The Three R's for Transformation - Reconnect, Reflect, React!

Unveiling the Transformative Potential in Environmental Activism in Russia

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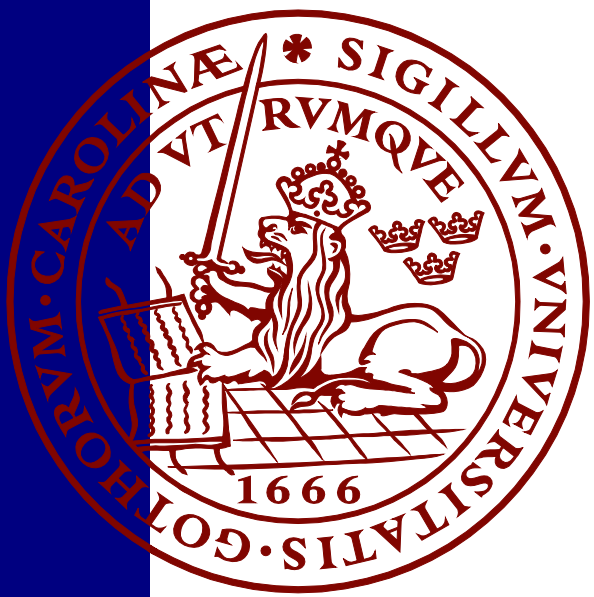

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Abstract

The recognition of both inner (beliefs, mindsets, values) and outer dimensions (structures, technologies, behaviours) in addressing the climate crisis offers a powerful leverage point for the transformation needed. However, there is a lack of understanding of how this approach can be adapted to different groups and contexts. This thesis focuses on environmental activists from Russia as valuable change agents trying to create meaningful change within repressive settings and explores their beliefs regarding the role of inner dimensions in addressing the climate crisis. By employing semi-structured interviews, this study shows the recognition of the importance of inner dimensions among interviewed environmental activists. While some activists have had experience with transformative practices, they were sometimes hesitant and sceptical when explicitly discussing inner dimensions. This thesis provides recommendations, reflects on the newfound insights and limitations of the inner transformation approach and advocates for a broader discourse on this subject among researchers and practitioners.

Keywords: inner transformation, inner dimensions, beliefs, transformative practices, environmental activism, Russia

Word count: 11992

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I believe in the relational nature of reality, which means that everything is created through relationships, where the whole (relationship/collective/system) is greater than its parts (me, in this case). So, the whole work wouldn't be possible without the support, ideas, and presence of the people around me.

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List of Abbreviations

ID	Inner Dimension
IT	Inner Transformation
FFFR	Fridays for Future Russia
TP	Transformative Practice
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1 Introduction

There is an urgent need for successful responses to address the scale of the escalating global climate change challenge (IPCC, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2023). Karen O'Brien presented three spheres of transformation that need to be addressed to meet this challenge: practical - including specific behaviours and technical solutions; political - referring to systems and structures; and personal - representing individual and shared values, worldviews and paradigms (O'Brien, 2018). However, most research and policies have focused on only the first two areas of transformation, - "outer change" (Ives et al., 2020; O'Brien, 2018). This is the case because the climate crisis is perceived as an external problem with external causes (Wamsler et al., 2021). During the past few decades, a new perspective started to evolve, with more focus on the personal sphere, aiming to link the inner and outer dimensions of climate change, with a comprehensive consideration of the internal causes (Wamsler et al., 2021). In this context, the inner dimensions (IDs) (e.g., values, worldviews, beliefs, mindsets) are seen as potential *deep leverage points* for the transformation needed as they tackle the root causes of the crisis (Meadows, 1999; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022).

Despite the emerging field of studies and practice focusing on the intersection of inner and outer dimensions in relation to climate change, there is still a gap in understanding what specific approaches could be used to integrate the IDs into decision-making and overarching activities for diverse target groups and contexts (especially because the majority of research and practice has been conducted in the Global North (Wamsler et al., 2021)). Additionally, limited knowledge is available regarding the specific links between IDs and climate change, how they can be addressed to become leverage points for change and how these are envisioned in different sustainability contexts and applications (Ives et al., 2023; Larocque, 2023; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022).

Environmental activists are valuable change agents and essential stakeholders for enhancing collaborative decision-making in sustainability efforts (Larocque, 2023). They organise protests, spread the climate message and mobilise people for collective climate action (Driscoll, 2020), effectively amplifying awareness and advocacy for environmental issues (Romano et al., 2024). Furthermore, their efforts can gain significant impact at local, national, and even international levels, contributing to collective action and solutions for addressing the challenges posed by climate change (Bandura & Cherry, 2020; Romano et al., 2024). Their goals vary from movement to movement but often include raising awareness of climate change and its consequences and putting pressure on governments and businesses to make the necessary changes (O'Brien et al., 2018; Sommer & Klöckner, 2021).

Recognising the internal human factors driving the problem, the specific links between climate change and IDs, and strategically incorporating such insights into campaigns in the given context, might help eco-activists act more effectively (Sommer & Klöckner, 2021; Wamsler et al., 2021). Such an approach would address the root causes of the crisis (Meadows, 1999), rather than providing "external" solutions to the "external" problem.

There is also limited research on the role of IDs as leverage points in repressive settings, indicating a significant gap in understanding their potential within different socio-political environments. It is recognised that the power structures often limit agency for change (Tyson, 2018), resulting in a reduced potential for integrating IDs to effect change for oppressed individuals. At the same time, the barriers are not solely structural, but also rooted in human capacities, mindsets and the narrative imposed by the power structures (Woiwode et al., 2021). Questioning this narrative and cultivating IDs can help to adapt to the context and implement new solutions. Thus, the general objective of this research is to explore the potential role of an inner transformation (IT) approach in the context of eco-activism in the repressive settings of Russia. This thesis does not aim to provide an overall overview but rather focuses on thought patterns in a limited sample of Russian eco-activists.

The beliefs and worldviews of individuals shape the way they define and address problems (Wamsler et al., 2024). A holistic and relational understanding of the problem, its context and the associated "mind-sustainability nexus" is necessary to successfully address the climate crisis (Wamsler et al., 2024), which is particularly relevant in environmental activism (Driscoll, 2020). Therefore, this thesis seeks to explore the *beliefs* of eco-activists in Russia, with a particular focus on their understanding of the *role of IDs* in *the climate crisis*. The findings will shed light on how IDs are reflected among eco-activists in the Russian repressive environment, potentially enriching the field of IT. I also aim to explore existing and potential transformative practices (TPs) that could potentially promote meaningful change if integrated into their activities. By meaningful change, I mean promoting their activism in the long term, providing motivation and a sense of active hope, leading to a greater connection with values and emotions, and providing more insight into the climate crisis and new ways of dealing with it.

As the nature of ID concepts continues to evolve and undergo further development and testing, this thesis seeks to assess their applicability within a novel context. The study serves a dual purpose: firstly, to deepen understanding of these concepts through the perspectives of eco-activists, and secondly, to evaluate their relevance and efficacy within a specific context. The guiding research questions (RQs) are as follows:

RQ1 Perception of Relationships between Inner Dimensions and the Climate Crisis

RQ1.1 How do eco-activists in Russia see the relationships between inner dimensions and climate change?

RQ1.2 What capacities/qualities are seen as important for solving the climate crisis?

RQ1.3 What are the similarities and differences between the insights from previous research and activists' perspectives?

RQ2 The Potential of Integrating Inner Dimensions in Eco-Activism in Russia

RQ2.1 What are the transformative practices used in eco-activism in Russia?

RQ2.2 How can inner dimensions be further integrated to enhance the impact of their environmental efforts and promote meaningful change? What are the barriers?

> RQ2.2.1 To what extent do eco-activists believe that addressing the inner dimensions can contribute to addressing climate change within eco-activism?

This research is relevant for sustainability science because it aims to understand human-nature interaction (Kates et al., 2001) by exploring the specific links between humans and climate change. Additionally, it is problem-oriented (Jerneck et al., 2011), seeking to explore how positive connections can be fostered through TPs to address the climate crisis.

2 Context background

Despite the varying harmful impacts of climate change evident in Russia through changes in permafrost thawing, increased flooding, and intense fires, the country's economy remains heavily reliant on fossil fuels (Javeline et al., 2024). In the government, there is almost no attention being paid to climate change and its impacts (Ashe & Poberezhskaya, 2022; Javeline et al., 2024), mirroring the lack of media coverage on the topic (Ashe & Poberezhskaya, 2022). Additionally, some media promote conspiratorial theories, depicting the climate narrative as a Western approach to controlling energy markets (Tynkkynen & Tynkkynen, 2018). Consequently, there is widespread scepticism regarding climate change and its anthropogenic origins among the Russian population, which is not influenced by political views or left-right affiliations (Ashe & Poberezhskaya, 2022).

In recent years, Russia has been marked by significant historical and cultural events, with the war in Ukraine being a central focus. This conflict has intensified tensions and led to a polarisation of opinions within Russian society (Balzer, 2023; WZB, 2022), exacerbated by systemic information manipulation by the government and aligned actors (OECD, 2022). Additionally, repressive measures in Russia, including the arrest and death of various activists and the designation of certain organisations as “foreign agents”, have further complicated the landscape for civic engagement (OVD-Info, 2024). These factors create a challenging environment for civic engagement, with individuals facing significant risks for speaking out against the government's position. Despite these obstacles, Russian civil society remains persistent (OVD-Info, 2024).

2.1 Environmental activism in Russia

The environmental movement began in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and has grown since the 1990s, with eco-activists in Russia campaigning for environmental protection and exposing state corruption and failures in environmental legislation (Henry & Plantan, 2022; Tysiachniouk et al., 2023). The growth of eco-activism began with the liberalisation of governance and support from foreign donors. Since the mid-2000s, their work has become more challenging due to illiberal political conditions and the exit of some foreign donors (Tysiachniouk et al., 2023). Since 2012, various environmental organisations have been labelled “foreign agents”, making them ineligible for international support and further limiting their work (Henry & Plantan, 2022; Sundstrom et al., 2022; The Moscow Times, 2024). In 2023, international environmental NGOs (including Greenpeace and WWF) were labelled “undesirable”, so cooperation with them was considered a crime, leading them to cease their work in Russia (The Moscow Times, 2024). In response to these pressures, eco-activism has become less centralised and less formalised, adapting with new strategies such as mobilising through informal groups, relying on

volunteer work, using crowdfunding, seeking government grants when available, emphasising social outreach, and utilising social media to promote activities and engage supporters (Sundstrom et al., 2022).

Russian eco-activists have faced significant challenges, leading many to leave the country in 2011-2013 and 2016 due to increased pressure from the state and concerns about the "Law on Foreign Agents" (Henry & Plantan, 2022). This legislation continued to pose threats after the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 when the oppression accelerated (Tysiachniouk et al., 2023). The laws disproportionately targeted eco-activists, subjecting them to heightened oppression compared to other activists (Henry & Plantan, 2022)[1]. This is evident in reported cases of fines (49 administrative fines imposed in 2023), physical assaults (32 reported cases in 2023), arrests with up to 20 years imprisonment (10 reported cases of criminal proceedings in 2023), and deaths among Russian eco-activists (12 registered cases in 2012-2022) (Ekologo-krizisnaja gruppa, 2024; Vot Tak, 2024). In total, 487 eco-activists came under pressure between 2022 and 2023, highlighting the risks they face in carrying out their activism (Henry & Plantan, 2022; Uzhvak, 2024). This is in line with the perspectives of participants of this research: "I tried to engage in activism and ended up facing repression because any independent protests were perceived as hostile to the regime. I was both imprisoned and arrested many times. [...]. The war started and I couldn't continue to do activism [...]. I was stripped of my citizenship; I cannot return to Russia" (A1).

At the same time, eco-activism is sometimes seen as a safer form of activism that "gives opportunity to have some kind of political agency, while you cannot have any influence in other areas" (A7), which was mentioned by several participants in this study: "Eco-activism, as I thought at that time, is safe, meaning I will not go to jail for it" (A8), and "People [...] find a way to fulfil themselves in eco-activism when they cannot do that in politics" (A7). In 2022 this perception had shifted. Participants noted that "...some kind of activism independent of the state… can only be done on a small scale, only on the issues that are not too inconvenient [for the state]" (A4), highlighting the tightening restrictions on eco-activism. This perspective was further underlined by the observation that "Now there are barely any instruments of peaceful activism in Russia, except for work in social networks" (A1).

Despite the repression, environmental activism continues to persist in Russia, with many activists helping from abroad and others adapting to the context within the country. These include political protests, social media campaigns, environmental events, and conservation programmes. Additionally,

[1] In 2022, media and political activists became the ones most affected (Inoteka, 2021).

there are numerous recycling organisations and activists in the country, where eco-activism remains less politically sensitive. However, according to one interviewee, eco-activists in Russia often lack the organisational support that would give them confidence in their actions. Without independent organisations providing support, eco-activism primarily consists of small-scale local initiatives.

Eco-activists continue to engage in activism for a variety of reasons, often grounded in personal values and beliefs (Mazur, 2024). Consequently, they can provide important insights into the IT field of research. Furthermore, the explicit cultivation of IDs through TPs has the potential for activists' "lasting contentment and well-being, with positive flow-on effects for the world at large" (Ives et al., 2020, p. 213). An examination of their beliefs can assist in determining the viability of the ID concepts in repressive contexts and in developing potential strategies for their application.

3 Theoretical background

Inner transformation is a field of research and practice, that focuses on the IDs of sustainability. IDs include individual and collective mindsets, values, worldviews, beliefs, paradigms, and associated capacities (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2021). In this field, the inner and outer dimensions across individual, collective, and system levels are seen as interlinked for the transformation needed (Ives et al., 2023; O'Brien, 2018). At present, the concepts are still evolving, but the field provides insights into the change needed for a more sustainable living. It differs from environmental psychology and similar disciplines in that it aims to explore the IDs in relation to the outer - the broader, systemic context (e.g., groups, society, culture, power structures) for sustainability outcomes, as shown in Figure 1 (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2021). It thus explores the relationships between internal and external dimensions, rather than focusing on one or the other in isolation (Ives et al., 2020; Walsh et al., 2021). It is argued that the transformation needed can only be created by challenging the underlying patterns of IDs in combination with external approaches, as opposed to mechanistic approaches that focus only on changing technologies, systems or behaviours (Böhme et al., 2022). Addressing the climate crisis requires a shift from mechanistic to relational, holistic paradigms, where emphasis is placed on understanding and nurturing the relationships between various elements of the system, rather than viewing them as isolated entities (Böhme et al., 2022; Wamsler et al., 2024). This holistic approach recognises the interconnectedness of inner, cultural, economic, and environmental factors, and emphasises the need for comprehensive and integrated strategies to foster sustainable change.

The IT field, as described by Ives et al. (2023), emphasises the importance of addressing deep leverage points to facilitate change by integrating both inner and outer dimensions. This approach involves deliberately cultivating the qualities necessary to address the crises (also referred to as transformative capacities/qualities). Although particular TPs would vary depending on the context, some ideas remain similar. These include cultivating IDs through consciousness-based approaches, such as contemplative and psychological practices and transformative leadership. Particular examples include meditation, yoga, group discussions, self-reflection, embodiment practices and outdoor learning (Fraude et al., 2021; Ives et al., 2023; Legrand et al., 2022)

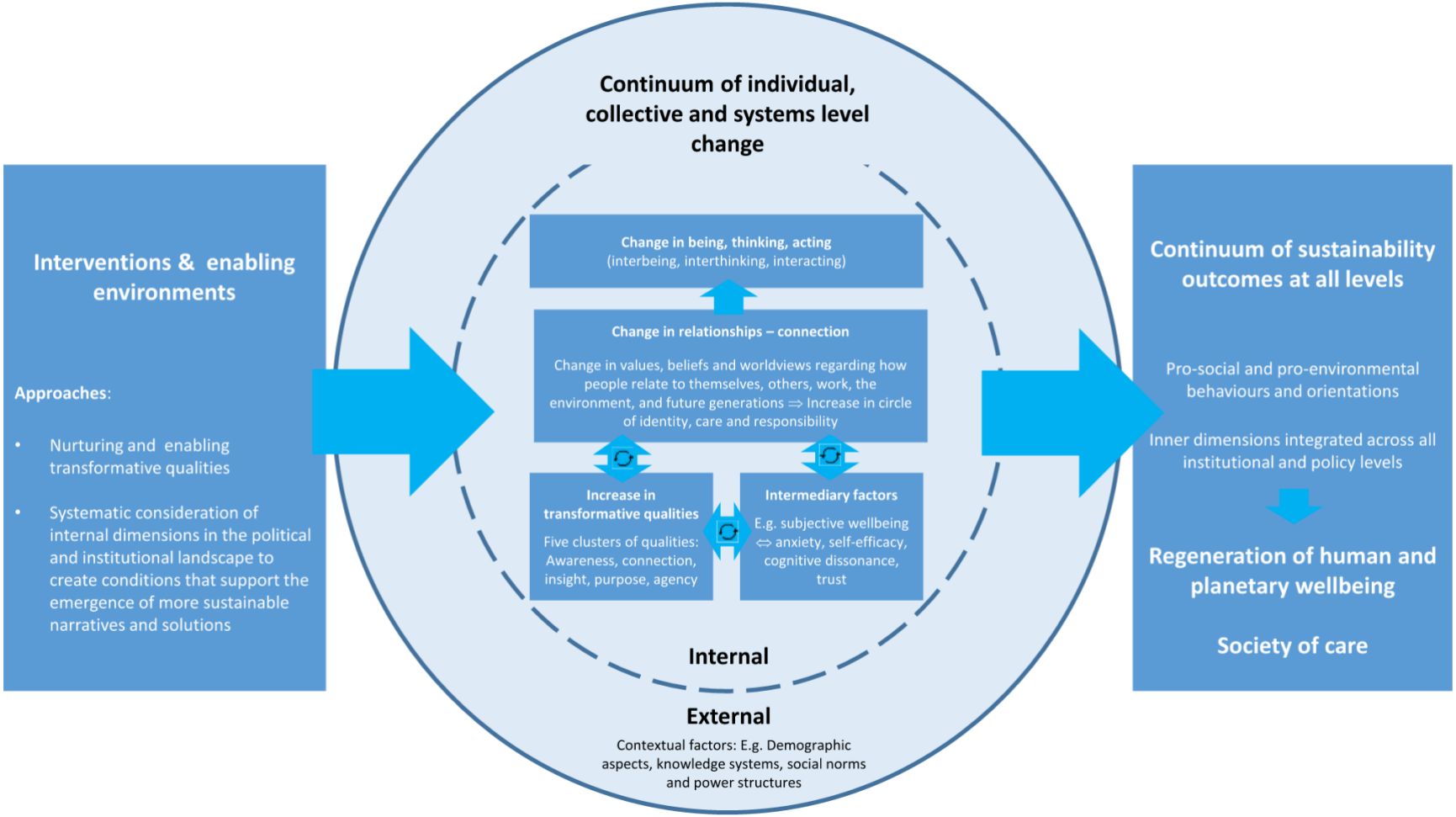

Figure 1. A heuristic model of change for internal–external transformation towards sustainability (Wamsler et al., 2021, p. 102373)

At the individual level, strategies may involve education, training, psychological support, and self-reflection practices. At a collective level, the approach includes creating safe spaces, learning environments and multi-stakeholder communities that foster dialogue, experimentation, and collective meaning-making through facilitation: co-creation practices, active listening, or nonviolent communication (Inner Development Goals, n.d.; Legrand et al., 2022). Finally, at the systemic level, the IT approach advocates for embedding IDs into policy-making processes and revising organisational frameworks and policies to integrate values as specific aims or criteria. Examples of this approach in practice include initiatives that integrate mindfulness practices into educational curricula, establish dialogue platforms for diverse stakeholders to collaborate on environmental issues, and incorporate sustainability principles into corporate governance structures (Ives et al., 2023).

The provided list of practices is not exhaustive and should be selected based on their relevance in particular contexts (Legrand et al., 2022). These practices and learning environments facilitate the integration of IDs into external solutions for sustainability (Ives et al., 2023). They should be used with a deliberative and mindful approach, acknowledging existing problems (Walsh, 2016). The limitations include the vagueness of the topic, which makes it difficult to grasp, and the lack of objectivity and scalability. However, this ambiguity also presents opportunities for creativity and innovation. This allows for flexibility in exploration, ultimately fostering context-specific insights and approaches rather than universal solutions (Brockwell et al., 2022; Ives et al., 2020).

Notably, such initiatives may face resistance from individuals and institutions unwilling to engage in reflection or adopt new approaches, especially because establishing causal relationships between interventions and outcomes can be challenging due to their complex and intertwined nature (Hertz et al., 2024). Additionally, certain practices may be inaccessible to marginalised communities due to financial, cultural, or geographical barriers. Another potential drawback of this approach is the risk of misuse, particularly in repressive contexts where it could be exploited for anti-environmentalism, nationalism, or similar agendas (Brockwell et al., 2022). This highlights the importance of ethical considerations, constant reflection on power dynamics and critical engagement with the field. The overall aim is not to “change people’s beliefs, values and worldviews, as this turns them into objects to be changed rather than subjects of change”, but rather “it is about valuing and addressing different perspectives [...] and creating spaces and conditions that can nurture a culture of personal development and growth, mutual support and engagement towards sustainability, from a space of shared, universal values and connection” and “about assisting people to exploit their full potential to support change and integrate different perspectives and knowledge” (Wamsler et al., 2023, p. 375).

3.1 Meaningful impact of environmental activism

Answering the question of improving activists' meaningful impact, many studies focused on the political and social aspects of eco-activism. They examined various aspects such as organisational dynamics, specific actions and strategies and their effectiveness, the political landscape with its implications and opportunities, and communication analysis (Hasler et al., 2020; McAdam, 2017). Other studies looked at psychological aspects, exploring the motivations that drive individuals to engage in eco-activism and the associated emotions (e.g., Brown & Pickerill, 2009; Duncan, 1999; González-Hidalgo et al., 2022; Romano et al., 2024; Wallis & Loy, 2021). However, there is a need for further studies in diverse contexts (Sarid & Goldman, 2021), grounded in the relational approach (Walsh et al., 2021). Such research targets eco-activists as valuable change agents and essential stakeholders for enhancing collaborative decision-making in ecosocial work (Bandura & Cherry, 2020; Larocque, 2023; Romano et al., 2024). I aim to explore eco-activists' beliefs on the intersection of IDs and climate change (Wamsler et al., 2024), acknowledging the Russian socio-political context.

While beliefs are formed by a variety of factors, including personal experiences, self-reflection, awareness, education, culture and social norms, they can also be imposed by power structures such as government organisations, religion and media (Arias, 2019; Johnson et al., 2011; Legrand et al., 2022; Woiwode et al., 2021). Simultaneously, beliefs shape the way we define and deal with problems (Wamsler et al., 2024). Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the problem, the context and the beliefs of different actors is a prerequisite for successfully addressing the climate crisis. As activists are often reflective (Larocque, 2023), they can provide important insights into understanding the intersection of the IDs and the climate crisis. Understanding the beliefs of Russian eco-activists can help to develop a strategy to improve their meaningful impact and expand the field of IT with examples from repressive environments.

3.1.1 Inner dimensions in environmental activism

Eco-activists are engaged in activism for different reasons, often rooted in personal values and beliefs, desire for social change, as well as social norms and perceived system failures (Mazur, 2024; Wallis & Loy, 2021). They often deal with feelings of insecurity and fear. Due to the perceived urgency, the scale of the problem and government inaction, they experience burnout and climate anxiety, along with other forms of emotional distress (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; Driscoll, 2020; Kleres & Wettergren, 2017; Rowe & Ormond, 2023). However, activists tend to focus on what is "out there", neglecting their personal problems (Brown & Pickerill, 2009). The long-term intensity of these emotions may lead some to withdraw from their activist efforts (Budziszewska & Głód, 2021). Depending on the context and the

coping strategies used by activists, “negative” emotions such as anger, despair and guilt can either be rejected and suppressed or cultivated for collective action (Bell et al., 2022; Kleres & Wettergren, 2017). The latter strategy requires a better connection with IDs. As Monica Sharma stated in her book on transformational leadership, “When activism is anchored in everyone’s inner capacities, it is compassionate and strong, where principled outrage replaces destructive anger, where burnout is transformed into sustained contribution” (Sharma, 2017, pp. 312–313). Exploring eco-activists' beliefs can help to develop specific strategies for integrating inner capacities that contribute to activating latent potential and to effective, long-term, meaningful, and holistic change.

Daniel Driscoll conducted a study on US-based eco-activists' strategies, for staying engaged in activism despite burnout, perceived urgency, and connected challenges. The discovered strategies included long-term thinking, spending time in nature, mindfulness practices (e.g., yoga, meditation) and focusing on what can be controlled (Driscoll, 2020). While Driscoll’s study provides crucial insight into what can help activists remain active, it was focused on activists’ actions, rather than on the beliefs that lie behind these actions, which, if uncovered, could promote new, more holistic strategies. Additionally, the study was focused on personal coping strategies, whereas the IT field stands for both personal and collective strategies (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2021).

As transformative change can result from cultivating IDs (Ives et al., 2023), the aim for activists can be to avoid triggering fight-flight-freeze reactions and polarisation in environmental campaigning. Instead, they could “come from a point of shared humanity and universal values” (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022, p.14), focusing on spreading ideas and shaping imaginations (Moore & Milkoreit, 2020). The means to these aims include the introduction of transformative spaces, practices and conditions for reflection that would foster climate collaboration, exploration of the role of IDs in sustainability, critiques of current paradigms and conditions for sustainable responses (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). The spaces and activities should not rely on instrumental approaches such as nudging or policy incentives, nor should they be imposed on activists as social engineering technique (Ives et al., 2023). Instead, they should emerge from the activists themselves (with possible facilitation), activate latent potential, and focus on supporting transformative qualities (Wamsler et al., 2021), including awareness, connection, insight, purpose, and agency, which in turn relate to open-minded, relational, equitable, and action-oriented attitudes (Wamsler & Osberg, 2022).

In the oppressive Russian settings, where eco-activists often face restrictive policies (Section 2.1), the described personal challenges are exacerbated by the government measures that limit their work and advocacy, leading to additional emotional distress and a perceived lack of agency (Henry & Plantan, 2022; Tysiachniouk et al., 2023). The exploration of their inner lives and their further cultivation holds

the potential to unveil “immaterial sources of lasting contentment and well-being, with positive flow-on effects for the world at large” (Ives et al., 2020). This can enhance activist aspirations to create broader positive impacts. It is essential to highlight that cultivating IDs in activists' activities is not presented as a panacea for all their challenges or as a means to alleviate oppression. Especially because the potential for eco-activists to effect change is limited in repressive settings. However, together with other approaches it can help to develop new action strategies, strengthen perceived agency and holistic understanding of the crisis (Wamsler et al., 2024), develop coping mechanisms for emotional distress (Schwartz et al., 2023), foster active hope (Macy & Johnstone, 2012), and establish stronger connections between activists' collaborative actions, their shared values and beliefs and the system they engage with (Bentz et al., 2022; Wamsler et al., 2024). By other approaches I mean, for example, the “resource mobilisation” or the “political process” approaches which concentrate on political and economic aspects of eco-activism. These approaches facilitate exploring external opportunities, identifying resource channels, and assessing the outcomes of the activist endeavours (Calibeo, 2017). By integrating these approaches with IT practices, environmental activists can develop a comprehensive understanding of socio-political, economic, and personal dimensions of their work.

4 Methods

The theory presented in the previous section informs the way the activists' beliefs are collected, interpreted, and analysed. Recognising the interconnectedness of inner and outer dimensions, with a typical emphasis on the latter, led me to pose direct questions related to IDs. The conceptual framework and interview guide, based on Wamsler & Bristow (2022), were adopted to ensure a thorough and comprehensive understanding of activists' perspectives.

A qualitative approach is adopted because of the under-researched nature of the topic and the aim to investigate meanings that activists attribute to their experiences (Belina, 2023, p. 334). Additionally, qualitative research is an important tool for studying those with limited recognition and marginalisation (which is the case for eco-activists in Russia), as it enables to articulate their experiences and fosters understanding between them and other groups (Moree, 2018).

I chose semi-structured interviews as they provide detailed and comprehensive insight into participants' perspectives, enabling a thorough exploration of their beliefs and experiences (Belina, 2023; Bryman, 2012, Chapter 17). The flexibility of semi-structured interviews is advantageous, as it allows for the exploration of different viewpoints and adaptation of the interview flow to the participants' perspectives (Bryman, 2012, pp. 470–472).

Following the research aim, the study did not intend to offer an overview of the entire Russian eco-activism. Instead, the objective was to investigate patterns of thought regarding possible connections between the IDs, climate change, and activism within a non-representative sample of eco-activists involved in different activities.

4.1 Selection process

I used purposive sampling (Tongco, 2007) to recruit activists involved in eco-activism in Russia (Table 1). An eco-activist was defined as an individual with at least one year of activism experience in an environmental organisation, group or social media campaign, and who self-identified as an eco-activist (Larocque, 2023; Sundstrom et al., 2022). Eco-activists did not need to be competent in the topic of IDs as the aim was to explore the perceptions of the topic, rather than their expertise in the subject.

First, I researched environmental movements, organisations, and groups. I then contacted their coordinators to inquire about their interest in participating in the interview. These included activists whom I knew (1) from my involvement in the Fridays for Future Russia (FFFR) movement, whom I found (2) through the university-based environmental organisation *Zelenaya Vyshka* and (3) through

Pesochnitsa movement, based in Arkhangelsk and focused on the topics of environment and local identity. To identify additional participants, I used snowball sampling (Parker et al., 2019). I asked the interviewed coordinators to recommend other participants, who might be interested in participating. One participant recommended me to post a message at (4) the public Telegram chat on an environmental topic, where I found six activists willing to participate. However, two of the participants became unavailable when scheduling the interview.

Table 1. Description of activists that took part in the interviews

Activist	The organisation or movement in which involved	Involvement in environmental activism and other relevant information
Activist 1 (A1)	Fridays For Future Russia	Political activism, communication on climate, politics and racial discrimination (and their intersection), organising protests
Activist 2 (A2)	Zelenaya Vyshka	Organising and volunteering in environmental projects
Activist 3 (A3)	Zelenaya Vyshka	Volunteering in environmental projects
Activist 4 (A4)	Fridays For Future Russia	Education in environmental science, communication on climate issues
Activist 5 (A5)	University-based activism and projects within the Russian Geographic Society ['Russkoje Geograficheskoje Obchestvo']	Education in environmental science, volunteering in environmental projects, communication and teaching about environmental issues
Activist 6 (A6)	Preferred not to mention	Volunteering in environmental projects
Activist 7 (A7)	Previous Greenpeace intern	Communication on climate issues, volunteering in environmental projects
Activist 8 (A8)	Preferred not to mention	Volunteering in environmental projects
Activist 9 (A9)	Pesochnitsa	Communication on climate issues, coordinating local environmental events with an accent on the creation of community, local solutions and local identity

Note. The table provides the activists' label, the organisation they are involved in and the nature of their involvement. The personal information is shared only for those who gave written consent to it.

4.2 Data collection

Based on the interview guide from a study conducted on politicians (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022), I adapted the questions for eco-activists. The adapted guide included three main topics: (1) the possible

intersections of IDs and climate change, (2) links to environmental activism, and (3) the potential for integration in their activities (Appendix 1). I translated all questions into Russian, the native language of the participants and the author, using DeepL. The term “inner dimensions” and related concepts were translated as accurately as possible, sometimes using several synonyms for clarity.

While conducting the interviews I followed advice from “Criteria of a successful interviewer” (Bryman, 2012, p. 475). The interview began with background questions about experience in activism, motivations, and views on the current state of Russian eco-activism and climate change. These were asked to inform the language used for the main section and to filter some questions. For instance, if the interviewee was unwilling to discuss political aspects or preferred to focus on local environmental issues rather than the broader climate change topic, I rephrased certain questions during the interview. Furthermore, I asked additional questions depending on the interview flow (Bryman, 2012, Chapter 20).

When discussing IDs, I often found myself asking the same question multiple times, due to the ambiguity and infrequency with which this concept is addressed in everyday conversation. When asked, I provided examples but emphasised that these were just examples and that the concept could include more ideas. This was done deliberately because the concept of IDs does not have sharp boundaries, allowing for “creativity and [...] integration across different knowledge domains” (Ives et al., 2020, p. 213). At the end of the interview, I asked questions about a general understanding of the climate crisis and possible solutions. The interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom and transcribed afterwards using AssemblyAI[2] with manual checking for accuracy.

4.3 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was the main method used to analyse the interview responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006), applying predominantly deductive with a combination of inductive approaches (Fryer, 2022). Thematic analysis directly led to answers for RQ1.1 and RQ1.2, while the exploration of other RQs was guided by the content of the interviews and enriched by insights drawn from the IT field.

I followed the steps for defining codes and themes, informed by (Braun & Clarke, 2006) (Table 2). In this context, codes are discrete units representing specific concepts or phenomena within the data, while themes encompass broader patterns or concepts that emerge from the aggregation,

[2] Before using the AssemblyAI for transcriptions, I made sure that the audio data will be stored only on my computer and will not be used for model training and any other purposes.

interpretation of these codes. For instance, drawing on the themes and codes based on Wamsler and Bristov (2022), “climate anxiety” and “burnout and overwhelm” were two different codes contributing to the overarching theme of “IDs as a victim of climate change”. Through inductive coding, I added additional codes such as “intrinsic motivation” and “understanding the impact of actions”, which were subsequently unified under the theme “IDs as a driving force to climate action”. Additionally, codes “inspiration” and “connection” were unified under the new theme “IDs as nurtured by climate action” (Figure 2). I established the connections between themes and codes based on the meaning conveyed by participants. For example, while the term “imperial mindset” could be interpreted in terms of both a cause of climate change and a barrier to climate action, I included it under the theme of barriers because it was described in that context, reflecting perspective on the constraints to effective climate action.

Clustering transformative qualities I used a framework from Wamsler et al. (2021) and Wamsler and Bristov (2022).

Table 2. Phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Step	Phase	Description
1	Familiarising myself with the data	I put all the transcriptions of the interviews in NVivo, read them all and created some notes.
2	Deductive data coding aligned with the preliminary codes and themes	Using the existing codes and themes from Wamsler and Bristov (2022) for RQ1.1, and both Wamsler et al. (2021) and Wamsler and Bristov (2022) for RQ1.2, I searched for relevant information across the data.
3	Inductive data coding	I generated new code ideas.
4	Interpreting the newly generated codes and creating themes	I reviewed the codes, merging and modifying them and then clustered them into the broader themes (either existing or new).
5	Reviewing and defining themes	I reviewed, named and finalised the themes.
6	Drawing conclusion	I compared all the codes and themes and wrote the results section.

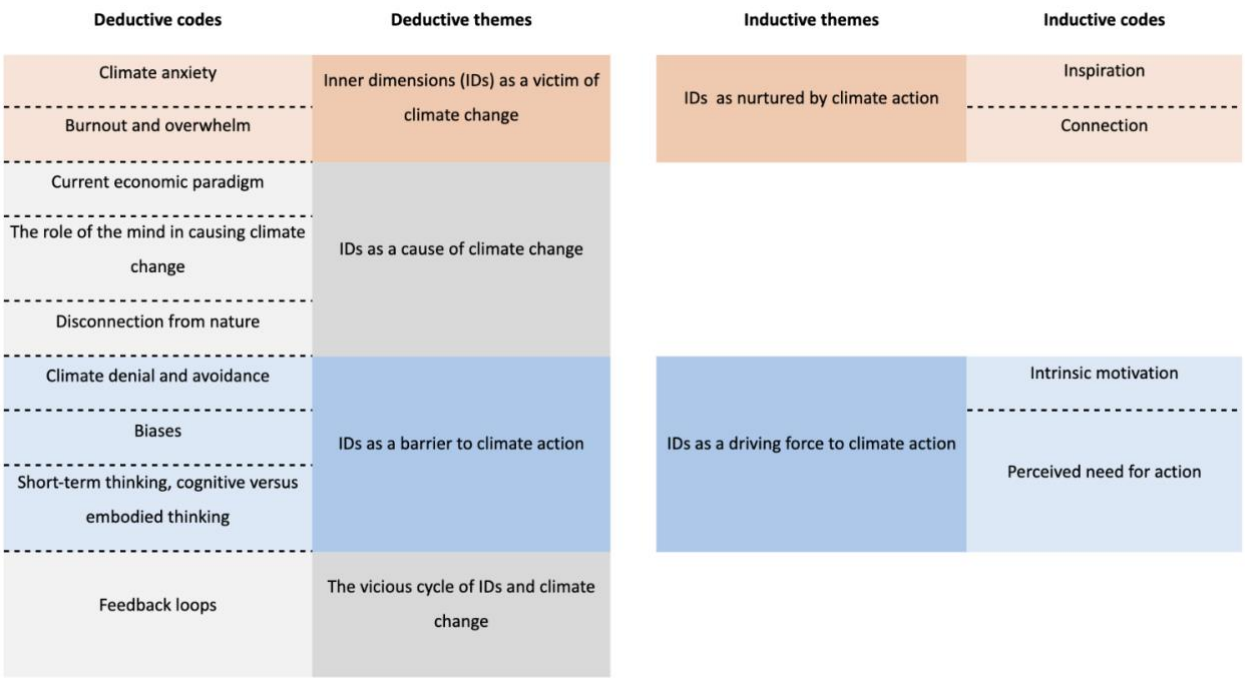

Figure 2. The intersections between IDs and climate change

Note. Deductive themes and codes are based on (Wamsler & Brisrov, 2022)

I conducted preliminary analysis in Russian (steps 1 - 4), followed by translation and further analysis in English (steps 5 - 6) (Table 2). The decision to conduct the preliminary analysis in Russian was based on my native language skills, ensuring a nuanced interpretation of the interviews. Further steps were conducted in English as certain concepts and terminology relevant to the analysis have been more fully explored and articulated in English, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate presentation of the study's findings.

In defining the codes for RQ1.2, I encountered challenges in interpreting respondents' responses and linking them to specific concepts. To overcome this, I analysed the meanings of the descriptions provided and grouped related concepts under existing similar codes. For example, when a participant mentioned “active listening”, I categorised it under the code “deep listening”, because these concepts are closely related, and “deep listening” is not commonly used as a phrase in Russian. Similarly, phrases like “feeling and understanding yourself” were grouped under the code “self-awareness”. I also included “patience” under the code “regulation and processing”, as the activist referred to it as managing and dealing with emotions and thoughts. I introduced two new codes within the themes of “agency” and “connection” based on their definitions (Figure 2): “perfectionism” was put under “agency” theme, as it was described in the context of a deep desire to understand and influence the world, driven by the intention to achieve one's goals, reflecting a proactive approach to navigating the

complexities of life (A2). Furthermore, under “connection” theme, I introduced the code “ability to unite and inspire people” as it captures the multifaceted nature of connection, which includes empathy and compassion.

4.4 Methodology, positionality, and ethics

Following the ontology of the IT field, I adopt a relational view on reality, whereby the interdependence of inner and outer dimensions unfolds across individual, collective, and systemic levels (Ives et al., 2023). I also emphasise the role of humans (subjectivity and intersubjectivity) as key agents for driving transformative change towards sustainability. Epistemologically, the study adheres to a pluralistic approach, acknowledging the value of integrating diverse perspectives and expanding knowledge systems (Ives et al., 2023). Consequently, I have prioritised conducting interviews with Russian eco-activists representing various movements to delve into their lived experiences. By integrating insights from Russian eco-activists, socio-political context and IT research, this thesis aims to generate a nuanced understanding of the role of IT in advancing sustainability holistically and inclusively.

I followed the main ethical principles of social research (Bryman, 2012, Chapter 6), ensuring that I did no harm to participants, respected privacy, avoided deception, took informed consent to participate and ensured voluntary engagement. I guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality to all participants and shared information about their affiliation with a specific activist group and other personal details only if they provided explicit permission. I also emphasised the right not to answer certain questions or to end the interview at any time.

I sent participants the informed consent form for signature the day before the interview (Appendix 2). It contained general information about the research, its aims and confidentiality. It also mentioned that the work will be published on Lund University's open website.

Notably, I conducted this research while participating in FFFRS’s social media campaign alongside several activists involved in this research. Furthermore, being from Russia, I am a part of the polarised societal landscape mentioned above, bringing my own set of political views. I aimed to be non-judgmental towards the interviewees, regardless of their political views and irrespective of differing views on climate change, society, and the role of mindsets in those.

4.5 Limitations

4.5.1 Data collection

I recognise the limitations associated with the chosen method, which include difficulties with replication and generalisation of findings (Bryman, 2012, Chapter 17). The nature of the interview method can lead to overlooking of aspects that interviewees consider to be trivial, potentially affecting the depth of information obtained (Bryman, 2012). This was evident in the flow of the interviews as several activists began some phrases with “this may be too obvious, but…” (A4, A5, A9). Furthermore, the semi-structured format may lead to variability in the depth of information gathered, as participants may emphasise certain aspects while overlooking others. The reliance solely on participants' recall and verbal expression may introduce bias and limitations in the accuracy of the information obtained (Tongco, 2007). Additionally, the use of vague words in the topics covered might lead to ambiguity or different interpretations, adding complexity to the interpretation of the data collected.

While recognising these limitations, I deliberately chose this method as the aim was to explore what the participants considered important and what they believed in. This method allowed me to adapt the question and explore the participants' beliefs in more depth by asking additional questions to explore the nuances.

4.5.2 Sampling strategy

This research used a non-representative sample; therefore, the results cannot be generalised. Moreover, a non-random sampling method (Bryman, 2012, Chapter 8) based on purposive sampling of environmental groups and further snowball sampling was used, meaning the selection is inherently biased (Tongco, 2007).

5 Results

5.1 Beliefs on the intersection of inner dimensions and climate change (RQ1.1)

All participants mentioned that the question about possible links between IDs and climate change was broad and difficult to grasp. Different activists interpreted the question differently in the beginning. While I explicitly asked about the possible connections between IDs and climate change, some participants questioned whether I only meant how climate change affects IDs, while others wondered if I was only referring to how IDs influence climate change. I invited them to go deeper into the mentioned intersection and to think of all possible connections for people in general. Figure 2 displays the identified themes and codes.

5.1.1 Vicious intersections

All activists agreed there are connections between IDs and climate change. The most mentioned relationship centred around ***the IDs as a barrier to climate action*** (A1, A2, A4-A9). This was the first thing that came to mind for six participants. In these terms, four activists highlighted tendencies towards short-term, individualistic thinking which prioritises personal benefits over long-term considerations for future generations and exhibits a limited sense of responsibility (A1, A5-A7). Additionally, the barriers to climate action were also articulated in terms of climate avoidance and denial (A1, A2, A5, A7). Activist 7 further emphasised a lack of energy and mental resources among individuals to engage in activism, influence politicians or participate in protests, which contributes to a general disengagement with the climate crisis. Activist 2 noted that people are often afraid to act and show disagreement with the government, which, combined with a "hold on until something serious happens" mentality, leads to passivity. Activist 2 also mentioned that people tend to become more indifferent to the problems because of the persistent heavy news flow. Civic society can exhibit climate avoidance, resisting fear and burnout to engage in political action but failing to address climate topics due to their perceived lack of political relevance (A1).

Different biases were the most mentioned factor among barriers to climate action (A1-A5, A7). Activist 1, who was one of the most politically engaged participants (based on their activist engagement in political protests and interest in climate politics), argued that the imperial mindset in Russia results in the neglect of regions most affected by climate change and the lack of corresponding actions. Moreover, Activist 1 pointed out the gap between vulnerable and privileged groups in climate activism, noting that marginalised communities often take the lead, while privileged groups prioritise their own interests, sometimes even rejecting the efforts of marginalised groups. As an example, Activist 1

shared personal experiences of facing rejection as an eco-activist in Russia due to not being Russian by nationality. Other biases identified as barriers to climate action included the "live once" mentality (A5), a lack of understanding regarding the connection between the visible changes in the environment and climate change (A4), scepticism towards the climate crisis especially among older generations, viewing it as Western propaganda and questioning its existence (A2, A5), and conservatism in Russian civic society, reflected in ignorance of the climate topic in preference to solely political protest (A1). Activist 3 also highlighted the perception of eco-activists as too radical, often portrayed in the media as overly emotional, using Greta Thunberg as an example. This portrayal leads people to see activism as irrational, discouraging them from getting involved (A3).

The second most frequently mentioned link was ***the IDs as a victim of climate change*** (A1, A2, A4, A5, A7-A9). Six activists specifically referred to experiences of stress, burnout and overwhelm as a result of the impacts of climate change (A1, A2, A4, A7-A9). Activists 1 and 8 emphasised the acute mental health effects felt by vulnerable groups and indigenous communities who bear the brunt of the consequences of climate change. Activist 9 articulated how the global nature of climate challenges often causes significant stress due to the overwhelming complexity and the perceived impossibility of addressing them. Conversely, local climate issues were seen as potentially more motivating for action than frustrating global problems. Furthermore, Activists 1 and 4 highlighted the prevalence of burnout within the activist community due to ongoing climate change, exacerbated by scepticism and negative attitudes towards their efforts from various groups. This suggests that individuals experience stress and burnout not only because of the impacts of climate change but also because of the challenges they face in their advocacy work, such as facing opposition and criticism. Four participants, all of whom were engaged in communication about climate issues, also referred to the term "climate anxiety" (A4, A5, A7, A9). Activist 9 highlighted the importance of the increased availability of climate change-related information in contributing to higher levels of climate anxiety as people become more aware of the problem but may not always know how to act on the information and what steps to take to address it.

Another identified link, ***the IDs as a cause of climate change,*** was less explicitly articulated. Activist 4 was the only one who directly stated that IDs are at the root of climate change. Only two activists directly mentioned the role of IDs in causing climate change. Activist 4 discussed how personal values and attitudes, such as selfishness and egoism, contribute to environmental degradation, while Activist 7 emphasised the importance of recognising the direct link between individual lifestyles and attitudes and their climate consequences. Six participants also identified some underlying factors. For example, they mentioned the effect of the capitalistic economic paradigm: "...in capitalist societies, it is obvious that there are more environmental problems because making money is more important than nature…"

(A2) and "...profit becomes more important than any labour input or other problems at all" (A8). Additionally, Activist 7 highlighted the political perspective concerning economic paradigms, noting how treating nature solely as a resource rather than acknowledging its other meanings reflects certain political ideologies. Activist 1 highlighted the role of dictatorial states, such as the Russian state, in limiting individual independence, which can contribute to climate change. Activists 6 and 7 also discussed the disconnect from nature and broader humanity as factors contributing to climate change and inaction in addressing it.

Activist 2 was the only one who identified the ***feedback loop*** between the climate crisis and IDs: "experiencing burnout and feeling overwhelmed by climate change leads to barriers to climate action and further exacerbates the climate problem, which, in turn, increases burnout."

5.1.2 Virtuous intersections

Two new intersections between IDs and climate change, distinct from those outlined by Wamsler & Bristow (2022), emerged from the interviews (Figure 2). Both new themes were characterised by positive associations. The first one, ***the IDs as a driving force to climate action*** (A3, A4, A7-A9) stands in contrast to the previously identified "barrier to climate action". While the barrier perspective focuses on internal factors that hinder engagement in climate action, such as short-term thinking and biases, the driving force perspective highlights the positive influence of the IDs in motivating individuals to act. This driving force for the climate action perspective encompasses intrinsic motivations and a perceived need for action. For instance, Activist 4 described how eco-activists often have "...a combination of a sincere love of nature, admiration for its beauty, and, on the other hand, a sense of justice, an understanding that we need to fight for justice, for the truth…" that lead to persistent climate action and act as drivers for change. Additionally, the search for like-minded individuals to form environmental communities was highlighted as another form of internal motivation (A4, A8). Furthermore, two distinct ways in which a perceived need for action emerges are: when individuals directly witness climate-related problems, prompting them to act (A3, A9), and when individuals are educated about climate change and feel compelled to act (A4, A7).

The second newly emerged theme, ***the IDs as nurtured by climate action*** (A1, A4, A5, A7) presents a contrast to the previously discussed theme of victims of climate change. While the perspective of IDs as victims of climate change highlights the negative impacts experienced by individuals due to environmental challenges, the notion of IDs being nurtured by climate action suggests a positive transformative potential. One significant factor identified was inspiration drawn from personal actions and the efforts of individuals and organisations. Participants expressed feelings of inspiration and

happiness derived from observing the climate actions of other individuals/organisations and finding joy and accomplishment in successful endeavours (A5, A7). Another important factor, connection, encompasses a feeling of belonging to a larger environmental activism society (A1) and a deepened connection to nature through engagement in environmental activism (A4). This highlights how climate action can foster a sense of purpose, belonging, and connection with human communities and the natural world, thereby nurturing the IDs of individuals involved in these efforts.

Overall, the activists identified six intersections between climate change and IDs (Figure 2). Although the IDs were most frequently discussed as a barrier to climate action, activists also commonly referred to them as victims of climate change. Only two participants directly mentioned IDs as a cause of climate change, while six activists referred to underlying factors such as the capitalist paradigm, disconnect from nature, and loss of independence due to repressive state settings as contributing more significantly to climate change. The feedback loop between IDs and the climate crisis was recognised only by one activist. Additionally, activists identified two new links, which were not present in Wamsler & Bristow's (2022) study: the IDs nurtured by climate action and IDs driving climate action. These themes represent the opposite side of the previously identified themes.

5.2 Important capacities to deal with climate change (RQ1.2)

After discussing potential connections between IDs and the climate crisis, participants were asked to reflect on the capacities and qualities necessary for effectively addressing the climate crisis. This question is related to the previously emerged intersection "IDs as a driving force to climate action" but invited participants to reflect on the specific capacities needed for this purpose. The overview of the mentioned transformative capacities/qualities and their definitions based on Wamsler & Bristow (2022) is presented in Appendix 3. When discussing transformative qualities, some activists expressed reservations, suggesting that these notions might sound too romantic or idealistic. This reflects the difficulty, rarity, or even condemnation associated with openly discussing IDs. Nevertheless, they often used words like "obvious", "trivial", or "banal" when referring to such qualities as love, empathy, mindfulness, and kindness.

All participants noticed the importance of ***connection*** in various forms such as empathy, compassion, and solidarity. For example, Activist 1 noted the difficulty individuals encounter in maintaining empathy in the face of numerous global issues but emphasised the crucial role it plays in addressing the climate crisis and fostering unity among people. Activist 7 described how the ability to connect with like-minded individuals can provide support to act despite the constant numbness that arises in the face of climate change. When discussing eco-activism, Activist 7 highlighted the significance of

forming communities and drawing inspiration and support from each other as essential elements in addressing climate problems. Activist 2 stressed the importance of compassion for future generations and nature in driving meaningful climate response. Additionally, activists also referred to the human-nature connection, kindness, love, care, and the ability to inspire people underlining the multifaceted ways in which connection can promote positive change (A3-A6, A9).

Eight participants highlighted the concept of ***agency***, emphasising the importance of recognising one's role in addressing the climate crisis and having the courage to act (A1-A4, A6-A9). Activist 1 underlined the need to understand the impact of one's actions to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of environmental challenges. Similarly, Activist 7 advocated for channelling negative emotions such as anxiety and despair as catalysts for productive action while Activist 3 highlighted the role of perfectionism in motivating action for the climate. Furthermore, collaboration was identified as a significant factor by four activists, who emphasised its role in fostering persistence (A1, A7-A9). They stressed the value of engaging with diverse actors, both locally and internationally, to build a supportive community. Additionally, Activist 7 highlighted the importance of recognising and embracing individual differences, suggesting that diverse qualities can complement each other to drive meaningful change. Activists also stressed the importance of courage to lead and be led (A4, A6, A7), as well as the ability to persist and experiment with creative solutions when faced with setbacks (A1, A9).

Awareness was another significant quality discussed by most activists (A2-A9). This includes recognising and validating one's feelings, especially during challenging moments in climate action efforts (A2), reflecting on oneself to gain a better understanding of personal motivations and behaviours (A9), and practising nonviolent communication techniques to foster constructive dialogue (A4, A6). Furthermore, the participants highlighted the significance of attention and active listening to both human and non-human voices (A3, A5). They also stressed the importance of developing emotional intelligence (A7) and understanding scientific principles while remaining flexible in response to new insights: “What people need is an understanding that science is never really one hundred percent reliable because any scientific fact is true until it is disproved. People need to understand that and not wait for confirmation before taking action” (A4). Furthermore, participants emphasised the importance of cognitive flexibility, qualitative critical thinking, and openness to new perspectives. Self-awareness was considered important for understanding one's behaviour and fostering deeper connections with humans and nature (A5, A8, A9).

Five activists referred to ***purpose*** as an important concept (A2-A5, A7). This concept revolves around intrinsic values, moral principles, and a commitment to principles of equality (A4). For example, activists highlighted the significance of equitable thinking, diversity, and inclusion, recognising the inherent inequities present in climate change (A4, A7). Additionally, participants stressed the orientation towards and sense of responsibility for future generations (A2, A5), as well as a broader sense of accountability for one's actions, the natural world, future generations, and the locus of control (A3-A5, A7).

Only four activists mentioned ***insight*** as an important inner capacity. They referred to integrating different ways of knowing in climate action, respecting diversity, and seeking and taking different perspectives (A4, A6, A7, A9). Activist 4 emphasised the importance of respecting indigenous knowledge, stating that "indigenous people know best how to live their lives. Outsiders cannot come in and say, - we want to keep burning coal and you're going to have to die because of it."

Overall, activists reflected on the different inner capacities/qualities required for meaningful climate response, recognising individual differences, and emphasising the importance of working together and using these capacities in combination to achieve a common goal.

5.3 Transformative practices in environmental activism in Russia (RQ2.1)

When I asked if there were any examples of practices aimed at cultivating or nourishing the described inner capacities or in any way related to IDs, some activists were confused about what these could be and asked for clarification and examples. Several activists reacted negatively, saying that such practices sound too exaggerated, insincere, and forced and that the role of IDs is clear by default (A1, A3, A4, A9). Activist 5 also mentioned that adults are usually not interested in conversations about feelings, kindness, and love as they would react "Why are you talking to me as if I was a child?", so that "You have to be a little bit rational when explaining all these problems".

However, activists described several related examples (Table 3). Firstly, they noted that values play a crucial role in eco-activism. Activists highlighted the existence of written and verbal manifestos outlining the values and organisation principles present at Greenpeace, FFFR, and *Pesochnitsa* (A1, A4, A6, A7, A9). These documents or conversations serve to guide participants and ensure a shared understanding of the movement's principles. These principles are presented to individuals before joining the organisation, while failure to respect these may result in dismissal.

Another mentioned example was leadership courses organised by NGOs (A4, A6). These courses included lectures, practical exercises, brainstorming sessions, reflection circles, and interactive games. One exercise mentioned was the leadership circle profile, which allowed participants to identify their existing qualities and areas for development, as well as collaborate with others who possess complementary qualities. The courses aimed to develop leadership skills and foster collaboration among eco-activists.

In *Pesochnits*a, participants have discussions on the mission, responsibilities, and safety issues (A9). They also talk about the importance of a horizontal structure without a specific leader[3], delegating tasks, and sharing feelings while respecting the principles of nonviolent communication. Additionally, participants can attend group meetings with a psychologist. These meetings were initially created to address differing visions and values among participants, as well as a sense of losing the global meaning of the movement. During these meetings, a moderator promoted reflection, meaningful discussion, and a reflective process on working together, burnout, and each participant's role in the organisation. After several sessions with a psychologist, the organisation's management system was changed. This resulted in more people feeling motivated to propose new ideas and lead projects. However, some participants declined to participate in these sessions with psychologists as they were solely interested in effecting meaningful change in Arkhangelsk and viewed *Pesochnitsa* as merely a means to that end, rather than a “family”.

Furthermore, *Pesochnitsa* previously focused on environmental issues by examining them through a philosophical lens and exploring the relationship between plants and indigenous communities. In practice, they organised events such as film screenings related to the philosophical view of ecology and the relationship between plants and humans. They also held discussions and readings of philosophical texts related to the theme of human-nature connection. Throughout their work, they reflected on the existence of plants, their language and how the nature-human relationship can be nurtured. They organised seed-collecting walks and created a course on urban greening. The aim was to view plants as friends, rather than just tools that clean the air and perform other functions. The project also explored how local plants and practices could be used to transform cities and restore vegetation to its rightful place; how to properly plant the vegetation so that it can self-regulate and grow without human intervention, while also being suitable for use in teas and medicinal remedies.

[3] While “horizontal structure” is not a practice in itself, it may provide the opportunities and settings for the easier implementation of related practices, where everyone is included, and anyone can initiate the process.

Although philosophical events had fewer participants than more practical and clear ones, they still attracted new people who became engaged in environmental actions (A9).

Some organisations use storytelling to communicate with larger audiences, creating emotions and provoking reflection (A7). Another mentioned example was ecotourism in various protected areas, where organisers facilitated discussions about environmental problems in the area, fostering empathy and understanding among participants (A5). In addition, the organisers required participants to arrive by train to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This approach promoted environmental sustainability and fostered a sense of connection to nature and purpose among participants as they believed that their visit served a meaningful purpose beyond mere recreation, enhancing overall experience and sense of fulfilment (A5).

Activist 1 shared their approach to developing new solutions for the same problem in changing circumstances, such as when protesting is impossible. The approach aims to be creative, incorporate humour, and build a strong community. Developing a sense of community helps individuals feel less alone and more supported in the face of repression. For instance, when activists are imprisoned, others would bring them parcels and write letters (A1). Activist 1 suggested that individuals should support each other in the current atmosphere and seek tools to combat burnout. An example from personal experience involved participating in meetings dedicated to discussing burnout, sharing activism experiences, and brainstorming effective strategies. Additionally, Activist 4 shared the explicit openness to discuss burnout within the FFFR movement.

Activists from the *Zelenaya Vyshka* did not report any TPs. Activist 2 expressed eagerness to integrate such practices after my question. Activist 3 mentioned that inner qualities and reflection are nourished by engaging in environmental activism, so purposive cultivation of IDs may not be necessary. This was also mentioned by other activists. Activists 3, 4, 7, 9 emphasised that being in the company of responsible, self-aware, caring, and attentive people can naturally motivate one to behave similarly. Activist 7 stated, “Being in this specific activist environment, you automatically internalise all these qualities.” This emphasises how immersion in a supportive activist community can foster the development of inner qualities without the need for explicit TPs.

6 Discussion

The main findings from RQs 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1 are as follows: All the interviewed eco-activists recognise the connections between climate change and IDs. They provided a comprehensive list of inner qualities necessary for meaningful climate action, consistent with the Wamsler et al. (2021) framework. While some activists showed scepticism about these concepts, the discussed activist organisations already have some TPs in place. The following sections will explore the connection between insights from the research field of IT and activists' perspectives and analyse the potential for integration of IDs into activists' activities.

6.1 Comparison of inner transformation field and activists' perspectives (RQ1.3)

6.1.1 The intersections between inner dimensions and climate change

In general, the perspectives of the interviewed activists are similar to those of the policymakers from Wamsler & Bristow (2022) in that they "consider the complex, intertwined nature of mind and climate change" (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022, p. 4). However, there are also several distinct differences.

It is interesting to see the differing perspectives on climate anxiety between European policymakers and activists in Russia. Most policymakers first mentioned climate anxiety when asked about the intersection between climate change and IDs (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022), while only four activists from Russia referred to it. The lower reference to climate anxiety among Russian activists could indeed be tied to cultural or media factors that influence awareness and discourse around climate-related mental health issues. The limited coverage of climate change in Russian media, as noted by Ogunbode et al. (2022), contributes to lower levels of climate anxiety among the Russian population. When people are not exposed to constant discussions about the associated impacts of climate change, they are less likely to experience anxiety or worry about the issue (Ogunbode et al., 2022), leading to fewer conversations about climate anxiety in media.

Furthermore, policymakers also focused on the mind being a root cause of the climate crisis (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022), while this intersection was less explicitly articulated among participants of this study. This could be connected to activists' perception of the problem from a more structural perspective. When directly asked about the root causes of ongoing climate change and its potential solutions already after discussing the IDs, most activists still primarily referred to political, economic, and structural processes, - "There needs to be significant structural adjustment, including the rebuilding of the energy sector, industry, and education reform" (A4), "We need to switch to alternative energy sources" (A2). However, some activists briefly mentioned mindsets (A6-A8), short-term thinking (A1)

and willingness to consume more (A1, A4) as important contributors to the climate crisis. Activist 4 emphasised the importance of policymakers increasing their mindfulness and self-awareness. This highlights the activists' perception of climate change as an external problem (Ives et al., 2020; Walsh et al., 2021), with evolving consideration of IDs. At the same time, activists placed significant emphasis on IDs as barriers to climate action, which represents a more direct causal link.

The vicious feedback loop was highlighted only by one activist, while policymakers recognised several possible feedback loops between IDs and climate change and reflected on the need to turn from vicious to virtuous circles to address the climate crisis (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). Although most activists did not explicitly recognise these feedback loops, two newly emerged themes "*the IDs as a driving force to climate action"* and **"***the IDs as nurtured by climate action"* highlight the existence of virtuous connections between IDs and climate change, emphasising the optimistic thinking and positive activist experience of the participants. The mentioned intersections show activists' understanding of IDs as possibilities for barriers or drivers for change (Wamsler et al., 2023).

6.1.2 Transformative capacities

In line with the existing literature, activists recognised the significance of inner qualities for a meaningful climate response (Wamsler et al., 2021; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). This highlights the similarities between actors with different backgrounds, having interconnected perspectives on the important inner qualities.

However, many activists initially showed resistance when asked about these qualities, seeking clarification multiple times. They also sometimes referred to skills rather than transformative capacities/qualities, such as language acquisition and scientific literacy (A1, A4). Thus, transformative capacities may be overlooked in discussions on climate change and environmental action among participants, with more emphasis placed on the acquisition of specific skills and viewing problems from a structural perspective (as discussed in Section 6.1.1), which again represents a bigger focus on outer dimensions (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2021). Notably, IDs are not frequently discussed in research, practice, and education, despite their critical role in the climate crisis (Woiwode et al., 2021). This lack of attention may also contribute to activists' difficulty in engaging with this topic because activists still demonstrated reflection and acceptance regarding the significance of IDs.

6.1.3 Existing practices

Despite the difficulty talking about IDs and confusion about the possible connected practices, activists did have transformative activities in their experience (Section 5.3). Table 3 offers examples of how

existing practices can be linked to the perspective of IT. Overall, these practices can deepen the understanding of movement dynamics, strengthen the human-nature connection, create space for self-reflection, build collective identity, and inspire collective action (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; O'Brien et al., 2018; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022).

Table 3. Relevance of existing practices from the inner transformation perspective

Activist group	Mentioned practice	Examples of relevance from the inner transformation perspective
Pesochnitsa	Discussions on the mission, responsibilities, and safety issues	• Space for self-reflection (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022) • Deeper understanding of dynamics of the movement (Brown & Pickerill, 2009) • Building collective identity (Brown & Pickerill, 2009)
Pesochnitsa	Group meetings with a psychologist	• Emotional reflexivity (Brown & Pickerill, 2009) • Foster dialogue (Jones et al., 2024)
Pesochnitsa	Films and readings on the theme of human-nature connection	• Admiration of more-than-humans lifeforms (Rowe & Ormond, 2023)
Pesochnitsa	Exploration of how local plants and local practices can be used to transform cities	• Admiration of more-than-humans lifeforms (Rowe & Ormond, 2023) • Encouraging collective agency (O'Brien et al., 2018) • Basing knowledge on local needs and conditions (Martin et al., 2022)
Pesochnitsa	Seed collecting and guided forest walks, course on urban greening	• Admiration of more-than-humans lifeforms (Rowe & Ormond, 2023) • Encouraging collective agency (O'Brien et al., 2018)
Fridays For Future Russia	Developing creative approaches to address the problem	• Staying positive (Driscoll, 2020) • Inspire actions (Jones et al., 2024)
Fridays For Future Russia	Community support, explicitly asking participants to share the issue of burnout	• Emotional reflexivity (Brown & Pickerill, 2009) • Building collective identity (Brown & Pickerill, 2009)
Greenpeace, Other	Storytelling in communication	• Inspire actions (Jones et al., 2024) • Foster empathy and emotional connection (Brown & Pickerill, 2009; Jones et al., 2024) • Foster dialogue (Jones et al., 2024)
Greenpeace, Fridays For Future Russia, Pesochnitsa	Values of organisations	• Transparent values in decision-making process (Martin et al., 2022)

Other	Ecotourism to protected areas with facilitated discussions about environmental problems in the area	● Seeing interconnectedness (O'Brien et al., 2018)
Other	Leadership courses	● Capacity to engage in transformative climate governance (Pender, 2023) ● Reflecting on and developing inner capacities (Wamsler et al., 2021)

Some activists noted that transformative capacities/qualities are automatically developed through participation in activist groups with like-minded individuals who already possess some of these (A4, A7, A9). Additionally, personal conversations on emotions and reflections between participants of the movement can also deepen this development (A1). Nevertheless, intentional integration of such practices holds a potential for consistent IDs cultivation and reflection, minimisation of automatic reactions and long-term engagement in meaningful and transformative activism (O'Brien et al., 2018; Woiwode et al., 2021).

6.2 Potential for integration of inner dimensions in activism in Russia (RQ2.2)

In this section, I examine the potential for further integration of TPs in Russian environmental activism by considering activists' perspectives and recommendations from the literature, while acknowledging potential challenges.

6.2.1 Activists' perspectives (RQ2.2.1)

It is evident that activists acknowledged the significance of the IDs in the context of the climate crisis and had experience with practices similar to transformative activities. Several activists expressed interest and curiosity regarding the practices they could integrate to cultivate transformative qualities (A2, A4-A6, A9). However, there was also a reluctance to fully embrace the concept, which sometimes resulted in prioritising structural and behavioural aspects over IDs when considering critical avenues for engagement. Despite participation in activities that inherently foster IDs (Table 3), there remains scepticism or hesitation regarding their theoretical underpinnings. This discrepancy highlights a gap between abstract concepts of IDs (Ives et al., 2020), their understanding and the experiential engagement, suggesting the need for bridging efforts to effectively integrate theoretical insights with practical experiences. This is in line with the argument presented in Wamsler et al. (2023), which highlights the necessity for further empirical research on the integration of IDs into sustainability initiatives. As Activist 2 mentioned, "...we need to come up with a slightly different format, but I

honestly do not know what format, because I don't think anyone has yet figured out how to do it properly so that people don't reject it so that they care and think about it".

6.2.2 Recommendations

Acknowledging the resistance to abstract concepts of IDs, it is important to develop simpler explanations and explore potential applications with different actors. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a culture of openness to IDs, recognising their importance in promoting personal and collective well-being and meaningful change (Ives et al., 2020; Wamsler et al., 2023) even within repressive settings. Explicit consideration of IDs in activists' aims and activities, "instead of focusing solely on tangible, behavioural and technological aspects" (Wamsler et al., 2023, p. 373) requires ongoing dialogue, experimentation and collaboration between different stakeholders to bridge the gap between abstract theories and practical applications, paving the way for a more holistic approach to global challenges (Ives et al., 2020; Wamsler et al., 2023).

As discussed in Section 3, the transformation needed for a meaningful response to the climate crisis requires attention to both external and internal dimensions (Wamsler at al., 2021; Wamsler et al., 2023). Focusing solely on the former has not yielded sufficient results, while the latter represents a deeper leverage point (Meadows, 1999; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). Activist 9 provided a personal example, reflecting on frustration and anger arising when some eco-activists focused solely on small-scale solutions like reusing and recycling, neglecting the broader climate issues. They found inspiration from those approaching the environment "from a philosophical point of view, from indigenous people's perspective", highlighting the nourishing potential for deeper engagement with IDs. Table 4 provides a list of recommended practices based on literature, that is not exhaustive and should not be viewed as a checklist of tools for successfully addressing IDs (Wamsler et al., 2023). It is important to stress that activists are the ones to determine what practices would be most beneficial for their groups. The recommendations should only serve as inspiration for a systematic and regular consideration of the IDs (Ives et al., 2023; Wamsler et al., 2021; Wamsler et al., 2023).

Incorporating self-reflection, fostering creativity, and recognising core values and emotions throughout activist experiences can help to source internal potential, connect with collective values while addressing current crises (Sharma, 2017; Wamsler et al., 2023). Furthermore, different activist groups can benefit from sharing their experiences of existing and emerging practices and engaging in inter-movement dialogue to foster collective learning. For a broader impact, activists can also develop communication strategies to inspire transformative activities, nurture a sense of interconnectedness and environmental responsibility (Karelse & Uba, 2024), and create informational materials that

highlight the intersection of the climate crisis with IDs. Figure 3 presents a heuristic model of potential transformative change for sustainability in the context of eco-activism in Russia.

As mentioned in Section 2.1, activist groups in Russia are small-scale and decentralised. While these characteristics can pose challenges and opportunities for activism in general, they also present opportunities for experimentation with different TPs. Such settings allow for flexibility in implementing new approaches. This experimental space can encourage creativity and collaboration, allowing activists to explore and refine TPs that resonate with their aims.

Table 4. Examples of transformative practices that could be used in environmental activism in Russia

Suggested practice	The potential of the tool	References
Check-ins and check-outs during meetings	Can help to explore collective beliefs, emotions and well-being and to create a safe space for active participation.	(Karelse & Uba, 2024; Rowe & Ormond, 2023; Schmid & Aiken, 2020)
Climate cafes	Can help to deal with climate anxiety, co-create solutions, explore the IDs and nourish agency	(Karelse & Uba, 2024)
Collective arts	Can help to identify individual and collective beliefs, values, needs, capacities and opportunities.	(O'Brien et al., 2018; Karelse & Uba, 2024)
Visioning exercises	Can help to identify individual and collective beliefs, values, needs, capacities and opportunities.	(Wamsler et al., 2023)
Place for reflection	Supports the holistic understanding of the problems, helps to connect with values, beliefs and emotions.	(Karelse & Uba, 2024; Woiwode et al., 2021)
Mindful nature walks	Support connection to nature, care and awareness. Can help to see more interconnections and provide space for relaxation.	(O'Brien et al., 2018; Wamsler et al., 2024)
Breathing and embodiment exercises	Can increase personal resilience, support connection with oneself and others.	(O'Brien et al., 2018; Rowe & Ormond, 2023; Wamsler et al., 2024)
Deep listening	Can help to have difficult conversations, feel empowered and create deeper connections	(Karelse & Uba, 2024)

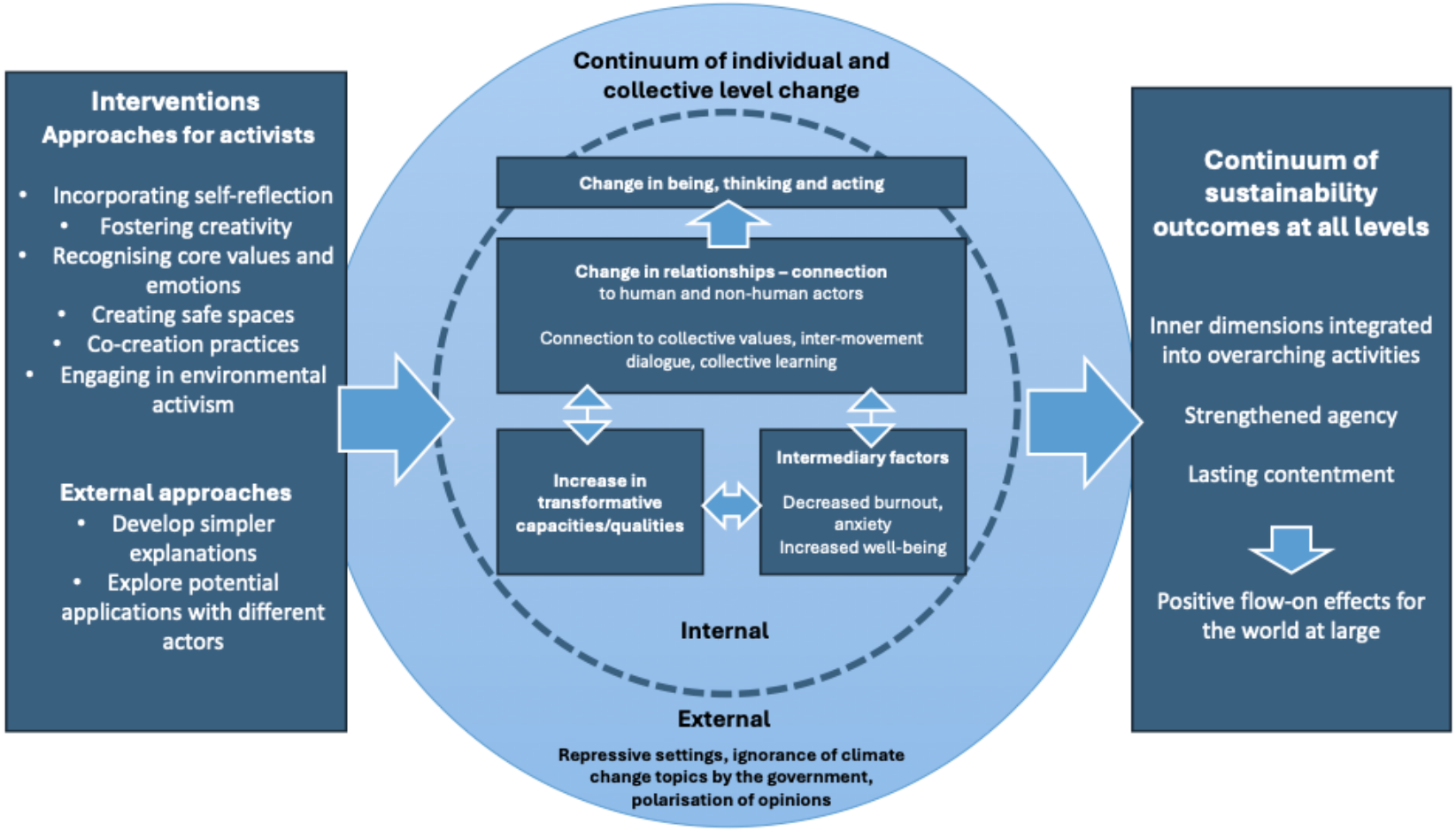

Figure 3. A heuristic model of change for internal-external transformation towards sustainability, developed for eco-activists in Russia based on (Wamsler et al., 2021)

6.2.3 Challenges for effective integration

Challenges to integrating the described transformative approach include structural, personal, and inherent factors.

Structural

The initiative to "bring aspect of mind and inner transformation into […] current work" can lead to marginalisation, exclusion and suppression within the group (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022, p. 17). To tackle this challenge, protective structures and practices are necessary to support risk-takers and encourage personal development in environmental activism (Sharma, 2017; Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). Next, the existing structures and management approaches might need to be reevaluated to integrate the IDs (Wamsler & Bristow, 2022). This requires time, resources, and effort. The limited resources available to eco-activists can result in a prioritisation of other practices, particularly given that some mentioned that being an eco-activist can cultivate the necessary inner capacities.

Furthermore, the potential outcomes of integrating transformative approaches might face repressions from the government, as highlighted by Activist 6: "I don't think it's going to be applicable... in the near future, if we are talking in the context of the Russian Federation, because these practices somehow make people more [conscious]...., give them a broader outlook, develop them, help them realise some things, and that is not welcome nowadays, so…" Additionally, political pressures force some activists to participate remotely, which could further limit the implementation of TPs.

Personal

New approaches might face resistance from some activists and participants of events. Activist 5 pointed out that adults are often disinterested in discussions about emotions, kindness, and love, seeing such topics as inappropriate. Activist 9 noted that philosophical events typically attract fewer participants compared to more action-oriented gatherings. These insights highlight the importance of recognising different preferences and perspectives within the activist community. Rather than imposing practices on individuals, fostering open dialogue and offering diverse approaches may be essential to engaging a broader audience. By accommodating different interests and preferences, eco-activism can appeal to a wider range of participants and effectively integrate TPs into its initiatives.

Inherent

For the meaningful and successful implementation of these practices, it is essential to facilitate them in an independent, contextually relevant, well-informed manner, which involves continuously

reflecting on power dynamics and ethics throughout the process (Brockwell et al., 2022). Therefore, such an intervention requires participants to constantly ask questions such as “Is there anyone who is excluded?”, “Is anyone taking up too much space?”, and “Are all perspectives respected and acknowledged?”. This poses challenges to facilitating processes, which require constant reflection and consideration of group dynamics.

6.3 Reflections

The IT approach offers valuable insights into how meaningful change can occur. However, during my research, I reflected on its limitations. Firstly, activists struggled to understand the broad ID concepts, which could indicate a need for clarification. But even if the concepts are clarified, people may not feel enthusiastic about this approach. As mentioned by one activist, some individuals may wish to keep their personal lives separate from their activism or work. Therefore, even with a clear definition and precise implementation of the concept and related practices, this approach may not be widely applicable among certain individuals.

Next, while the potential for scalability is reflected in literature (O’Brien et al., 2023), its application in repressive settings can be limited. While this approach may foster a stronger connection with oneself, community, and nature, and promote perseverance, agency, and self-awareness, it is not a panacea. Addressing climate change, fighting inequality, and influencing governments require significant effort from various disciplines and approaches.

6.4 Limitations

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Firstly, the sample of eco-activists was non-representative, and to ensure a comprehensive understanding of IDs in environmental activism I would include a more diverse sample. Additionally, due to time constraints, detailed exploration of the perceived outcomes of the TPs was limited. Further research could delve into these to provide deeper insights into their effectiveness. Next, while the thesis aimed to address inner and outer dimensions, the focus was primarily on the ID. If I were to expand on this research, I would aim to explore the interplay between inner and outer dimensions and ensure that recommendations are contextualised, given the repressive environment of Russian activism. Finally, while this thesis offers recommendations for TPs, it does not guide who, where and when should facilitate these processes.

7 Conclusion

The study examines the beliefs of Russian environmental activists engaged in different environmental groups, shedding light on the potential of considering inner dimensions (IDs) in eco-activism in the Russian context. Through semi-structured interviews with nine eco-activists, it became evident that there is a recognition of the importance of IDs and transformative practices. However, there also exists a degree of hesitation and scepticism towards surrounding theoretical concepts. This suggests a need for broadening the discussion on inner transformation among researchers and practitioners, ensuring accessibility and ongoing reflection on ethics and power dynamics.

This thesis offers recommendations for possible transformative practices that could be used for regular consideration of the IDs in eco-activism. These recommendations are not presented as a panacea for all the challenges but can help to develop new action strategies, strengthen agency, and provide a holistic understanding of the crisis, thus holding the potential to catalyse meaningful change in addressing the climate crisis. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of such an approach, which include limited potential outcomes especially in repressive settings, and challenges in gaining widespread engagement.

This thesis provides insights into the IT field, offering context-specific perspectives on the role of IDs in Russian eco-activism and suggesting two possible intersections between IDs and climate change. Future research could delve into longitudinal studies on the practicalities of these recommendations, tracking changes in beliefs and the state of eco-activism over time. Another extension could be conducting comparative studies between environmental groups in different regions to explore how cultural, political, and social contexts influence perceptions of IDs. Furthermore, examining policy challenges of integrating IDs into Russian eco-activism through policy document reviews could shed light on how existing policies hinder the incorporation of IDs into their efforts.

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9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Background questions

Experience and Engagement in Environmental Activism

1. Can you briefly share your journey and experience as an environmental activist?
2. What are the organisations/activities/campaigns that you are engaged in?

Motivations and goals

3. What motivates you to be an environmental activist?
4. What do you see as the aim of your activism?

State of env. activism in Russia

5. How would you describe the current state of environmental activism in Russia?
6. Is there a large number of people involved?
7. Are there any specific barriers to eco-activism?
8. Is there public discourse about the activities?

Views on Climate Change

9. What is your opinion about the current state of the climate change issue?
10. How do you see the political climate in your country in regard to climate change? / Is it hostile or friendly to the issue?

Inner dimensions and CC

Mind and Inner Lives in Relation to Climate Crisis

1. In a broad sense, how do you perceive the connection between people's mindsets and the climate crisis?
    - Can you identify specific interactions or relationships between these two?
2. Based on the interactions you described, do you believe that certain human qualities or capacities are particularly important for increasing responsiveness to the climate crisis? Please explain why.
    - Is there something wrong with the current mindsets? What mindsets do you think should be cultivated?

Personal Use of Inner Capacities and Integration into Activism

3. On a personal level, do you make use of, or intentionally develop, inner capacities to support your activism? *If so, what practices do you use? Did it have an influence?*
4. Do you know of any examples of how inner dimensions were integrated or intentionally cultivated into activism practices? *If yes, what practices were used? If not, what practices do you think could be beneficial?*

5. Have you done any communication relevant to the intersection of inner-capacity development and responsiveness to the climate crisis? Alternatively, have you come across similar communication? If yes, please describe this work.

Drivers and Barriers to Considering Inner Dimensions into Activism

6. What is your vision for improving current activities? What concrete measures and approaches can be taken?

7. What barriers or challenges do you and other activists face when considering inner capacities in environmental activism?

General understanding of climate change and solutions

8. What do you think are the main reasons for ongoing climate change?
9. What are the potential solutions?
    - Is this happening? Why/Why not?

Thank you for your time! Please let me know if you have any recommendations for other activists I should contact regarding this initiative.

9.2 Appendix 2. Consent form

Consent form

Thesis title: Inner Dimensions of Environmental Activism in Russia: Eco-Activists' Beliefs on the Intersection of Mind and Climate Change

1. **Introduction**

I am Tatiana Shevel, a Master's student at Lund University International Master's program in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science. I am asking you to participate in a research interview for my thesis titled "Inner Dimensions of Environmental Activism in Russia: Eco-Activists' Beliefs on the Intersection of Mind and Climate Change".

2. **Thesis description**

The thesis aims to explore the potential role of an inner transformation approach in the context of environmental activism in Russia. Specifically, I seek to investigate the beliefs of environmental activists in Russia, with a particular focus on their understanding of the relationship between mindsets (including emotions, values, worldviews) and climate crisis.

3. **Purpose of the interview**

The aim of this interview is to learn about beliefs of environmental activists in Russia on relationships between mindsets and climate crisis.

4. **Information regarding consent**

All information is confidential and will not be revealed or associated with your name unless you agree to it. If you do not want to answer a question please tell me, the interview is entirely voluntary and you can end it at any moment. All information collected from this interview will be safely stored and used only for the purpose of the thesis.

5. **Please answer the following questions and sign below:**

- Do you consent that I can use your answers for my thesis project? (Yes / No)
- Do you wish to stay anonymous? (Yes / No)
- If you are associated with an organization, would you like me to refrain from mentioning it in the thesis? (Yes / No)
- Do you authorise the interviewer (Tatiana Shevel) to record and transcribe the interview? (Yes / No)

9.3 Appendix 3. Mentioned transformative qualities/capacities

Categories and definitions are based on Wamsler et al. (2021) and Wamsler & Bristow (2022). Inductively created codes are highlighted in italics.

Transformative capacity/quality	Specific quality	Referred to the quality	Activists
"Connection - the ability and desire to see and meet oneself, others and the world with care, humility and integrity, from a place of empathy and compassion"	Care	1	Activist 3
	Compassion	5	Activists 1, 2, 4, 6, 7
	Connectedness	1	Activist 9
	Empathy	6	Activists 1 4, 6, 7, 8, 9
	Generosity	0	
	Gratitude	0	
	Human-nature connectedness	2	Activists 3, 5
	Humility	0	
	Integrity	2	Activists 3, 4
	Kindness	2	Activists 4, 5
	Love	2	Activists 5, 9
	Seeing shared humanity	1	Activist 1
	Solidarity	4	Activists 1, 2, 7, 9
	Uniting and inspiring people	*1*	*Activist 9*
	Total	**27**	
"Agency - the ability to see and understand broader and deeper patterns and our own role in the world in this regard, and to have the intention, optimism and courage to act on it"	Action-oriented mindset	3	Activists 1, 6, 7
	Cooperation and co-creation	4	Activists 1, 7, 8, 9
	Courage	1	Activist 6

	Creativity	2	Activists 1, 6
	Hope	1	Activist 2
	Optimism	1	Activist 7
	Perseverance	3	Activists 1, 7, 9
	Sense of agency	2	Activists 2, 7
	Sense of empowerment	2	Activists 4, 7
	Solutions-based mindset	0	
	Perfectionism	*1*	*Activist 2*
	Total	**20**	
"Awareness - the ability to meet situations, people, others and one's own thoughts and feelings with openness, presence and acceptance."	Acceptance	1	Activist 2
	Adaptive-flexible response capacity	3	Activists 4, 6, 9
	Attention	2	Activists 3,9
	Cognitive flexibility	2	Activists 4, 9
	Deep listening	2	Activists 3, 5
	Discernment	1	Activist 4
	Emotional intelligence	1	Activist 7
	Equanimity	0	
	Meta-cognition	0	
	Openness	2	Activists 4, 6
	Presence	0	
	Psychological resilience	1	Activist 7
	Regulation and processing	1	Activist 4

	Self-awareness	3	Activists 5, 8, 9
	Self-reflection	1	Activist 9
	Total	**20**	
"Insight - the ability to see, understand and bring in more perspectives for a broader, relational understanding of oneself, others and the whole"	Care and forgiveness regarding our history	0	
	Integral thinking	1	Activist 4
	Integrating different ways of knowing	1	Activist 4
	Perspective taking	3	Activists 4, 7, 9
	Perspective-seeking	2	Activists 4, 7
	Relational awareness-thinking	1	Activist 9
	Sense of reciprocity, inter-intra-connectedness	2	Activists 4, 6
	Sensemaking	0	
	Valuing diversity	1	Activist 7
	Total	**10**	
"Purpose - the ability to navigate oneself through the world, based on insights into what is important (intrinsic, universal values)"	Equitable thinking	2	Activists 4, 7
	Future orientation	2	Activists 2, 5
	Intrinsic value orientation	1	Activist 4
	Meaning making	0	
	Sense of purpose	1	Activist 2
	Sense of responsibility	4	Activists 3, 4, 5, 7
	Total	**10**	