenship; a few people are able to engage in all of them. In this sense, environmental citizenship is like citizenship per se, which, as described in Chapter Two, takes place in something more like a matrix than a continuum. However, given the internal motivational and external structural barriers from the economic, political and social context in which such citizen actions take place, at this stage lifestyles of most citizens in wealthy industrialised countries are just too comfortable for them to take far-reaching citizenly action in all spheres – private, community and political – to ensure that climate change does not become catastrophic.

Chapter Eight Conclusion

8.1 Summary of thesis

The argument for serious action on climate change at the international and national levels has been mounting for at least three decades, and has reached the stage that if effective action is not taken soon damaging changes in the climate will be unavoidable and irreversible; some say this stage has already been reached. Yet at the international and, in many cases, national level, governments have been slow to arrive at the kinds of effective, far-reaching policies needed to significantly reduce GHG emissions.

The idea for this thesis came from awareness of the stark contradiction between the urgent need for serious climate change action and the continuation of a high-consuming, fossil fuel dependent way of life in advanced liberal democracies like Australia. To investigate this contradiction and the apparent reluctance, or inability, of governments to take effective action, the thesis examines broad social, political and economic factors contributing to climate change and constraining mitigating action. Using the theoretical lens of citizenship, and specifically environmental citizenship, the thesis goes beyond the realm of the state to examine the critical role of individuals; and goes further by using the relationship between climate change and over-consumption in advanced liberal democracies to ground-test environmental citizenship theory.

At the centre of the understanding of citizenship built up through Chapter Two is the struggle between private interest and public, or common, good (Riesenberg 1992), and this forms one of the central ideas of the thesis. Many theorists argue that the dominance of liberal over republican citizenship with the triumph of neo-liberal politics has seen the decline of active citizen engagement, with people pursuing their own interests as isolated, self-centred individuals and households (Janoski 1998; Salvaris 2000; Dagger 2002; Maniates 2002b). The involvement of citizens at any level of the community or political life is an essential part of the functioning of a democratic society; the corollary is passive citizenship in which citizens simply fulfil their legally defined duties while pursuing their own self-interest. Such citizens do not contribute to social or political change; it is thus essential that active citizens exist to ensure that the democratic political system does not stagnate.

While new forms of citizenship participation have developed in the last decade or so, such as signing electronic petitions (Huijser & Little 2008; Vromen 2008) or political consumerism (Micheletti 2003; Micheletti, Follesdal & Stolle 2004), these are

consistent with the individualisation of responsibility that has come with neo-liberalism. It remains to be seen whether such new forms of participation will be able to counteract the dominant focus on self-interest rather than public good. Barry (2006) offers the useful metaphor of a continuum from minimalist, passive notions of liberal citizenship to critical citizenship in which individuals examine the underlying social, political and economic factors behind issues and problems, and act accordingly. However, given the many ways in which citizenship can be exercised in modern liberal democracies – in different fields of political, economic and social life – the idea of a matrix of citizenship is introduced, to be revisited as the thesis progresses.

By now the focus of the thesis on the role and potential of active citizenship to counteract neo-liberal individualisation is clear. Chapter Three goes on to examine the role of Western over-consumption in climate change, and the political, economic and social forces that drive people to consume so much. Climate change is intimately connected with massively increased industrial production, especially since the mid-twentieth century, and the reliance of liberal-democratic governments on increasing economic growth and consumption. Much of the GHG-emitting production occurring in rapidly industrialising countries such as China and India, having shifted from advanced industrialised countries, is now destined for Western consumption. The chapter looks further at individualisation, finding that it has been fostered by liberal-democratic governments' focus on the sovereign consumer and the need to maintain consumer confidence, which is in turn integral to their reliance on continuing economic growth. It also finds that international, flowing down to national, sustainable consumption policy takes a technological, voluntaristic approach, which is consistent with maintaining economic growth and high consumption levels. The alternative approach – examining new concepts of wealth and prosperity that are less dependent on resource exploitation, while maintaining high living standards – has largely been ignored by liberal-democratic governments. However, although GHG emissions in advanced industrialised countries overall have fallen in recent years, the thesis notes arguments that the mainstream, weak, approach, and the related 'myth' of 'decoupling' economic growth from environmental harm have proven incapable of producing the kind of GHG emissions necessary to abate climate change (Christensen 2007; Jackson 2009; Naess & Hoyer 2009).

Despite their rhetoric of the need to reduce GHG emissions, liberal-democratic governments are caught in a bind, especially those with fossil fuel reliant economies and/or short election cycles: Australia has both. It is very difficult for such governments to introduce measures that could be perceived by citizens as threatening

their economic security and well-being (Alperovitz, Williamson & Campbell 2000; Hobson 2003; de Geus 2004) through job losses in fossil fuel dependent industries and increased prices; and also to withstand the pressure from vested interests like fossil fuel based industries (Curran 2009; Crowley 2011). The thesis argues, and concludes, that without strong support from citizens (voters) such 'courageous' political action risks electoral loss. This dilemma is graphically illustrated in Australia, with successive governments' reluctance to introduce bona fide reforms aimed at significantly cutting GHG emissions, and the steep decline in popularity of the current minority government after its announcement of its carbon price policy (ABC News 2011b). Recognition of just such a conundrum leads the thesis to an examination of environmental citizenship and its relationship to sustainable consumption.

Environmental citizenship is clearly concerned with citizens' role in influencing governments to change environmental policy, but it extends much further, to the intersection of private interest, and practices, with the public good. Chapter Four examines environmental citizenship theory in detail, finding that it advances traditional citizenship theory in a number of ways, in particular the extension of citizenship beyond the territorially bounded state, through private sphere responsibility and action. Environmental citizenship theory is normative and based on commitment: it aims to bring about a situation in which citizens act towards the environmental common good. The thesis finds that environmental citizenly action takes place in three dimensions: the political, the community and the personal or household. The theoretical literature provides vague and long-winded definitions of environmental (or ecological, sustainable or green) citizenship; in Chapter Four a simple, clear definition – 'acting on a commitment to ensuring a sustainable society' – was therefore adopted to guide the thesis' empirical work.

One of the most serious criticisms of environment citizenship theory is that by regarding purely private actions as citizenly, in effect legitimising the privatisation of responses that should be the responsibility of government, it potentially depoliticises serious environmental issues like climate change. At the same time citizens are given leave to take actions that are consistent with their own self-interest at the expense of public, political action to deal with the structural political and economic issues that perpetuate the problems. There are also many barriers to environmental citizenship and consuming more sustainably, most of which relate back to modern liberal democracies' economic and political reliance on growth and consumption, with the associated rise in social and psychological dependence on consumerism.

There are no easy answers to these issues. Theorists like Dobson (2003) and Barry (2006) point out the need for citizens to identify the connection between their own everyday actions, those of their society, and their environmental consequences; and to take action accordingly. However, theoretical approaches do not show how such connections can be made, other than through education, which is a long-term prospect and an uncertain one at that. As the main theorists point out, the reality of environmental citizenship and its potential to bring about change can only be properly demonstrated through empirical studies, such as is attempted here.

Chapter Five introduces the concept of the 'citizen-consumer', to bring it within the examination of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption, something which is rarely done in the theoretical literature. Again, there are complex issues involved in the use of consumption decisions to bring about political, including environmental, change. While there have clearly been very successful citizen-consumption campaigns, in the case of climate change it is difficult to find a clear connection between consumption decisions and the expression of a political message. Individualised decisions by consumers in the attempt to 'do the right thing' – green consumerism – are part of the mainstream sustainable consumption, weak ecological modernisation approach (Hobson 2004; Seyfang, 2005) which arguably has not successfully reduced GHG emissions (Monbiot 2006; Christensen *et al.* 2007; Jackson 2009).

On the other hand, 'critical' consumption (Sassatelli 2006) involves citizens questioning production/consumption chains and examining the connections between their consumption decisions and the kinds of global environmental and social issues that find expression in climate change. It is therefore consistent with Dobson's (2003) ecological citizenship, Barry's (2006) 'critical' and sustainability citizenship, and the alternative approach to sustainable consumption (Seyfang 2005).

The chapter also introduces the concept of the 'attitude-(or values) behaviour gap' (Kollmuss & Agyeman 2002), which is then added to the theoretical themes identified in the thesis to develop a new framework for analysis of empirical studies of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption. Perhaps the central theme to emerge is that environmental citizens have a much greater appreciation of the connection between their own, and their societies', actions – between the local and the global – than other citizens, and they have the will and the ability to act on their commitment to the environmental common good. Many factors are considered that could contribute to these citizens' awareness and commitment, and sense of agency, that is, that their actions can make a difference.

On the other hand, it is the political-economic system as a whole that perpetuates both environmental damage and the way most citizens live and contribute to it, leading to a sense of futility that many people feel in relation to overwhelming global environmental problems (Macnaghten & Urry 1998). Somehow environmental citizens are able to transcend these limitations, to varying degrees; a range of factors contributing to their ability to act has been identified, including education, stage of life, for example not working full-time, and access to the types of facilities and structures that enable a lower ecological footprint, like public transport or bicycle paths. It is clear, though, that there must be other factors that contribute to the motivation and awareness of environmental citizens. The chapter finds that factors identified in the literature on pro-environmental behaviour, in particular on values orientation and formative influences, could very usefully be applied to environmental citizenship, although it is a broader concept. Education is identified in most studies as potentially leading to environmental values and action; however studies are inconclusive on other factors. One important finding is that people are more engaged and willing to act on local than global environmental issues, but when a connection is made between impacts on their everyday lives and broader environmental issues, a sense of awareness and potential agency begins to develop (Macnaghten 2003; Rathzell & Uzzell 2009).

Chapter Six introduces the case study of Tasmanian Greens members. After concluding on the basis of a threshold examination at the macro, values, level that the group does indeed consist of environmental citizens, it presents results on consumption and analyses them in the light of relevant theoretical considerations. It finds that these environmental citizens are very much aware of the links between the personal and political, and global imbalances in ecological footprints; and take a range of consumption-based actions that limit their GHG emissions. Like the environmental citizens in other studies, the participants are not unaffected by the economic, social and cultural barriers to environmentally responsible behaviour. However the case study found that, to a much greater degree than those in other Australian studies, participants have overcome problems of inconvenience and expense that limit other citizens' involvement in consumption-related action on climate change.

Chapter Seven continues to present the case study results, and brings in further theoretical analysis. It finds that the participants are committed to action in all three dimensions of environmental citizenship action – personal, community and political, and that to the extent that comparisons are possible, they are also much more involved than the participants in other Australian studies in community-based,

and certainly political, climate change action. The results resoundingly confirm the importance to environmental citizenship of action across all three dimensions, and that the engagement of these citizens in private sphere actions has not diminished in any way the value they see in their public sphere involvement. The chapter does find, however, that even these committed environmental citizens are more attracted to personal and household action, and to a lesser extent community action, than on becoming involved in politics beyond their Greens membership and occasional volunteering.

The chapter finds that a central characteristic of environmental citizens is their awareness of the complex chains of responsibility linking their own actions, and those of their broader society, with global environmental and social problems like climate change. Somehow these citizens are able to transcend many of the barriers to environmental behaviour that exist in advanced capitalist democracies like Australia, and to transform their awareness to a commitment to action in both the private and public spheres. Key motivating factors identified in the empirical studies in Chapter Five, such as an altruistic, universal values orientation, knowledge from a high level of education, and emotional involvement in environmental issues were found among participants. It was suggested in Chapter Five that the sense of satisfaction and meaning in life derived from acting, virtuously, on a commitment to living more sustainably could be an important motivating factor for environmental citizenship. Such a sense of satisfaction and well-being was found among interview participants, at least to the extent that it motivated their continuing actions, and survey respondents identified climate change action with a sense of meaning or purpose in their life, leading to the important conclusion that there is a connection between environmental citizenship and well-being.

However, importantly, it was found that among the participants a sense of agency, of effectiveness and engagement, is more likely to be found at the level of household, consumption-based than political action, with community involvement providing a fertile ground for bringing the personal out into the public. Like studies finding that citizens can relate much more clearly with environmental problems manifesting locally, the thesis finds that despite the dangers of perpetuating the individualised neo-liberal approach to citizenship responsibility, it is at the level of the everyday – the level that people understand, relate to and have the time for – that climate change action must be focused and facilitated.

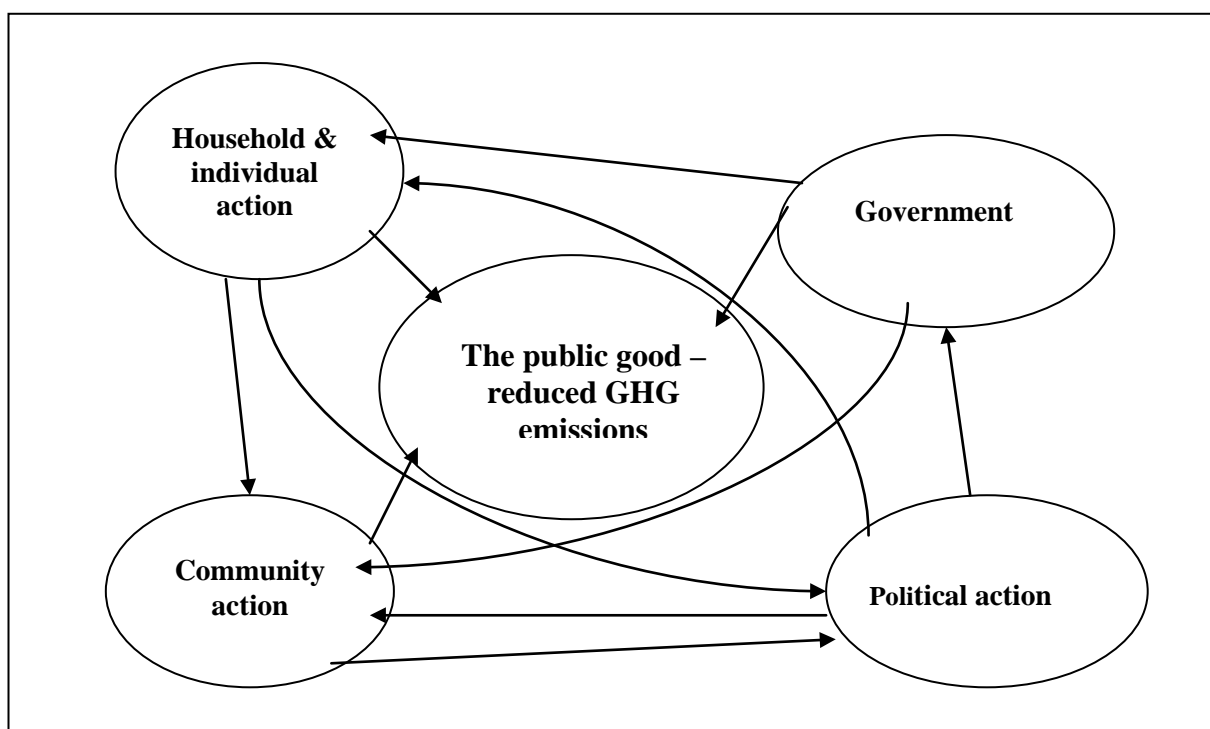
A number of factors or mechanisms connecting personal action with the public sphere were found from the empirical examination in Chapters Five to Seven:

knowledge, and an emotional reaction to that knowledge, of the global environmental and social impacts from the lifestyles of citizens in wealthy industrialised countries; community-based activities that bring private concerns and activities, such as those around food, out into the public; and the identification of environmental impacts, specifically from climate change, on citizens' own lives enabling them to connect the global with the local. However further work is needed to incorporate these connecting mechanisms into environmental citizenship theory.

8.2 Major findings and conclusion

Environmental citizenly action may be private, consumption-based; it may take the form of a conversation or some action within a community, whether local, work or school-based; or it could be political action, aimed at pressuring government policy change. Each of these areas of action may also interact: awareness of the impacts of private consumption decisions could lead a citizen to join a community garden or an organic co-operative, or towards overtly political action such as joining the Greens party. A group of citizens may become aware of their suburb's lack of public transport and form a community group to car share but also to lobby government for better services. Government action, inspired by political pressure from environmental citizens, could be aimed directly at GHG reduction through, for example, regulatory or economic measures such as a carbon tax, or could feed back into community or household action through grants schemes.

As shown notionally in Figure 5, connections can be made between the three dimensions in which environmental citizens are active: personal, community and political; and all actions are directed towards the common environmental good – mitigating climate change by reducing GHG emissions. Environmental citizenship is central to them all. While the *degree* to which a person becomes involved in citizenly action, therefore, can be located on a continuum, the form which environmental citizenship takes is more of a matrix; it is free-flowing, with many connections and influences. As Seyfang (2006) points out, there is no *necessary* connection between private citizenly action and broader community or political action, although a number of connecting mechanisms were found in the thesis, as noted above. While private, consumption-based, actions can contribute to GHG reduction, the urgency of the climate change situation is such that isolated actions by individuals and households are not enough.

Figure 5: The many connections and influences of environmental citizens

The empirical findings of the thesis did not support the criticism of environmental citizenship theory that it condones or facilitates the individualisation of citizen responsibility; the participants believe that action at all three levels are important, and are involved in them all. Their strong involvement in private sphere activities has not detracted from their commitment to political actions to mitigate climate change. Nevertheless, it is at the household level that citizens, even environmental citizens like Tasmanian Greens members, are likely to be most interested in change, and it is at that level that governments are most likely to be able to direct relevant programs to citizens. So, while it may be true that voluntary household behaviour change directs citizens' attention away from political action to change the structural factors that cause problems like climate change in the first place, the theoretical and empirical research undertaken for this thesis indicates that – because modern liberal-democracies have become so individualised – most citizens are unlikely to take part in active community and political engagement around climate change.

It is essential therefore that there are environmental citizens at the far – politically active – end of Barry's (2006) continuum, who *do* question the status quo and put pressure on governments to bring in both regulatory or market-based (involuntary) measures as well as voluntary household and community programs. It is possible that citizens who take the lead on issues like climate change may develop

their awareness through programs promoting consumption changes. However, there must be some catalyst or factor which motivates such citizens to go further than the kinds of domestic actions promoted by governments and NGOs.

Adopting concepts and findings from the pro-environmental behaviour research, the thesis finds that the case study's environmental citizens are motivated by an altruistic, universal values orientation and their knowledge of and reaction to global environmental harm and its link with high-consuming Western lifestyles, coupled with a crucial sense of agency. The thesis confirms the findings of other studies that education is an important factor contributing to motivation for environmental citizenship; it also suggests that the sense of satisfaction and well-being gained through living in a way that consciously reduces ecological impacts can itself be a motivating factor, and asserts the connection between well-being and environmental citizenship.

The thesis finds, along with Barry (2006), that the state has a legitimate, and important, role in helping to sow the seeds for environmental citizenship. In order for governments to be able to introduce lasting measures aimed at reducing GHG emissions – measures which could be portrayed as detrimental to citizens' short-term economic interests – it is essential that citizens are able to understand and accept such measures. Through educational, community-based and household programs, for example, governments can encourage the development of environmental citizenly attitudes and behaviour.

However, in liberal democracies, governments must be made aware of the need for such measures before they will act: herein lies the critical role of radical environmental citizens. Through their own awareness of the political-economic causes of climate change and its relationship to unsustainable consumption and global inequality, such citizens assume the responsibility to take personal, community-based and political action to ensure both their societies and their governments understand the imperative for action.

Perhaps the major contribution of this thesis to development of the theory is its incorporation of concepts and findings from the sustainable consumption and pro-environmental behaviour theoretical and empirical literature which has enabled a realistic and empirically based evaluation of environmental citizenship theory.

The thesis finds that while environmental citizenship is a useful theoretical framework for citizen action on climate change it is only highly motivated citizens who are able to transcend the barriers to citizenship action coming from the economic, political and social context in which they must take place and to take the

kinds of actions in the personal, community and public arenas required to ensure the necessary urgent abatement of climate change. The theory as it stands does not extend to providing a mechanism for broader citizen action, other than through the leadership provided by environmental citizens at the far, politically active, end of the environmental citizenship continuum.

8.3 Directions for further research

Both environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption are new and growing fields of research, and little work has been done in Australia beyond early theoretical research and some empirical studies focused on activists' campaigns, and on social capital (see Chapter One). While this thesis has made a start on redressing this gap with its empirical study, there are many questions and issues that could be addressed by further research in order to develop the full potential of environmental citizenship and sustainable consumption beyond the theoretical.

One of the major gaps in the research to date concerns the motivation for environmental citizenship, especially that which attempts to deal with major, but 'invisible' issues such as climate change. To carry out a comprehensive study of motivation for environmental citizenship would require a study akin to the psycho-sociological research that has contributed valuably to the research on pro-environmental behaviour. To flesh out findings on the connections between private and collective action the results of the present case study could be analysed in more detail to determine, for example, the factors that make it most likely for environmental citizens to take action in both public and private spheres, and in the community and formal political dimensions of the public sphere.

Research could also identify ways in which environmental citizenship can become more generalised; so that changed attitudes and behaviour become the norm rather than the province of a few especially aware citizens, and indeed how that may be occurring over time. This would not be research about how to spread a message, like 'social marketing', but would look at structural disincentives and barriers and at policy and practical measures to overcome them; and also at the factors that enable environmental citizens like the Tasmanian Greens members studied to develop such a strong sense of agency.

Research could also look at new forms of citizenship, such as electronic participation in environmental campaigns, investigating the effectiveness of such campaigns compared to traditional campaigning methods, and how such methods are placed in relation to arguments about declining citizen participation.

Lastly, there is a distinct lack of consistent and cohesive sustainable consumption policy in Australia; more inter-disciplinary research could usefully look into, for example, ways government policy can develop the 'alternative' pathway to sustainable consumption outlined in Agenda 21; the potential for community-based citizenship such as the Transition Towns movement and other means by which citizens attempt to contribute to more sustainable consumption across the board; and how government policy may be directed towards assisting such a transition.

8.4 Conclusion

In an evolving field of research, this thesis has identified, in environmental citizenship and its relationship with sustainable consumption, a solid framework for citizen action on climate change. It has identified some gaps in the theory and sought to resolve some of the disputed aspects within it, in particular concerning the potential individualisation of citizen responsibility due to its extension to the private sphere. Through interrogating the theory in practice it has provided an Australian contribution to the field of research on global concerns around unsustainable consumption, climate change and citizens' responses. It has begun the process of redressing the gaps in the theoretical research, in particular concerning the motivations for environmental citizenship. While it finds that environmental citizenship can provide a useful framework for citizen action on climate change, such action will only ultimately be successful if it includes political action to pressure governments to introduce regulatory and involuntary market-based changes, and to broaden public acceptance of such programs. Governments have an important role in facilitating such programs, and also community-based and household programs, with politically active environmental citizens involved in designing them. If such citizens can successfully influence governments to that extent, ultimately environmental citizens will be able to provide leadership to the broader public via their personal and community-based actions.

Climate change, however, must be addressed urgently, and, as political-economic realities prevail in liberal democracies, at least in Australia, such a vision is a long-term one.

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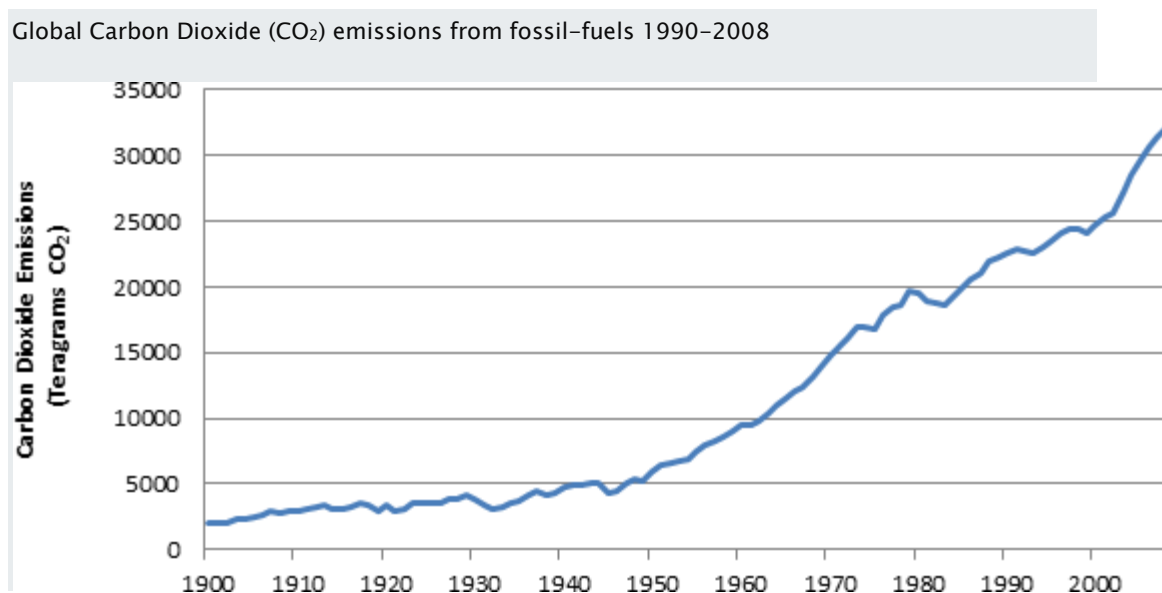
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Appendix One

Greenhouse gas emissions data

Figure A1. Trends in global emissions of carbon dioxide 1990-2008



Source: US Environment Protection Agency,
<http://epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/global.htm>
 Last updated 14 June 2012 viewed 10 July 2012

Source of data: Boden, T.A., G. Marland, and R.J. Andres (2010). Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO₂ Emissions. Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge, Tenn., U.S.A. doi 10.3334/CDIAC/00001_V2010.

Table A1. Global CO₂ emissions 2006-2010:

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
28,885.307	29,590.449	30,318.019	29,777.687	31,780.361

Source: US Energy Information Administration, International energy statistics
<http://www.eia.gov>

Table A2. Global greenhouse gas emissions per country (2010)

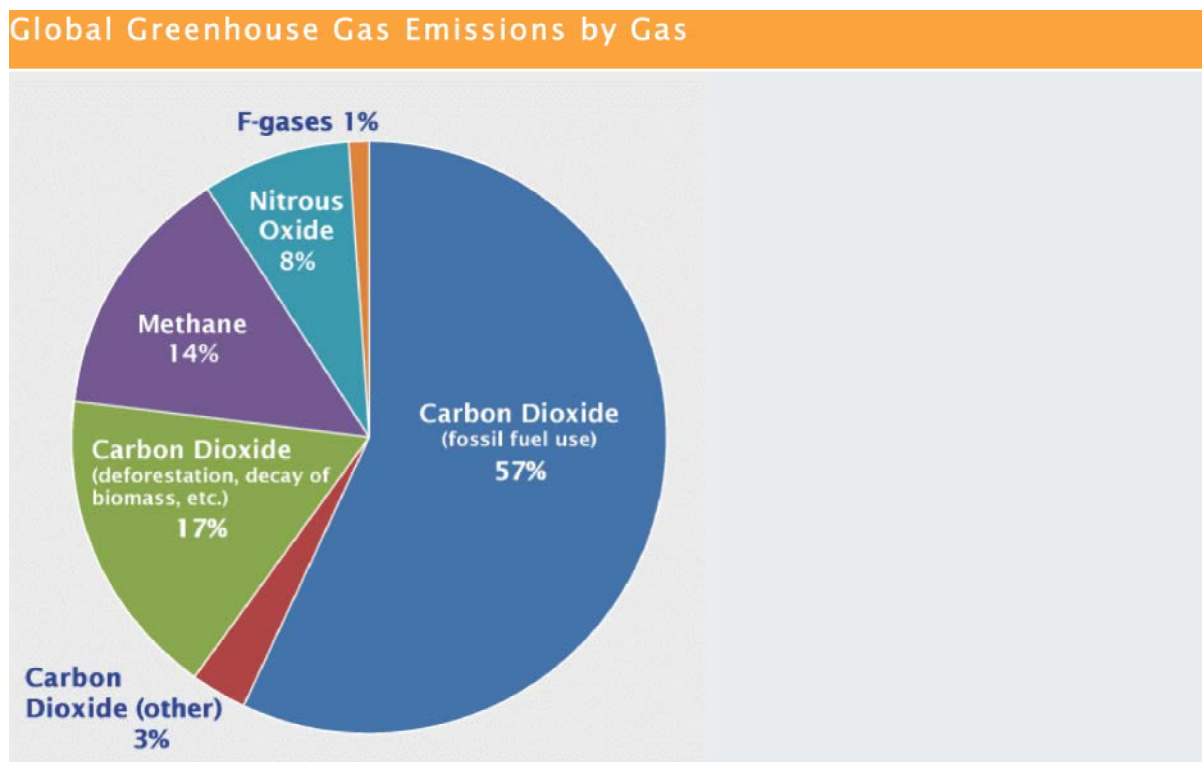
Co2 emissions from energy consumption* 2010 million tonnes (MT)	All greenhouse emissions** (MT)	Co2 emissions per capita, from energy consumption 2010* (tonnes)
1. China: 8,320.963 million tonnes (MT) or 25.4%	1. China: 7,216 MT or 16.4%	Gibraltar 135.319
2. US: 5,610.108 MT or 17.8%	2. US: 6,931 MT or 15.7%	Australia: 18.839
3. India: 1,695.623 MT or 5.3%	3. Brazil: 2,856 MT or 6.5%	Qatar 76.920
4. Russia: 1,633.804 MT or 5.2%	4. Indonesia: 2,046 MT or 4.6%	United States: 18.084
5. Japan: 1,164.466 MT or 3.6%	5. Russia: 2,028 MT or 4.6%	Russia: 11.721
6. Germany: 793.655 MT 2.5%	6. India: 1,870 MT or 4.2%	Germany: 9.645
7. Canada: 548.754 MT or 1.8%	7. Japan: 1,387 MT or 3.1%	UK: 8.504
8. South Korea: 578.973 MT or 1.7%	8. Germany: 793.655 MT or 2.3%	China: 6.256
9. Iran: 560.335 MT or 1.7%	9. Canada: 585.754 MT or 1.8%	India: 1.445
10. UK: 532.442 MT or 1.7%	10. Mexico: 696 MT or 1.6%	Africa average: 1.128
		world average 4.49 tonnes

Sources:

* Data from US Energy Information Administration, International energy statistics <http://www.eia.gov> Percentage and ranking information for CO2 emissions provided by Clark (2011) and Guardian (2012) based on US EIA 2009 data.

** Clark (2011) based on World Resources Institute latest data.

Figure A2. Global greenhouse gas emissions by source activity

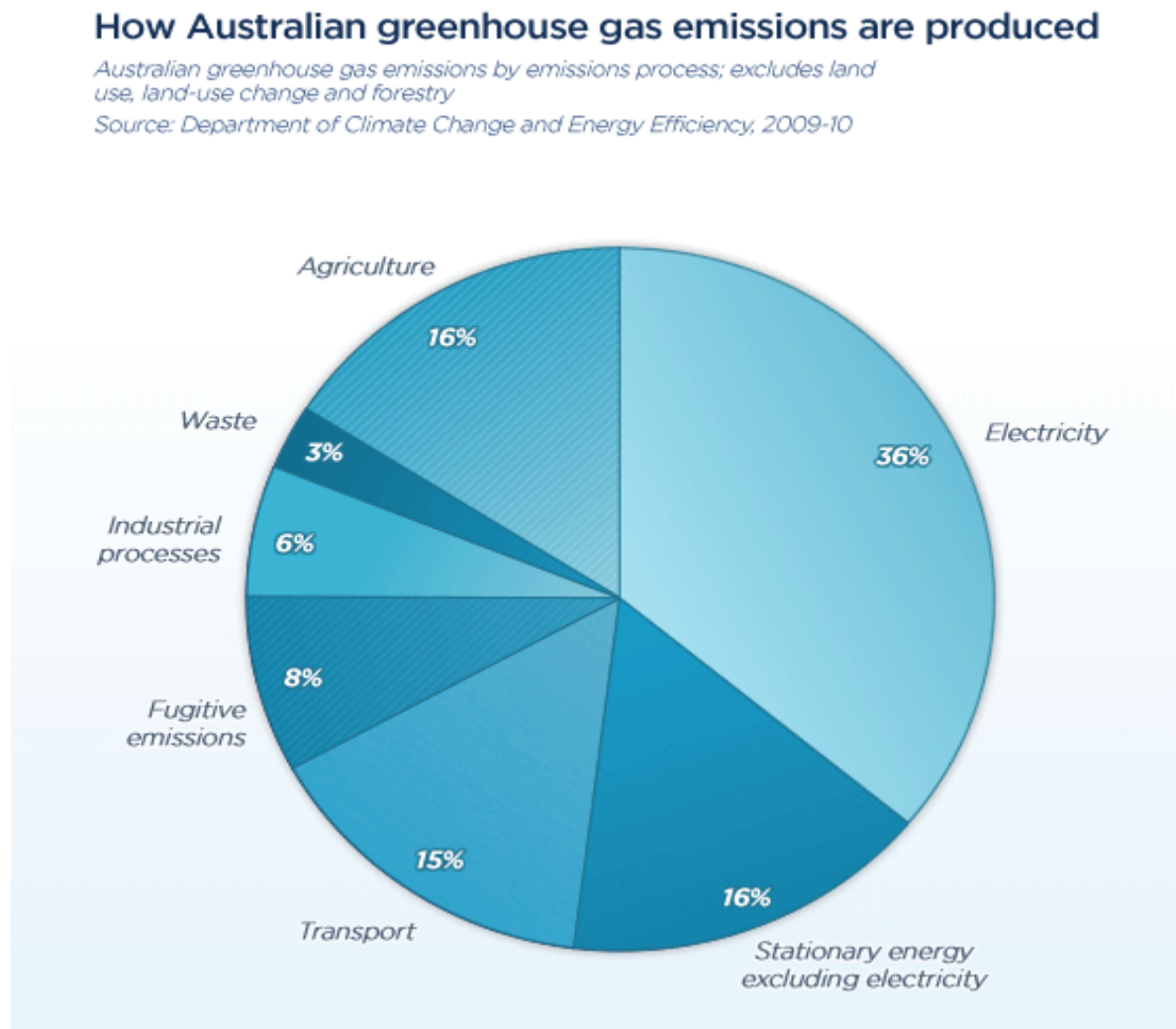


Source: [IPCC \(2007\)](#); based on global emissions from 2004. Details about the sources included in these estimates can be found in the [Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#).

Source: US Environment Protection Agency,
<http://epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/global.htm>
 2012

Last updated 14 June 2012 viewed 10 July 2012

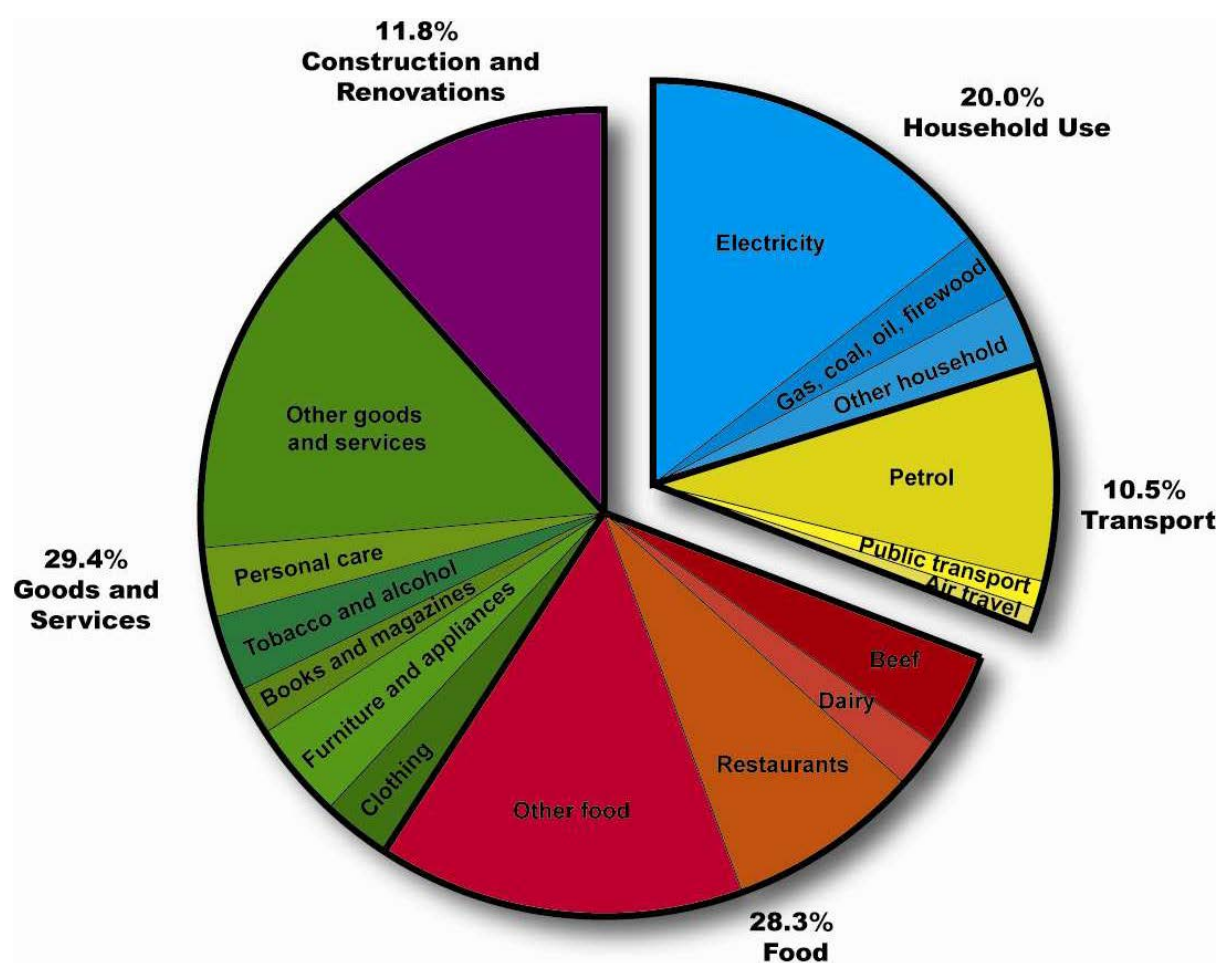
Figure A3. Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by emissions process (excludes land use, land use change and forestry)



Source: ABC News <http://www.abc.net.au/news/specials/climate-change/emissions/>

Viewed 10 July 2012

Based on data from Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency 2009-10

Figure A4. Average household profile: greenhouse gas production

Source: ACF, *Consuming Australia: Main Findings*, 2007, p. 5.

Appendix Two:

Charter of the Tasmanian Greens

Reflecting an awareness of the interrelatedness of all ecological, social and economic processes, the general principles of The Greens are to:

Ecology

- Ensure that human activity respects the integrity of ecosystems and does not impair biodiversity and the ecological resilience of life-supporting systems
- Encourage the development of a consciousness that respects the value of all life.

Democracy

- Increase opportunities for public participation in political, social and economic decision making
- Break down inequalities of wealth and power which inhibit participatory democracy.

Social Justice

- Eradicate poverty by developing initiatives that address the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty
- Provide affirmative action to eliminate discrimination based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, class, religion, disability, sexuality or membership of a minority group
- Introduce measures that redress the imbalance between rich and poor.

Peace

- Adopt and promote a non-violent resolution of conflict
- Develop an independent, non-aligned foreign policy
- Develop a self-reliant, defensive, non-nuclear defence policy.

An Ecologically Sustainable Economy

- Develop economic policies which will ensure greater resource and energy efficiency as well as development and use of environmentally sustainable technologies.
- Reduce dependence on non-renewable resources and ensure sustainable use of renewable resources
- Adopt more comprehensive social, environmental and technology assessment practices
- Facilitate socially and ecologically responsible investment

Meaningful Work

- Encourage, develop and assist work that is safe, fairly paid, socially useful, personally fulfilling and not harmful to the environment
- Encourage and facilitate more flexible work arrangements, on-going education, training and social welfare so that more people can engage in meaningful work.

Culture

- Respect and protect ethnic, religious and racial diversity
- Recognise the cultural requirements of the original Australians
- Assist in ensuring the achievements of Aboriginal land rights and self-determination.

Information

- Facilitate a free flow of information between citizens and all tiers of government
- Ensure that Australians have the benefit of a locally responsible, diverse, democratically controlled, independent mass media.

Global Responsibility

Promote equity between nations and peoples by:

- Facilitating fair trading relationships
- Providing for increased development assistance and concerted international action to abolish Third World debt
- Providing increased green technology transfer and skills to developing countries
- Opposing human rights abuses and political oppression
- Ensuring that Australia plays an active role in promoting peace and ecological sustainability.

Long-range Future Focus

- Avoid action which might risk long-term or irreversible damage to the environment
- Safeguard the planet's ecological resources on behalf of future generations.

Tasmanian Greens' Climate Change Policy

The Tasmanian Greens believe that rapidly increasing climate change is an undeniable fact. Based on reputable scientific measurements and mathematical modelling, we also assert that a significant contribution to that change is human-made.

We further believe that the human-made contribution to current climate change, if left unchecked, has the potential to make it irreversible. Humankind, however, has the capacity to avert catastrophic environmental damage before it nears any critical point of irreversibility. Despite being a global problem, it will be the concerted efforts at a regional and local level that reverse the human-made contribution to climate change.

Tasmania is well placed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to provide an example, nationally and internationally, of how climate change can be addressed, how its impact can be lessened, and how any necessary adaptation to it can provide economic and social advantages. Early action to reduce pollution will be less costly than delaying action, so any positive, early measures this state takes can be exported as intellectual property or technological skill.

For the Tasmanian Greens, these beliefs underpin every measure in every policy area upon which climate change impacts. Where climate change is not mentioned directly in a policy, it still forms the background against which all measures are proposed.

The Tasmanian Greens believe that Tasmania can become self-sustaining in clean energy and in food, and that the changes needed to achieve this can make us healthier, fitter people and help to build strong, vibrant communities.

Measures

Legislation and Regulation: create the ministerial portfolio of Minister for Climate Change; enact legislation that specifically addresses the issue of climate change in the areas of environment, planning, industry, finance, energy, transport, agriculture and waste; ensure that all future legislation in every policy area takes the impact on climate change into account; word all relevant regulation in a way that prepares citizens for the impact of climate change; direct the transition to a low carbon economy through regulatory mechanisms which reflect the real cost of greenhouse gas emissions; redirect incentives, subsidies and government support from research or development of fossil fuel energy projects towards projects which are low carbon emitting, energy efficient and utilise renewable and environmentally benign fuels; preference carbon efficient passenger and utility vehicles in government procurement policies

Energy: convert all energy, fuel and power supply to benign, renewable, low emission sources as a matter of priority; plan for net zero greenhouse gas emissions as soon as is feasible but no later than 2030 with a minimum of 40% reduction on the state's 1990 levels by 2020; subject all energy production and distribution projects to a planning assessment process that takes their environmental and social impacts into account; mandate that all future energy production projects are ecologically benign and sustainable; introduce strict minimum energy performance standards for all products, buildings and infrastructure; reverse the state's increasing demand for energy through demand management practices, and increased efficiency of production, supply, distribution and end use

Equity: distribute the cost of reducing emissions and adapting to climate change fairly between the state, citizens and business; negotiate with the federal government about the acceptance of those people displaced by climate change; address the social impacts of the transition to a low carbon economy

Business: introduce measures including gross feed-in tariffs to support prospective new renewable energy technologies; factor in the energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission levels of all businesses who tender for or supply products or services to the state government, state government projects, and local council initiatives; ensure that energy price subsidies are not used to attract or retain energy intensive or high emission industries; support and promote businesses that research or develop software or technology that reduces greenhouse gas emissions or combats climate change, especially where their intellectual property or technology is exportable; oppose the establishment of any fossil fuel-fired power station, new coal mine or the expansion of an existing mine; ensure that companies are financially responsible for the risks of greenhouse gas leakage; support the development of distribution networks for transitional and sustainable alternative fuels

Education: emphasise the consequences of climate change by its inclusion in science and social science curricula; increase community awareness of the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by publicising simple and cost-effective emission mitigation options; promote public education campaigns on the need to plan for future climate change.

Source: Tasmanian Greens www.tas.greens.org.au/ viewed 10 June 2012

Appendix Three Survey documents

1. Letter from Tasmanian Greens, including message from Senator Christine Milne (also sent out by email)



Dear Fellow Greens Member,

The Tasmanian Greens have agreed to allow Sharon Moore, a PhD student at the University of Tasmania, to survey members as part of her research. Please note: Sharon has no access to membership information as part of this research.

Senator Christine Milne has endorsed the survey; and has provided this message encouraging members to participate.

Dear fellow Greens member

As you know I live and breathe the need to take strong action on climate change and I am really proud of the way Greens across the country are working on the issue. But things are not changing as quickly as we would all like or as the planet needs. Even though the science is clear, it seems people need more than information to change their behaviour.

It has become obvious that we need to better understand what makes people change their ideas and responses so that we can design our campaigns and messages to be more persuasive. This is an area of research that has been neglected but is critical.

Sharon Moore is doing a PhD at the University of Tasmania addressing this problem. She has designed a questionnaire as part of her research and I would like to encourage you to participate by responding to the attached questionnaire. There is also the possibility of participating in a follow-up interview. If you have time, your involvement would be greatly appreciated.

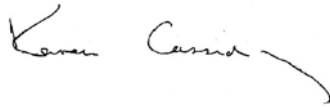
Hopefully it will make us all better campaigners and better environmental citizens.

Kindest regards,

Christine

Enclosed is an information sheet about the project and survey, and the survey itself. Sharon has asked that you return it by 28 August 2009, using the enclosed reply-paid envelope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen Cassidy", with a long, sweeping flourish extending from the end.

Karen Cassidy
(Party Manager)

2. Participant information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (B - paper questionnaire) SOCIAL SCIENCE/ HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Climate change and environmental citizenship: transition to a post-consumerist future? Phase one: survey.

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a research study into the views and experiences of Tasmanian Greens members concerning climate change, consumption and environmental citizenship.

The project is being conducted for the partial fulfillment of a PhD for Sharon Moore.

The study is being conducted by
Sharon Moore, PhD candidate, School of Government,
Associate Professor Kate Crowley, School of Government, and
Dr Bruce Tranter, Senior Lecturer, School of Sociology and Social Work.

1. 'What is the purpose of this study?'

The purpose is to investigate the kinds of personal, community and political actions taken by members of the Tasmanian Greens in response to climate change; and also their views on the relative importance of these kinds of actions. The study will be an important part of a PhD project which aims to evaluate the relevance of environmental citizenship theory to practical politics in Australia.

2. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'

All members of the Tasmanian Greens are being invited to participate in the study. This is because members of the Greens are considered to be people who are likely to have taken personal and/or political action in response to climate change and have views relevant to the issues the study examines.

4. 'What does this study involve?'

The study has two phases: a questionnaire (survey) and interviews.

(i) *The questionnaire (current) phase* involves completing a questionnaire. All responses to the questionnaire will be anonymous; you will not be able to be identified from your response to the survey. However, you will be invited on a separate form at the end of the questionnaire to provide your contact details if you wish to be contacted about participating in the interview phase of the study (see (ii) below). Contact details forms will be separated from the survey responses as soon as they are received. All data will be stored in a designated secure data storage area at the School of Government, (University of Tasmania, Hobart).

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate. You may

discontinue participation in the study at any time without providing an explanation: simply do not return the questionnaire.

If you decide to participate in the survey, please use the reply-paid envelope provided to return it, by **28 August 2009**. Your consent to participate in the survey is implied by your completion of the survey.

2. As well as the questionnaire, the study has an *interview phase*, and all Tasmanian Greens members who complete the questionnaire are invited to participate. If you would like more information about the interviews, please contact the researcher, Sharon Moore (contact details below), or fill in the interview volunteer contact detail form at the end of the survey.

5. 'Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?'

Participants in the study will contribute to the body of knowledge on citizen action and involvement on climate change issues in Australia, and could contribute to development of public policy in this field.

6. 'Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?'

There are no risks anticipated from participation in this study.

7. 'What if I have questions about this research?'

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact either (myself) Sharon Moore (ph 62261844 or email smoore@utas.edu.au) in the first instance, or Kate Crowley (ph 62262364 or email Kate.Crowley@utas.edu.au). Either of us would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will provide the Tasmanian Greens office with a summary of our findings and ask them to make it available to interested members. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote H10708, the project's approval number.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study. It should take 15 - 20 minutes to complete.

If you wish to take part in it, simply fill in the attached questionnaire and return it in the reply-paid envelope provided. Your participation in this way will be taken as consent. This information sheet is for you to keep

3. Questionnaire

Environmental Citizenship and climate change: transition to a post-consumerist future?

Where a number of options are given for your response, please circle the response that best matches your own experience.

A Your actions and involvement

1. In the last five years to what degree have you changed the following areas of your life in response to climate change?

Area of life	Changed a lot	Changed a bit	Not changed much	No changes
a. Power consumption	1	2	3	4
b. Type of power used (eg solar, gas)	1	2	3	4
c. Everyday transport	1	2	3	4
d. Travel (eg for holidays)	1	2	3	4
e. Shopping, eg buying locally	1	2	3	4
f. Growing own food	1	2	3	4
g. Reducing waste	1	2	3	4

2. If you answered 'Not changed much' or 'No changes' to any part of Question 1 circle the factor that best matches the reason for your answer:

Area of life	Lack of available/ suitable alternatives	Too time consuming	Too expensive	Climate change is the government's responsibility	Why should I, when other people don't?	Lack of information on alternatives	I pay carbon credits instead	Satisfied with changes already made, or no need to make changes.	Other: please specify below if reason not listed
a. Power consumption	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b. Type of power used	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c. Everyday transport	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d. Travel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e. Shopping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f. Growing own food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g. Reducing waste	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

If you chose 9 in any row, please write your reason/s here: _____

3. In the last five years to what degree have you been involved in the following community-based responses to climate change?

Community activity	Heavily	Somewhat	Occasionally	Not at all
a. Growing food	1	2	3	4
b. Buying food, eg bulk buying	1	2	3	4
c. Alternative energy scheme	1	2	3	4
d. Transport, eg car sharing	1	2	3	4
e. Group co-ordinating community response	1	2	3	4
f. Informal discussions	1	2	3	4

4. If you answered 'Occasionally' or 'Not at all' to any part of the previous question, tick the most important reason for your answer to that part:

Community activity	Cost	Lack of opportunity	Climate change is the government's responsibility	Too time consuming	Not something I've thought about	Prefer doing this as an individual/family	Lack of confidence	I've been involved for more than five years	Other: please specify below if reason not listed
a. Growing food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b. Buying food	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c. Alternative energy scheme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d. Transport	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e. Group co-ordinating community response	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f. Informal discussions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

If you chose 9 in any row, please write your reason/s here:

5. In the last five years, to what extent have you been involved in the following political responses to climate change?

Political action	Very much so	Quite a lot	A bit	Not at all
a. Join the Tasmanian Greens	1	2	3	4
b. Increase involvement in the Greens	1	2	3	4
c. Join an environment group	1	2	3	4
d. Increase involvement in an environment group	1	2	3	4
e. Engage in public debate, (eg letters to editor, public discussions)	1	2	3	4
f. Attend protests/rallies	1	2	3	4
g. Write submissions, or letters to politicians	1	2	3	4

6. If you answered 'A bit', or 'Not at all' or to any part of the previous question, tick the response below that best matches the reason for your answer to that part:

Political action	Climate change is only one factor	Too time consuming	Too difficult, stressful, etc	I am already involved to my full capacity	Why bother; it makes no difference	It's only one way I work for change, eg through work,	I joined the Greens more than 5 years ago	Other: please specify below if reason not listed
a. Join the Tasmanian Greens	1						7	8
b. Increase involvement in the Greens	1	2	3	4	5	6		8
c. Join an environment group	1	2	3	4	5	6		8
d. Increase involvement in an environment group	1	2	3	4	5	6		8
e. Engage in public debate, (eg letters to editor, public discussions)	1	2	3	4	5	6		8
f. Attend protests/ rallies	1	2	3	4	5	6		8
g. Write submissions/ letters to politicians	1	2	3	4	5	6		8

If you chose 8 in any row please specify your reason here: _____

7. When you are considering buying a product (including making travel bookings), to what extent do you think about the following factors?

Factors	Always	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Never
a. Greenhouse gas emissions	1	2	3	4	5
b. Other environmental impacts	1	2	3	4	5
c. Social impacts, eg working conditions	1	2	3	4	5
d. Convenience	1	2	3	4	5
e. Cost	1	2	3	4	5
f. Need	1	2	3	4	5
g. Non-purchase alternatives, eg repair, re-use, going without	1	2	3	4	5

B Now we would like your views on the following statements.

8. Please tick the response in each row which best reflects your own views:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(a) Climate change is the most serious challenge humanity is facing.	1	2	3	4	5
(b) People in high emission countries should reduce their emissions more than in low emission countries.	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Governments should take stronger action to require reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	1	2	3	4	5
(d) I feel a sense of duty as a citizen to take action on climate change.	1	2	3	4	5
(e) I feel I have a moral obligation to reduce my carbon footprint. * Carbon footprint refers to the amount of greenhouse gases emitted as a result of an individual's actions and lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5
(f) There should be more financial incentives for people to reduce their carbon footprints*.	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Taking action on climate change gives me a sense of purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Taking action on climate change gives me hope for the future.	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Being involved politically has given me a sense of community engagement .	1	2	3	4	5

9. Please read the following definition of environmental citizenship and circle the response that best matches your reaction to it:
 ‘Environmental citizenship is an attitude to life; it means both being engaged politically and also acting in our private lives in an effort to stand up for the environment.’

1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Not sure 4 Disagree 5 Strongly disagree

10. Had you ever heard of environmental citizenship before this questionnaire?
 Yes 1 No 2 Not sure 3

11. Having read the definition, would you describe the following actions as examples of environmental citizenship? Circle one response in each row.

Action	Yes	No	Not sure
a. Joining the Greens	1	2	3
b. Buying locally grown products	1	2	3
c. Buying ‘environmentally friendly’ products	1	2	3
d. Attending a climate change protest	1	2	3
e. Joining a community transport scheme	1	2	3
f. Ringing talkback radio about climate change	1	2	3

12. In politics, people sometimes talk about the 'left' and the 'right'. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Left										Right

13. Next, a question about what you think the aims of Australia should be for the next ten years. Here is a list of four aims that different people would give priority:

1. Maintain order in the nation
2. Give people more say in important government decisions
3. Fight rising prices
4. Protect freedom of speech

If you had to choose among these four aims, which would be your first choice? And which would be your second choice? Put the number of the statement in the appropriate box:

First choice ☐ Second choice ☐

C Now, some questions about you

14. Please circle the appropriate responses:

- a. What is your sex?

1. Female 2. Male

- b. When were you born? Just the year will do. _____

- c. What is your postcode? _____

- d. What is your highest qualification since leaving school?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 No qualification since leaving school | 2 Post-graduate degree or post-graduate diploma |
| 3 Bachelor degree (including honours) | 4 Undergraduate diploma |
| 6 Trade qualification | 5 Associate diploma |
| | 7 Non-trade qualification. |

e. Would you say you now live in...

- 1 A rural area or village 2 A small country town (under 10,000 people)
 3 A larger country town (over 10,000 people) 4 A large town (over 25,000 people)
 5 An urban-fringe/semi-rural area 5 A major city (over 100,000 people)

Some questions about your work:

f. Last week, what were you doing?

- 1 Working full-time for pay 2 Working part-time for pay 3 Unemployed – looking for full-time work
 4 Unemployed – looking for part-time work 5 Retired from paid work
 6 Full-time school or university 7 Keeping house 8 Other: please specify _____

g. What kind of work do you do in your main job (or did you do in your last main job)?

- 1 Manual work 2 Tradesperson 3 Service: eg clerical/retail/tourism/restaurant
 4 Managerial 5 Essential service, eg healthcare 6 Professional 7 Other: please specify

h. Who do you work for in your main job (or did you work for in your last main job)?

- 1 Self-employed 2 Federal/state/local government 3 Employee of private company or business 4 Employee in family business or farm 5
 Community sector 6 Other: please specify

i.. What is your current marital status?

- 1 Never married 2 Now married (including de facto) 3 Widowed 4 Divorced or separated

j. What is your personal income (before tax)?

- a. Less than \$10,000 b. \$10,000 - \$20,000 c. \$30,000 - \$40,000 d. \$40,000 - \$50,000
 e. \$50,000 - \$60,000 f. \$60,000 - \$70,000 g. \$70,000 - \$80,000 h. Above \$80,000

k. How many children do you have living with you?

Number of children: _____

l. Do you do any voluntary (unpaid) work? 1 Yes 2 No

If so, how many hours per week (on average) do you do this work? _____

m. Do you own outright, are you buying or renting the dwelling in which you now live?

- 1 Own outright 2 Own, paying off mortgage 3 Rent from private landlord
4 Rent from public housing authority 5 Other (boarding, living at home, etc.)

n. Which social class would you say you belong to?

- 1 Upper class 2 Middle Class 3 Working class 4 None

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

If you are interested in taking part in an interview in which these issues will be explored in greater depth, please contact the researcher, Sharon Moore:

Email: smoore@utas.edu.au Phone: 6226 1844

Or, if you prefer, fill in the attached form and send it in with your survey.

4. Interview volunteer contact form

I consent to being contacted using the details provided below to discuss the possibility of participating in a follow-up interview. I understand that participation in the interview is voluntary and that I may choose to decline participation in the interview at any time.

Signed _____

Date __/__/09

Name:

Address:

Best contact (phone or email):

Appendix Four: Interview documents

1. Participant information form

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
SOCIAL SCIENCE/ HUMANITITES
RESEARCH**

Climate change and environmental citizenship: transition to a post-consumerist future? Phase two: interviews.

Invitation

Thank you for volunteering to participate in the interview phase of a research study into the views and experiences of Tasmanian Greens members concerning climate change, consumption and environmental citizenship.

The project is being conducted for the partial fulfillment of a PhD for Sharon Moore.

The study is being conducted by
Sharon Moore, PhD candidate, School of Government.
Associate Professor Kate Crowley, School of Government
Associate Professor Bruce Tranter, School of Sociology and Social Work
Dr Aidan Davison, School of Geography and Environmental Studies

2. 'What is the purpose of this study?'

The purpose is to further investigate the kinds of personal, community and political actions taken by members of the Tasmanian Greens in response to climate change; and in particular their views about the relative importance of these kinds of actions and about environmental citizenship. The study will be an important part of a PhD project which aims to evaluate the relevance of environmental citizenship theory to practical politics in Australia.

3. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'

All members of the Tasmanian Greens were invited to participate in the study. This is because members of the Greens are considered to be people who are likely to have taken personal and/or political action in response to climate change and have views relevant to the issues the study examines.

4. 'What does this study involve?'

The study has two phases: a questionnaire (survey) and interviews. Phase one of the study (the survey) has already been completed; at the end of the questionnaire, participants were invited to volunteer for a follow-up interview.

In the current phase interviews will be conducted to look in greater depth at the issues raised in the survey. Participants are asked to commit roughly 45-60 minutes in order to take part in a semi-structured face-to-face interview. Questions asked during the

interviews will look in greater depth at the questions raised in phase one of the study, that is the participants' experiences and views concerning personal and political responses to climate change, and the relevance of environmental citizenship in Australian politics. All interviews will be recorded and at least partially transcribed for analysis. Each participant will be given the opportunity to comment on their transcript, and for their transcript to be amended or partly deleted according to their wishes.

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation; simply contact the researcher, Sharon Moore, and state that you do not wish to be interviewed. If you have already been interviewed and wish to withdraw your interview recording and transcript from the study, you may do so up until 31st July 2010. They will then be destroyed.

All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and your name will not be used in the thesis or any publication arising out of the research. All information will be kept in a secure electronic format or designated secure data storage area at the School of Government (University of Tasmania, Hobart).

5. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

Participants in the study will contribute to the body of knowledge on citizen action and involvement on climate change issues in Australia, and could contribute to development of public policy in this field.

6. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

There are no risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, please note that you are entitled to decline to address any question(s) for any reason(s) or to place limitations on the use and disclosure of any of your answers. As noted above, all information collected during the study will be securely stored at the university.

7. What if I have questions about this research?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact either (myself) Sharon Moore (ph 62261844 or email smoore@utas.edu.au) in the first instance, or Kate Crowley (ph 62262364 or email Kate.Crowley@utas.edu.au). Either of us would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will provide the Tasmanian Greens with a summary of our findings and ask them to make them available to interested members. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or

email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote [H10708].

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

2. Interview participant consent form

CONSENT FORM

Climate change and environmental citizenship: transition to a post-consumerist future?

1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this project.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves participation in an audio-taped interview which will take about 45-60 minutes.
4. I understand that there are no anticipated risks involved in participation in the interview, but that I may elect not to answer any question and I can specify how my response is to be reported. I understand that I will be provided with the opportunity to review and comment on my transcript and to have any part of the transcript amended or deleted.
5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for five years and will then be destroyed, unless participants consent to the data, which will not be identifiable, being archived.

I give express consent for my de-identified data to be archived: (Please circle one)

Yes

No

6. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I agree that research data gathered from me for the study may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a participant.
8. I understand that the researchers will maintain my identity confidential and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research.
9. I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without any effect, and if I so wish may request that any data I have supplied to date be withdrawn from the research.

Name of Participant:

Signature:

Date:

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project & the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Name of Investigator

Signature of
Investigator

3. Interview plan

Focus of interviews: what is the relationship between the political views and the daily consumption habits of the interviewees (who are Greens members)?

Introduction:

Thank you for offering to be interviewed. As the information sheet says, this interview is part of my PhD project; it's a follow-up to the survey I did last year, which you filled out. The aim of the interview is to get a richer picture of your everyday practices and priorities than was possible with the survey. Sorry it's taken me so long to contact you for the interview. It doesn't matter if you can't remember what you answered in the survey.

Section One:

(Aim: hopefully from these questions they will reveal some things about their work, whether full-time, their children or lack of, their income, how much they like living in the area where they live, whether greenhouse gases, food miles etc are important to them; whether they buy fair trade where possible, shop at the tip shop, get things fixed or fix themselves, make own clothes etc or whether they're too busy because of working full-time, the demands of children and work etc.)

I'm interested in aspects of how you live your life, especially in relation to your environmental interests and concerns. Perhaps we could start with food. For example, where do you get your food from?

Prompt if necessary: eg this bowl of fruit on the table, where did you get that fruit? Where do you go shopping?

Other things to ask if they do not come up from this first question:

- How do you get around, what do you use for transport?
If it doesn't come up: what about holidays?

- I'm also interested in where you live, this house (flat etc) – how long have you lived here? (hopefully they'll tell me if they've bought it, or are renting etc.)
If not: Would you mind telling me whether you own or rent your house? Don't answer if that makes you feel uncomfortable.

I'm interested in what you buy and what you don't buy. Can you talk about that?

Prompts: for example, how important is it to you whether something is going to last a long time, or whether you can fix it?

What about non-material consumption such as buying services (gardening, massage, classes, etc...

What about relaxation, recreation, hobbies? What sorts of things do you do to relax and have fun?

Prompts if necessary: for example do you go bushwalking; do you have any pets?

A general question, if it hasn't already been discussed, about any other central/time consuming aspect of their lives? E.g., parenting, caring for an elderly relative, volunteering in a community organisation, ...

Section Two:

Relationship of political views to consumption practices.

(This very much depends on their responses. In this part I will refer back to the previous discussion, ask them to elaborate on things they said that I picked up on, eg they seemed a bit tentative about one aspect or they have not mentioned something, eg the word sustainability, or climate change, or they mentioned they fly overseas for holidays but also said they are conscious of their carbon footprint.)

Examples of questions:

You mentioned earlier that you are very conscious of shopping locally as much as possible. Why is that?

That you are conscious of food miles when you shop... What do you mean by that and how does it affect your shopping? Where did you hear that term?

You said before that... You try to cycle/walk as much as possible to work;

Are on a low income so make and fix things as much as possible;

Having a low carbon footprint is very important to you;

Put out a full recycling bin every fortnight;

But you also said that... Things that may raise some inconsistencies, contradictions with what they said, eg

You fly overseas for a holiday every year or two;

Are too busy to do things like growing your own vegetables or shopping for second hand items;

Have two big dogs who eat you out of house and home;

Are unhappy about the amount of packaging that comes with the food you buy at the supermarket.

Can you tell me a bit more about these aspects of your life? Prompt if necessary, for example do you see any inconsistencies there?

Show the pictures; ask whether they have any comments on them. (See pages 201-2 for pictures and explanation).

Section Three

Meaning of personal, community and political activity to participant

In this section, more searching questions are asked about what the participants' political and consumption-related activities mean to the participant, personally.

What does your membership with the Greens mean to you, how important is it to your life?

Why are you so motivated to do something about climate change? Why is it so important to you?

Would you say you see it as a personal responsibility?

Pictures used in Section 2

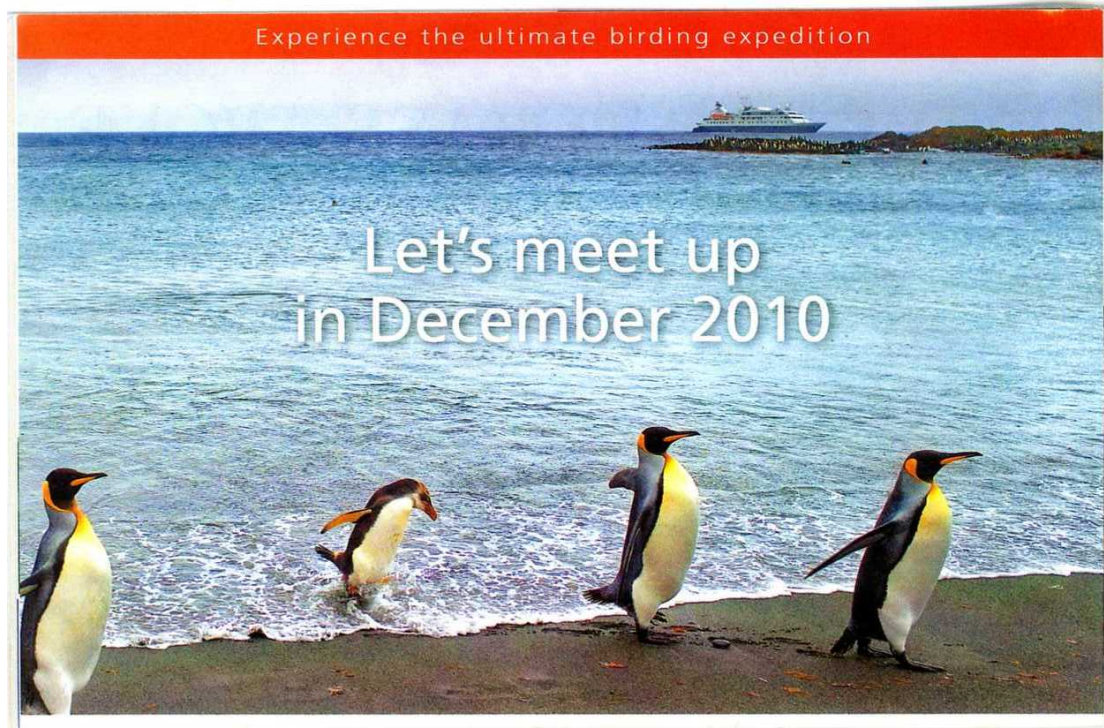
Figure A5: supermarket shopper



Source: *Habitat*, vol. 38, no. 3, July 2010, p. 21.

Aim of picture: to prompt explanations from respondents about their shopping habits and consumer choices.

Figure A6: Penguin tourism



Source: Cruise advertisement flyer in *Habitat*, vol. 38, no. 2, April 2010.

Aim of picture: to challenge participant to think about the extent to which consumption intrudes upon the natural world, in the form of travel and 'eco-tourism'. Ask prompting question if they are unable to make a connection between the photograph and the interview topic, eg what do you think about eco-tourism? Do you think it's a form of consumption?

Appendix Five Demographic tables

1. Demographic tables (questionnaire respondents):

Table A3: Respondents' income

Income	%
<\$20,000	34.5
\$20-40,000	26.1
\$40-60,000	16.7
\$60-80,000	15.3
>\$80,000	7.4

Table A5: Respondents' education

Education	%
No qualification since school	10.3
Post-graduate degree or diploma	33.0
Bachelor degree (including honours)	25.1
Undergraduate diploma	5.9
Associate diploma	8.4
Trade qualification	10.8
Non-trade qualification	6.4

Table A7: Number of respondents' children

No. children	%
0	71.3
1	12.9
2	12.4
3	2.0
4	1.5
4+	0

Table A9: Respondents' employment sector

Sector	%
Self-employed	27.9
Government	39.8
Private company or business	17.9
Family business or farm	2.0
Community sector	12.4

Table A4: Respondents' age

Age	%
17-35	6.6
36-50	26.3
51-65	37.9
66-75	21.2
75+	8.1
Total	100

Table A6: Respondents' occupation

Occupation	%
Manual work	4.5
Tradesperson	4.5
Service, eg clerical/retail/tourism	15.4
Managerial	8.5
Essential service, eg healthcare	15.4
Professional	51.7

Table A8: Area where respondents live

Area	%
Rural area or village	32.0
Small country town	7.4
Larger country town	3.9
Large town	10.8
Urban fringe/semi-rural	18.2
Major city	27.6

Table A10: Respondents' employment status

Employment	%
Full-time	26.2
Part-time	30.7
Unemployed-looking for part-time work	1.5
Retired from paid work	34.2
Full-time school or university	3.0
Keeping house	4.5
Unemployed-looking for full-time work	0

2. Details of interview participants

Table A11: Details of interview participants

Participant pseudonym	Age	Income	Education	Area	Home	Children	Occupation
Sally	51-65	\$20-40,000	Post-graduate	Suburban	Owned	1 adult + grand-children	Just retired
Anna	51-65	\$60-80,000	Post-grad	Suburban-bush fringe	Owned	1 + adult stepdaughter/grandchild	Almost full-time
Jack	66-75	< \$20,000	Bachelor degree	Inner-suburban	Owned	2 adult + grand-children; young adult stepchildren	Retired
Edith	75+	< \$20,000	Non-degree qualification	Inner-suburban	Living with family in owned home	Adult/grand-children	Retired
Alex	51-65	< \$20,000	Post-grad	Rural	Owned	1 adult, overseas	Full-time; starting new career
Jim	51-65	\$60-80,000	Post-grad	Coastal satellite town	Owned	2 adult	Full-time
Michelle	51-65	< \$20,000	Post-grad	Inner-suburban	Owned	No	Full-time; self-employed
Olive		< \$20,000	Degree subjects completed	Urban	Owned unit	Adult/grand-children	Retired
Myra	51-65	< \$20,000	TAFE diploma	Coastal, rural	Owned	No	Full-time; self-employed
Leanne	51-65	\$40-60,000	Bachelor degree	Suburban	Mort-gage	No	Part-time, casual
Pat	51-65	\$20-40,000	Post-grad	Inner-suburb; plus coastal village	Owned	1 adult	Part-time, self-employed
Simon	17-35	\$20-40,000	Bachelor degree	Inner-suburban	Renting	No	Full-time, temporary
Donna	51-65	\$40-60,000	Post-grad	Coastal village	Owned	3	Part-time

3. Comparison with Greens' membership figures:

According to Greens membership records, obtained from membership forms, the largest group of members are concession holders, followed by those on incomes up to \$30,000 (18.9 percent), then up to \$45,000 (10.3 percent), over \$60,000 (8.2 percent), then up to \$60,000 (5.5 percent)⁶⁷. These figures are reasonably consistent with the survey results, and demographic characteristics of interviewees. However, around 23 percent of members contribute by monthly payment rather than an annual income fee, so it is not possible to determine the income levels of those members.

The Greens' records on members' occupation and age are incomplete so it is not possible to check whether the membership consists mainly of

⁶⁷ Information provided by Tasmanian Greens' party administrator, 2010.

Appendix Six: Results

Figure A7: Views on climate change and respondents' mitigating activities (percent)

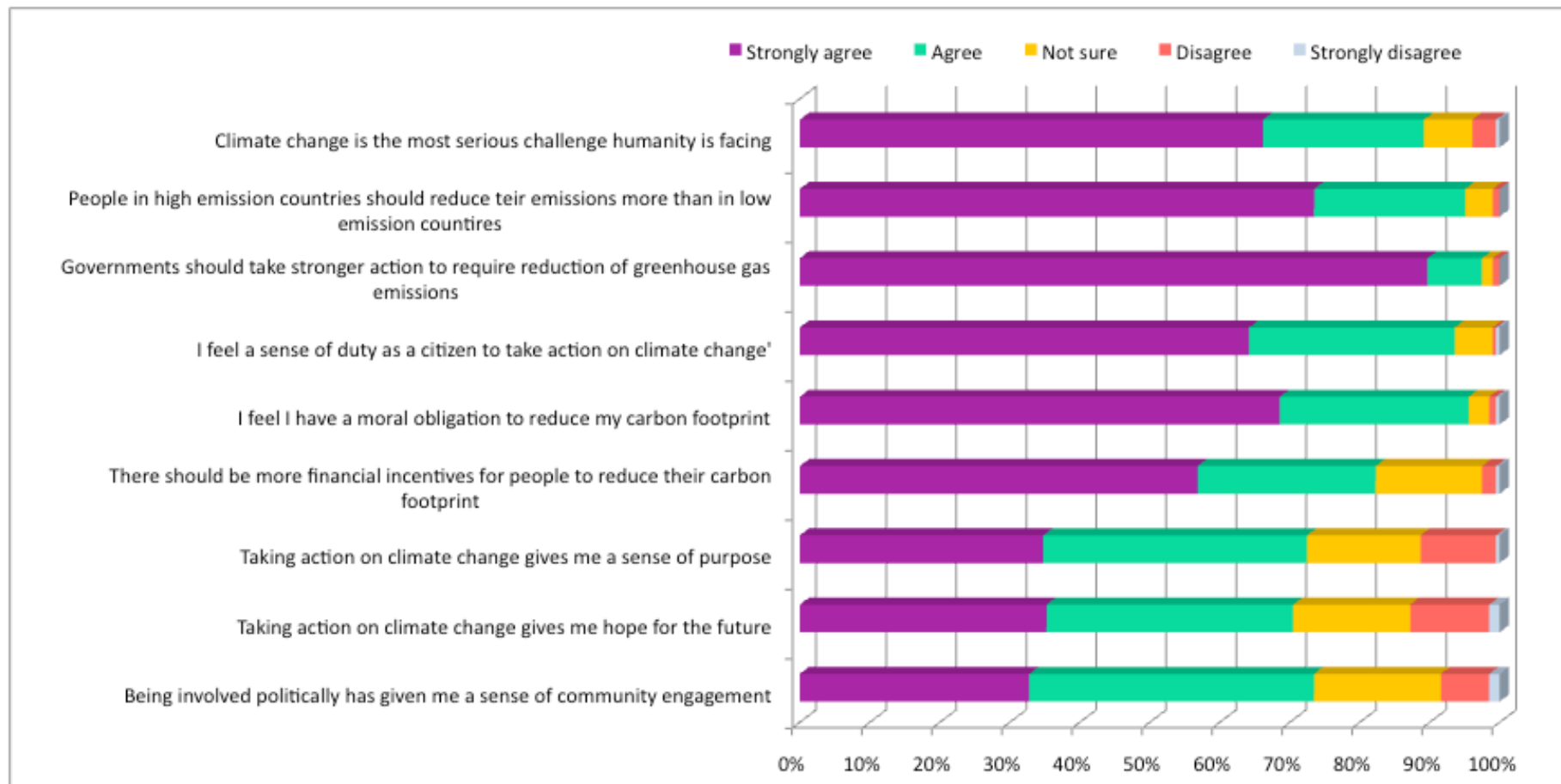


Figure A8: Reasons for not reducing consumption in response to climate change: percentage of total 'not changed much' or 'no changes'

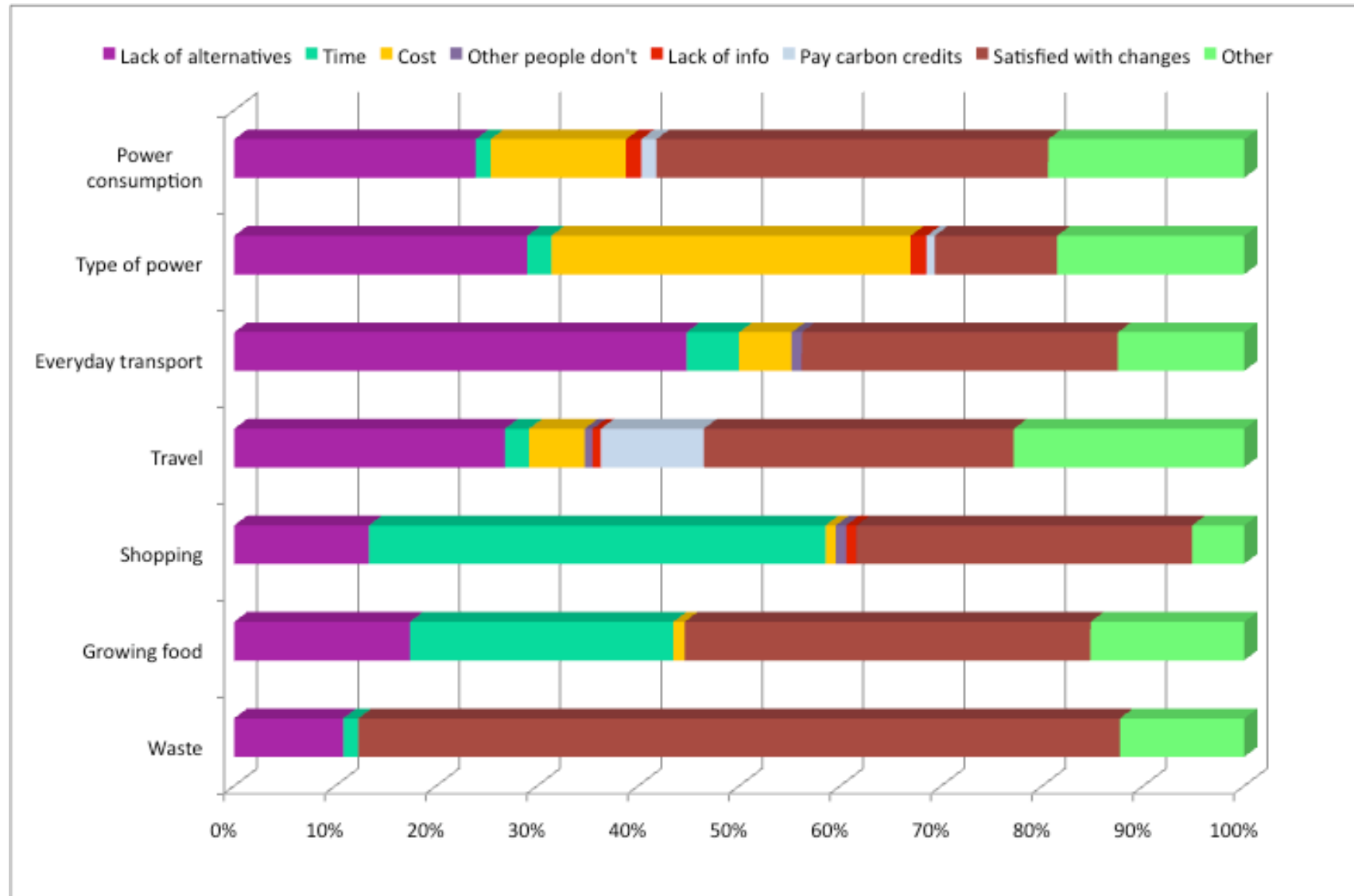


Table A12: ‘Other’ reasons for not reducing or changing consumption practices in response to climate change: (percentage of ‘other’ responses).

	Power consump. (n=13)	Type of power (n=23)	Everyday transport (n=12)	Travel* (n=29 total*)	Shopping (n=5)	Growing food (n=14)	Waste (n=8)
No reason/no answer	53.8%	52.6%	50.0%	7.7%	40.0%	14.3%	35.7%
Moved/moving house	-	5.3	-	-	-	5.6	-
Renting/flat ret. home	-	31.6	-	-	-	23.0	-
Other aspects sustainable	-	5.3	33.3	15.4	40.0	-	37.5
Health/age/too difficult			8.3	3.8	-	35.7	-
Gov & multinats must change first	7.7	5.3	8.3	3.8	20.0	7.1	12.5
Lazy/greedy/human (etc)	15.4	-	-	11.5	-	14.3	12.5
Growing family	23.1	-	-	-	-	-	-

* Some ‘other’ reasons were specific to travel and so are not included in this table (see figure below).

Figure A9: ‘Other’ reasons for not changing travel practices in response to climate change

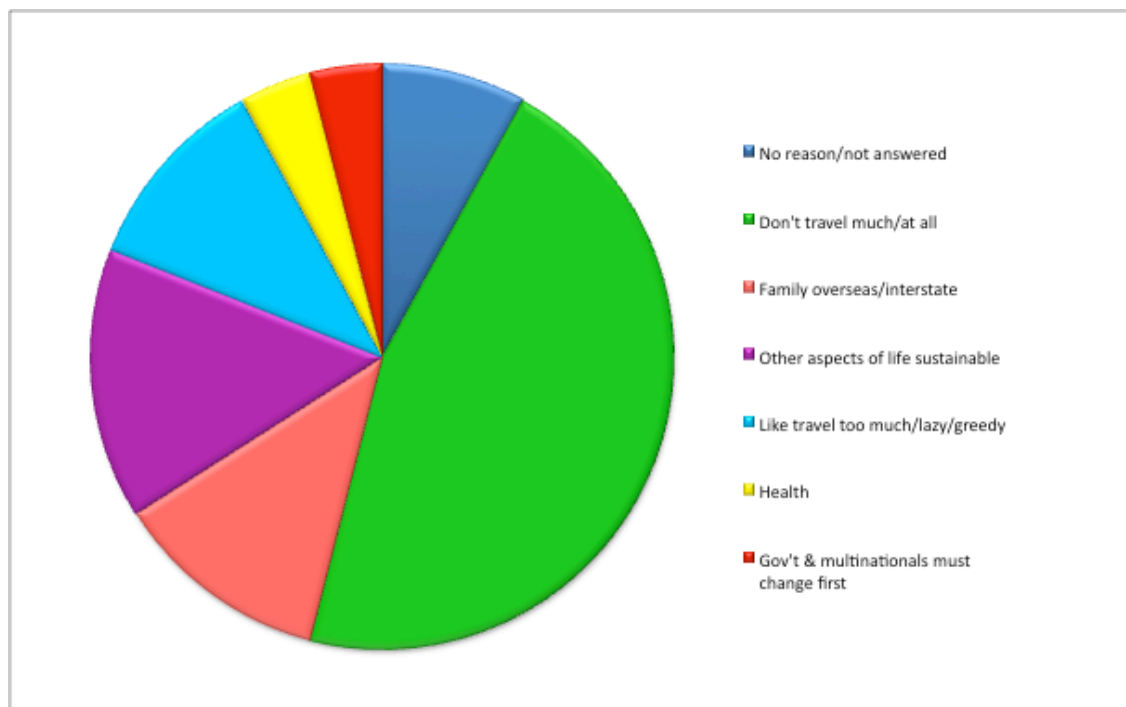


Figure A10: Reasons for not participating in community-based responses to climate change in the last five years (percentage of respondents who participate ‘occasionally’ or ‘not at all’).

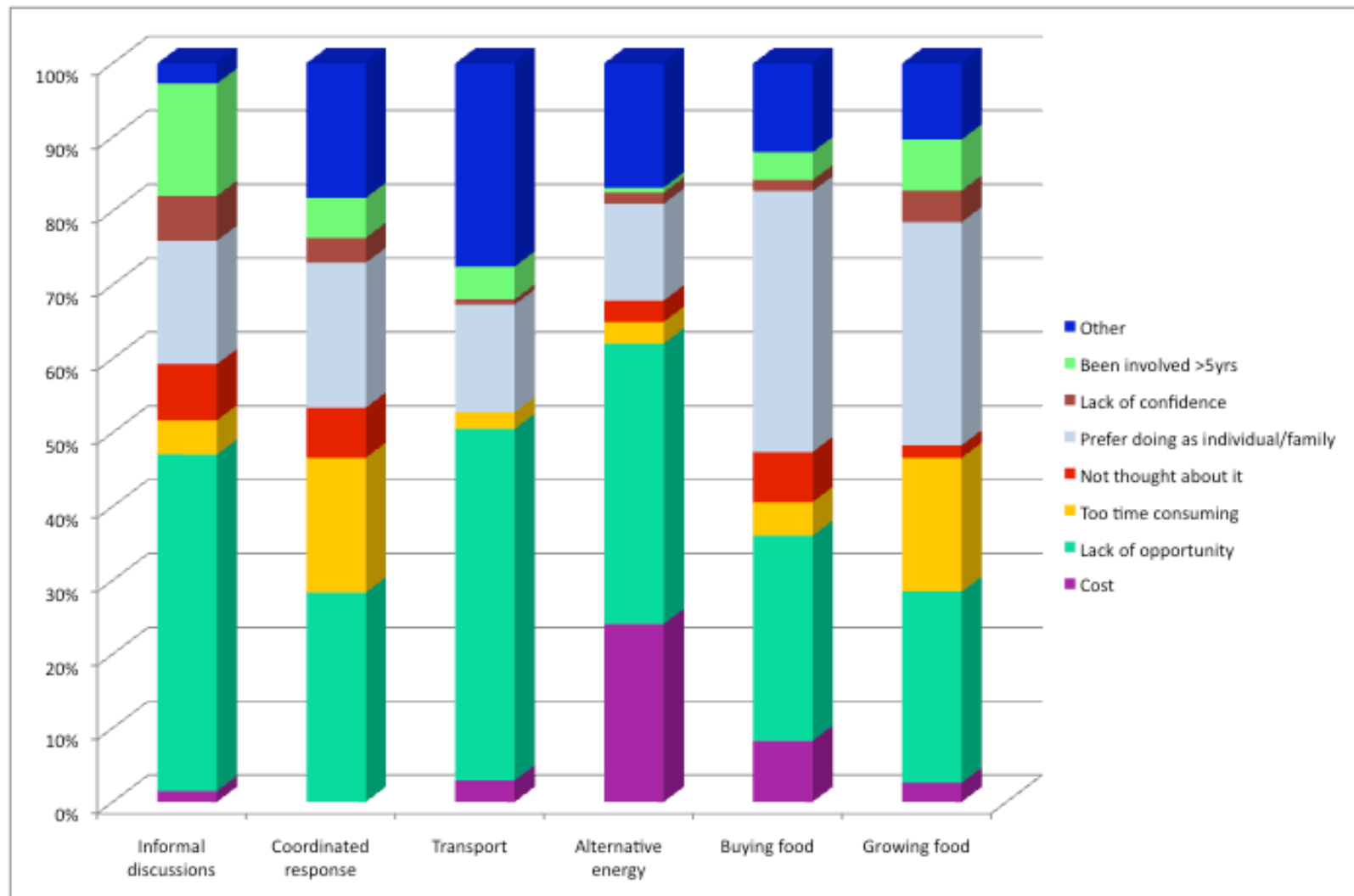


Table A13: ‘Other’ reasons for non-participation in community-based programs (percentage of respondents who participate ‘occasionally’ or ‘not at all’).

	Growing food (n=12)	Buying food (n=15)	Alternative energy (n=23)	Transport (n=37)	Co-ord. response (n=27)	Informal discussions (n=18)
No reason/no answer /didn’t understand question	58.3	62.5	60.9	37.2	59.3	66.7
Health/age	25.0	12.5	8.7	4.7	11.1	11.1
No need (personally)	-	12.5	8.7	20.9	-	-
No need (for Tas)	-	-	13.0	-	-	-
Higher priorities	8.3	6.3	-	-	-	-
Too inconvenient/ difficult/ burnt out/too much commitment	-	-	4.3	30.2	18.2	-
Lazy etc	-	-	-	2.3	7.4	-
Unviable or makes no difference	-	-	-	2.3	-	16.7
Gov’ts & multinationals must change first	8.3	6.3	4.3	2.3	3.7	5.6

Table A14: ‘Other’ reasons for non-participation in political responses to climate change (percentage of respondents who participate ‘occasionally’ or ‘not at all’).

	Not increase inv. Greens (n=35)	Not join env. grp (n=25)	Not incr inv. env. Grp (n=26)	Not engage public debate (n=26)	Not attend protests (n=25)	Not write subms (n=23)
No reason/no answer/ didn’t understand question	57.1	56.0	53.8	61.5	53.6	65.2
Little opportunity in Tas. Greens	5.7	-	-	-	-	-
Equates involvement with letterboxing or mem’ship	11.4	-	-	-	-	-
Recently joined	11.4	-	-	-	-	-
Access difficulties (travel, time, health)	8.6	8.0	11.5	3.8	35.7	-
Other polit./community activity preferred	5.7	4.0	-	-	-	-
Cost	-	4.0	-	-	-	-
Greens fulfil this role	-	24.0	23.1	7.7	3.6	21.7
Burn out/improving own environment	-	-	3.8	7.7	-	-
Lack of confidence/not ‘cup of tea’/just go to make up numbers	-	-	7.7	11.5	3.6	-
Politicians disinterested	-	-	-	-	-	8.7
Haven’t gotten around to it yet/lazy	-	4.0	-	-	-	4.3
Due to involvement in other groups	-	-	-	7.7	3.6	-

Figure A11: Reasons for not participating in particular political response to climate change in the last five years (percentage of respondents selecting ‘a bit’ or ‘not at all’ to question 5).

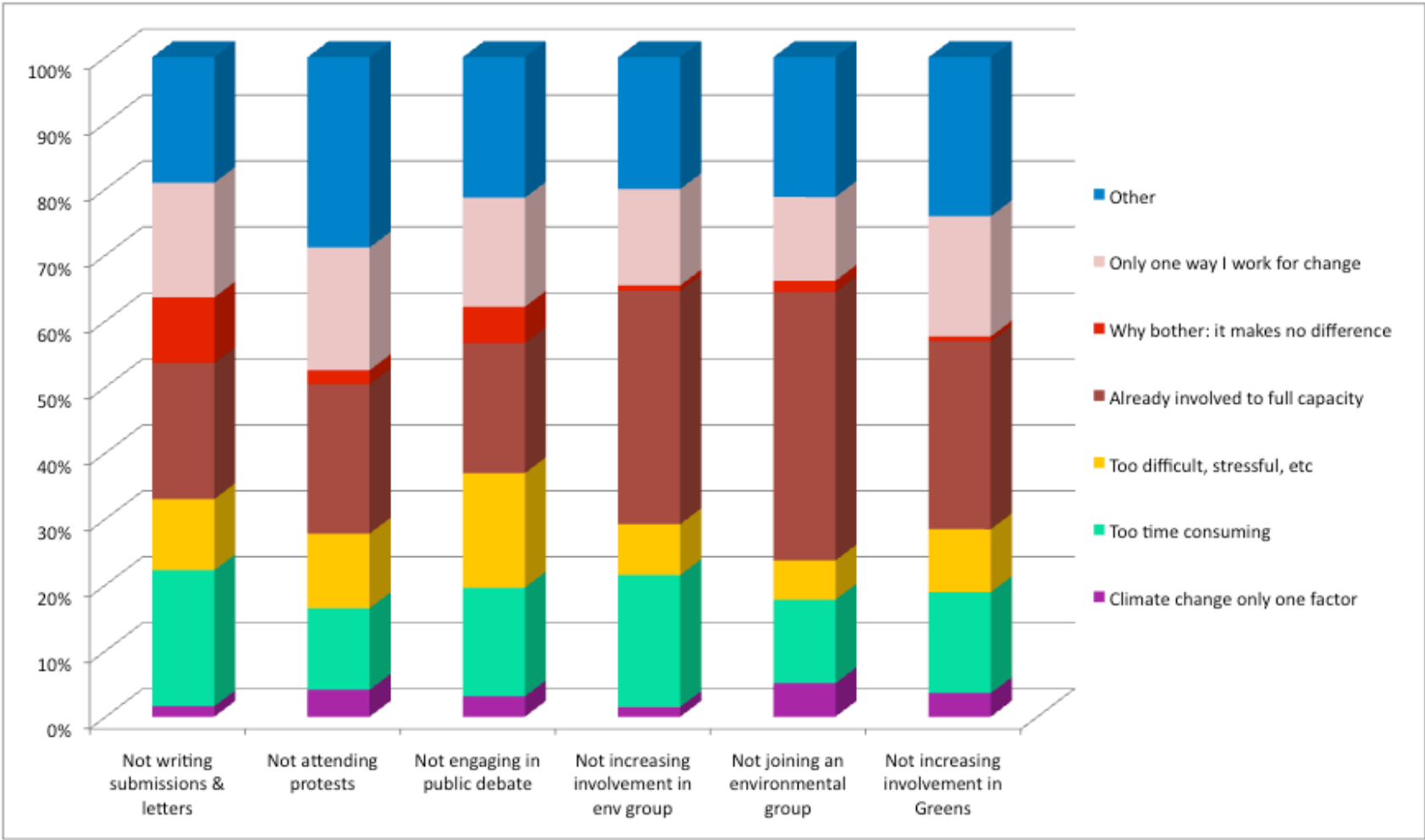


Figure A12: Changed consumption within the last five years: percentage of changed respondents by income (the first row shows percentage in each income category for comparison with other categories)

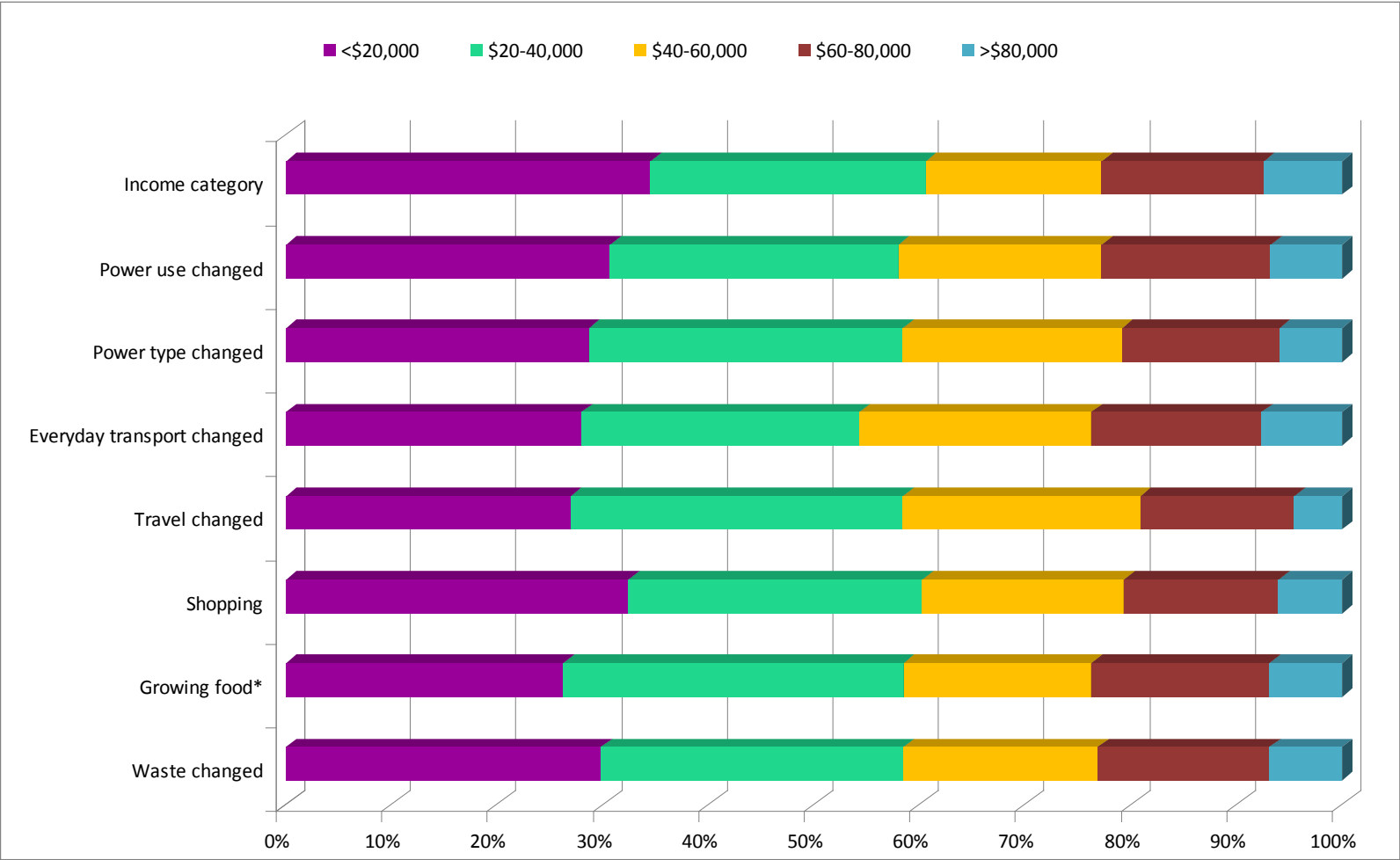


Figure A13: Changed consumption by income, including respondents who have been making changes for more than 5 years

