Surfing communities and their potential for grassroots environmentalism
A comparison of Ukraine and Germany

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research paper aims to study the lack of local grassroots initiatives in surfing communities by comparing Ukrainian and German contexts. Hence, a qualitative and inductive approach is used. The scope of the research question is explored, by analysing the effects of individual motivators and societal factors needed for GRI formation in active and connected surfing communities. It is further analysed how these motivators are developed and influenced in Germany and Ukraine taking the theories of ecopsychology, social learning and social capital as the framework and analytical lens. Key findings highlight a certain degree of potential for Ukrainian GRIs in surfing communities, while an intense amount of limiting factors is found. Moreover, the chosen comparative context of Ukraine and Germany reveals relevant findings from the collected data, that reveals a low level of trust towards the governments and a low self-efficacy level in Ukraine, while a high level of trust and high self-efficacy was observed in Germany. The research provides relevant insights about the increasing popularity of surfing as a sport, niche, and potential social movement towards environmental activism and sustainable development.

Key words: grassroots initiatives, GRIs, environmental activism, environmentalism, surfing movements, surfing communities, ecopsychology, social learning, social capital, Ukraine, Germany, EU

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Table of Abbreviation

EJM	Environmental Justice Move
EU	European Union
EWWR	European Week for Waste Reduction
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRI	Grassroots Inititative
IOSF	Internationally operating surfing foundation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SC	Social Capital
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGMAP	Surfer grassroot movement against pollution
SL	Social Learning
SLE	Significant Life Experiences
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USC	Ukrainian Surfing Community
USF	Ukrainian Surfing Federatio

1. Introduction

Grassroots initiatives (GRIs) emerge as networks of activists and organizations generating novel bottom-up solutions for sustainable development. Lately, they have been growing and obtaining a lot of attention, tackling global environmental issues through activism (Feola, 2013; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Leach et al., 2012). Global environmental issues refer to harmful effects of human activity on ecosystems, biodiversity and natural resources causing global warming, environmental degradation (such as ocean acidification) and biodiversity loss. These environmental challenges have been recognized and therefore, sustainable development was coined by the United Nations General Assembly in 1987 (UN, 1987). The sustainable development goals (SDGs) were launched in 2015 in order to amongst others, fight climate change (SDG 13) and maintain sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

GRIs play an important role when addressing these challenges as, in contrast to mainstream business, they fight climate change and strive for sustainable cities in different and innovative solutions (Grabs et al., 2015; Seyfang & Smith, 2007). As role models for societal change, GRIs are mainly focused on organizing at a local community level with a structure that aims to work on a high degree of participatory decision-making and flat hierarchies (Grabs et al., 2015). Their successful achievements were defined in previous research along the lines of social connectivity, empowerment, and external environmental impact (Feola & Nunes, 2013).

Research also suggests that a lifestyle sport, such as surfing, can be considered not only a sport but a cultural space concerned with the social movement of environmentalism (Wheaton, 2007). Wheaton (2007) reveals that participants of hedonistic, individualistic, minority sports cultures are exposed to and directly involved with environmentalism. Even though bodily pleasure is the apparent intercommunity, these cultural spaces bear the potential for political activism (Wheaton, 2007). Laviolette (2006) approves that surfing creates interconnectivity of humans and nature. Interestingly, the theory of 'ecopsychology' defined that the closer the human connection to nature is, the stronger the desire for taking care of the environment and contributing to more sustainable practices will be (Brymer, Downey & Gray, 2009).

Thus, this research study focuses on grassroots initiatives around surfing and their potential to influence environmental activism and foster communication towards more sustainable development in Ukraine. To better understand the context, the following sections will provide an introduction to the topic. Hence, GRIs will be explained and European surfing communities, especially the German context will be characterised to lay the foundation for a comparison with the Ukrainian surfing community. Magnani and Osti (2016) explain that the German surfing community and context was chosen due to the strong GRIs networks in northern Europe. The engagement of civil society in social movements is essential. Hence, Germany is a relevant country to look at.

The country's legal framework for GRIs favors the development of such and generally the political will to support is found. Moreover, Western- and Northern European countries seem to have a higher overall GDP per capita (income), than Southern- and Eastern European nations. Therefore, the stronger middle class in Western and Northern Europe has more resources to utilize for the formation of social movements (Magnani & Osti, 2016). Kern (2019) states that since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and the Paris Agreement in 2015[1] awareness was raised about the responsibility of cities and municipalities to bring sustainable change. As this research shows, Germany among other countries like

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[1] The Paris Agreement describes the get together of 195 countries in 2015 that were willing to understand and face climate change by developing a global agreement that is nationally fair and globally adaptable (Klein, Carazo, Doelle, Bulmer & Higham, 2017).

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the Netherlands and Sweden, are the leaders in Europe, when it comes to voluntary implementations of significantly sustainable practices, that often exceed the aims of the EU and member states (Kern, 2019). When a municipality acts as a 'green city', and therefore as a leader for other places, communities and citizens, the latter ones get inspired and empowered to become active on individual levels. Thus, the total sum of these factors favours the formation of GRIs in Western and Northern European countries (Magnani & Osti, 2016; Kern, 2019).

Thus, Germany and Ukraine are divergent, yet both countries show surfing movements. Therefore, two countries, one EU member and one non-EU member, will be compared. The different political and industrial circumstances will be taken into consideration as well as societal factors when surfing communities and movements are compared and examined.

1.1 Context

The following paragraph enlightens the key terms used in the thesis, which are 'sustainable development', 'environmental local activism', 'GRIs' and 'active and connected surfing grassroots movements". These terms are part of the research question, as well as important for contextualizing the previous research, as well as for the findings from the interviews.

1.1.1 Sustainable development

The concept of sustainable development was interpreted by the Brundtland Commission to link the issues of economic and environmental stability. Sustainable development was defined as the "development that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). In 2015, the agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) were formed with the idea to transform the world by ending poverty, inequalities and tackle climate change by 2030. This agenda calls for the action, commitment and collaboration of stakeholders around the world.

1.1.2 Environmental local activism

An environmental movement emerged in the 19th century around preservation and conservation. Preservation describes the aim to keep nature undisturbed and apart from industry and humanity. Conservation is concerned with the sustainable use of natural resources for future generations. These trends reacted to early stages of capitalism. These approaches clarify the perceptions of humans dominating nature, in this time referred to the industrialization and its effect of the environment in the first place. While the 1960s brought a new era of environmental activism, the early approaches of preservation and conservation are still part of the common strategies. When further industrialization and urbanization took place, the effects on nature increased and as a consequence knowledge about the effects of environmental disruption on human health (Mihaylov & Perkins, 2015). In a middle-class setting, where social movements were supported and social change requested the new environmentalism arose by questioning economic growth and demanding a 'greener lifestyle' and independence from governmental control. These times brought forth 'green politics' and introduced environmental concerns into the political context, especially in Europe. The relationship between humans and nature changed and the approach to generations passing the world on like they received it arose. In addition to it the 1970s and 1980s continued the bottom-up-approach in the 'Environmental Justice Move' (EJM). The EJM arose in a time, when economic growth increased and societal inequalities intensified Mihaylov & Perkins (2015) explain. The EJM aimed to include the less powerful and formerly discriminated into the movement. Communities had learnt from the civil rights movement and adapted their experiences to then fighting for clean water, air and food. The strong connection of

social justice and environmental activism describes the interconnection of first, protecting the environment to protect marginalized communities that suffer most from environmental harm and second, fighting for social justice helps the environment, because societies are less excluded and the enforcement of environmental protection can be easier implemented. The importance of local initiatives became clearer, because especially marginalized communities stay within the spatial borders of their communities, not only for work, learning and residing, but also for leisure activities. The audiences of the environmental movement have included the white middle-class and marginalized communities which over the years acknowledged the importance of local involvement and activism. In the 1990s and 2000s a drastic increase in local GRIs took place. The localization of environmental activism evolved. These GRIs are part of humans' everyday life and interpersonal networks, which react to the immediate threats of environmental harm (Mihaylov & Perkins, 2015).

Moreover, the interaction between locals and their environment is rooted in two perspectives on the place, that is desired to be protected. The 'place' is described in a material, as well as socially constructed dimension. Places are referred to as locations where people work, live, and form social relationships and attachments. Therefore, local GRIs movements get strengthened by locals' connection and proximity to the e.g. threatened ecosystem or site (Mihaylov & Perkins, 2015).

1.1.3 Grassroots initiatives

GRIs are organizations with innovative bottom-up approaches for sustainable development (Grabs et al., 2015; Seyfang & Smith, 2007). They stimulate collective actions characterized by a greener business activity role model where sustainable innovation with a focus on Social Learning (SL) is ascendant. They emphasize different social, ethical and cultural rules and their spectrum of organisations exhibit varying degrees of professionalisation, funding and official recognition. The motives of the activists who initiated the movement are normally driven by social need and ideology (Seyfang & Smith, 2007). Grassroots then, involve committed activists and innovative solutions for sustainable development that respond to the local situation and the interests and values of the engaged communities (Seyfang & Smith, 2007).

Seyfang and Smith (2007) further explain, that GRIs offer potential for individual advantages, development and diffusion opportunities. The individual advantages include job creation, training, skill development, personal growth in relation to self-esteem or confidence, a sense of community, social capital, improved access to services, health improvements and greater civic engagement. Advantages for diffusion that are accrued by GRIs are awareness-raising, education, promotion, altering mindsets of local policy-makers and politicians, inspiring people to implement more sustainable ways of acting and thinking in their everyday life, supporting sustainable development, fighting for empowerment, confidence and built the capacity for community-based actions and activism.

GRIs are functional for various of the processes of niche development (Ornetzeder & Rohracher, 2013; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012). A 'strategic niche' is defined as a protected space where experiments can develop away from regime selection pressures and it is formed by intermediary organisations and actors, which serve as 'global carriers' of best practice, standards, institutionalized learning, and other intermediating resources such as networking and lobbying which are informed by, and in turn inform, concrete local projects (Kemp, Schot, & Hoogma, 1998). Three key processes for successful niche growth and emergence are recognized: managing expectations, building social networks and learning. Expectation management concerns how niches present themselves to external audiences and whether they live up to the promises they make about performance and effectiveness. To best support niche emergence, expectations should be widely shared, specific, realistic and achievable. Networking activities are claimed to best support niches when they embrace many different stakeholders, who can call on resources from their organisations to support the

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niche's growth. Learning processes are estimated to be most effective when they contribute not only to everyday knowledge and expertise but also to 'second-order learning' wherein people question the assumptions and constraints of regime systems. GRIs may be functional in terms of network formation, learning and competence building but also in shielding, nurturing or empowering niche innovations (Ornetzeder & Rohracher, 2013). Conversely, the niche can play an active role in interacting with the context and thus contribute to shaping the conditions for GRIs success or failures (Feola & Nunes, 2013). Many positive accounts of specific grassroots initiatives have been provided and often seen as niches of experimentation of new social, cultural, economic or technological arrangements (Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012; Seyfang & Smith, 2007).

1.1.4 Active and connected surfing grassroots movements

Active and connected surfing grassroots movements in this context mean the representatives of those communities constantly involved in surfing as a sport or leisure time activity in different locations: Odessa and Chernomorka in Ukraine and other popular and visited surfing places all over the world (e.g. Portugal, Sri-Lanka, Bali etc.). The surfing community is connected in a way that surfers do not necessarily live at the coastline, but live in Ukraine, and they are the part of the surfing group (despite the fact it's formalized or not) and have to travel to the coast in order to practice surfing ("First surfing championship in Odessa", 2018).

However, several studies (Brymer & Gray, 2009; Olsen, 2001; Uhlik, 2006) explore the deeper connection and relationship between extreme sports participants and nature, that can lead to different repercussions (starting from stronger care and leading to environmental activism) according to the theory of ecopsychology (Brymer & Gray, 2009). Those who participate in extreme sports consider the concept of fighting or conquering the environment a misunderstanding. A Study by Brymer & Gray (2009) shows that participants of extreme sports accept that they cannot control the environment and that they are powerless compared with the natural world. Participants of extreme sports deny any attempt to control natural forces. They are in the natural world and, to participate successfully, must learn to understand their limitations and adapt (Brymer & Gray, 2009).

Furthermore, active and connected surfing has more potential to become a strong GRI towards environmental activism, as according to the principles of ecopsychology people who had formative experience with nature from early childhood and had role models who took care of it were led by their example are more prone to have a better interconnections with the natural world that is being expressed in a care of it (Gibson, 2000; Chawla, 2007; Arnold, 2009).

1.2 Impact of surfing foundations on environment

Multiple movements and organizations around surfing for the protection of beaches, reduction of plastic waste in the ocean and adaptation of ocean-policies arose within the last decades. An internationally operating surfing foundation (IOSF), a NGO, was founded in 1990 in the United States and brings together local communities (volunteers), coastal defender and national experts in law, policy and science to produce victories, change laws, educate and share knowledge on protecting beaches and oceans. Therefore, the introduced IOSF is a valuable example of activistic engagement, since its impact is measurably successful ("A European Network of Volunteers", 2019; "Our oceans, waves, and beaches are everything", 2019). Another movement that gathered in the late 1990s is named the local surfer grassroot movement against pollution (SGMAP). The surfers demonstrated how through sports consumption, participants from a range of minority water sport cultures have formed a political trans-local collectively based around a concern with their own localised environment, one which has become articulated into broader political issues (Parris, Shapiro, Welty Peachey, Bowers, & Bouchet, 2015).

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Apart from the focus of the thesis on local surfing communities, the authors acknowledge the fact that the internationality of surfing leads to extensive air travel, which is one of the worst activities from an environmental point of view. Nevertheless, the thesis focuses on the local groups as a driver for environmentalism and is therefore distanced from the harmful travelling.

1.2.1 Europe: Surfing initiatives

A European surfing foundation was founded shortly after the American core foundation around the year 1990 (German Interviewee 1). Today, local chapters of the IOSF are found in over 14 European countries, run by volunteers ("A European Network of Volunteers", 2019). Thousands of volunteers operate to promote the foundation's mission, run local campaigns, raise awareness, organise events, develop partnerships and improve the volunteer network ("A European Network of Volunteers", 2019). Thus, the impact of these surfing foundations and their members is considerable. Moreover, surfing is a leisure activity that has gained more popularity within the last years. Hence, the surfing communities in Europe and the interest in environmental protection grew ("A European Network of Volunteers", 2019).

Not actually nudged by surfing initiatives but aligned with their visions is the following political trend: the preservation of the ocean as a thematic priority in political parties' programs, which was analysed and published by the IOSF of Europe ("European Election", May 24, 2019). The observation shows that Germany ranks highest with 11 parties that focus on preserving the environment and ocean from threats such as pollution, biodiversity, sea transport and climate change. The IOSF stresses the importance of acting 'against the economical and industrial interests' ("European Election", May 24, 2019).

1.2.2 Germany: The country, their environmental attitude and surfing movement

A multitude of surfing organisations, formed to various extents, are found in Germany. There are surf clubs, that focus on the sport and performance, NGOs, that activate within the surfing communities for charitable matters and above, local chapter of IOSF.

More than one local chapter of an IOSF were formed in Germany. These chapters are located in Hamburg, Berlin and on Fehmarn. The multitude of local chapters shows great awareness for the protection of the ocean, beaches and the environment in general among involved volunteers. The first chapter was formed in Hamburg, followed by Berlin and Fehmarn (German Interviewee 1). The local chapters work through volunteers. The IOSF in Germany supported the political engagement to adopt measures for maritime transport to retain the commitment of the Paris Agreement to keep the global temperature rise below 2°C, which proved to be successful (*"Annual Report #17"*, 2017). Moreover, they took part in the European Week for Waste Reduction[2] (EWWR) which takes place once a year since 2012 (*"Ideas for Actions"*, 2019). Awareness was raised by volunteers that reached out to up to 100 stores in Northern Germany to educate about the effect of plastic bags on the environment (Assenjo & Sico, 2017).

A present image of Germany portraits the country as the 'global environmental leader' (Schreurs, 2016; Knill, Heichel, & Arndt, 2012). It is often stated, that the country has one of the most active and institutionalized Green movements in the world. Studies from 2016 show that 10 percent of Germans are part of an environmental, nature protection, or animal rights group and thereby, more active than other nations (Schreurs, 2016). Hence, GRIs exist in many places in Germany. Whole

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[2] EWWR takes place annually all over Europe. The EWWR aims to educate about sustainable resource and waste management by promoting the 3 Rs, that are reduce, reuse, recycle (*"Ideas for Actions"*, 2019).

communities collectively compete against each other to be more sustainable or more organic than other towns. Some compete for who is using more renewable energy solutions. Moreover, Germans rank high in European comparison with their recycling performances (Schreurs, 2016).

Germany is Europe's largest economy and accounts for over 20 percent of the European Union's (EU) Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It is the largest country by citizen. Therefore, the country has a noticeable voice in Brussels EU Parliament. Concerning the European climate goals, Germany advocated for the establishment of a significant reduction in CO_2 emissions, development and support for renewable energy and the ambition to improve energy efficiency by 2020 (Schreurs, 2016). A driving force in these developments were GRIs. Nevertheless, the country still quarries the natural non-renewable resource brown coal, which is not environmentally friendly, and is responsible for the largest amount of greenhouse gases emitted in Europe (Schreurs, 2016). On top of that the automobile industry is very strong in Germany. Approximately one percent Germans is employed in this field and 18 percent of the worldwide produced cars origin in Germany (Schreurs, 2016).

What this all amounts to is that Germans show an awareness for planet's scarce resources and the need for environmental protection. Hence, a network of GRIs is present and active. Nevertheless, industries and politicians often chose the short-term solution and sacrificed environmentalism, even though political attempts are visible. Though, in comparison to other European countries, Germany ranks as a leader in the political and 'green-economical' context (Schreurs, 2016; Knill et al., 2012).

1.2.3 Ukraine: The country, their environmental attitude and surfing movement

Ukraine as a surfing destination in Eastern Europe is developing. Hence, the south coast of the country (Odessa) and its Black Sea coastline have great potential for the surfing activity to be developed: The Ukrainian Surfing Federation (USF) was created in summer 2018, registered as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and has already held one competition among surfers in September 2018 in Odessa ("First surfing championship in Odessa", 2018[3]). Moreover, a Ukrainian surfing community (USC) has great popularity in the country as it popularized surfing practices as a leisure activity and increases tourism. Moreover, the USC organises surfing trips to different continents, which are accessible for Ukrainian surfers with different skill-levels ("Hi, it's us!", 2019). Natural conditions allow surfing in Odessa mostly in autumn and winter, which can be too demanding for the leisure activity in beginner's perspective, but despite the fact that surfing conditions in Ukraine can be difficult for beginners, the surfing community in the country grows each year ("Surfing in Odessa:", 2016). The USC can be defined as passionate surfing individuals who surf at local beaches (e.g. Odessa, Chernomorka) as well as abroad in countries such as Portugal, Spain and Sri-Lanka ("Surfing in Odessa:", 2016).

Observing the situation of Ukraine at the moment, due to Euromaidan events, it seems that the country represents a good platform for grassroots initiatives that have the potential to learn about a sustainability transition. Several studies suggest that grassroots initiatives in Ukraine were influenced by an important social protest - Euromaidan (2013-2014) and affected participants' perception of taking an action, building community and reflect (Udovyk, 2016; 2017). The protest's label 'Maidan' originates from the common abbreviation for 'Maidan Nezalezhnosti' (Independence Square) the main plaza in Ukraine's Capital Kyiv. Geographically the plaza is not located within an area of political decision-making. However, historically, the plaza is known for the 'October Revolution' during soviet times and is ever since known for a place for political expression (Yekelchyk, 2015). Multiple protests

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[3] Hardly any comprehensive scientific studies exist about the surfing community in Ukraine, therefore non-scientific sources are gathered.

have been held at the 'Maidan' throughout the years, which made the square internationally known to be a symbol for 'popular democracy' (Yekelchyk, 2015). Recently, from 2013 to 2014, Ukrainian GRI participants strengthened their senses of solidarity and responsibility through the experience of Euromaidan and were led to the active participation of further development of similar initiatives (Udovyk, 2016), which makes Ukraine a strong platform for further development of GRIs. In 2013 protests were initiated and GRIs were formed after the Ukrainian government resigned from the 'Association Agreement' with the EU, which was supposed to stabilize political and economic relations, secure equal rights for workers and build a step towards visa-free traveling of Ukrainians (Yekelchyk, 2015). Hence, the dissatisfaction of Ukrainians was immense, GRIs were formed and consequently, the government changed and was revoted (Yekelchyk, 2015). Therefore, the self-confidence for the possible effect of GRIs was increased (Udovyk, 2016).

Moreover, according to a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) environmental survey, the Black Sea has twice as much floating plastic as any other sea in Europe (UN Environment, 2018). According to the results of Simeonova (2019) marine litter monitoring along the coast of the Black Sea is most polluted by artificial polymer materials (plastic cups, lids of beverages, synthetic polymer items). Today, the Black Sea has one of the highest indicators of single-use plastic items - 68%, in comparison with the Mediterranean Sea - 13%, NE Atlantic - 12% and Baltic Sea - 7%. Generally, the report concludes that single-use plastic items (e.g. plastic cups and drink bottles) were typical mostly from the Bulgarian Black Sea coast and were not found on the shoreline of the rest marine regions in those amounts yet, which can mean that they were probably replaced by another type of material (Simeonova, 2019). The repercussions of plastic pollution at the seashore are obvious which highlights the need for an influential and active community to locally tackle the problem.

According to the latest report on climate change in the context of the Paris Agreement commitments and challenges in cooperation between Ukraine and EU, it is stressed that no framework law has been adopted in Ukraine on the prevention of- and adaptation to climate change, and there are problems with integrating climate policy in various spheres. Low institutional capacity and human resource potential are mentioned as obstacles for policy implementation (Turchenko, Viriovkina, Tselocalchenko, Zakrevska, & Bondarenko, 2017). Moreover, the role of local governments is indicated as a strong obstacle when achieving climate targets (Turchenko et. al, 2017).

It has been also stressed that special attention should be paid to the adaptation to the effects of climate change. Important for Ukraine this regard is the relationship between water resources management and climate change: the probability of a future lack in potable water resulting from climate change needs to be taken into account, and a policy developed to address these adverse effects (Turchenko et. al, 2017). Moreover, it is emphasized on the importance of raising awareness among the population that should be better informed of the implementation of environmental legislation and Ukraine's environmental commitments to greening the economy, energy savings, climate change prevention and adaptation to climate change (Turchenko et. al, 2017).

Surfing has a great potential in Ukraine, not only as a leisure activity but also as a professional sport. The fact that Ukraine did not become a part of European Union and is still on its way of development and meeting the requirements of the EU, may have influenced the climate regulations, policies and the attitude of authorities towards the adaptation to climate change. Moreover, Ukraine's Industry is renowned to be one of the world's largest producer of steel, cast iron, pipes and mineral fertilizers. Pre-influenced by the Soviet Union, Ukraine still ranks as a relevant player in the military industry (Yekelchyk, 2015). The Ukrainian industry, hence, consists of heavy and 'dirty' fields, with no prominent trend towards climate-friendlier alternatives, yet (Yekelchyk, 2015). Moreover, the Ukrainian country still struggles with the law framework of the climate regulations and proper

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awareness among the population (Turchenko et. al, 2017) by covering this issues with more important social, political and military matters.

2. Previous research

Different authors emphasized the importance of having local grassroots instead of globalized environmentalism due to the significance of local knowledge and scale, direct exposure to nature, place attachment and its disruption, and place-based power inequalities (Mihaylov & Perkins, 2015; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012). Previous environmental initiatives in situations of an uneven status of power have been demonstrated to be successful and started to replace governments in the quest for environmental sustainability (Guerrón-Montero, 2005). Further, research shows that societies are less likely to wait for political unions and parties to act and would rather proactively approach problems themselves (Kjølsrød, 2013). Research also investigated why grassroots initiatives were created and developed successfully by focusing on the processes of funding, engaging, developing and maintaining grassroots initiatives (Grabs et al., 2015). They presented theoretical and empirical evidence connecting a broad spectrum of concepts, as Social Capital (SC) and Social Learning (SL), that can be used as testable factors for in-depth investigations of grassroots motivators which will be used in the thesis. Furthermore, ecopsychological studies suggest that under the circumstances a person had access and mobility to explore the natural world (Chawla, 2007), had a strong role model (parents, caregivers or peers) who protected or were knowledgeable about the environment and lived through significant life experience with the nature (Arnold, 2009), this individual is more prone to be influenced in a positive way for environmental care. There is no direct proof that only people with mentioned experiences can become strong environmental leaders, but ecopsychology evidences that mentioned factors influence general interconnections with the natural world and forms the personality (Chawla 1998; 2007; Sivek, 2002; Arnold, 2009), which can create a perpetuate loop of sharing environmental competences with others and be a base for environmental activism.

2.1 Research problem

Different observations have been contemplated. First, it appears that grassroots movements keep increasing globally due to their successful achievements (Feola & Nunes, 2014). Second, surfing communities are increasing in popularity and more surfers are connected with nature, therefore they are also more aware and concerned about the environmental damages caused by human actions and feel more responsible to protect the environment (Laviolette, 2006). Third and contradictorily, it seems that not every surfing community necessarily follows this line of thought. Ukraine will be analysed and compared to Germany in this thesis, due to active surfing communities in both countries, which can be examples of good platforms for GRIs with the potential to transform individuals into sustainable leaders. Yet, there are scarce prominent indicators for change towards sustainable development and little visible active environmental behaviour in especially Ukrainian surfing communities. There is thus a gap in research regarding the motivators and influences needed at the individual and the societal level for facilitating grassroots surfing initiatives which enable and empower environmental activism. In the context of motivators that Grabs et al. (2015) described as necessary for successful grassroots initiatives, certain factors at individual and societal level need to be considered and explored when interviewing the individuals from the surfing communities in different contexts, as these motivators are the preconditions for GRIs and can contribute to finding influences for the current gap in research upon surfing communities and their potential for GRI environmentalism.

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2.2 Purpose

The thesis aims to explore to what extent local surfing communities bear potential for transforming into GRIs and act as sustainable leaders to bring change towards sustainable development and environmental activism. This will mainly be performed by exploring the effects of individual motivators and societal factors, needed for GRIs to form and develop in surfing communities. Ukraine and Germany will be used as exemplary contexts.

2.3 Research questions

RQ 1: *How is it that there is a lack of local grassroots initiatives in Ukrainian surfing communities while they are present in the EU country Germany?*

RQ 1.1: *How does the relationship between individual and societal level influence local GRIs?*

RQ 1.2: *What are the influences that bring about sustainable development and environmental activism through active and connected surfing grassroots movements in EU countries such as Germany?*

2.4 Structure

This paper is organized into seven chapters with further subchapters. The first chapter provides background information about the context of the paper. The second chapter presents the research questions, the purpose of the study and previous research on the studied question. Chapter three gives an overview of the relevant theoretical framework which was used in the paper. In the fourth chapter a detailed methodological description for data collection is presented, this chapter describes also the data analysis process and specifies research limitations. Chapter five is composed of the detailed analysis of the collected data and is divided into subchapters according to the analytical process. The key findings are summarized and discussed in chapter six. Lastly, a conclusion is formed in the last chapter of the paper.

3. Theoretical framework

The following chapter introduces the theoretical framework of multiple concepts and theories that the research paper is rooted in. Research suggests that the formation of GRIs, e.g. local chapter of an IOSF, surfing associations are a fundamental progress and effective tool for sustainable development and environmental activism (Feola & Nunes, 2014). Several factors influence the GRI to be a catalyst for sustainable development and environmental activism (Grabs et al., 2015). Through the application of the theoretical framework to the findings from the qualitative research, this research aims to identify the motivators that might be lacking at individual and societal level for implementation of grassroots initiatives in surfing communities in Ukraine. The chosen theoretical perspectives were Social Learning (SL), Social Capital (SC) and Ecopsychology. SL studies behavioural change and GRIs will become more generative contributing to efficient behavioural change through SL by bringing change in the positions and commitments of different actors. As SC is used to study the interaction of individuals and the thesis focuses on group movements, this theory was relevant to study the type of relationship between different actors. Finally, ecopsychology was chosen as it emphasized the interconnections between human and natural world as well as states that the closeness to the environment learnt through

the formative experience has a great impact on future relationship to nature and can lead to sustainable development and consequently environmental activism.

3.1 Model for social change through grassroots initiatives

Based on the model from Grabs et al. (2015), GRI motivators can be framed in three different levels: the individual, group-level and societal-level. GRIs can be represented in various forms and tackle different problems, while they all provide a collective and social strategy for action and change. As initiatives are driven by individuals engaged in the movement it is advisable to take the individual level of GRI motivators into account. It is highlighted that the importance of comprehensibility, self-efficacy, key experience, meaningfulness of change for individual as well as value systems or worldviews, life quality as the starting point or motivator on an individual level. As GRIs are not only individuals acting independently but are characterized as a group of people acting for a shared cause, the model considers group-level characteristics. First and foremost, the legal status of the organisation plays an important role in its image and further cooperation with other agencies and attraction of volunteers. Strong organisational structures are of special importance for the initiatives that seek to influence societal change as well as productive relationships with the government, funders, media and other organisations are vital for small grassroots groups. As GRIs are managed by a group of people their skills and the amount of time devoted to the development of the organization are vital too. Moreover, the size and diversity of the steering group, trust between group members, density of the internal network and the quality of internal communication are the factors mentioned by Grabs et al. (2015) to motivate people to continuously develop the GRI organisation. Furthermore, the organisational level includes motivators such as openness in process and goal-setting, so that the team is led by a common goal and share expectations of the organisation that all members can identify with.

Lastly, even well organized and functioning groups might not achieve their stated goals unless they are able to motivate collective learning and change at a societal level. This requires certain structural and framework prerequisites. Societal-level GRI motivators should consist of regional or national network, contacts to other stakeholders such as governmental agencies, private businesses, and community representatives as they may further help the GRIs goals. GRIs also have to boost their influence by offering broader-level policy recommendations to governmental actors. External communication and the external impression by others through the focused public relations activities, can even enable GRIs to stimulate change outside the traditional spheres of influence (Grabs et al., 2015). Moreover, societal framework conditions for change have to include: political governance support, under the circumstances that governmental objectives align with the grassroots initiatives' state institutions which can then aid the cause by organising conferences, programs, or even special funding for the group in question (Seyfang & Smith, 2007). One more motivator mentioned in the study is the particular moment in time when GRI discovers societal conditions favourable for its success: a certain window of opportunity (Grin et al., 2010), where due to particular events (such as crisis) given societal arrangements become questionable and there is demand for alternatives which favours respective GRIs. The levels are categorized and described according to the Grabs et al. (2015) model. Hence, this research follows this specific categorization and focuses on the link between individual motivators of GRIs and the societal level as it has great influence on GRIs development and success.

3.2 Social Learning

SL theory is based on the idea that people learn from interactions with others in a social context. This theory has often been called a bridge between behaviourist learning theories and cognitive learning theories because it demands attention, memory and motivation (Tadayon, 2012). Learning is defined

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by Weinster & Mayer (1986) as the relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behaviour due to experience. Bandura (1977) described SL as a learning process that individuals obtain by their social interactions within a group. The theory explains that the individual can learn in different ways: some patterns of behaviour are acquired by humans own direct experience, such as learning by doing, or by observing at behaviours of others, so called observational learning. Bandura (1977) stressed the importance of *observational learning or modelling*, where people observe their actions and outcomes and on the basis of informative feedback they develop thoughts and hypotheses about the type of behaviour that will be most successful. These thoughts and hypotheses will serve as guides for future actions and are forceful (Bandura, 1977). There are four components involved in the process of modelling. First, the observer must pay attention to events that are learned. Attention is determined by variety of variables, including the power and attractiveness of the model as well as the conditions under which behaviour is viewed. Second, it must be retained, with the observed behaviour represented in memory through either an imaginal or a verbal representational system. Third, symbolic representation now must be converted into appropriate actions similar to the originally modelled behaviour. To start reproducing may involve skills the observer has not yet required. Lastly, the observational learning process involves motivation as a variable. There must be, for instance, sufficient incentive to motivate the performance of the modelled actions (Grusec, 1992).

Bandura also introduced self-efficacy as a context of an explanatory model of human behaviour and how it will influence their actions in the face of overwhelming problems, defined as 'beliefs in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and over environmental events' (Bandura, 2001). One's perception of his/her capabilities and confidence of being able to complete a concrete task, may not always be compatible with the actual accomplished skills and abilities of this person. If the overestimation represents a slight discrepancy, then it can be considered a benefit as it inspires people to go beyond their immediate reach and stimulate them to put more effort to excel their usual performances (Bandura, 2001). However, the discrepancy between actual and perceived self-efficacy should not be a gap, as according to Gage & Polatajko (1994) the inaccuracies in perception of one's performance, despite the fact they are too pessimistic or optimistic, may result in notable repercussions. It is important to mention, that although perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of behaviour, when capabilities are lacking, the desired performance cannot be achieved only based on the expectations of the individual (Bandura, 1989). Additionally, Bandura finds that mastery experiences are the most effective source for creation of efficacy perception and boosting efficacy level (Bandura, 1989). Mastery experiences can be previous experiences in a specific area in the form of knowledge, practices, procedures or practical experiences with a concrete task that has been dealt with success and therefore increased the sense of efficacy, which, according to Pearlmutter (1998) will influence one's efficacy for the next task to be performed successfully. It is found that beliefs of self-efficacy can contribute to the motivational process and decisions for behavioural change. This is so, because such beliefs affect the choice of action, how much effort will be put in it, how long people will persevere when confronting obstacles and the type of goals that will be set (Wood, Bandura, & Bailey, 1990). Pearlmutter (1998), finds that perceived self-efficacy influences one's readiness to promote change, as well as their level of motivation and commitment. The main implication is that if people believe they can succeed in the performance of a task, they will become involved in the particular activity and will behave with commitment, while if they think they cannot succeed, they will avoid the activity (Pearlmutter, 1998).

Reed et al. (2010) argues that for a process to be considered SL, must have three characteristics. First, a change in understanding has taken place in the individuals involved. Second, a process needs to demonstrate that the change goes beyond the individuals and becomes situated within wider social units. Third, change occurs through social interactions and processes between actors within a social network.

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Social networks were traditionally linked between the micro and macro levels and have also been demonstrating to have an influence on people's opinions and views. Changes in social networks might be found through changes of rules, norms and power relations. Social interactions can be one-directional (through information transmission) and multi-directional (in which the exchange of and deliberation over different ideas and arguments change prior perceptions through persuasion. In alignment with this, Gough et al. (2017) described it as "processes by which society democratically adapts its core institutions to cope with social and ecological change in ways that will optimise the collective well-being of current and future generations".

3.3 Social Capital

'Social capital' (SC) is a sociological concept that stands for the source which facilitates social movements as well as for the outcome of social movement activities (Edwards, 2013). Parris et al. (2015) describe that when SC is created it creates value for the life within this particular community. Thus, a social network is formed and trust is built. Paldam (2000) introduces the 'trust-cooperation complex' which implies that SC stands for the quantity of trust that an individual has with other individuals within their community and wider society (Paldam, 2000). Through this development both individuals and the wider community benefit from a more supportive, trusting, and effective society (Parris et al., 2015). Generally, SC describes people's ability to work with other people to achieve a common goal in the structure of a voluntary organisation (Paldam, 2000). Although this form of cooperation is actively chosen by individuals, an outside enforcement may also take place through third party involvement, like governmental or institutional interest in social capital (Paldam, 2000). Moreover, governments and institutions might passively support SC through a legal and political environment that favours the social movement activities (Paldam, 2000). Furthermore, Putnam's instrument is the density of voluntary organisations (Paldam, 2000).

Woolcock (2000) describes that the most fundamental agents for creating SC are a person's relatives, friends and associates. Putnam (1993) agrees that 'thick trust' develops in personal relations. The same structure holds for groups. Communities with a diverse set of social networks and civic associations are stronger and able to fight issues such as poverty and move forward quicker and more agile (Woolcock, 2000). Therefore, SC describes the norms and networks that get people to act collectively and voluntarily (Woolcock, 2000; Putnam, 1993). Putnam (1993) organised these three resources as follows: first, trust and the supporting elements for development, second, the importance of social norms and obligations and third, the presence of social networks and formation of voluntary organisation (Siisiäinen, 2000).

Putnam emphasized that SC is a collective quality produced and shared by members of a group. Building on this, Flora and Fey (2004) examined community contexts and created a classification that connects two aspects of social capital: bonding and bridging network for effective community action. Bonding networks refer to strong connections among individuals and groups with similar background while bridging networks refer to weaker connections among individuals and groups with different backgrounds. Flora and Fey (2004) argue that communities with high levels of bonding and bridging networks will be engaging in effective action while communities with low levels of bonding and bridging networks suffer from individualism and find it difficult to engage in community action. The communities with strong bonding, but weak bridging tend to have conflicts between separate insider groups which are competing for control of decision-making. Communities with strong bridging but weak bonding networks tend to leave too much control in de the hand of powerful outsiders. These aspects of network themes can be helpful when locating communities on a continuum from weak to strong in term of these two types of networks.

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Figure 1 shows a community Social Capital Model developed by Chazdon and Lott (2010). This focuses on how communities can improve their Social Capital by strengthening their residents' trust and engagement within three distinct networks: bonding, bridging and linking. Linking networks are defined as networks and institutionalized relationships among unequal agents. Compared with bridging, which connect individuals or groups who are not alike but more or less equal in terms of status of power, linking networks are based as explicit vertical power differentials. These vertical connections to organizations and systems help residents gain resources and bringing about change. Linking networks is thus a third category of social capital to measure community strength.
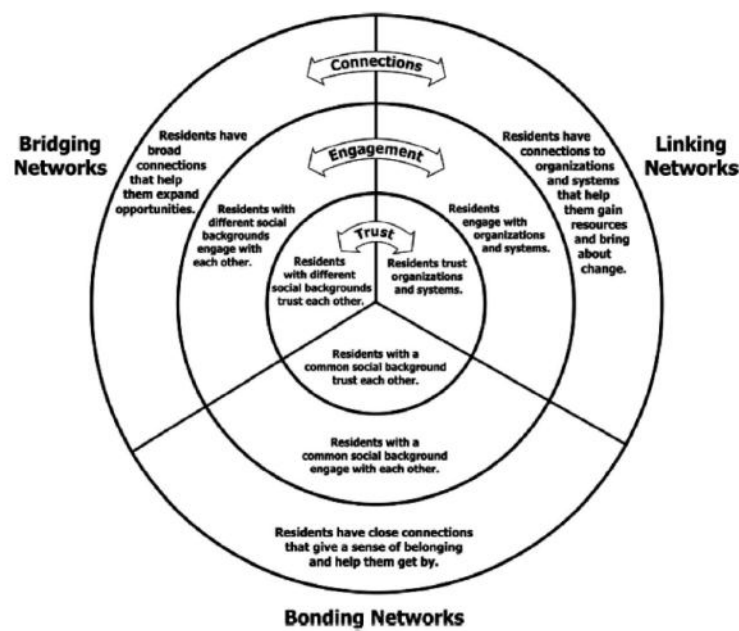
Figure 1. Community social capital model (Chazdon & Lott, 2010).

3.4 Ecopsychology

'Psychology, so dedicated to awakening human consciousness, needs to wake itself up to one of the most ancient human truths: we cannot be studied or cured apart from the planet' (James Hillman).

Ecological psychology or ecopsychology "first defined by Theodore Roszak" is a term for the emerging synthesis of psychology and ecology (Hibbard, 2003). As a type of psychology, it seeks to comprehend humankind's interrelationship with the natural nonhuman world, to diagnose what is wrong with that interrelationship and to suggest paths to healing (Roszak, 1995). Ecopsychology grew out of the environmental movement, which began in the 1960s in response to the dawning recognition that modern industrial civilization had engendered an environmental crisis (Hibbard, 2003).

Studies suggest various definitions of ecological psychology: according to Winter (1996), it is the study of human experience and behaviour in its physical, political and spiritual context in order to build a sustainable world. Kinder (1994) defines ecopsychology as a study which explores how our psyche is influenced by our environment as well as the environmental conditions influencing the way we think and feel, treat nature and other creatures around us. According to Kindler, 'Environmental psychology is typically concerned with the effects of particular environmental conditions, such as stress,

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pollution, noise, urbanization, crowding, and so forth, on individuals' (Kinder, 1994). By definition ecopsychology aims to understand the ecological crisis from a psychological perspective (Hibbard, 2003). Taking into account all the mentioned definitions, ecopsychology aims to explore the interrelations between human and nature relative to ecological crisis as it grew from it (Hibbard, 2003)

Scull (2008) discusses how actions towards nature need to be changed to overcome the existing psychological alienation from the natural environment (Scull, 2008). Thus, ecopsychologists mention that improving the relationship between human and nature happens on several levels (Hibbard, 2003; Scull, 2008). One of those levels of ecopsychology is the experiential learning, that is assumed to help humans arrange or rearrange their emotional and spiritual connection within their ecological system (Scull, 2008). More precisely, experiential learning can already begin in early childhood as a significant life experience that might continue, e.g. in wilderness experiences.

It is difficult to indicate a clear place of ecopsychology along other disciplines, as it has the potential to break down barriers between many contrasting approaches to the human-nature relationship and can be located at the intersection of three different dimensions, as illustrated in Figure 3. Indefinite boundaries between ecopsychology and neighbouring disciplines appear.

To resume ecopsychology as a discipline, it has to be mentioned that it is a mixture of experiential environmental education, natural history, and science. One can learn about nature and ecology through attentive contact with the natural world (Scull, 2008). Building on a foundation of direct experience with nature, ecopsychology is about formulating a language and set of models of the human-nature relationship (Scull, 2008).

Figure 2. The position of ecopsychology in relation to other sub-disciplines. The boundaries are vague and ecopsychology is informed by all these neighbouring fields. (Scull, 2008).

In ecopsychology people coexist in a cycle of life, like other organisms, and are directly confronted with the physical world and not just mental constructs (Chawla, 2007). Furthermore, ecopsychology suggests and describes that individual psychology takes place when people learn through movement and exploration, such as children growing up close to nature or through playing outdoors. Therefore, being a human means being involved in constant movement (Gibson, 2000). Under ideal conditions children and adolescents discover the world through a wide range of movements in the place where they live and in nature, since the natural environment plays a crucial part in this experience.

For learning and exploration, nature is a good playground and field of study since nothing happens twice in the natural world (e.g. the chemistry of water) (Chawla, 2007).

By seeing people first and foremost as moving organisms in the environment, ecopsychology sees them as a part of a relational system (Hibbard, 2003). Ecopsychologist Gibson (1979) suggested the concept of affordances, which describes the properties of the environment that are described by the relationship between the environment and other organisms. According to his concept affordances lay in the relationship between nature and human-beings. Focussing on the subject of the paper the example can be as follows: a wave has a certain shape and thus, allows a surfer to surf on it. This example relies on the logic from Heft (1988). Therefore, it is about all creatures' ability to take advantage of the resources that the environment holds. Success depends not just on the qualities of the environment, but equally on the biological systems that creatures have evolved to detect and use information about these qualities, as well as the particular capabilities of individual organisms. Of course, the level of affordances provided to humans are very different depending on the living conditions (Kytta, 2004, 2006).

Various studies (Chawla, 2007; Arnold, 2009; Sivek, 2002; Bymer & Gray, 2009; Gibson, 2000) define stronger connection with the nature in adolescence stages for those who were raised in a less urban setting and had strong role models (parents, care givers, teachers), taking care of the environment around them by action (Chawla, 2007) or by significant life experiences (Arnold, 2009). Significant Life Experiences (SLE) are associated with pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour. It was found that environmental leaders attribute their involvement in environmental action to spending time outdoors, with parents, peers and teachers or reading books on relevant topics, e.g. environmental destruction. The majority of the influences mentioned in SLE researches participants developed in their childhood or adolescence and involved passionate role models such as parents, caregivers or teachers (Chawla,1998; 2007; Sivek, 2002; Arnold, 2009). Previous researchers suggest that parents were formative for all participants. Supportive parents were consistently present, but only this factor was not enough to translate interest and values into action (Chawla 1998,2007; Sivek, 2002; Arnold, 2009). For most people, the caregivers who first introduced them to the world remain their examples of what to notice in the environment and how to respond to it (Chawla, 2007).

It is studied that adults who are the role models pay attention to the environment in four ways: seeing land or water as a limited resource essential for family identity and well-being; by disapproving of destructive practices; by experiencing pleasure while being out in nature; and through their own fascination of earth, sky, water and living creatures (Chawla, 2007). The same people who taught care for the land or water were also likely to express disapproval of other people's destructiveness, and when they showed fascination with the details of things, it underscored lessons about the value of family land or attitude to the natural water they use for family's well-being, or general expressions of pleasure at heading out into forests or fields (Arnold, 2009). By this ecopsychology explains the influence of close role model caregivers on further attitude to nature or environmental activism.

The final principle of ecological psychology which helps to explain the formative experiences of environmental activists is the importance of learning about the world first hand through one's own actions in it, rather than second hand when others represent it. Reed (1996) calls it 'the necessity of experience'. Outdoors especially, a person encounters a dynamic, dense, multi-sensory flow of diversely structured information, but some places are richer in this regard than others. For that reason, Reed (1996) suggested that the level of closeness to the nature or the access to affordance during the development of a child is of importance due to the fact that it will influence the future exploration and interconnection and care for the environment in adolescents, despite the influence of significant adults. Primary experience is also necessary because it occurs in the real world of full-bodied experiences, where people form personal relationships and attachments. This increases the motivation to protect the

surroundings, people they love and to build competencies and communities to do so (e.g. to protect the river they grow up close to or to save the park from buildings) (Reed, 1996; Chawla, 2007).

Chawla (2007), suggests the positive interactive cycle of a human engagement with the environment to support the principles of ecopsychology. As it is shown in Figure 3, the positive interactive cycle starts with an animate organism who is human and has the ability to be mobile (e.g. free to explore the environment autonomously) as well as the access to that environment. This is the base to start the experience of interaction with nature. To proceed with a deeper exploration one (or an animate organism) needs a certain level of affordances (as it was mentioned before with the branches of the tree or the waves example). When the interaction happened in a satisfying way and gave some further challenges to overcome there is a motivation to explore further, which positively leads to growing environmental knowledge and competence (Chawla, 2007). The cycle presents the ground for the human-nature interaction and can be interpreted broader than the focus on environmental activism. However, this research will use the cycle to display the work of principles of ecopsychology in the surfing community.
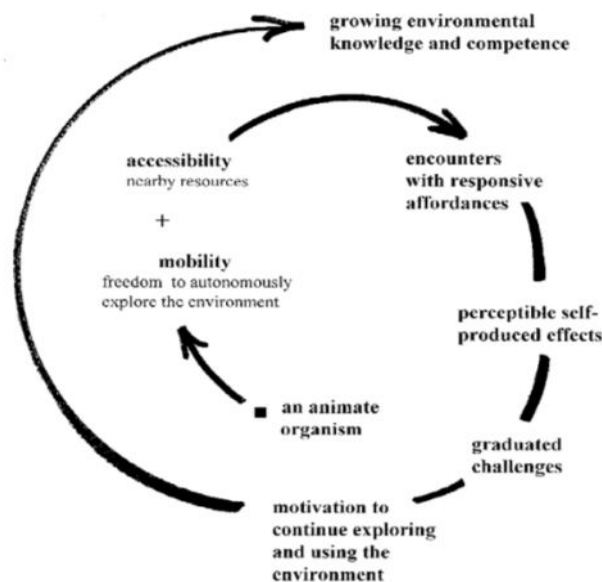
Figure 3. Interactive cycle of human engagement with the environment (by Chawla, 2007).

Last but not the least principle of ecological psychology relates to the value of organisations, which environmental activists also credited as important influences in their childhood and youth (Chawla, 2007). Barker (1968) developed the concept of 'behaviour settings', which are the customary patterns of behaviour in designated places where people gather to engage in particular activities at particular times (Chawla, 2007). These settings are constituted by the coordinated actions of people as well as the affordance of the place. According to Barker (1968) these settings are influential for further environmental activism. However, the base of affordances or role-models in a positive interactive cycle are usually the factors that are deeply-rooted (Chawla, 2007).

Putting these principles of ecological psychology together, they illustrate how formative childhood experiences, role-models and settings that a person experiences are to have a stronger interconnection with nature, which eventually leads to more powerful environmental values and care.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research design

This thesis is conducted with a qualitative and inductive research approach. Qualitative research is an umbrella term for a variety of approaches and strategies for conducting research aimed at finding how human beings understand, perceive, interpret, and experience the social world (Campbell & Hammersley, 2012). This research will be mainly concerned with the analysis of the complex, contingent, and context-sensitive character of social life. Moreover, the analysis will observe actions and outcomes, which are produced by people that interpret situations in different ways, and act individually on the base of these interpretations. The logic behind the inductive approach is that generalisations will be made about behaviour observed in a specific context or situation. In this instance, the gathering of data is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework (Saunders et al., 2012). This paper introduces research questions to define and narrow the scope of the study. Further the research questions aim for objectives that shall be achieved during the research process. There is no theoretical frame for successful motivators in grassroots initiatives in surfing communities, yet. Therefore, this will be explored by identifying patterns at existing and developing surfing communities in Ukraine and Germany. The theoretical framework (SC, SL and ecopsychology) is used as an analytical lens. The analysis will be followed by a discussion which will include recommendations for practice and further research. Eventually, the findings of the thesis will be summarized in a conclusion.

The chosen method in the research is semi-structured interviews, where interviews are conducted to understand the socially constructed world of research participants (Ritchie et al., 2014). This was chosen due to the conversational style, which is often relevant for learning about motivations behind people's behaviours and choices, their attitudes and beliefs, and the impacts on their lives of specific policies or events. Semi-structured interviews often provide valuable information that was not anticipated by the researcher (Raworth et al., 2012). In the thesis, 10 semi-structured interviews with open ended questions were used, as it allowed the flexibility and depth of responses (Wiles, 2005). These interviews were composed of a total sum of 12-40 questions, that were specifically adapted to the individual background of the interviewee's role in the surfing community. The noticeable difference in interview-questions shows the individual approach to each interviewee, which indicated another advantage of semi-structured interviews, which is the freedom it gives to the interviewees when answering questions in their own frame of reference without being restricted by leading questions from the interviewer (Wiles, 2005).

The semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed by the authors themselves and thus belong to primary data, which is generally understood to be the initial data specifically collected by the original researcher concerned about the research problem. The literature review will be the secondary data, understood as a portrait of data gathered from previous studies by a number of relevant researchers (Heaton, 2004). The findings from the literature will be presented result-based and focused on recent developments in the research field in the sections 'introduction', 'context' and 'previous research'. Therefore, the research will be approached by three modalities: by gathering formal data from publicly available data, by collecting informal data shared between researchers and by accessing one's own data. By using all three approaches, the team of researchers aim to answer the research question at micro (individual) and macro (societal) level.

The focus of this research is based on two countries - Germany and Ukraine, where surfing communities exist and can therefore be compared and examined. Hence, the authors interviewed 10 surfers from both countries: 3 Germans and 7 Ukrainians with different levels of involvement in GRIs,

surfing communities and environmental activism to collect the primary data for the research. The total sum of 10 interviews was chosen due to the predefined guidelines by Malmö University.

4.2 Collecting data

The ten interviewees were selected and consequently contacted through social media and email. The main criterion for the participation in the interviews was the level of involvement in surfing communities in Germany or Ukraine, as well as their participation in the IOSF, which was relevant solely for German interviewees due to the fact the USC has not yet been formalized as a GRI. Gender and age of participants was not taken into account, however, the place of living and growing up was considered due to the theoretical framework of the paper. Ukrainian interviewees were found through the USC groups in social media. German interviewees were found and chosen due to their involvement in relevant IOSF and local surf clubs.

The structure of the semi-structured interviews was the following: after explaining the purpose of the interview and research, questions regarding the interviewees' personal details (nationality, place of living etc.) followed. Afterwards, the interview was designed to continue with more detailed and open questions to obtain a deeper view on the participants opinion about relevant subject areas. The first questions were focused on the interviewee's previous experience in surfing and also tackled the reasons of involvement with the sport and connections with the nature of a particular interviewee. Then a variety of questions followed that enabled the interviewer to understand the level of involvement in IOSF (was relevant only to German interviewees). The interview questions were designed according to a chosen model of GRI motivators by Grabs et al (2015). The model was described earlier in the paper and provides an understanding of which factors have to be taken into account for societal change in a developing GRI. As the focus of this paper is the interconnection of influences on individual and societal levels on GRIs, the interview questions were formulated accordingly. Particularly the questions were composed to find out how the individual involvement of a surfer with the IOSF is constructed and which reasons for the involvement exist. Just as important for the research are the effects of the societal conditions and political support on the IOSF. The questions were also rooted in the ecopsychological theory to provide an overview of the participants' involvement in surfing through their connection with the nature.

One interview was conducted in person. The environment was chosen in a public environment to make the interviewee feel as comfortable as possible to create a friendly and trustworthy atmosphere (Flick, 2018). The additional nine interviews were then conducted via telephone or video-call, since the interviewees are not living in Sweden, where the research was conducted. Each of the interview got audio-recorded and then transcribed (Flick, 2018). Firstly, the transcript was authored in the native language of both interviewer and interviewee, secondly, the interviews were translated to the language of presentation. Whilst Flick (2018) describes different approaches to presenting translated findings bilingually, the authors of the thesis will present findings coherently only in the language of presentation. The answers of the interviews were used for an analysis by coding and categorizing the collected data. The exact composition of the 10 interviewees by code, gender, country, organisation and role is described in Table 1.

	Interviewee	Gender	Country	Organisation	Role	Interview date
	Table 1. Overview of 10 Interviewees from Germany and Ukraine					
1	German interviewee 1	m	Germany	IOSF	Founder of the Berlin chapter of the IOSF, activist, surfer	April 26, 2019
2	German interviewee 2	m	Germany	IOSF	Founder of the Berlin chapter of the ISOF, activist, surfer	May 8, 2019
3	German interviewee 3	f	Germany	Local surf club on a German island	Board member, youth leader, surfer	May 13, 2019
4	Ukrainian interviewee 1	m	Ukraine	/	Surfer	May 8, 2019
5	Ukrainian interviewee 2	m	Ukraine	/	Surfer	May 10, 2019
6	Ukrainian interviewee 3	m	Ukraine	USF	Surfer	May 9, 2019
7	Ukrainian interviewee 4	m	Ukraine	USF	President, Surfer	April 23, 2019
8	Ukrainian interviewee 5	m	Ukraine	/	Surfer	May 8, 2019
9	Ukrainian interviewee 6	m	Ukraine	/	Surfer	May 14, 2019
10	Ukrainian interviewee 7	m	Ukraine	USF	Co-Founder, surfer	May 14, 2019

4.3 Data analysis

The interviews are analysed with a narrative approach, which refers to any study that uses or analyses narrative materials, where narrative is defined as "a discourse, or example of it, designed to represent as a connected succession of happenings''. It may be used for comparison of groups, to learn about a social phenomenon, or to explore a personality. It is often used for the analysis of conversations or life stories obtained in interviews. The narrative is used to represent the character of a lifestyle of specific subgroups in society which are usually unheard, by exploring their subjective and inner experience on a relevant issue. (Lieblich et al., 1998). The narrative analysis thus bears great potential for gathering contemporary beliefs, individual and collective opinions and perceptions of culture (Alvesson, 2010).

Thus, the analysis will be focussed on comprehending the character of the specific subgroups of surfers and GRI participants by exploring the collected data through the theoretical lenses. In the final analysis the authors of the thesis will further study contemporary beliefs, by analysing determined

themes, in section 5.2. The themes 'self-efficacy' and 'trust' were chosen due to their apparent significance.

4.4 Research reliability and validity

Reliability is the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research, and validity is the degree to which the finding is interpreted in a correct way. Social science has relied almost entirely on techniques for ensuring reliability, in part because "perfect validity" is not even theoretically attainable (Golafshani, 2003).

The question whether the method and findings of the study are replicable and if future researchers will achieve the same results and interpretations, is within the discourse of reliability (Golafshani, 2003). Conducted interviews therefore address the topic of reliability by having particular patterns to compare and match the participants' answers within a clear research process and analysis method. Theoretical transparency is further presented through the theoretical framework given in the paper.

The validity of research describes the extent to which a study may be useful for other researches. Therefore, the validity of this study lies within approaches for analysing surfing movements and their potential for GRIs. The approach was presented in the structure of the interview questions, which was based on the principles of ecopsychology as well as the model by Grabs et al. (2015) with the focus on societal and individual motivators for GRI. Conclusion validity means the extent to which the data supports statements which are made based on analysed patterns, so that it is not reasonable to draw a general conclusion from just one individual interviewee's answer, rather there is a legitimate theoretical framework to ground the data into theory and to show the interconnections in order to generate helpful conclusion.

The science of philosophy of this thesis refers to the ontology and epistemology, which comprises the beliefs or assumptions of the reality (ontology) and the gaining of knowledge and relationship between research participant and researcher (epistemology) (6 & Bellamy, 2012).

Therefore, the approached used in this research paper is based on an ontological position referred to as constructivism, where knowledge is constructed through interaction with other people (personal experience) (6 & Bellamy, 2012). This approach is found compatible with the subject of surfing movement and its potential to become a GRI as the perspectives of representatives of surfing communities and personal experiences on the topic were the basics of the findings of this research.

The authors of this thesis are aware that there is a possibility for multiple interpretations and deductions of the data, knowledge and the additional information provided in this academic paper due to individual differences and multiple perspectives, as according to Rodwell (1998) constructivism is never final or absolute.

4.5 Research limitations

Due to the timeframe and the focus of this study, this research paper implies several limitations. The geographical limitation is acknowledged as the study focuses on Germany and Ukraine. This is suboptimal when contacting the interviewees and conducting the interviews. Initially, all the active members of IOSF from EU-countries were chosen to be interviewed to have a bigger scope of research comparison. But due to the timeframe and the level of responsiveness, the authors of the thesis opted to research Germany and Ukraine for a deeper comparison and exploration.

Besides the geographical limitation, another drawback of this study is the gender imbalance within the participants. As the criteria for the interviewees was mainly the level of involvement into

surfing and respective IOSF, the authors did not take into account the gender gap in surfing sport and out of 10 interviews 9 participants are male and 1 female.

One more critique of the research could lay in the narrow scope of the interviewees. As the authors focused on surfing communities, logically the representatives of those who were interviewed in the countries of the study's focus - Germany and Ukraine are members of that community. It would have been insightful to also gather opinions of ecological experts and representatives of local governmental agencies and political parties in regards to the research questions.

As well as more attention and further research could be dedicated to the extent and influence of a welfare state on activism and its interconnections.

A strength of the research is the collection of data from two different countries, Germany and Ukraine, in the respectively native languages of both the interviewer and interviewees. The researchers chose to proceed that way to respect the cultural affiliation. Partly, the native languages were chosen due to the lack of knowledge of English as a foreign language and mostly because of the interview participants', whose input to the focus of study was relevant. Consequently, the translation was conducted by the interviewers to provide the gathered information for all the authors of the thesis. Accordingly, collected data might miss some of the nuance expressed in the native languages of the interviewees, or mistranslated to some (small) degree by the authors of the thesis.

5. Analysis

The ten interviews that were conducted with German and Ukrainian surfers revealed antecedent findings. These findings and statements from the interviewees will be presented and interconnected to point out parallels and inconsistencies in regards to the chosen theories and background. The first paragraph will examine how far the interviewees confirm or dissent with the given argumentative structure of the thesis, that is based on the argumentation for the importance and trend towards local GRIs and furthermore, that surfing communities bear great potential for environmentalism (activism) due to their closeness to nature. These theoretical arguments will be linked to the collected data.

Further, the analysis will devote paragraphs to each theory described in previous segment 3, 'Theoretical framework'. More specifically the collected data will be analysed through the lenses of the chosen theories. First, the SL theory will be compared with the transcripts and relevant citations will be presented and explained. Second, the SC theory is going to be utilized to locate vital statements within the collected data, to highlight the SC components within surfing communities in Ukraine and Germany. Third, as the theoretical framework shows, the ecopsychology theories are an essential basis for argumentation in this thesis, therefore the ecopsychological elements will be highlighted and analysed with a sharper focus. The additional paragraphs will present the Ukrainian political context for activism and a description of the surfing community, as it is currently (2019) found.

The analysis will then further explore themes that were developed after the data was collected. These themes are 'trust' on a societal level and 'self-efficacy' on an individual level, which will look more specifically into the use of language and wording of the participants for further discussion.

5.1. Antecedent findings

Seyfang & Smith (2007) mention that GRIs facilitate beneficial intrinsic development for individuals and diffusion opportunities. Hence, notable intrinsic changes were observed. German surfers described that they grew as a person by learning to coordinate people, overview responsibilities and enhance knowledge and skills, such as improve in holding a speech or creating innovative events to raise environmental awareness. Their level of confidence increased by having a sense of belonging to a community, that acts collectively and shares visions. Finally, German surfers mentioned that since

they became a part of the GRIs they started to be more faith- and hopeful to make a difference in their community. Thus, this reflects one of the individual changes, such as greater civic engagement (German Interviewee 1; 2; 3). Some diffusion factors were also present. A German surfer discussed how the local group of the IOSF, in which he is active, succeeded in raising awareness about a plastic free lifestyle, when people were critical at the beginning, but inspired and interested at the end of the event or conversation (German Interviewee 3). Awareness-raising projects were prominent, since all German surfers mentioned being involved with a lot of volunteers around the community and country supporting sustainable development through their GRIs (German Interviewee 1; 2; 3). In contrast to an earlier finding (Seyfang & Smith, 2007), however, no evidence of altering mindsets of local policy-makers and politicians was detected in the surfing GRIs. Nevertheless, the importance of awareness-raising and individual changes through GRIs are considerable.

Various authors demonstrated that GRIs are functional for processes of niche development (Ornetzeder & Rohracher, 2013; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012). A surfer who previously volunteered for an international NGO with an environmentalism focus outside of the surfing community mentioned that the NGO was great but did not reach out to people 'seeking a certain lifestyle' in the city. Moreover, he confidently mentioned that more people from his generation seek a more niched kind of approach with events and approaches (German Interviewee 1). Another surfer volunteering for the IOSF, mentioned that the organization approaches environmentalism through cultural niches with information-stands at e.g. surf movie nights, which already attract the right audience (German Interviewee 2). This aligns with the theory, which explains that GRIs are seen as niches of experimentation of new social and cultural arrangements (Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012; Seyfang & Smith, 2007). In summary it can be said that German activists tend to foster networking activities by engaging the stakeholders, which is one of the requisites for successful niche growth (Ornetzeder & Rohracher, 2013). These findings strengthen the argument for a trend towards local GRIs.

In addition to that multiple interviewees agreed that surfing is becoming more popular globally, but also on their local level (Ukrainian Interviewee 7; German Interviewee 1; 2). A Ukrainian surfer assumes that in Ukraine, SUP and classical surfing is quite a young sport. Moreover, he states, that the costs of buying equipment and traveling to surf-spots is a reason why not many people choose to surf, due to limited financial flexibility. Nevertheless, he noticed a trend, a noticeable increase of popularity when it comes as it becomes more accessible (Ukrainian interviewee 2). Multiple Ukrainian interviewees mentioned the evolving/growing surfing community in Ukraine (Ukrainian interviewee 2; 5; 6). Therefore, it is assumed that these trends combined bear a great potential for environmentalism within the surfing communities. More concretely, the strong feeling of attachment to nature, especially the ocean, plays a key role in this development. As mentioned by German as well as Ukrainian surfers, the affinity to nature is a powerful experience. Furthermore, a German surfer, who is active for an IOSF, explains, that this nature-affinity did not appear through surfing, but rather, that his closeness to nature, which he felt before, made him surf, because he wanted to experience the sensation of a human-natural-connection. Therefore, it appears that more contemporary and local approaches for the alignment and formation of GRIs and environmentalism through niches, such as surfing, create a stronger proximity of the involved participants. The promising tendency will be further analysed in the subsequent paragraphs.

5.2. Social Learning

A process of observational learning and the four involved components were noticed when asking some interviewees if they were involved in environmental activism. German and Ukrainian surfers are involved with communal 'beach clean ups'. This happened for them through a process: First, they payed attention to people collecting trash at the beach. This image was retained by experiencing the view of a clean beach scenery. Thereupon, as the surfers (the learners) internalised the necessity for a clean beach they started to change their behaviour by cleaning the beach more often. Eventually, the intrinsic motivation differs between the interviewees, as Germans keep seeing the incentives for it, whilst the Ukrainians saw that the beach environment keeps being polluted by other people or companies, that perform 'construction'. As one Ukrainian surfer precisely mentioned, that in his opinion, people do not have enough motivation to take action (Ukrainian Interviewee 7).

Even if SL states that learning starts eminently by observing, it does not always need to be like this. SL can also be learned by doing. One Ukrainian surfer (Ukrainian interviewee 3) stated that he does not consider himself an activist, though he acknowledges that there is something happening intrinsically. He describes that he "will not go on strike or start a revolution.", because he believes that most importantly, it needs to start within oneself. He later on refers to himself as a "calm activist", that does not force his beliefs onto others, but rather leads by example (Ukrainian interviewee 3, personal communication, May 9, 2019). Just as other Interviewees agreed and stated that they influence their immediate circle of acquaintances. As a result, the change becomes situated within wider social units.

Germans involved with local chapters of IOSF mentioned that their interest in environmentalism and activism was initiated through mass media and their awareness that was gained as a result of that. More specifically, one of the involved surf activist said that "I think I got in touch with this whole plastic topic and ocean pollution in 2011, when I read an article in a newspaper." (German interviewee 1, personal communication, April 26, 2019). For this to be considered as SL, as described by Reed et al. (2010), three stages need to take place. The first, was the described scene, of understanding a topic on an individual level. This phase described is one-directional, where the characters receive information. Followed by the next step, which is the stage where multiple interviewees from Germany and Ukraine explain, that they have already influenced family, friends and people close to them (Ukrainian interviewee 1,2,6), this implied that wider social units have learnt, mainly because the wider circle has realized that the overall living conditions will benefit from these changes (e.g. less garbage in the neighbourhood or on the beach implies that everyone will have an advantage from a better and cleaner environment. Therefore, the level of multi-directional learning was reached, when mentioned interviewees founded a local chapter of the IOSF to engage in environmental activism in their local environment. The chosen organizational structure of direct democracy shows that the individuals aim for a collective learning experience to "optimise the collective well-being of current and future generations" (Gough et al., 2017).

Not everyone is necessarily influenced by a certain person, when it comes to increased awareness about environmentalism. German interviewees were influenced by mass media, which bears potential to consequently influence acquaintances, relatives and proximal individuals with their own beliefs (German interviewee 1; 2). Meanwhile, for Ukrainian interviewees it is unlikely being influenced and educated about environmentalism by mass media. A Ukrainian surfer mentioned that they are far from being environmentally active, as he said "partially because of the information we are surrounded with, I mean, monitor our media: they are all about corruption and war, and pensions and aging of the nation. There is basically nothing about the climate change or a plastic-free life'' (Ukrainian interviewee 6, personal communication, May 9, 2019). Another Ukrainian surfer agreed and assumed that there is huge potential in Ukraine, because he sees various environmental threats, whilst he also

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witnesses ignorance and suppression because of "more burning issues, like elections, war or religion" (Ukrainian interviewee 2, personal communication, May 10, 2019). These results are similar to those reported by Turchenko et al. (2017), explaining how Ukrainian media does not inform or educate about climate regulations, nor raises awareness among the population, due to more important issues like social, political and military events.

5.3 Social Capital

A Ukrainian that is part of the USC does not define himself as an activist. Yet, him and his family engage in actions on a local scale. "We go out on Saturdays to the events of local importance (like beach clean ups or neighbourhood clean ups). And it's all organized and the initiative of our neighbours or some active citizens of the neighbourhood." (Ukrainian interviewee 2, personal communication, May 10, 2019). He also mentions how schools do not thematise topics like recycling and the need to protect the environment, so him and his wife decided to educate their children themselves. Moreover, he stated, that for their children environmentally friendly behaviour, like picking up trash comes naturally already. He adds that in his perspective activism is not about signing petitions or going to strikes, but more about conscious consumption of the resources and raising awareness about those topics, at least to one's children and the closest acquaintances (Ukrainian Interviewee 2). Roger Barker (1968) described the 'behaviour settings', where the importance of an influencing organisation is described in early childhood and youth (Chawla, 2007). This describes the phenomenon that the Ukrainian surfer (Ukrainian interviewee 2) explained. The neighbourhood actions, for him, do not feel like activism, yet, they influence future generations and create an impact. From a perspective of ecopsychology, these neighbourhood-actions create a closeness to the immediate environment and promote a sense of responsibility. A sharp presence and interconnection of SC and ecopsychology exists. As Flora and Fey (2004) argued, communities with high levels of bonding and bridging network will be engaging in effective action as an outcome. In this case, the relationship between families (bonding network) and between the neighbours (bridging network) is strong and that is why there is a high degree of community action.

When a social network forms, trust is supposed to build up, Paldam (2000) explains and introduces the 'trust-cooperation complex', which suggests that SC stands for the quantity of trust that an individual has with other individuals within their community and wider society. In contrast to that, multiple interviewees were not entirely agreeing. Their extensive awareness about the climate crisis, plastic waste in waters and on the beaches and the certain environmental effects, creates only a limited amount of trust. Simultaneously, interviewees feel very disappointed in societies and humanity in general, even though within their circle of activism they feel a certain degree of trust among their peers, members, relatives etc. (German interviewee 1; 2; 3). The Ukrainian surfers shared that people who were not raised or lived near the coast did not understand the value of nature and used to harm the area by polluting it, so it seemed that their level of trust was also not really high (Ukrainian interviewee 1; 4; 7).

The so called 'third party involvement' (Paldam, 2000), describes the legal and political environment that either favours or overcomplicates the formation of GRIs within a country. All German interviewees agreed that Germany is an ideal place for GRI formation despite not completely agreeing about political seriousness about long-term actions towards environmental protection and policies (German interviewee 1; 2; 3). The mentioned conflict is characterized as one of the necessary motivators for empowering GRIs in niches, such as surfing communities (Ornetzeder & Rohracher, 2013; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012). As opposed to this, the Ukrainian interviewees criticize a holistic absence of environmental policies in the political circles (Ukrainian

interviewee 2; 3; 6; 7). Moreover, Kjølsrød (2013) argued that societies are more improbable to only rely on political unions and parties to act but would instead become active themselves. As the interviews with Ukrainian surfers clarified, this assumption shall not be adapted to any national context, without further investigation, since it does not holistically apply to their experiences. Surprisingly, the German interviewees declare that an adjuvant national context for activism and GRIs movements is present due to their feeling of safety and support from the state. The further Ukrainian context of 'third party involvement' will be further elaborated in '5.6.1 Trust'.

5.4 Ecopsychology

Multiple Interviewees from Ukraine and Germany grew up by the ocean (or the sea, in Ukrainian context) (German interviewee 1; Ukrainian interviewee 1; 2; 3; 4; 7). A German surfer, who grew up on an island, mentioned that she feels a strong connection to the ocean and adds, that water is her element (German interviewee 3). Chawla (2007) explains that children, as well as adolescents, learn and experience the world at the place where they live and grow up through the movements they make, which function as a field of study. These naturally occurring processes of learning can happen through the exploration of nature and the bare movement within the coastal environment (Chawla, 2007). Given the explored context of the thesis, the surfers that grew up by the coast, as well as the surfers, that nourish their connection to the natural world by spending much time there, take part in this exploration and process of learning and therefore, nourish their connection to nature to an extended degree.

Various interviewees talk about a very deep and ever-present connection to the ocean or sea (Ukrainian interviewee 1; 2; 3; 6). Moreover, one interviewee adds that "while surfing, doesn't matter if you are catching the wave or just enjoying the still water or the sunset, you kin[da] connected to something bigger than just water or the beach" (Ukrainian interviewee 3, personal communication, May 9, 2019). This statement reassures the strong connection to the ocean/sea. Strongly agreed by a fellow Ukrainian surfer, who stated that he also feels the sensation of belonging to something bigger, when he surfs (Ukrainian interviewee 7).

A Ukrainian interviewee added the closeness of people living in a maritime environment, that did not necessarily grow up there, but chose to live there. The same interviewee explained that people who live on the coast, they feel dependent on the sea and understand the value of the sea (Ukrainian interviewee 4). Therefore, the interviewed surfers agree on a special connection to the ocean/sea and environment, which supports the ecopsychological statement that people who grew up in a less urban settings or had a significant life experience (e.g. with the sea in this case) are more prone to take care of the nature and value it stronger (Chawla, 2007; Arnold, 2009).

As it was presented in the theoretical background of the paper, Chawla (2007) suggests the 'positive interactive cycle of human engagement with the environment' in order to support the principles of ecopsychology. In that cycle, humans have to pass through steps of interaction with nature to gain a deep level of knowledge and competence. According to the cycle (Chawla, 2007) one needs to have access to nature and the mobility to explore it as a base to start experiencing the interconnection and interaction, as well as the level of affordance (relationship between the environment and other organisms), with it. When the interaction happens, the strength of natural powers can be challenging but also motivational to overcome the challenges in order to explore further. The deeper exploration can lead to gaining environmental knowledge and competence. According to the data from the interviews all the participants had unique experiences and interactions with nature. Surfing was either the initial stage of it, a part of it or the result of the previous interaction. The access the exploration of nature was explained by Ukrainian interviewees saying that while growing up by the sea it was inevitable for them to end up as a surfer (Ukrainian interviewee 1; 3). Concluding the access and

mobility of those who grew up at the cost was obvious and inevitable: "I started in my childhood from various attempts, because I lived by the sea and always wanted to do something marine" (Ukrainian interviewee 2, personal communication, May 10, 2019). Challenges which appeared after the interaction with nature were named as the struggle to obtain the participant's surfing skills (Ukrainian interviewees 2; 3; 5). Surfing as a sport or a leisure activity needs dedication and permanent practice. Therefore, the surfers explain that they have to interact with nature constantly to overcome the challenge of losing skills, in order to improve their surfing performance and satisfaction (Ukrainian interviewees 2; 3; 5). A Ukrainian interviewee assumes that surfers do not usually discuss or share their deep connection with nature and the ocean with others (Ukrainian interviewee 1). Though, for the German interviewees the concept of sharing is different: "you talk about the waves and the strength of the ocean [...] So I think that's communicated among friends, at least surfer friends (German interviewee 1, personal communication, April 26, 2019). The level of sharing and exchanging the experiences can be different in the surfing communities and is an individual feature, rather than one assigned to a surfing community in general.

All of the interviewees expressed their involvement in surfing by building a stronger connection with nature (those who grew up at the coast) or reconnecting with it (those who were living in the urban settings). As mentioned previously, they did not reflect on the experience and felt like surfing was an obvious hobby to have while growing up or living close to the coast. Those, who were distant from the sea for various reasons wanted to establish the connection with nature after living in an urban environment again and surfing became a tool: "I assume, this is my desire to reconnect with the nature again. [Cos] I live in a big city, in block of flats with my family. We do not even have a garden. So, I made surfing kind of my purpose to travel to the sea more often and also to show the example to my daughters, who are also already involved in this sport" (Ukrainian interviewee 6, personal communication, May 14, 2019). The surfer mentions multiple motivators to make surfing a tool: his living conditions, his immediate urban environment and his desire to reconnect with nature. Something similar is mentioned by a German surfer, engaged in a local surfing club where she acts as the youth leader, namely that she always needs to come back to the sea and live close to the water (German interviewee 3).

However, some of the surfers did not have a direct goal to re-establish their connection but obtained it after engaging into surfing sport: "I was born in Shostka, Sumska oblast. There was no sea, of course. There were rivers and lakes. But I grew up in very urban conditions. We lived in a block of flats [...] So, basically, I didn't have that marine connection or a dream. I obtained it later, when I started to surf" (Ukrainian interviewee 5, personal communication, May 8, 2019). Once again, the perceived conflict of the urban environment was mentioned, which led to the desired connection to a more natural environment.

5.5 Ukraine: Political context

A Ukrainian surfer explains that Ukrainians in Odessa, where he resides, are busy with meeting their basic needs. Interestingly, the interviewee mentions Maslow's Pyramid[4] to refer to his perceptions about basic needs and other psychological or safety needs. He says that in the conditions they live, it is not logical to expect any high activistic impulses from people, and the authorities are advantageous enough for people to be able to satisfy their basic needs such as nutrition, housing or paying rent (Ukrainian interviewee 1).

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[4] Maslow's Pyramid of needs (1943) is an hierarchical approach to human motivation including bottom to top: immediate psychological needs, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization (Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg, & Schaller, 2010).

Different surfers agree that being employed and receiving a reliable incomes allow them to surf and follow this interest. Thus, they assume that the high costs of surfing as a hobby is the reason why it is not considered entirely accessible in Ukraine. Moreover, a lack of understanding is described concerning knowledge about the health benefits of this leisure activity, which is just as advantageous as wholesome food and a healthy lifestyle, interviewees describe. Another line of thought argues that the lack of activism refers to the general lower level of wealth in Ukraine, stressing that while having a stable income one can be more dedicated to hobbies like surfing or follow any other priorities, but this is not applicable for the majority of the Ukrainian population (Ukrainian interviewee 2; 3). Another interviewee suggests that environmental activism starts when basic needs are steadily covered, so that the population has capacities for developing an awareness about climate change and other environmental topics, because momentarily there are "more important things they have to care about" (Ukrainian interviewee 3, personal communication, May 9, 2019). The interviewee is one more time referring to food and housing while stressing that climate change awareness is not considered a basic need (Ukrainian interviewee 3). Another participant adds that there is no prevalent understanding or present mindset of prioritizing ecology and an 'eco' lifestyle, because nature is considered to be 'given': "at least in our country and we always used the resources and never were thoughtful of how to make nature comfortable too" (Ukrainian interviewee 5, personal communication, May 8, 2019). The statement clarifies that the interviewee's mindset has already shifted to being aware of the human's effect on nature and in reverse, the nature's need for protection.

In contradiction we have the statements of German activists (German interviewee 1; 2) that describe the benefits of having more time for activism in times of uncertainties, e.g. finding a new job, because the state support in Germany is strong enough to let them turn these times of uncertainties into purpose-driven times, which for them meant to engage with the IOSF.

Moreover, a Ukrainian surfer mentions obstacles like the challenge to lobby against illegal construction sites and further harmful issues initiated by official institutions, which slow down the development of surfing. Interviewees agree and mention the difficulties of corruption one faces in everyday and especially professional life (Ukrainian interviewee 4; 3; 6). Yekelchyk (2015) supports these statements and approves that Ukraine has not managed to eradicate corruption. The president of USF further adds that "sometimes I feel like all of my efforts for the beach cleaning or attitude to plastic have to be communicated horizontally" (Ukrainian interviewee 3, personal communication, May 9, 2019). He describes the wish for support from official institutions and the government, instead of having to facing obstacles and ignorance from these parties. Moreover, he mentioned repeatedly that the political situation in Ukraine is not ideal for environmental focus and changes, because the government has to deal with many urgent issues, including a war (Ukrainian interviewee 3). When mentioning the 'war' he is referring to the armed conflict in the Eastern part of the country. He acknowledges that even though not all regions in Ukraine were affected, it has been and still is very present all over the country.

5.6 Themes

For the advanced analysis, a relevant set of themes were selected to be further examined. These themes were chosen due to apparent thematic accumulations in the transcripts. Moreover, the detected themes of 'trust' and 'self-efficacy' will be interpreted to analyse if the trend of GRI movements in Europe is being facilitated in Ukraine as well. Although the theoretical framework has been applied to the findings from the collected data in the previous paragraph, the developed themes will more specifically look into the use of language and phrasing for further relevant outcomes.

5.6.1 Trust (societal level)

GRI motivators on the societal level are characterized by strong political support of governmental agencies and the level of trust present in societies (Grabs et al., 2015). The explicit mentioning of the low level of trust towards the government expressed by Ukrainian interviewees is striking. Therefore, the following paragraph is analysing the theme of 'trust'.

When referring to the government, the Ukrainian interviewee used the words 'corrupted', 'rich people' and 'whom you cannot trust' (Ukrainian interviewee 7, personal communication, May 14, 2019). Generally, the attitude towards the government and local authorities was described by lacking trust as well as low-engagement in environmental issues in coastal cities (Ukrainian interviewee 1). The word 'corruption' and a generally negative attitude to authorities were mentioned multiple times by participants from Ukraine. The interviewees were unanimously about their attitude to corruption and obvious repercussions from illegal construction at the surf spots and generally on the coastal line (Ukrainian interviewees 1; 2; 5; 6). The president of the USF assumes that the local budget is "divided and spent on other possible personal needs of officials" (Ukrainian interviewee 1, personal communication, May 8, 2019). The assumption sums up the low level of trust and since they are not verified, it shows that even if the local authorities are not corrupted and functioning properly, the participants still expressed their biased negativism about the cooperation with them. An example given by a member of USF while organising a surfing competition is that the surfing community was expecting the need "to bribe a lot of people at local authorities' in order to make the championship happen." (Ukrainian interviewee 3, personal communication, May 9, 2019). The member of the USF describes the communication with the authorities as 'challenging', whether it turns out to be corrupt or not.

It was widely agreed among the Ukrainian surfers then that the 'third party involvement' (Paldam, 2000) does not actively support social movements, or the development of a surfing movement, yet. In summary it can be stated, that the interviewed Ukrainian surfers feel like the government is not only not supporting them, but further, they feel like they need to work against it. The prominent lack of trust and missing optimism is therefore in the knowledge due to demotivating actions from political parties and official channels, such as illegal actions, that have been experienced by the interviewees themselves. Only the co-founder of the USF mentioned the possibility of policies, that might support Ukrainian environmental actions. He honestly adds that he does not know about their existence though. Right after he added that the government might not share these because they might be "afraid of criticism or the feedback" (Ukrainian interviewee 7, personal communication, May 14, 2019). Therefore, the co-founder of USF highlights the high degree of uncertainty, that many Ukrainians described, as a precondition for their low level of trust.

5.6.2 Self-efficacy (individual perspective)

The stress on self-efficacy arose while analysing the surfers' responses to the interview questions concerning environmental activism and their personal role and perception of it. It was striking in all Ukrainian interviews that participants did not define themselves as activists and their given definitions were comprehensively explained in an expanded way.

Since self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (2001) as the "belief in one's capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and over environmental events", it appears intuitive that while not having a strong trust in one's capability to implement the intended change, taking action seems meaningless. Particularly in the face of more overwhelming problems, when referring to the Ukrainian context, as previously mentioned in '5.5 Ukraine: Political context'.

Defining themselves as 'activist' by using the words and collocations like 'calm', 'not radical'

or 'will not go on strike or start a revolution' can be characterized as questioning one's own capabilities to influence societal or behavioural change of others. Ukrainian surfers (Ukrainian interviewee 1; 2; 3; 6; 7) expressed their ability to affect others by 'starting from yourself', by being a 'role-model' to others (especially the closest, such as relatives and young generations) and being consistent in one's own values. Mentioned interviewees focus on micro-influencing their closest circle like younger generations: "the steps I am doing towards shaping the mindset of my kids is already activism" (Ukrainian interviewee 6, personal communication, May 14, 2019), neighbours or students, along with teaching kite-surfing. As a result of this reserved approach, empowering environmental activism throughout entire country, Ukraine, is hard to reach.

On the contrary, one of the German co-founders of the local chapter of the IOSF stresses that activism is about taking the initiative, taking actions by sometimes being extreme (German interviewee 1). For them the 'activism' was described with words 'initiative', 'priority', 'actions' and 'extreme'. Even the other co-founder of the local chapter of the IOSF describes himself as being 'moderately activistic', while activism defines a big part of his life (German interviewee 2). Overall, there were no wordings in the conducted German interviews that might indicate low self-efficacy of the participants.

A related concept in self-efficacy is the positive outcome expectation and an optimistic attitude related to the effectiveness of one's efforts (Bandura 1989). The co-founder of the USF said that "my activism is my own behaviour and sharing my views with people, but I do not think it's enough for changing behaviours and mindsets." (Ukrainian interviewee 7, personal communication, May 14, 2019). With this statement and the previous analysis, it can be concluded that the level of optimism in their attitudes and efforts is rather low. However, the participants provide examples of approaching environmental threats, such as plastic pollution or climate crisis, in everyday life. These approaches were named as beach and park clean ups, awareness raising and trying to positively influence their close circle of acquaintances and relatives. According to Grabs (2007), these small actions play an important role in improving their self-efficacy.

Further, some striking characters traits emerged from the collected data. More precisely, the findings refer to the president, co- founder and board-members from USF and co-founders of the local chapter of the IOSF. The mentioned leaders show a notable degree of determination.

Both founders of the local chapter of the IOSF mentioned their future ambitions, which involve influencing more people outside of their organisation, as they realize that the only way to motivate extensive change is by influencing as much people as they can (German interviewee 1; 2). That is the reason why they also desire the growth of their chapter without changing their basic democratic structure. One of the founders of the local chapter of the IOSF mentioned that he became actively involved in environmentalism due to the fact that he was being influenced by people in Japan (German interviewee 2). Therefore, he felt inspired by the extent of influence he felt from these activists and aims for the same in the local chapter he is active in. Although, both founders of the local chapter of the IOSF have mentioned that they are not actively looking for new members, yet (German interviewee 1; 2). The founders admitted that the discrepancy of their vision and their action is owed to their limited resources, in greater detail the amount of highly involved volunteers, which would want to take responsibility.

More concretely, the above-mentioned character traits of the interviewed leaders (German Interviewee 1; 2; Ukrainian Interviewee 4; 7) show an extensive, intrinsic drive towards environmentalism. One of the German co-founders described the processes of building up the local chapter of the IOSF, and his career as an activist, as 'self-nourishing' (German Interviewee 1). This use of words implies how comfortable he feels in his role and how satisfactory the results for him appear. A high degree of initiative is present. The president of the USF explains that he finds himself in a 'management position' for the first time (Ukrainian interviewee 7). Therefore, he acknowledges his

leadership role, whilst accepting that it is a role he still needs to identify with. Nevertheless, the passion that drives these leaders (German Interviewee 1; 2; Ukrainian Interviewee 4; 7), leads to investing time and initiative sufficiently to create a progress of the 'organisational development'. The authors of the thesis see a strong influence of leadership roles on the development of the GRI. The mentioned leaders are the ones responsible for organising, taking initiative and moreover, mobilizing followers by inspiring them, reaching out to them and lastly, by taking control. Hence, a leader-follower-relationship is detected, since distinct power-structures are in existence.

6. Discussion

The following discussion is structured as follows. Firstly, theoretical findings about the theory of ecopsychology will be elaborated and put in context for future research. Secondly, the research questions will be answered by discussing the gathered findings from the analysis and discussion. The following paragraph starts with discussing the Research Question 1, followed by Research Question 1.1 and 1.2, which will be answered by inspecting the interrelation of 'self-efficacy' and 'trust', that stand for the individual and societal level. These findings will eventually be interpreted and visualised in the 'Horizon of trust'.

Firstly, the background provided relevant information about the interconnection between humans and nature (Laviolette, 2006). Since surfing is exercised in an immediate natural environment the theory of 'ecopsychology' suggests that a close connection of humans and nature strengthens the desire to protect the environment and foster sustainable development to a greater degree (Brymer, Downey & Gray, 2009). Though, the interviewees' connection to their environmental surroundings, especially the coastal areas, were much more of a given and developed connection, as the interviewed surfers explain. As Reed (1996) agrees that in the theory of ecopsychology especially in the years of growing up and living in a natural environment, a connection is formed. Therefore, a 'reconnection' to nature was discovered in the research, as a sensation felt while surfing. Thus, the theoretical base of this research invites the additional nuance of 'reconnection to nature while surfing' into the thematic background and learns that different stages of creating a connection with nature exist. These stages can be summed up as follows: humans who grew up at the sea mentioned having the connection by default, meanwhile those who live in urban environments discover the mentioned 'reconnection' or even newly found connection to nature after engaging in the surfing practice. Thus, ecopsychology was considered a relevant field in the scope of this research. The theoretical context of previous studies was, however, lacking to include the theory of ecopsychology. Yet, the authors of the thesis assume that these mentioned nuances of environmental closeness shall only transform into something more meaningful, active and communicated, when GRIs are formed and will further elaborate on that in the following paragraphs.

Therefore, the paper proposed the question (Research Question 1) of how it is that there is a lack of local GRIs in Ukrainian surfing communities, while they are present in the EU country Germany. Firstly, the discussion questioned whether Ukraine as a non-EU-member is potentially secluded from public discussions about 'greener' trends in EU-level politics. The assumption receives strong approval. Secondly, the strong Ukrainian industrial sectors with non-green alignments appear as further influences for a weak communal awareness about 'green' trends. Finally, the governmental structures were described as 'corrupt' and 'not trustworthy'. The Ukrainian interviewees describe their attitude towards municipalities, local governments and the national government as 'bias' and 'pessimistic'. As observed in the findings, there is a difference of vertical relationship when comparing Ukraine and Germany. Referring to the SC model, these relationships either improve or worsen the level of engagement and trust in a particular community (Chazdon & Lott, 2010). Based on the interview data,

the research team concluded that the communities from Ukraine have a weak linking network, while Germany has a strong linking network. The linking network refers to explicit 'vertical' power differences. As the SC model describes, a lack of linking network supports a higher level of mistrust and low level of engagement between residents and governments. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the German communities would have less difficulties participating in a movement which can more easily influence on a macro level, having in mind that their actions for change are not insignificant.

Lastly, focusing on the relationship between the individual and societal influence on local GRIs (Research Question 1.1), the analysis brought forth multiple arguments, which will be discussed and visualised in a diagram, the 'Horizon of trust', which was developed by the team of researchers. Therefore, the final part of the discussion will ultimately venture to allow the authors of the thesis to interpret the findings. In particular, the diagram strongly reflects the analytical results from the discovered themes, such as 'trust' and self-efficacy'.

On the individual level the findings have been striking, Germans have a high self-efficacy level while Ukrainians have a low-self efficacy level. As Ukrainian interviewees, who engage in surfing communities, but do not belong to any GRI, yet, explain, that their perception of their actions is solely inward. Their self-efficacy as activists is low, and usually do not even consider themselves activists, even though it has got a high significance in their private and families' lives, where they lead by example and with strong emotions. These urges to act are not yet, directed in a manner of forming a social movement, because Ukrainian interviewees, representing the surfing communities, mention that they have little trust in the government to support activism. They mention in the interviews that they do not believe that they can have an impact, when the government does not foster it. Therefore, they do form surfing communities, without considering these as GRIs, because fundamentally, they do not believe bigger scale changes are about to take place.

As visualised in the units of the 'Horizon of trust' which is divided into four segments: 'High trust in governments & low self-efficacy', 'High trust in governments & high self-efficacy', 'Low trust in governments & low self-efficacy' and 'Low trust in governments & high self-efficacy'. Each interviewed surfer and activist will be displayed by an icon, indicating the country of residence. Therefore, the distinction will be made between Ukrainians (blue icons) and Germans (green icons).
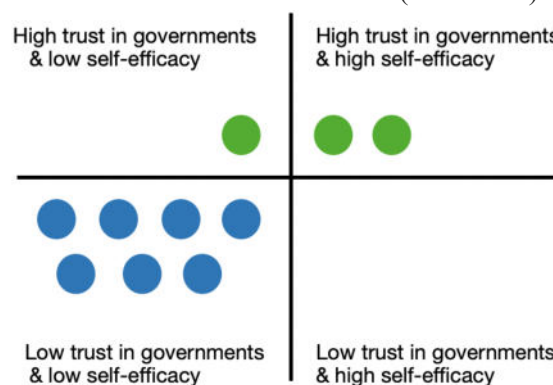

Figure 4. Horizon of trust (own diagram).

The total sum of Ukrainian interviewees is placed in 'Low trust in government & self-efficacy'. Although, Udovyk (2016) studied the effect of the Euromaidan Movement in Ukraine, which had shown the successful formation of GRI movements and in 2013 to 2014 even led to a change of governmental structures. Nevertheless, these protests were concerned with the resignation of Ukraine from the Association Agreement with the EU, which was hoped to stabilize political and economic relations with EU member states, secure equal rights for workers and build a step towards visa-free travelling of Ukrainians (Yekelchyk, 2015). Therefore, these protests resulted from an immediate threat to all

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Ukrainians. The researched niche of surfers, the threat of environmental changes and the pollution of natural environments appear to be not as threatening as the right for democracy, a functioning political system and a stable economic system. However, the interviewed surfers show great awareness for environmental protection and a strong intrinsic development towards a conscious lifestyle. Yet, a retention towards a more active behaviour, to the degree of being an 'activist' is present. The civil conflict in 2013 to 2014 was highly intense and present. Thus, the level of urgency towards environmentalism in recent times remains shallow. With this argument, the authors of the thesis assume that there is potential for Ukrainians to achieve a higher self-efficacy level, despite not having support from the government. This can be reached by external influences enhancing the process of making the communities understand that global warming, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss is a priority and can even threat their basic needs, which the participants of the research noticeably mentioned and proved to consider relevant. As the recent European Parliament Elections have shown, the awareness and discussion about climate change is as present as never before, thus, the balancing act of environmental, economic and industrial interests remains a delicate issue ("European Election", May 24, 2019).

Therefore, the authors conclude, that a European wide awareness was raised and question whether this attention was spread in Ukraine, too, as a country whose citizen hope to join the EU (Euromaidan protests 2013-2014) or at least strengthen the European bonds. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that especially the most vigorous industries in Ukraine, such as cast iron and steel, employ and influence a considerable number of Ukrainians. As outlined by Yekelchyk (2015) these 'dirty' industries do not show a trend towards climate-friendlier alternatives. This being the case, the authors see an intense conflict and correlation between the individual and societal level. While arguments for the influence of each level are present, no distinct conclusion will be made which one outweighs the other, since it is highly contextual and correlational.

Interestingly the German interviewees are positioned in 'High trust in governments & low self-efficacy' and 'High trust in governments & high self-efficacy'. The influences that bring about sustainable development and environmental activism through active and connected surfing grassroots movements in EU countries such as Germany (Research Question 1.2), are discussed in the following paragraph. First, as was mentioned in '1.2.2. Germany: The country, their environmental attitude and surfing movements', Germany's political parties and citizens show more recognition for the planet's scarce resources and the need for environmental protection in comparison with other countries. Moreover, the interviewed German surfers mentioned that they felt safe and supported by their country even in times of uncertainty. This political support was seen as a highly important component for communities to start forming GRIs. Secondly, Grabs (2015) explains that media is crucial for providing information and creating awareness, which can result in the formation of GRIs. Germans supported this statement, as they started being aware of environmental damages due to the information they read in newspapers or other sources. Finally, a great example was provided by the insular community, which was described by German Interviewee 3. A great standard of social cohesion was present; thus, the level of trust was high. Therefore, the preconditions for the formation of an activistic network are realistically attainable. Thereby, the local surfing club and surrounded community present ideal circumstances for beginning in this particular (surfing) community in Germany. Nevertheless, the term 'beginning' is used, since the mentioned interviewee did not reveal a high level of self-efficacy, yet. Moreover, the co-founders of the local chapter of the IOSF (German Interviewee 1; 2) agree, that Germany is an ideal place for GRI formation.

Still, the authors of the thesis acknowledge the unanimity of the interviewed surfers and question which influences could potentially undermine these conclusions. Regional influences, such as the level of socio-economic factors, could affect these statements. Moreover, the high literacy rate of

Germans was universally concluded by interviewees, whilst it must be deliberated upon the section of the population to whom this might not be applicable to. Likewise, German citizen that struggle with housing, job seeking, family issues and professional development might not be the ideal context for the formation of GRIs. Even though in this particular context, German interviewees mentioned their times of uncertainty as a 'free space' for activism. Therefore, individual contexts need to be considered. Whilst the Ukrainian context shows that the industries (cast iron & steel) were considered as strong influences on the environmental awareness of Ukrainians, it is important to mention, that parts of Germany are also operating in the industrial sectors, even though the German industries appear to align their visions in a 'greener' direction. Nevertheless, the observed context revealed ideal preconditions and supportive influences around the formation of GRIs in surfing communities.

6.1 Future Research

Finally, areas for further research are identified by the authors of the thesis, who suggest future research to include the mentioned theoretical field of ecopsychology. In particular, the field of ecopsychology and the human-nature interconnections could be expanded in further research when focusing on GRIs through active and connected surfing communities towards environmental activism and sustainable development. According to the analysis of the paper, two German interviewees mention that they prioritize the activism in their lives over other aspects. Ukrainian Interviewees have not mentioned these tendencies at all. Therefore, further and more specific research in the field of activism on an individual level should be considered. Further focus on leadership involvement of activist in the forming of GRIs in surfing communities would be relevant for the field. As well as the concept of self-efficacy of environmental activists can be studied thoroughly towards the questions on leadership influence the self-efficacy in the group of environmental activists.

7. Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to explore the potential of local surfing communities to transform into GRIs and act as sustainable leaders to bring change towards sustainable development and environmental activism. The research aimed to identify relevant influences to foster this progress.

Concluding the research findings from the collected data analysis, strong distinctions arise. Firstly, the economic stability in Germany and Ukraine displays fundamental differences (Yekelchyk, 2015; Magnani & Osti, 2016). As the previous research by Magnani and Osti (2016) described, Western and Northern Europe have higher incomes and more stable economies than Southern and Eastern Europe. In addition to it, Eastern Ukraine faces a war and great capacities from the government's focus and household budget upholds the country. Consequently, the unstable political situation and fight for democracy, as mentioned by interviewees the fight for 'basic needs', is prioritized over the formation of GRIs. Moreover, the collected data revealed a high degree of mistrust towards the government, as Ukrainians are exposed to corruption in their private and professional lives. This highlights the different stage that Ukraine is in. Meanwhile, Germany has more economical resources than Ukraine to utilize for the formation of social movements (Magnani & Osti, 2016). As agreed by the German interviewees, they see Germany as an ideal place for the formation of GRIs and entity as activists and describe a high level of self-efficacy and trust towards their government.

Generally, the research concludes that the popularity of surfing increases. Therefore, it is an interesting social movement and niche to observe. Moreover, the closeness of humans and nature, especially when engaging in surfing was detected as a strong given connection. This is relevant due to the fact, that humans who feel a strong connection to the natural environment also feel a stronger urge

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to protect it. Therefore, surfing communities bear a great potential for the GRI formation and environmental activism. Lastly, the analysis and discussion clarified, that the high trust in governments and high self-efficacy are preconditions for the formation of GRIs in surfing communities. Countries with high trust in governments and high self-efficacy levels appear as the ideal context for GRI in surfing communities.

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Appendix

1. Interview Questions

Table 2. Interview Questions for Ukrainians	
No.	Question
1	Do you surf?
2	When was the first time you surfed?
3	What do you love about surfing?
4	How would you describe the feeling to be in the water?
5	Do you feel connected to the ocean/nature while surfing?
6	Do you think that this is something you and other surfers share?
7	Have you always felt like protecting the environment?
8	Was there any particular event or a person that influenced changing the attitude to the environment?
9	How do you define activism yourself?
10	Would you consider yourself an activist?
11	Do you struggle with housing, job seeking, family, professional development etc at the moment?
12	Is there any political / law (policies, regulations) framework that supports the activities of your organisation in your country?
13	Do you feel like your country is an ideal place for grassroots initiatives?
14	Do you know the political context in your country in terms of adaptation to climate change?
15	How do you think the political situation in your country influences the work your organisation is currently doing?
16	Do you know about IOSF? (explain the aim). Do you know any similar organisations across the world or in Ukraine?
17	Do you think it is relevant to have such an initiative in Ukraine?

18	How USF can be useful in this and what are the problems and challenges you think it can tackle?
19	Is there anything more you would like me to know / share with me?
20	Do you have any questions to the interviewer?

Table 3. Interview Questions for German IOSF-Characters	
No.	Question
1	Do you surf?
2	When was the first time you surfed?
3	What do you love about surfing?
4	How would you describe the feeling to be in the water?
5	Do you feel connected to nature while you surf?
6	Do you think that this is something you and other surfers share?
7	Is that something you talk about or is that something one keeps internally?
8	Have you always felt like protecting the environment?
9	Was there any particular event or a person that influenced changing the attitude to the environment?
10	How do you define activism yourself?
11	Would you consider yourself an activist?
12	Is activism a priority of yours right now?
13	Do you struggle with housing, job seeking, family, professional development etc at the moment?
14	So do you feel like you have capacities for activism right now?
15	How did you get in contact with IOSF?
16	Why this IOSF?
17	What's your role at IOSF in your country?
18	Can you describe the structure at IOSF?
19	How are the local chapters interconnected?

20	Do you have funding sources? Do you need funding and for what?
21	Do you try to involve new members to be active participants? Why/not?
22	Do the members/volunteers require any particular skills to be a part of the movement?
23	If they are / how much time do you expect from them to be involved in the activities?
24	How much time do you invest in IOSF?
25	Is the vision and mission of IOSF pre-defined by the IOSF-organization? Who participates in the process? decision-making process?
26	Are there challenges the organisation is facing at the moment?
27	Have you heard about other surfing organizations that do similar actions?
28	Do you have more trust in your community/peers since you joined IOSF, because you know there are many people who think just like you?
29	Do you cooperate with private businesses? How much support do you get from them?
30	Do you cooperate with government agencies and to what extent? How much support do you get for the activities of your organization?
31	How do you communicate the messages of the organisation to external stakeholders?
32	Who is your target audience (who do you want to influence) and how do you communicate with them? Do you hold any public activities or event to communicate?
33	In what way does your organization want to change the behaviour of the target audience?
34	Is there any political / law (policies, regulations) framework that supports the activities of your organisation in your country?
35	Do you feel like your country is a good place for grassroots initiatives?
36	Do you know the political context in your country in terms of adaptation to climate change?
37	How do you think the political situation in your country influences the work your organisation is currently doing?
38	Is there anything about IOSF that you still want me to know?
39	Is there anything more you would like me to know / share with me?

40	Do you have any questions to the interviewer?

2.

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Participants Consent Form

Title of research study:
Surfing movements in Ukraine and its potential for grassroots environmentalism.
A comparison between Germany and Ukraine.

Researcher(s): Oksana Dmytriak, Isabelle van der Graaf, Pia Luisa Reker

The researcher has informed me about the following:
1. The purpose of the study
2. I can withdraw from the study. If so, I don't have to give a reason for that.
3. All information the researcher gets from me is kept confidential.
4. My name and the name of my organization will be treated with strict confidentiality.

31.05.'19

Signature and date

Luca Kunz // Surfrider Foundation Germany

Printed name

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Berlin, 31.5.2019 Stephan Keichel

_____

Signature and date

Stephan Keichel

_____

Printed name

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_____ Westerland, 31.05.19 _____
Signature and date

        Julia Petersen
_____
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_____ 29.05.2019
Signature and date

Andrii Artynov

Printed name
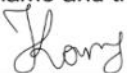
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Anton Kateryniuk

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 Dmytro Chepurniy 29.05.2019
Signature and date

Dmytro Chepurnyi

Printed name

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 Imir Subaiev   28.05.2019
Signature and date

Imir Subaiev

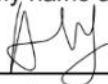Printed name

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Oleksiy Khanzhyn

Printed name

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_____ 28.05.2019
Signature and date

Pavel Karlovich

Printed name

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_____ 28.05.2019
Signature and date

Kordysh Vasyl
Printed name