

Chapter 4

Societal Issues and Environmental Citizenship



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4.1 Introduction

The concept of sustainability gradually became the central element of all agendas promoting social and economic development and environmental protection – particularly the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) (UNCED 1992) and Millennium Development Goals (UN 2000), as well as outcomes of the conferences organised by the United Nations (e.g. the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002; United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012). Societal issues have therefore become key areas for achieving a sustainable development.

In 2015, the UN adopted a new key document – Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – whose aim is “to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of

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A. Ch. Hadjichambis et al. (eds.), *Conceptualizing Environmental Citizenship for 21st Century Education*, Environmental Discourses in Science Education 4, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20249-1_4

the planet and its natural resources” (UN 2015c). It also resolves “to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities” (UN 2015c). The 2030 Agenda focuses on five key issues: (1) people, (2) planet, (3) prosperity, (4) peace, and (5) partnership (UN 2015c). A special highlight of the document lies in understanding different interconnected systems and how changes in one system can cause effects in others. There are several global frameworks related to the 2020 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Paris Agreement (UN 2015a), Sendai Framework (United Nation Office for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015), and New Urban Agenda. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, including SDG 11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. It further recognises that culture should be taken into account during the promotion and implementation of new sustainable consumption and production patterns that contribute to the responsible use of resources and address the adverse impact of climate change (United Nations General Assembly 2016).

In light of the complex nature of socio-environmental issues of the contemporary world, the chapter focuses on selected societal issues to show their interconnectedness and consequences. In this chapter, we will elaborate on some of the most important socio-environmental transformations of the twenty-first century that an Environmental Citizen needs to know about and act upon. The chapter focuses in particular on the processes of urbanisation, transportation, and tourism as important social and societal factors of contemporary life. These can be seen as sources of opportunities for sustainability but also as causes of serious socio-environmental problems. Cities produce 70% of the GDP, which is a critical trend in contemporary societies and transportation plays a vital role in human lives through regional organisation and the development (UN 2017). In this chapter, we explore how these issues can be considered sustainability issues and how they present contexts within which Environmental Citizenship is manifested. Deeper consequences are presented on the example of the struggle for maintaining culture diversity and heritage, endangered by all of the previously mentioned processes.

To promote sustainable ways of dealing with the above-mentioned issues, the promotion of Environmental Citizenship seems to be necessary. Environmental Citizenship represents the responsible pro-environmental individual and collective behaviour of citizens who act and participate in society as agents of change in the private and public sphere, on a local, national, and global scale (ENEC 2018).

4.2 Cities, Landscapes, and Cultural Diversity

Nowadays, globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 55% of the world’s population residing in urban areas in 2018 (UN 2018). It is expected that between 2015 and 2030 there will be an additional 1.1 billion new city dwellers,

growing the global urban population by 28%, from 4 billion to 5.1 billion (UN 2015b). Sustainable urban development requires integration and extensive coordination between all local and national authorities, including land use planning, urban agriculture, water resource management, energy-related authorities, employment opportunities, technology, transportation infrastructure development, waste management, etc. (Al Zubi and Radovic 2018).

Cities occupy approximately only 2% of the total land. Nevertheless, while producing 70% GDP, they manage to spend over 60% of global energy consumption and are responsible for 70% of greenhouse gas emissions and 70% global waste (UN 2017). Although urbanisation has the potential to make cities more prosperous and countries more developed, many cities worldwide are grossly unprepared for the multidimensional challenges associated with urbanisation (UN 2015b). Decision-makers too often only focus on the technical aspects of sustainable city development, such as energy reduction and efficiency, sustainable building materials, or compact settlement structures, without acknowledging the importance of building social capital or social networks (Mössner 2016; UN 2015b). Therefore, Environmental Citizenship becomes recognised as an important factor in sustainable developments and community plans. Environmental Citizens are able to identify the underlying structural causes of environmental degradation and environmental problems and have the willingness and the competencies for critical and active engagement and civic participation to address those structural causes, acting individually and collectively within democratic means and taking into account inter- and intra-generation justice (ENEC 2018).

While broadly adopted by many countries, notably in the EU where the active contribution is reported regionally and the trends and territorial considerations nationally, one cannot but ask how come *territory* – in its many differences, needs, and offers – has been left aside from the big focus on urbanisation. Moreover, territories are usually relegated as either beautiful touristic scenery or restricted sites of *wealth* due to resources, which are so often exploited ignoring the impacts on the global sustainable future of them as complex, whole, and unique units.

The development of cities depends on different economic, social, and environmental factors, as well as the position of the city in the more complex urban and transport system. In this case, the geographic position is pivotal (e.g. harbour cities, urban settlements along critical commercial lines, such as the silk route). Geomorphology and hydrography restrain or shape a specific city or town making it unique.

The interdependence between *urbs* and *rus* (Latin etymology, in the origin of urban and rustic, respectively) has always signalled a close relationship between town and country. Furthermore, it was agriculture that led to the creation of the foundations of cities, from the first human settlements, holding a fertile land that would be able to feed and protect some community-liberated humans from everlasting nomadic life.

Until the nineteenth century (specifically the beginning of WWI, 1914), the direct link between the rural estates that provided for food and other resources and

the urban areas bounded by walls and ring roads with their tolls was still the key to understanding the mechanisms of the territories.

In Southern Europe, a city is deeply rooted in the territory from which it develops, primarily through the legacy of classical culture with a strong connection to the place and its foundation. In this light, people hold such a tectonic sense of belonging to a specific place that one could say that the urban fact grows from some local seed, embedded on the ground, shaped by physiographic elements – the land, the water – gradually revealing the fabrics that artificially fabricate the landscape. These are cultural and societal traits that usually respect the balance and nature of each place. Youngsters and the elderly learn the importance of bonding with the community and reinvent the site where they live (Viganò 2010; Dematteis 1995). The community gives a new meaning to these sites by introducing new practices, values, and actions. This way the community tightens more closely to the area in which it lives, giving it a strong sense of place.

A territory is always specific to a place, a landscape, ways of living, and culture. These circumstances make it possible to recognise and distinguish one area from another. They allow someone to identify as being “from there”. Hence, giving importance to the grounds that hold human occupation, over functional schemes, allows for a better perception of how they evolve in space and time in their morphological, systemic, dimensional coherences (Gaspar 2003). According to various authors and organisations (e.g. WEF/World Economic Forum), we are currently experiencing the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, where omnicality, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence will provide an augmented perception of reality or, even, an alienation from specific space and time (Schwab 2015, pp. 3–11). Hence, when data overcome information and frequently substitute knowledge, and the media interferes in so many dubious ways in civic and democratic values, is it even possible to implement an active Environmental Citizenship, and how can it be implemented in some vital societal domains, as cities, landscapes, and cultural heritage?

These are some of the concerns that will be further discussed in this and other chapters, under the scope of Education for Environmental Citizenship.

4.3 Vital Issues of Transportation

Transportation is another major societal issue that plays a vital role in human lives through the organisation and the development of space. As an activity of the transportation of people, goods, energy, and information from one place to another, this enables people to satisfy their daily needs and functions (Gasparovic and Jakovic 2014). Transportation could be defined as one of the fundamental life functions. The three components of sustainable development could also be addressed through the impact of transportation, corresponding to Environmental Citizenship. Transportation is a markedly spatial activity whose influence is visible in space. This influence is

reflected through its environmental, societal, and economic impacts. These three impacts are integral and have to be analysed together.

The main aim of sustainable transportation is to promote better and healthier ways of meeting and satisfying people's needs and functions by reducing the social, economic, and environmental impacts of their mobility modes. Sustainable transportation tries to achieve these aims by reducing resource inputs and waste outputs and minimising the effects of transportation on the public realm (Schiller et al. 2010). Given that transportation is one of the primary human activities, it could be concluded that sustainable transportation promotes easier access to basic life functions (e.g. work, education, shopping, leisure) and the use of healthier and economically more cost-effective modes of travelling (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport) that affect both the individual and the environment by reducing pollution and traffic density.

The interrelationship between transportation and Environmental Citizenship can be noticed when transportation and environmental issues are discussed. It is necessary to emphasise that the impact of transportation on the environment is significant. Transportation is one of the most abundant energy and petroleum consumers. Transportation is the fastest-growing contributor to air pollution through carbon dioxide emissions, thus becoming a significant contributor to global warming. Transportation also generates pollution through nitrous oxides, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter (Ionescu 2017).

The significance of transportation is noticeable through its responsibility for around a quarter of EU greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, it is the second biggest greenhouse gas-emitting sector after energy generation (Stroe et al. 2017). Transportation is responsible for 19% of the world's energy consumption and 23% of carbon dioxide emission production (Chu 2012). In the EU, the transportation sector is responsible for a large share of greenhouse gas emissions, i.e. it contributes 27% of the total EU-28 greenhouse gas emissions (including aviation and shipping) (EEA 2018) and for 33% of all energy consumption (EEA 2008). In the United States, ground transportation consumes almost 30% of the primary energy and is responsible for 27% of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Gosse and Clarens 2017). In California, car transportation is responsible for 38% of GHG emissions, and other pollutants have been linked to significant health impacts (Chester et al. 2017). Bongardt et al. (2013) have stressed how important the road transportation is globally, which has a share of 69% of all carbon dioxide emission related to transportation in general. However, other modes are also significant contributors; (inter) national shipping contributes with 14% to carbon dioxide emission, aviation with 10%, rail transportation with 2%, and other modes with 5%.

An additional problem is the pronounced dependence on car transportation. Nowadays, 1.2 billion vehicles are on the road (Sperling 2017). It could be emphasised that transportation (especially the dependence on car transportation) and urban land use lead to environmental, economic, and social problems for the sustainability of cities (Schiller et al. 2010).

In addition to environmental pollution regarding GHG emissions, the significant impact of transportation is noise pollution. An additional problem is land use since

the environment is being irreversibly destroyed by the construction of transportation infrastructure (e.g. roads, railway tracks, airports, ports).

Apart from the environmental component, both the economic and social component are essential part of sustainable transportation. Transportation aims to connect by enabling mobility through access to various activities. Appropriate mobility and accessibility are the basic requirements of today's globalised society (Hoyle and Knowles 1998). However, mobility and accessibility could be hindered or limited, and in this case, the usage of transportation services could be threatened leading to transport disadvantages. This in turn would cause problems relating to employment, health, education etc., which would eventually lead to serious social disadvantages. Transportation disadvantages could also lead to (transportation based) social exclusion. Vulnerable social groups, such as the elderly, children, disabled, pregnant women, and single parents, would be affected the most. Transportation disadvantages could also affect people living in poorly connected areas. Thus, people who are forced to use a car because of poor public transportation will also be affected. This will have an additional impact on their home budget, with particular concern for the poorer population.

In addition to transportation disadvantage and social exclusion, the social aspect of sustainable transportation also relates to the security and safety issue. A growing number of cars will cause traffic jams leading to delays and an increased fuel consumption associated with rising costs. Transportation sometimes takes over valuable land (e.g. agricultural) through compulsory purchase aimed for transportation infrastructure (new railroads, airports, parking lots, motorways, etc.), which is a permanent loss. Indirect costs will arise due to health problems associated with greenhouse gas emissions, reduced mobility owing to car dependence, as well as injuries and deaths caused by traffic.

Many technical and technological inventions are being used to try and reduce the impact of transportation on the environment. These include improved fuel efficiency, reduced motor emissions, and systems that control the traffic flow on major roads or streets (Schiller et al. 2010). Electric-powered, hybrid, or hydrogen-powered cars could also be included. In addition, many countries in various ways are trying to reduce individual vehicle emissions by reducing the number of vehicles. However, these efforts did not contribute to the reduction in the number of vehicles on the roads. An increase is also present in air transportation (Ionescu 2017). It is necessary to reduce the negative impact of transportation on the environment. Therefore, new possibilities and improved existing ones are necessary as well as the development of new and more efficient forms of transportation.

Public transportation could be considered to be an efficient solution to take large numbers of people in and out of cities and urban areas (Cahill 2010). Public transportation systems are often considered to be "transportation environmental impact reducers", and this relates to the new, modern, and more efficient modes. Life-cycle environmental impacts will be reduced by implementing certain public transport solutions, which would have a significant local and remote energy and environmental impact beyond vehicle operation (Chester et al. 2017). Beside regular bus and tram networks, some more sustainable and efficient ways of public transportation

have also been developed in some cities. These include bus rapid transit (BRT) and light rail transit (LRT), together with metro and heavy rail systems. Relatively new but an environmentally friendly mode of transportation in certain cities is the funicular railway. To connect more distant areas, for example, the city centre, to outer suburbs or commuter towns, suburban railways represent a good example of sustainable and environmentally friendly way of transportation. High-speed rail should also be emphasised as an efficient way of public transportation.

Of course, walking and cycling are sustainable ways of transportation due to their favourable impacts on health, financials, and environment. However, in order to make this more attractive, big improvements in the walking and cycling environment and public spaces need be made, since many streets and roads are not suitable due to a lack of cycle paths and on-street parking, etc. (Cahill 2010).

When sustainable transportation is discussed, it should be emphasised that it is a societal process rather than a strictly technical one. Sustainable transportation depends upon spatial and transport planning and policy, economics, and citizen involvement. One of the main aims of sustainable transportation is lowering financial costs to all social groups. This could be achieved through decreasing dependence on automobiles as the primary mode of individual mobility (Schiller et al. 2010), with walking, cycling, and public transport as alternatives. Transportation development should also aim to increase safety and security. It should be emphasised that transportation should promote an equity aspect for all social groups and citizens so that a fair society could be achieved, with a better quality of life and healthier environment.

With regard to the Environmental Citizenship discussion, it is possible to emphasise various measures in transportation to achieve a cleaner environment, but also to achieve more economic and socially equitable citizenship. Some soft measures (i.e. smarter choices) could be proposed (Cahill 2010; Cairns et al. 2004): travel plans (i.e. work or school), personalised travel planning, public transport information and marketing, travel awareness campaigns, car clubs, car sharing, teleworking, teleconferencing, and home shopping.

To achieve Environmental Citizenship and become a responsible pro-Environmental Citizen, it is important to approach to the transportation in an appropriate way. It means accepting transportation as one of the most prominent factors in everyday lives. On the other hand, it is also important to rely on more environmentally friendly and sustainable modes of transportation. For example, walking, cycling, and public transportation are pro-environmentally oriented transportation modes and could be acceptable to an Environmental Citizen. On the other hand, it is also necessary to educate people in the most suitable way on the advantages and disadvantages of transportation modes in a sense of environment protection. Only synergy between the willingness in becoming an Environment Citizen and the Education on Environmental Citizenship can result in achieving Environmental Citizenship. Transportation could adopt environment, and environment could adopt transportation, but the key factor is a human with his awareness on the necessity of environment protection.

4.4 Forms and Approaches of Tourism

Throughout the last century, the societal issue of tourism has grown into one of the most important wealth providers while at the same time being one of the main causes for environmental degradation. These issues will be problematized in this section, and ways forward for the informed Environmental Citizen will be suggested.

The development of tourism after WWII was generated primarily by raising the average income in developed countries (especially in Europe, the United States, and Canada), more free time (paid holidays), and technological advances in transport (especially in road and air transport). Growing tourism demand in *mass* or *conventional* tourism predominantly is based on an inexpensive and standardised tourism product that enables a greater volume of tourism, particularly within the areas of coastal (*sun and sea*) and ski tourism (Cavlek et al. 2011). However, in the 1980s after only 30 years of intensive development, mass coastal tourism (particularly in the Mediterranean) started to experience slower growth and stagnation. On the supply side, the stagnation was partly due to outdated infrastructure and, significantly, the degradation of the environment in all tourism areas particularly in developing and sensitive areas. Those destinations could not compete anymore to *new* Mediterranean and long-haul destinations. On the demand side, responsible were the changes in the demographic structure and travel preferences at tourist markets. New generation of tourists, that was more conscious of environmental degradation and unhealthy way of living in the large cities, preferred destinations with preserved environment, which consequently imposed new environmental standards in tourist destinations.

Tourism had many positive effects, especially on the agile economic development and raising income and living standards (Sulc 2016, 2017). However, environmental degradation in tourism regions soon threatened tourism itself by damaging the main attraction basis.

Faced with these problems and having adopted the paradigm of sustainable development, new concepts of tourism development were introduced, ranging from diversified and *sustainable coastal tourism* to *new, soft, or alternative* tourism.

Most of them are under the umbrella of *sustainable tourism*, introduced as a new approach to tourism development that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities (UNWTO 2005). It can be applied to different forms of tourism, ranging from mass coastal tourism to specific forms, like ecotourism, and it refers to the environmental, economic, and sociocultural aspects of tourism development (UNWTO 2005). Sustainable tourism requires all stakeholders to:

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources as a critical element in tourism, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity

2. Respect the sociocultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their building and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance
3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, and provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are equitably distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities, social services to host communities, and poverty alleviation contribution (UNWTO 2005). These elements of sustainable tourism correspond to the concept of sustainable citizenship

The Global Code for Ethics in Tourism explicitly promotes sustainable tourism and Environmental Citizenship, particularly in the recommendations that treat tourism as a factor for sustainable development, a user of cultural heritage, and a contributor to its enhancement (Articles 3. and 4.):

1. All stakeholders in tourism should safeguard the natural environment and achieve sound, continuous, and sustainable economic growth to equitably satisfy the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.
2. Tourism resources belong to the common heritage of mankind; the communities in whose territories they are situated have particular rights and obligations to them.
3. Priority should be given to the forms of tourism development that are conducive to saving rare and precious resources, in particular water and energy, as well as avoiding possible waste production
4. Tourism infrastructure and activities should be programmed to protect the natural heritage and preserve endangered species of wildlife (and impose limitations and constraints on activities exercised in particularly sensitive areas, e.g. desert and coastal, polar, or high mountain areas).
5. Tourism policies and activities should treat artistic, archaeological, and cultural heritage; particular care should be devoted to preserving and upgrading monuments, shrines and museums, as well as archaeological sites, which must be widely opened to tourists (UNWTO 2001).

Therefore, classical mass tourism in coastal destinations has been partially transformed in order to meet the requirements of sustainability. The methods of applying sustainability range from very strong sustainability (where natural resources have an intrinsic value and are worth saving in their original condition, no matter their potentially positive impacts on the society) to very weak (that allows the use of natural resources according to the market demand and it is focused on economic growth) (Turner 1993).

New tourism is characterised by flexibility, by the segmentation of tourism demand and supply, and by the development of new forms of customised experience, offering a variety of choices to tourists (UNWCED 1987). New forms of tourism promote an approach that is more sensitive, by giving priority to natural and cultural resources in planning and development (Triarchi and Karamanis 2017). The term *soft tourism* originated in the Alpine countries and focuses on the forms of tourism that feature attention towards environmental issues and the promotion of

ecologically friendly development policies (Triarchi and Karamanis 2017). It promotes in particular the use of public transport, e.g. modernised traditional mountain railways that represent attractions in themselves or cable cars instead of private cars to prevent traffic congestion and pollution.

The term *alternative tourism* is comprised of different forms of tourism based on the special motivation of visitors, as opposed to mass or conventional types of tourism. Since it includes some forms of travel that can include a large number of visitors (e.g. cultural tourists), it has been replaced by the term *special interest tourism*. Although there is no widely accepted definition of these terms, they are characterised by having a higher awareness of environmental issues and protection, a more delicate approach to social issues by connecting to the local community, and an emphasis on experiencing the destination by all senses (e.g. by seeing attractions, by listening to sounds and/or music, by eating local food and drinking wine, by experiencing local culture, by adopting new cultural values, tolerance, etc.). Consequently, special interest tourism aims to increase positive impacts of tourism and reduce its negative impacts on the destination area.

These new approaches to tourism have many common characteristics with Environmental Citizenship and do involve Environmental Citizens. A good example is volunteer tourism, where participants are active agents of change in destination areas: being helpful to other (economically marginalised) people (e.g. building traditional houses), working in disaster areas (e.g. after the 2010 Haiti earthquake), or helping to preserve the environment (e.g. at the bear orphan refuge on Velebit Mountain in Croatia).

New or soft tourism materialised in various new forms of tourism (e.g. ecotourism, geotourism, nature-based tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism), as well as new approaches to tourism (e.g. ethical travel, *slow* tourism, and community-based tourism). Nature tourism and ecotourism are particularly important for enriching and enhancing the experience; they respect the natural heritage and local populations and are kept within the carrying capacity of the sites (UNWTO 2001).

Ecotourism is defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education (TIES 2015). Environmental Citizenship provides a cradle to these characteristics by aiming to (1) minimise physical, social, behavioural, and psychological impacts of tourism; (2) build environmental and cultural awareness and respect; (3) deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to the host country's political, environmental, and social climates; and (4) design, construct, and operate low-impact facilities (TIES 2015). Unlike other forms of tourism motivated by visiting nature (e.g. nature-based tourism, tourism in protected areas), ecotourism is distinguishable by the motivation and responsible behaviour of tourists towards the environment. It builds directly upon Environmental Citizenship, since visitors have to be highly conscious of the environmental values of the destination areas and must act in ways that preserve the sensitive environment. It also requires a high level of Environmental Citizenship from the local population, in the way of good tourism and spatial planning, actions, and consciousness on the value of the environment.

Nature-based tourism, on the other hand, is widely defined as leisure travel undertaken largely or solely for the purpose of enjoying natural attractions and engaging in a variety of nature-based activities (Ecotourism Australia n.d.). It can encompass different and potentially incompatible activities, such as wildlife viewing or ecotourism, scuba diving, boating, skiing, or walking in alpine areas (Pickering and Weaver 2003). Nature-based tourism can include both sustainable and unsustainable activities. However, since it is based on the natural environment, its tourists are required to be Environmental Citizens to increase benefits for the destination area and to preserve the environment.

Another form of tourism that is related to Environmental Citizenship is geotourism, defined as visiting geosites for passive recreation, engaging a sense of wonder, appreciation, and learning (Newsome and Dowling 2005). The term geosites comprises areas with specific geological and geomorphological features and processes, as well as the natural resources of the landscape, landforms, fossil beds, rocks, and minerals (Newsome and Dowling 2005). Beside the features themselves, the focus is on the processes that formed such features. A positive instance of Environmental Citizenship with tourism stakeholders is the Škocjan Cave in Slovenia, a UNESCO World Heritage site that despite universal attractiveness has managed to maintain the visiting level below the estimated carrying capacity. The daily number of visitors is limited, and the cave can be visited only in a scheduled guided tour several times a day.

Elements of Environmental Citizenship may be applied to all forms of tourism by using different approaches and concepts of development. One of the most used in the literature on tourism is *responsible tourism*, defined as an approach that aims to minimise adverse impacts of tourism on the environment and maximise its positive contributions to local communities (Fabricius and Goodwin 2002). The key element of responsible tourism is to take responsibility and action to make tourism more sustainable, referring to all stakeholders in tourism: operators, hoteliers, governments, local people, and tourists (The Earth Changers 2017).

Similarly, the core of *conscious travel/tourism* is the consciousness of the effects and consequences of tourism: travellers who make their own travel decisions and are conscious of the potential impacts and alternatives, bringing benefit to the world through their heightened awareness (The Earth Changers 2017). On the other hand, Andriotis (2002) uses a narrower definition of conscious tourism and associates it with labour-intensive, endogenous, alternative, and small-scale and enclave tourism development.

Although *ethical tourism* lacks a standard definition, it is usually mindful of travel choices and is based on the awareness of the values that prevent environmental impacts during travel (The Earth Changers 2017). However, that label cannot be easily associated with a form of tourism or a touristic business, as it requires a more profound analysis on how it affects economic and social development of the local community as well as the environment (see Butcher 2008).

Environmental Citizenship can be directly applied to previous three approaches to tourism in terms of the environment, since all of them put a lot of attention on preserving the environment and efforts to limit pollution and environmental

degradation in different aspects – travelling (e.g. using public transport instead of private cars), accommodation (e.g. staying in traditional houses or hotels with vernacular architecture instead of uniform global chain hotels), consumption (e.g. eating traditional food made of locally produced ingredients), and other activities (e.g. participating in local cultural events, using bicycles as local transport, visiting different tourist attractions not only major ones, separating waste).

Another concept is *slow travel* or *slow tourism* (Lowry and Lee 2011), which was initially associated with gastronomic tourism and created as a reaction to fast living, conventional *Sun and Sea* concept, an escape from hectic lifestyles, and the enjoyment of life's simple pleasures. It evolved gradually from the concept of the Italian slow food movement in the late 1980s. The next step was branding *slow cities* (*CittaSlow*), towns that pass through a rigorous process of certification, with excellent local food and preservation of the local environment (Matos 2004). Therefore, slow tourism is associated with ethical commitment of the part of the travellers, who make a conscious choice to minimise any negative impact that they might have on the environment or the community, as well as their choice to purchase from local providers (World Travel Market & Euromonitor 2007). Matos (2004) points out essential characteristics of slow tourism: simple accommodation, a healthy diet, a leisurely pace, local culture, a peaceful atmosphere, and respect for the natural environment. One of the most famous rural areas of this type is the Chianti Region in Tuscany, Italy, which is inevitably connected to Environmental Citizenship from both the host and the guest. The area with rich natural scenery consisting of picturesque hills with vineyards and restored old houses, associated with good local food and wine, was branded as one of the earliest and most famous destinations of rural tourism, primarily driven by the efforts of the local population and their consciousness on the value of the region. Visitors are also highly motivated to experience the region using all senses, but they are also highly conscious of the uniqueness of the area and are prepared to contribute to its preservation.

All analysed forms and concepts of tourism require elements of Environmental Citizenship by both hosts and guests, taking into account the environmental, economic, and social impacts of tourism, in order to achieve the sustainable development of destination areas.

4.5 Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage

Equality and justice among different countries and societies are promoted in contemporary documents, in particular the 2030 Agenda. It focuses on improving availability of education, health services, transportation, sanitation, human rights etc., but it also stresses culture as an important element of sustainable development. The most visible and present form of culture involved in the concepts of sustainability is represented by tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In this section, we will discuss the importance of cultural heritage for Environmental Citizenship.

While the UNESCO 1972 Convention (UNESCO 1972) considered cultural heritage to be strictly physical (monuments, groups of buildings and sites), the UNESCO 2003 Convention (UNESCO 2003) widened the scope, to include intangible aspects of cultural heritage: "...the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith...". This tangible-intangible dimension of cultural heritage could be promoted by the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Council of Europe 2005), which recognised the need for a holistic approach to cultural heritage, "a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society". The Faro Convention obligates the Parties to "promote cultural heritage protection as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity" (Council of Europe 2005; article 5). Environmental Citizenship should be in accordance with the Faro Convention, demanding solid knowledge on cultural heritage diversity, appreciation, and protection.

Tangible cultural heritage usually refers to all cultural artefacts from the past that are perceived as valuable. Environmental Citizenship mostly focuses on historical buildings or constructed units, which are protected not only because of their physical characteristics but also as documents of knowledge, which had been collected, shaped, and transferred through many generations. It is particularly visible in the vernacular architecture or 'architecture without architects' (Rudofsky 1987), which expresses "the cultural diversity anchored in the specificities of territories" (Guillard 2014). The VerSus project (VERSUS, Heritage for Tomorrow: Vernacular Knowledge for Sustainable Architecture, 2008–2013) showed that vernacular architecture all over the world has embodied principles of sustainability in various creative ways (Correia et al. 2014).

Based on the analysis of numerous examples, VerSus has identified *socio-economic* and *sociocultural* key principles to protect the cultural landscape, transfer construction cultures, enhance innovative and creative solutions, recognise intangible values, and encourage social cohesion. In addition, it promotes principles of *environmental sustainability* by respecting environmental context and landscape to the benefit of natural and climatic resources, to reduce pollution and waste materials, contribute to human health and welfare, and reduce the natural hazard effects of vernacular architecture. The VerSus project did not dismiss any of the vernacular building practices as old-fashioned, overcome, or primitive, but it considers them as a collection of knowledge, produced by anonymous builders who adopted the building practice to the diversity of environments, overcame constraints, and made the best use of available resources (Guillard 2014).

Tradition and innovation are not necessarily opposed. Due to the close relation of man and nature in the past, the knowledge gained through centuries could nowadays be employed in order to achieve sustainability. Although the relationship between vernacular architecture and sustainable buildings has been realised and explored throughout the last two decades, we should not only consider the preservation of the material aspects of cultural heritage (architecture) or the knowledge of how to produce it (building crafts, intangible aspect) but also regain the positive image of our

heritage. For example, after the WWII, vernacular architecture and traditional building crafts in the Balkans were viewed with contempt and a want to embrace new artificial building materials instead (Dragisic and Dordevic 2014).

The Environmental Citizen and Education for Environmental Citizenship are both expected to strengthen the awareness of the cultural context, not to exclude any inherited practice as obsolete but to respect cultural differences and protect the entire world cultural heritage, regardless of the nation or geographic region. An Environmental Citizen is an inhabitant of the Earth and whose knowledge is stored in various cultural traditions. In order to adequately sustain the cultural heritage of humanity for future generations, it is important to develop an awareness of its importance and complexity. Pivotal actions would not limit its interpretation by the currently accepted measures of its preservation and safeguard, but as suggested in the document Culture 21: Actions (2015) (United Cities and Local Governments 2015), thus including it in education, cultural skills, knowledge, intercultural dialogue, tangible and intangible heritage, and cultural rights. This is one of the important issues for Environmental Citizens.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the role of Environmental Citizenship in selected key human societal activities as observed in the 2030 Agenda. It has explored how Environmental Citizenship is inseparably related to the evaluation of the territory and urban development, transport systems, cultural heritage, and tourism. It has demonstrated that, although Environmental Citizenship focuses mostly on the environment, it has to be involved in all paradigms of socio-economic development to make the human activities more sustainable. The previous analysis has shown, for instance, that Environmental Citizenship has played a great role in the innovative and sustainable means of carbon-free transport, increased energy efficiency, and the achievement of economic and social equal citizenship.

Furthermore, as stated in the 2030 Agenda, the trends of environmental degradation have to be reversed, not only to preserve the environment by itself but also to solve (or at least reduce) some of the most important and severe current problems – hunger, extreme poverty, unhealthy living environments, climate changes, major war sites, and conflicts that lead to impressive migration, to mention just a few. Some of these problems are a result of unequal allocation of environmental resources and therefore strongly require a high consciousness with environmental problems and individual and collective actions to resolve them and improve the environment.

The chapter also presents examples of sustainable approach to important human societal activities that have already been applied somewhere and have obtained favourable results. They can be used as examples of good practice that can be implemented elsewhere. For example, the successful use of an inherited built environment can be used as a lesson of building materials, techniques, and principles of planning and building. However, one has to keep in mind that sustainable practices

will not be immediately adopted everywhere and that it is a long-lasting process. For instance, as stated earlier in the text, new forms and approaches in tourism are getting more attention among (potential) tourists, but mass forms of tourism (e.g. coastal, ski, massive cultural tourism) still have the largest share of the tourist market in the world.

The key change from an unsustainable to sustainable approach towards the environment and various human activities lies in education. Therefore, it is not a question of whether Environmental Citizenship should be included in the education curricula, but it should be implemented in all levels of education as soon as possible. Another way of strengthening Environmental Citizenship is participation in volunteering initiatives, which may be considered as a potential tool for shaping the attitude of improving community character and cohesion.

Finally, this reflection intends to open questions for further discussion and research, particularly related to the role of Environmental Citizenship in sustainable urban planning and transport systems, sustainable use of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism, and the forms of voluntarism movements and initiatives that could serve to sustainable societies. The significance of volunteering stems from the notion that this helps to not only develop solidarity directly linked to the idea of preserving social cohesion but also to build social, cultural, and human capital based on one of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy to promote a knowledge-based society by encouraging non-formal learning (Keranova 2014).

Individuals can be given opportunities to act as Environmental Citizens in different contexts, for example, within their local community, or with regard to national or global considerations. Local initiatives have a particular potential to deliver environmental improvements and social justice.

Acknowledgement This chapter is based on work from Cost Action ENEC – European Network for Environmental Citizenship (CA16229) – supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

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