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A Value-Based Framework Connecting Environmental Citizenship and Change Agents for Sustainability —Insights for the ENEC EEC Model

Sarid, A., & Goldman, D. (2021). A value-based framework connecting environmental citizenship and change agents for sustainability- Implications for education for environmental citizenship. *Sustainability, 13*, 4338.

Aims / Rationale

1. Connect discourse on change agency for sustainability to the ENEC EC model.

   Our aim is to focus and further elaborate on the component of 'change agentry'.

2. Take an in-depth look on psychological attributes of change agentry – focus on motivational values - a field which is under-researched in the literature (Visser and Crane, 2010).

   Toward this we use Schwartz's Theory of Motivational Values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012)

3. Offer insights regarding the implications of our framework for educational practice/curriculum in the context of EEC.
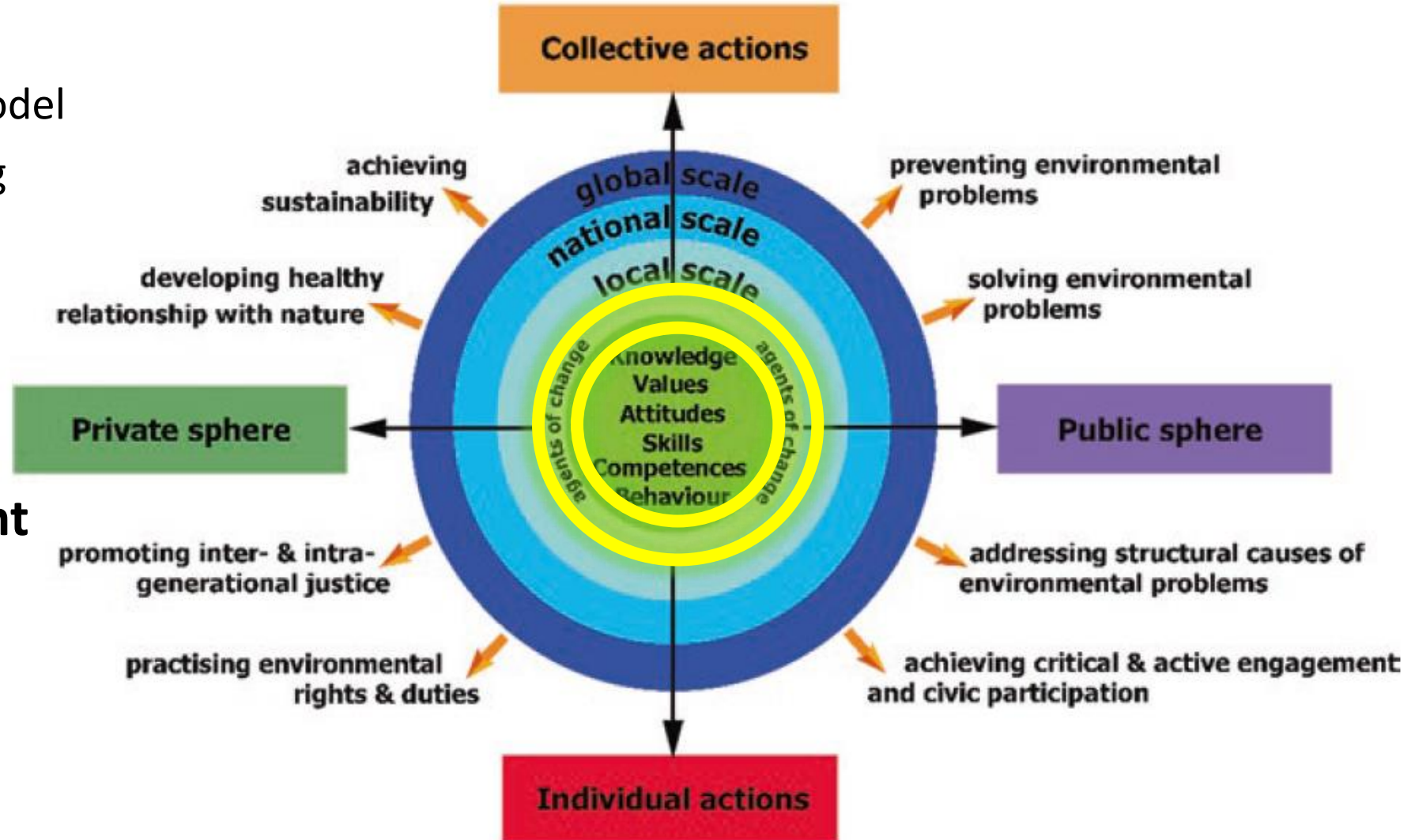
Point-of-departure: ENEC EC model

Agents of Change -
Central/inherent to the model

- The **means** for achieving social transformation toward sustainability
- The **outcome** of EEC

3 axes of EC engagement

- **Dimensions**
- individual / collective

- **Sphere**
  Private / Public

- **Scale**
- local /National / Global

The EC model looks specifically at students/individuals
We expand this - Our insights look at **school organization as a whole**

Connecting to theory

I. ENEC (ENEC, 2018) conceptualization of an Environmental Citizen

"[...] is able to **identify the underlying structural causes** of environmental degradation and environmental problems and has the willingness and the competences for critical and active engagement and **civic participation to address those structural causes** [...] and to act individually and collectively within democratic means, taking into account inter-and intra-generational justice"
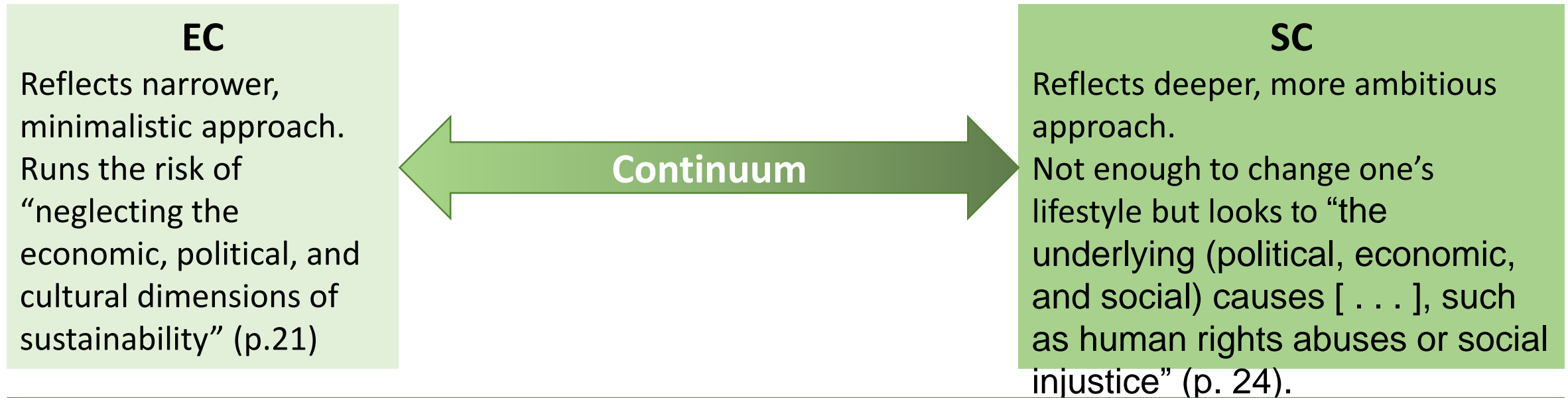
- **Conceived role of the citizen**: Identifies role of citizens not only in individual's actions, but the ability and propensity to look at the bigger picture/underlying structural causes; question the systemic socio-political and socio-economic structures that have led to current norms & take active role in co-creating sustainable policy.

- **Engagement in promoting sustainability**: Focusing <u>only</u> on individual action is not socially transformative and is un-sustainable.

- **Citizenship responsibilities** - More weight to universal principles of democracy, human rights, global commons: Necessary to address broad structural oppressions related to global capitalism that are the root causes of environmental problems.

- Such positions acknowledge the power of individuals as a political force for positive change at the societal level.

(Barry, 2006; Capra & Luigi-Luisi, 2014; Kalina, 2020; Schild, 2016)

Connecting to theory

Distinction between EC and SC (sustainability citizenship) is blurry

In context of achieving sustainability some citizenship theoreticians use the term EC, others use SC.

Barry (2006) specifically distinguishes between these:

EC

Reflects narrower, minimalistic approach.
Runs the risk of "neglecting the economic, political, and cultural dimensions of sustainability" (p.21)

Continuum

SC

Reflects deeper, more ambitious approach.
Not enough to change one's lifestyle but looks to "the underlying (political, economic, and social) causes [. . .], such as human rights abuses or social injustice" (p. 24).

The ENEC conceptualization of EC
(1) Incorporates Barry's deeper, transformative understanding of citizenship
(2) We look as the construct of EC as a continuum

Connecting to theory

II. Type of construct

Non-binary human constructs - **Developmental continuum** like Roth's (1992) Environmental Literacy – developing stages of accomplishment from zero/limited ability to advanced competency.

"the degree of EL is reflected in the breadth of human-environmental interaction to which that person brings to bear all the skills and knowledges that define operational EL (Roth, 1992, p.19)

3. Operational level

2. Functional level

1. Nominal level   Roth, 1992
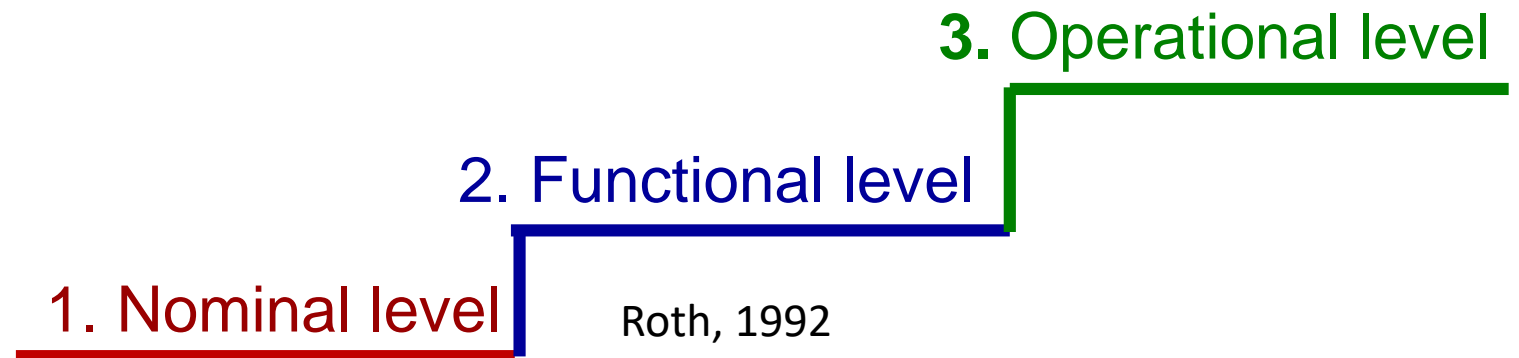
Levels are instrumental – provide practical means for articulating and measuring (qualitatively & quantitatively) the different forms or expression and extents of competences.

Connecting to theory

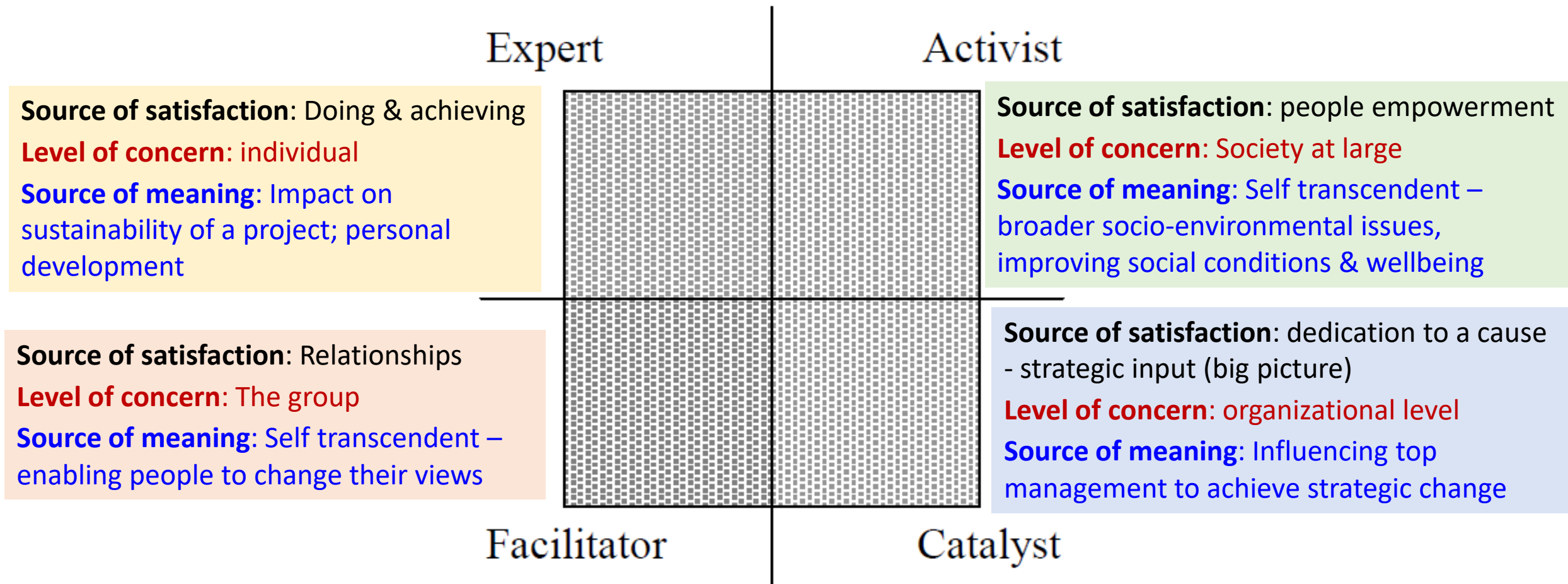## III. Gaps in Sustainability Change Agency discourse

- Discourse is primarily about **competences** (Hesselbarth & Schaltegger, 2013) MBA program for educating sustainability change agents.

- There is surprisingly limited discourse/research on sustainability change agents and their education/development. This is primarily so with regards psychological aspects…

- *Despite the acknowledgment of the need to develop change agents, there are gaps in the EEC and ESE literature concerning the specific attributes of such individuals, the* **motivations** *driving them, the* **objects of their concern**, *and the* **type of change** *they aspire to achieve*.

We connect to current discourse on change agency (Visser and Crane)…

Visser, W., & Crane, A. (2010). Corporate sustainability and the individual – Understanding what drives sustainability professionals as change agents. *SSRN Paper Series, 1*.

Typology (empirical) – 4 qualitatively distinctive types of sustainability managers in terms of value motivations, sources of meaning


Figure 1: Four Types of Sustainability Manager

Expert

Activist

Source of satisfaction: Doing & achieving
Level of concern: individual
Source of meaning: Impact on sustainability of a project; personal development

Source of satisfaction: people empowerment
Level of concern: Society at large
Source of meaning: Self transcendent – broader socio-environmental issues, improving social conditions & wellbeing

Source of satisfaction: Relationships
Level of concern: The group
Source of meaning: Self transcendent – enabling people to change their views

Source of satisfaction: dedication to a cause - strategic input (big picture)
Level of concern: organizational level
Source of meaning: Influencing top management to achieve strategic change

Facilitator

Catalyst

Connecting to theory

IV. Schwartz universal theory/model of basic motivational values (19 values)

Our EC-Change Agency framework uses this as a scaffold
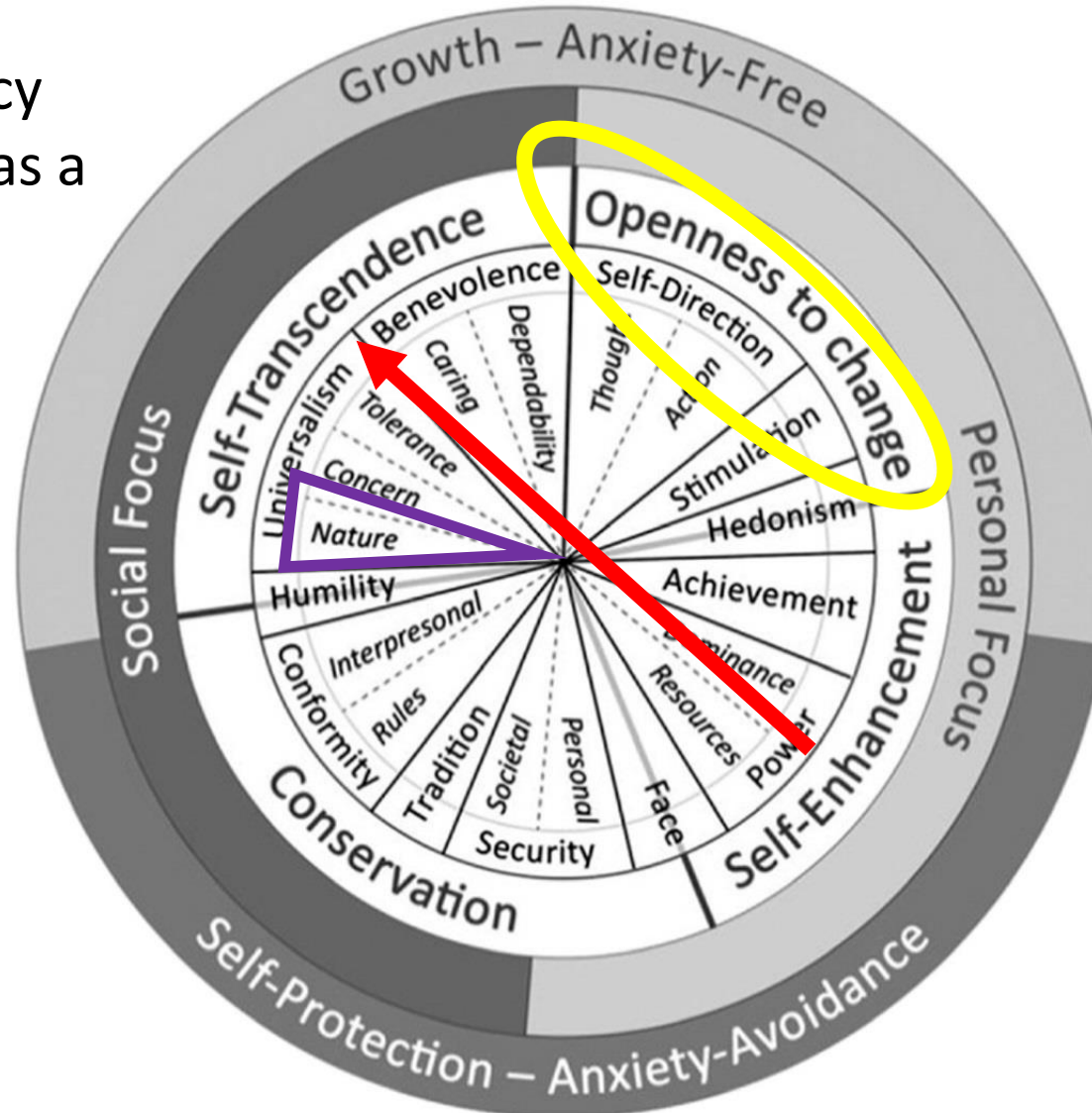
- Circular organization – represents a **relational** model

- 4 higher-order values (SE – ST, CONS-OC)

- Our work is not novel in implementing Schwartz's theory in terms of environmental behavior (ST is connected to REB)

- Our framework looks also at OC which is under- addressed in other studies (theoretical & empirical) – which, in the context of REB, look less at this continuum

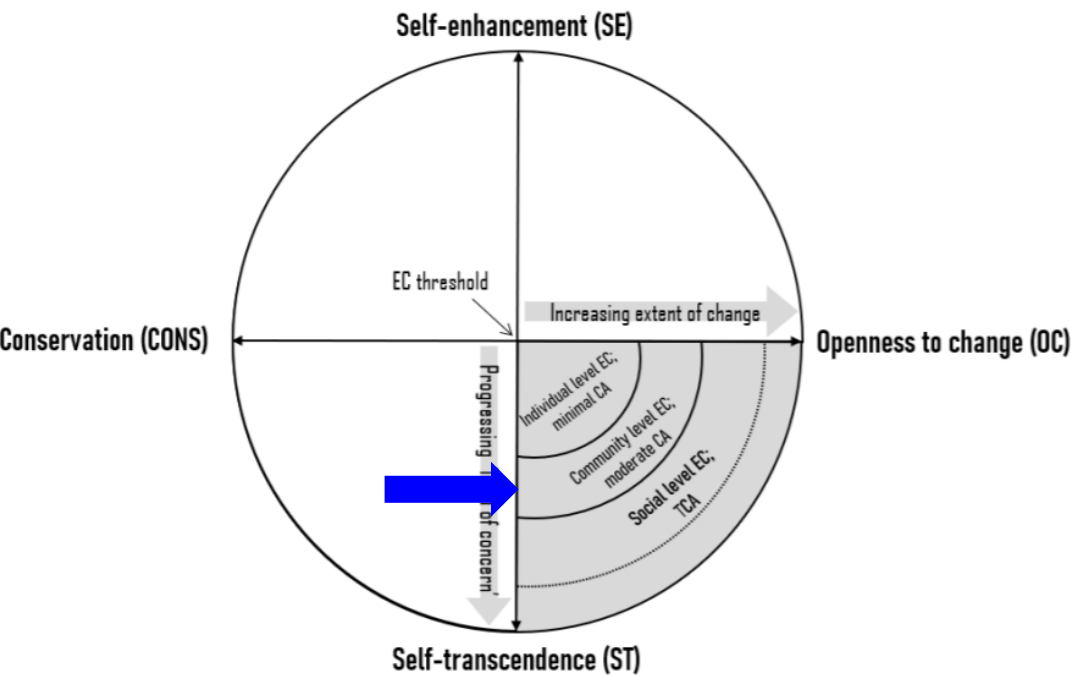# The proposed EC-Change Agency framework
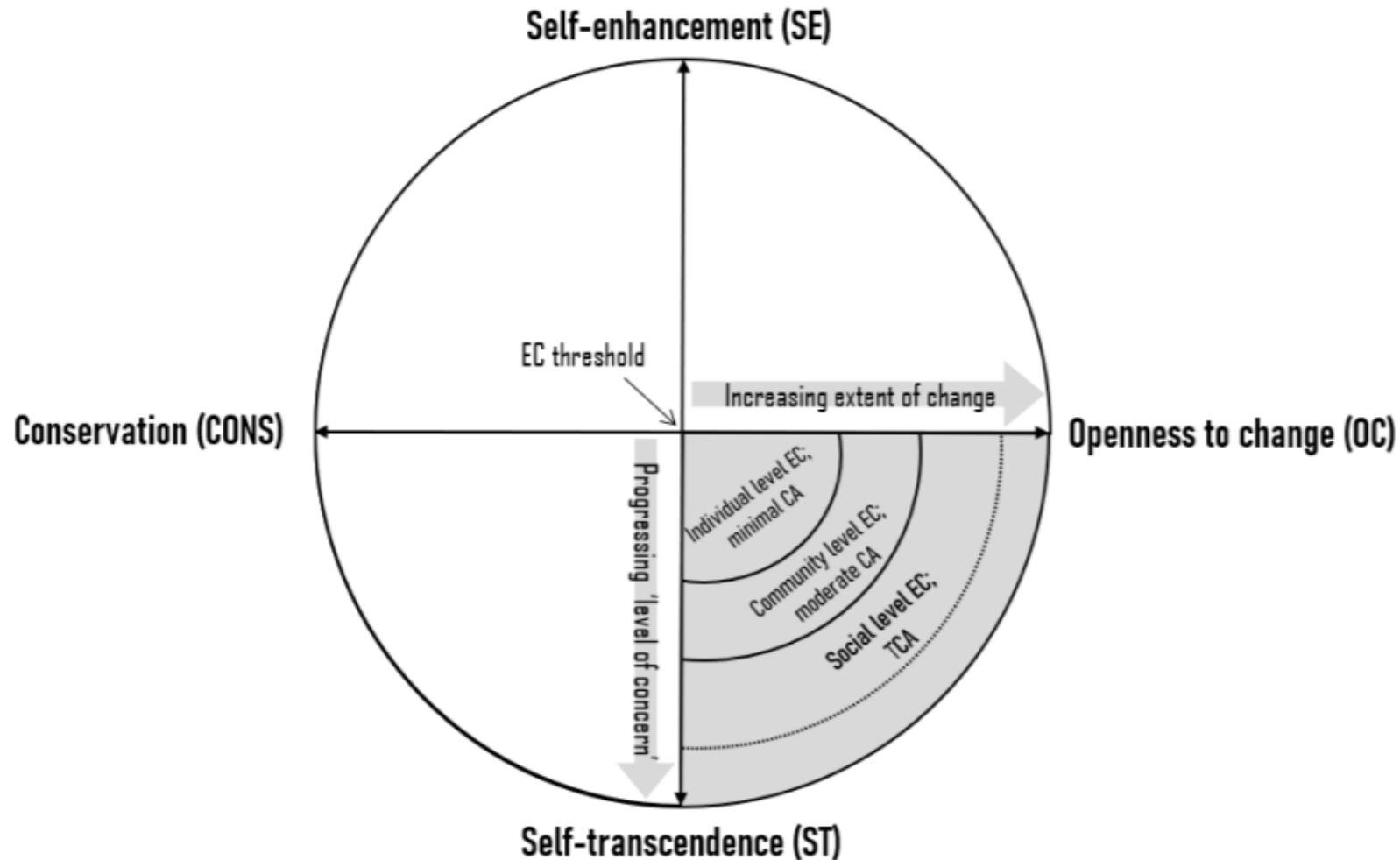
Clarifications

- Conceives EC as continuum of developing motivations for promoting sustainability.

- Builds on levels within a continuum.

- Applies Schwartz's bi-dimensional organization of motivational values as a theoretical scaffold to distinguish 3 levels of EC and articulate corresponding levels of change agency.

- Each level is presented in relation to Schwartz's higher-order values (SE-ST, CONS-OC).

- Change agentry discourse: Objects of concern, Type/depth of change

Individual level EC-

SE - ST	CONS - OC	Change agency
Awareness that personal lifestyle impacts others' wellbeing and welfare & common good. Despite this, willingness to act for others' benefit is limited to actions that also have personal benefits or do not entail taxing personal tradeoffs	Some commitment to OC (self-directed behavior, stimulation, risk-taking) but such commitment is directed to 'change' that promotes self-enhancement. When change is for others' benefit at expense of personal benefit, commitment to OC is conservative.	At this level CA is limited in terms of levels-of-concern and extent of change.

Community level EC-

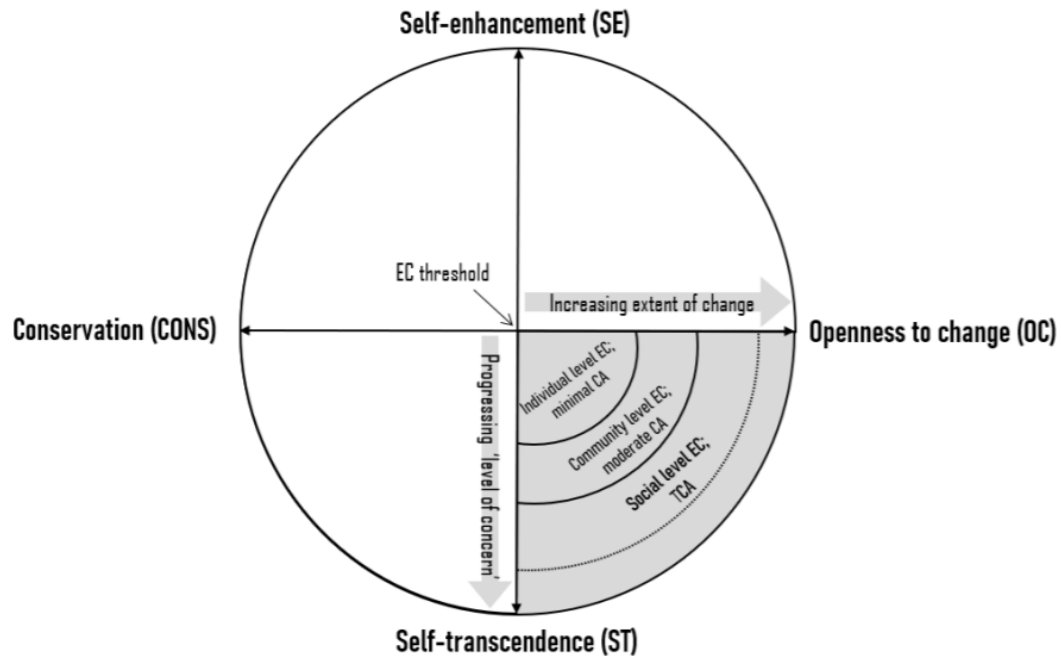| SE - ST	CONS-OC	Change agency
Increased relative importance of ST in relation to SE-values: focus broadens beyond the self to include one's 'identity group; Greater inclination to enhance & protect welfare of those belonging to the person's in-group; Readiness for greater behavioral tradeoffs for the good of social group even at expense of self-interest.	Motivation for adopting change-oriented mindset (risk-taking, openness to challenges, exploration) is enhanced and directed not only to oneself but to changing those belonging to one's in-group.	Combination of attributes in both dimensions reflect moderate change agency Example: Student at this level is motivated to affect EC dispositions and behaviors of class-mates or family members.

Social level EC-
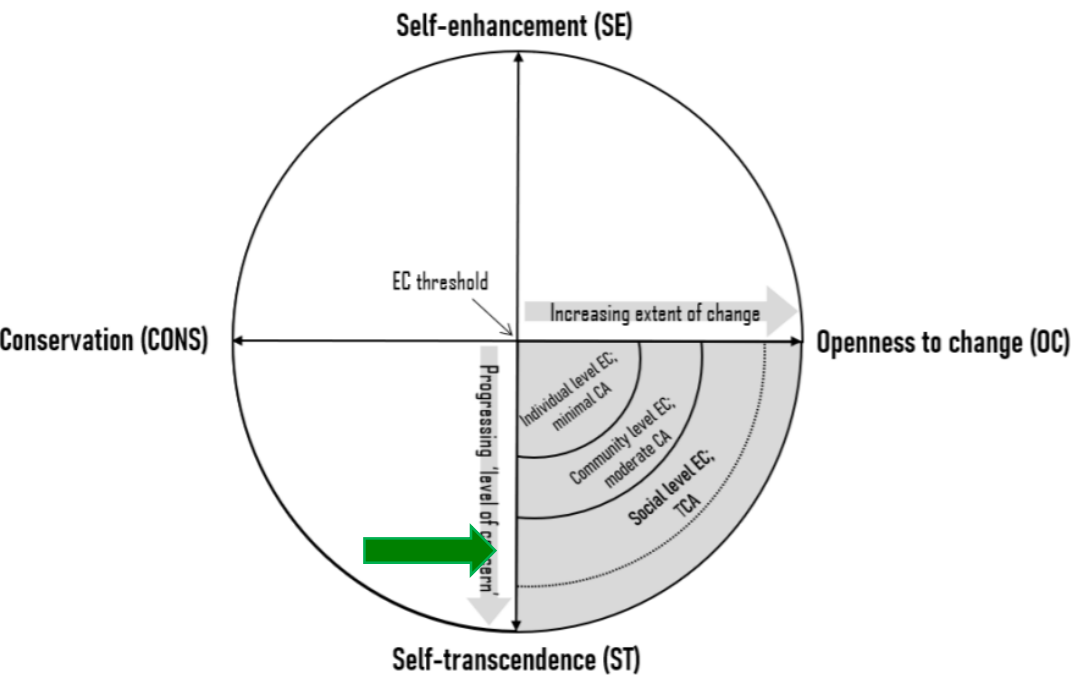
Willingness for more taxing tradeoffs (time, efforts) & taking risks to promote welfare of **humanity & environment**

SE - ST	CONS - OC	**Change agency**
ST values > SE values: increased **universal-cosmopolitan perspective**– focus of concern is **society-at-large,** expands beyond intra-generational to include **inter**generational perspective;	Change is deep in the mindset; individual is not satisfied by effecting change in others but strives to **change the 'rules-of-the-game'** (existing norms determining socio-economic infrastructure & political decision-making processes). Influencing at leverage points or social structures. Reflects '**deep ecology**' (Naess 1973) view and '**cradle-to-cradle**' approach (McDonough & Braungart, 2002)	Social level EC reflects **transformative change agency** (TCA) –change agent that applies socially transformative attributes: high commitment to **democratic citizenship values** (ST pole) and propensity for **deep change** (OC pole)- specifically **moral courage** to confront structural root causes.

Clarifications/boundary conditions of the framework

Figure labels: Self-enhancement (SE); Conservation (CONS); EC threshold; Increasing extent of change; Openness to change (OC); Progressing 'level of concern'; Individual level EC, minimal CA; Community level EC, moderate CA; Social level EC, TCA; Self-transcendence (ST)

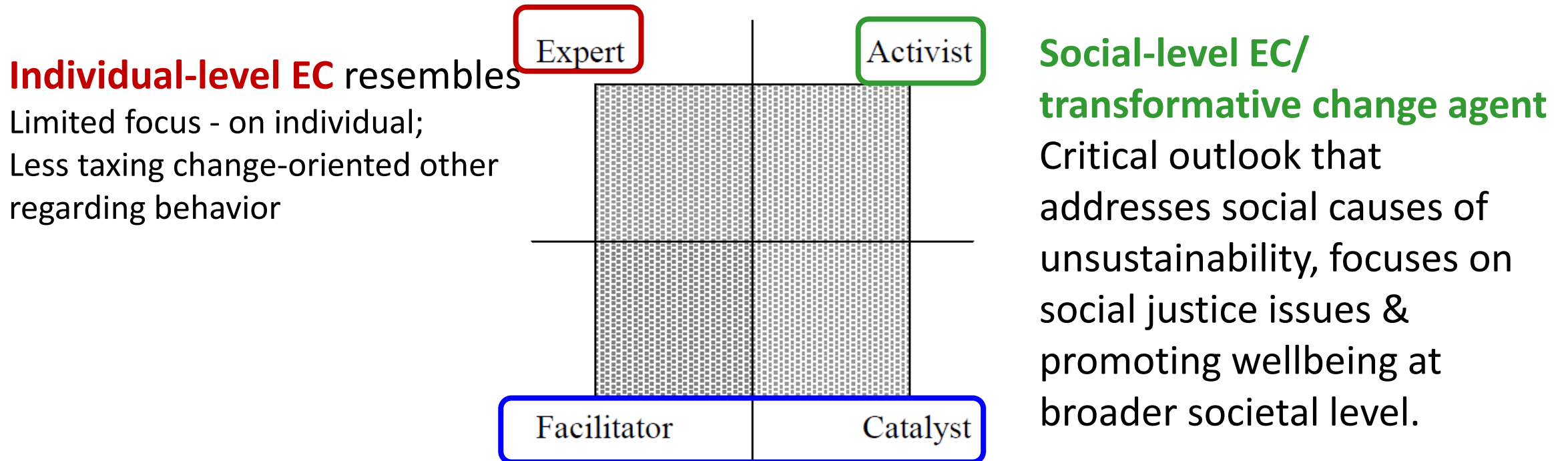| SE - ST	CONS - OC	Change agency
(1) Movement along **CONS-OC** continuum must be linked with movement along **SE-ST** continuum: Only change-oriented thinking & behavior (e.g., reducing EF of one's organization) that is paralleled by greater ST values (e.g., promoting welfare of others belonging to this organization) constitute type of OC pertinent to change agency for sustainability.		
(2) Each level represents within itself a range of motivations, commitments and change-agency actions		
(3) Framework assumes (in line with lit) that promoting SD goes hand-in-hand with promoting social justice. But, since human psychology & behavior are complex, there are circumstances that the framework does not account for – reflected in different placement of the individual on each of the 2 dimensions.		

Discussion

Theoretical implications – Tying the framework to change agency discourse

3 EC-levels and respective change agentry level of our framework share affinities to Vissar & Crane's qualitative CA typology

Figure 1: Four Types of Sustainability Manager

Individual-level EC resembles
Limited focus - on individual;
Less taxing change-oriented other regarding behavior

Expert		Activist
Facilitator		Catalyst

**Social-level EC/
transformative change agent**
Critical outlook that addresses social causes of unsustainability, focuses on social justice issues & promoting wellbeing at broader societal level.

Community-level EC
Extends focus to wider circles:
Focus on relationships, empowerment, promoting change in others' views [Facilitators];
Focus on bigger (organizational) picture [Catalyst]

Discussion

Theoretical implications – Tying the framework to the ENEC EC model

Community-level EC/change agency
aligns with the collective dimension and private sphere.
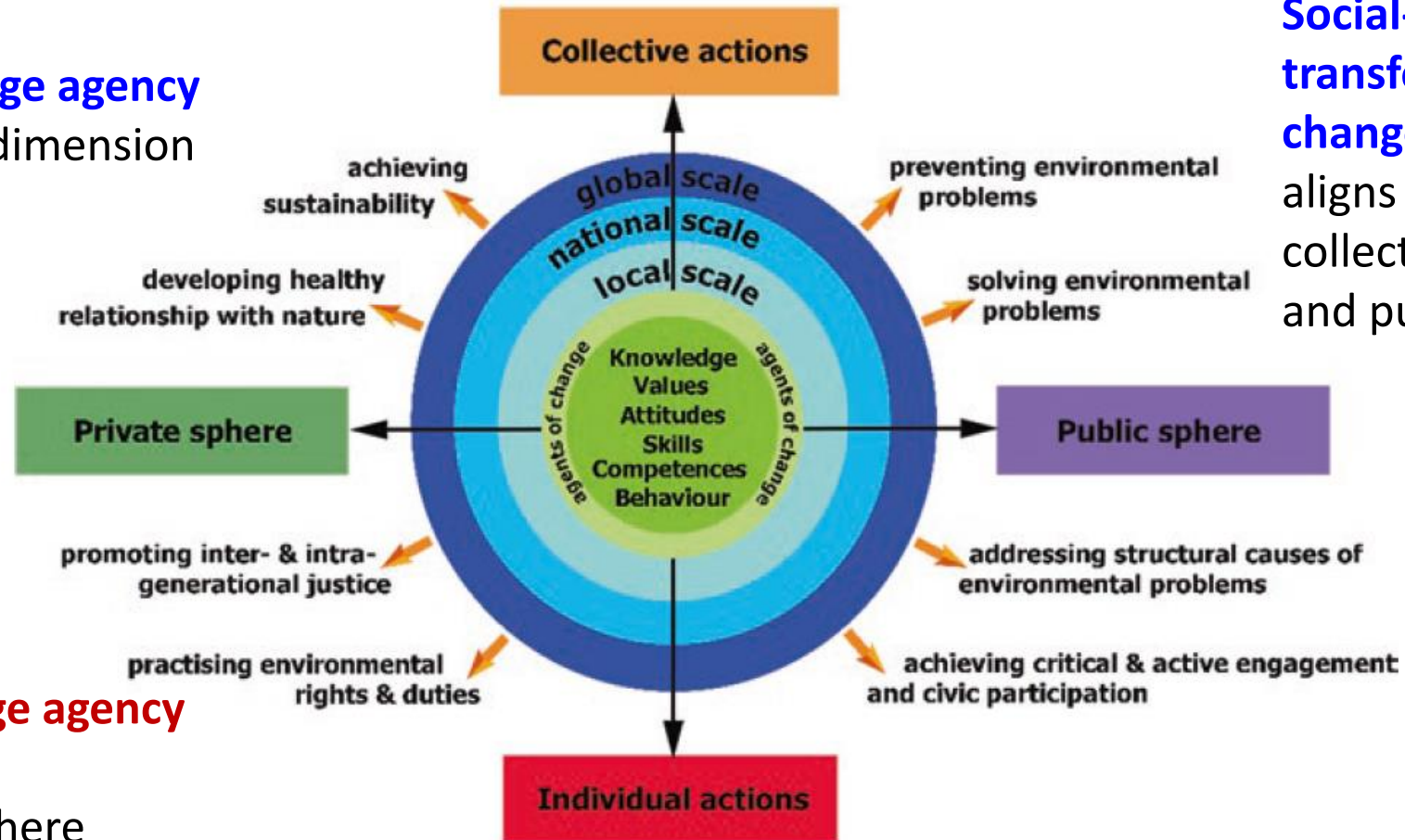
Social-level EC/ transformative change agency
aligns with the collective dimension and public sphere.

Individual-level EC/change agency
aligns with the individual dimension and private sphere

Discussion

Theoretical claims of the proposed framework

The proposed EC framework offers a comprehensive view that:

(1) **Theoretical grounding** - Is theoretically grounded on both dimensions of Schwartz's theory of motivational values.

(2) **Change agency discourse** - Distinguishes among **qualitatively** different change agency types that correspond to change agency literature but argues that **the different qualitative types reflect increasing levels of change agency** (motivational values), that are reflected in expanding levels-of-concern (individual, community, society) and an increasing extent-of-change that is promoted

(3) **ENEC EC model**- The different combinations of dimensions, spheres & scales of the EC model can be organized as **progressing levels of change agency motivations and commitment.**
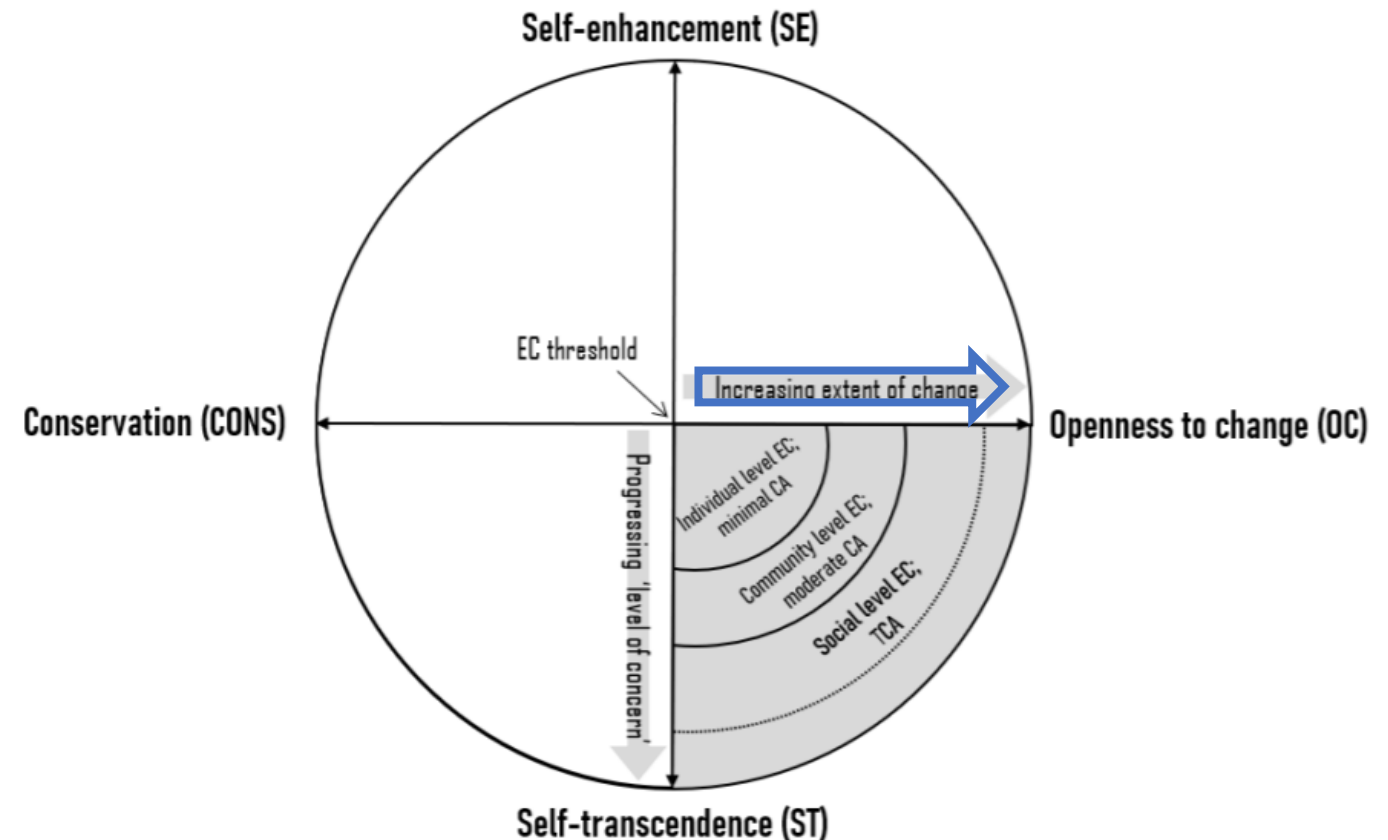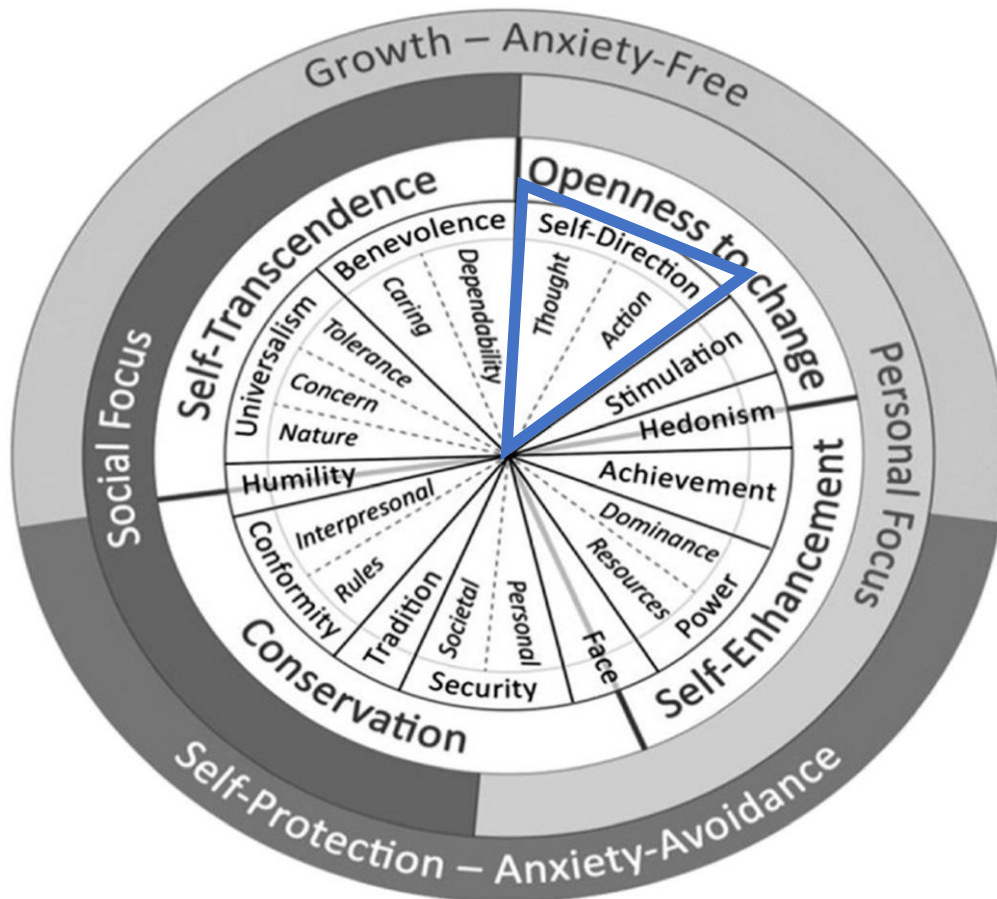
Curricular-pedagogical implications: General ideas

1) **Adapting learning to motivational-value level**: all aspects of learning can be adapted to the motivational level of the organization, staff and students (rather than competences, skills and actions). A call for applying a dynamic curriculum.

2) **Specifically addressing motivation as part of the learning process/organizational culture**: The **"why"** of learning and acting: what makes you interested in what you are doing? What motivates you to take action?
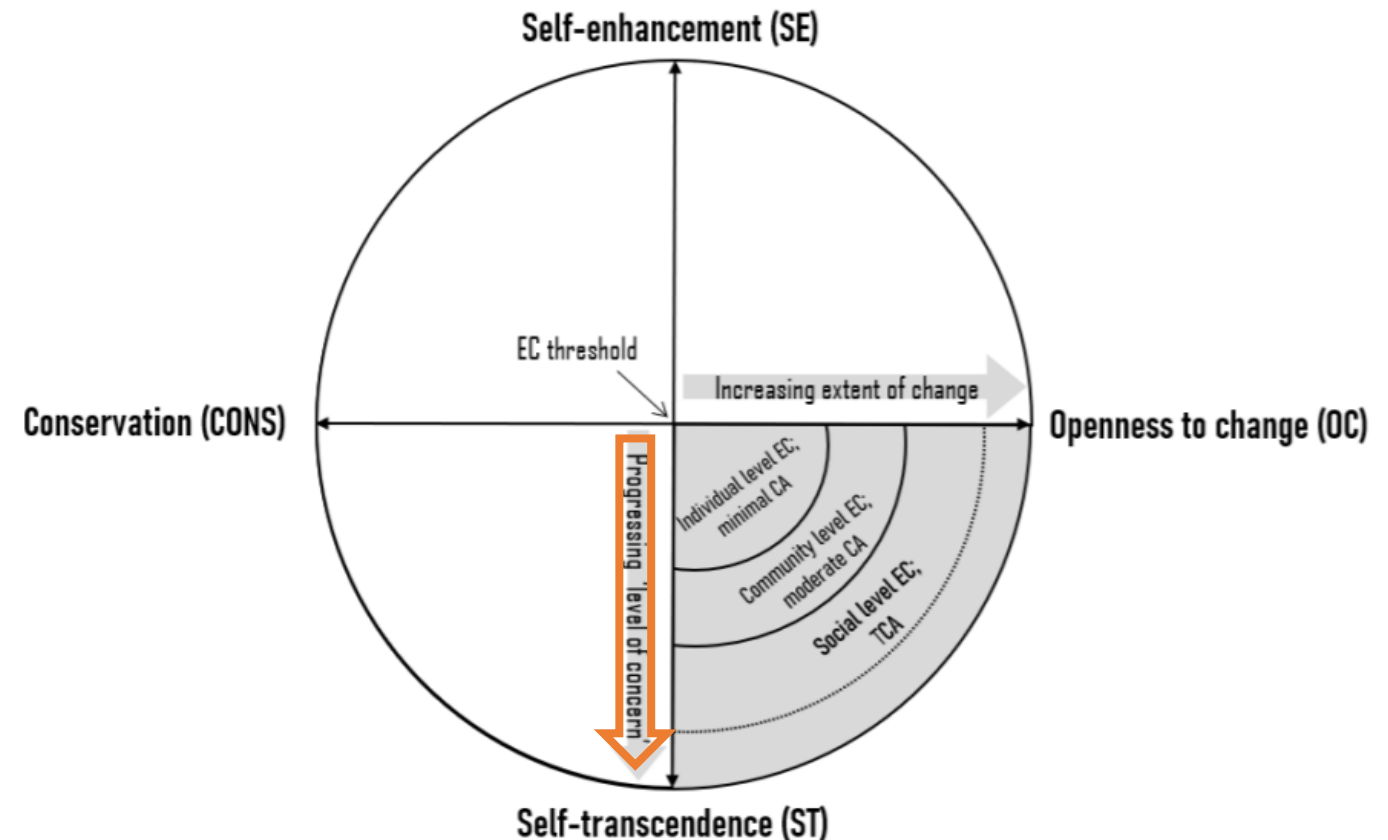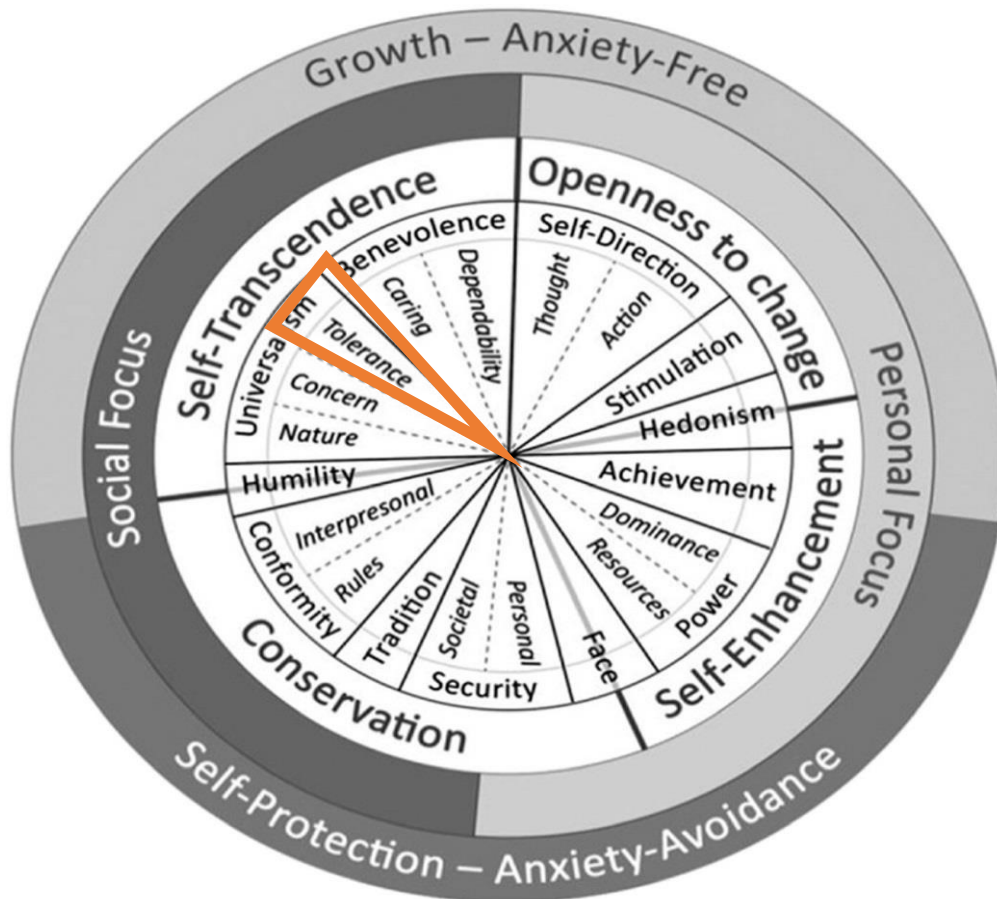
Curricular-pedagogical implications: What may facilitate motivational values supporting EC: Encouraging and experiencing risk! Education is over-protective both physically and cognitively; experiencing adversity and challenge.
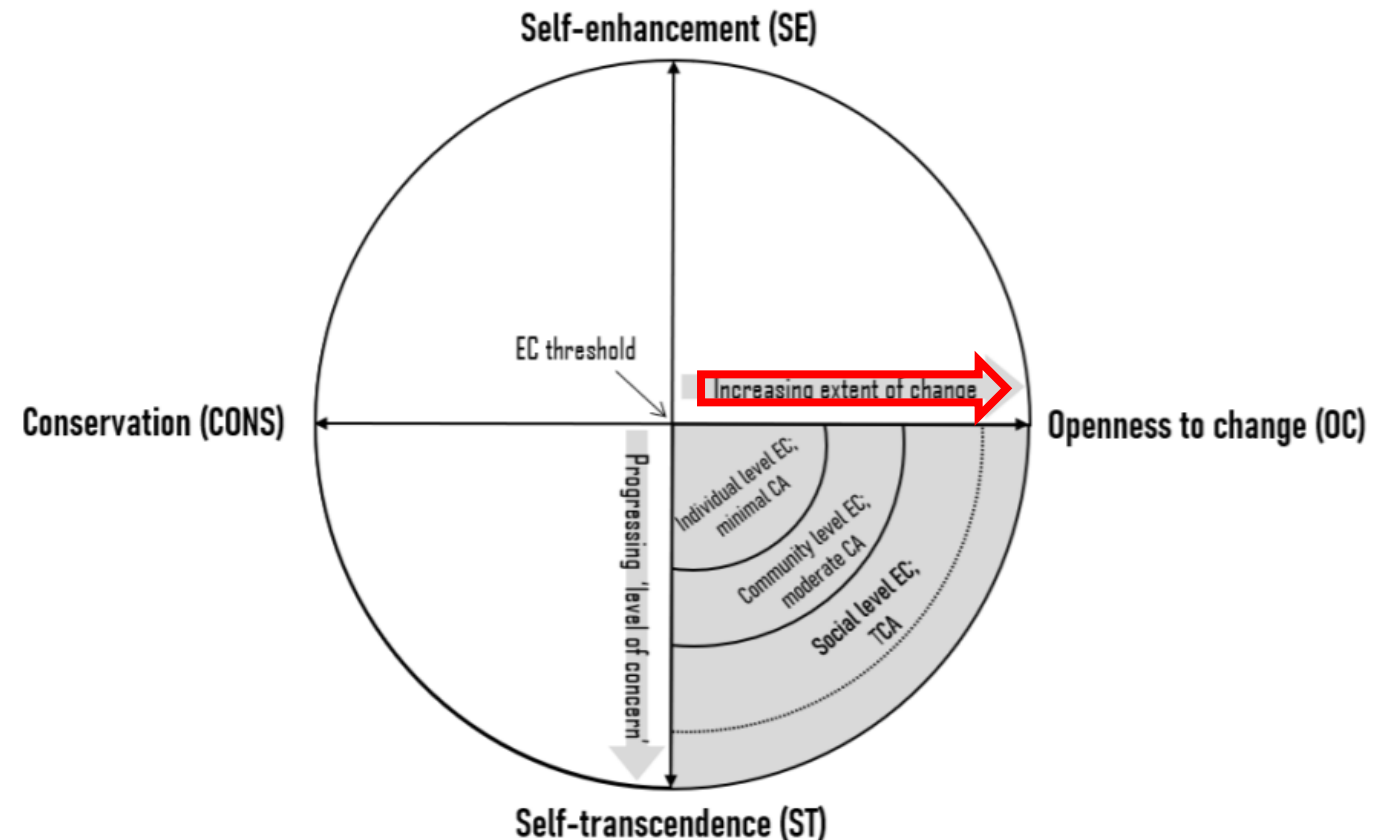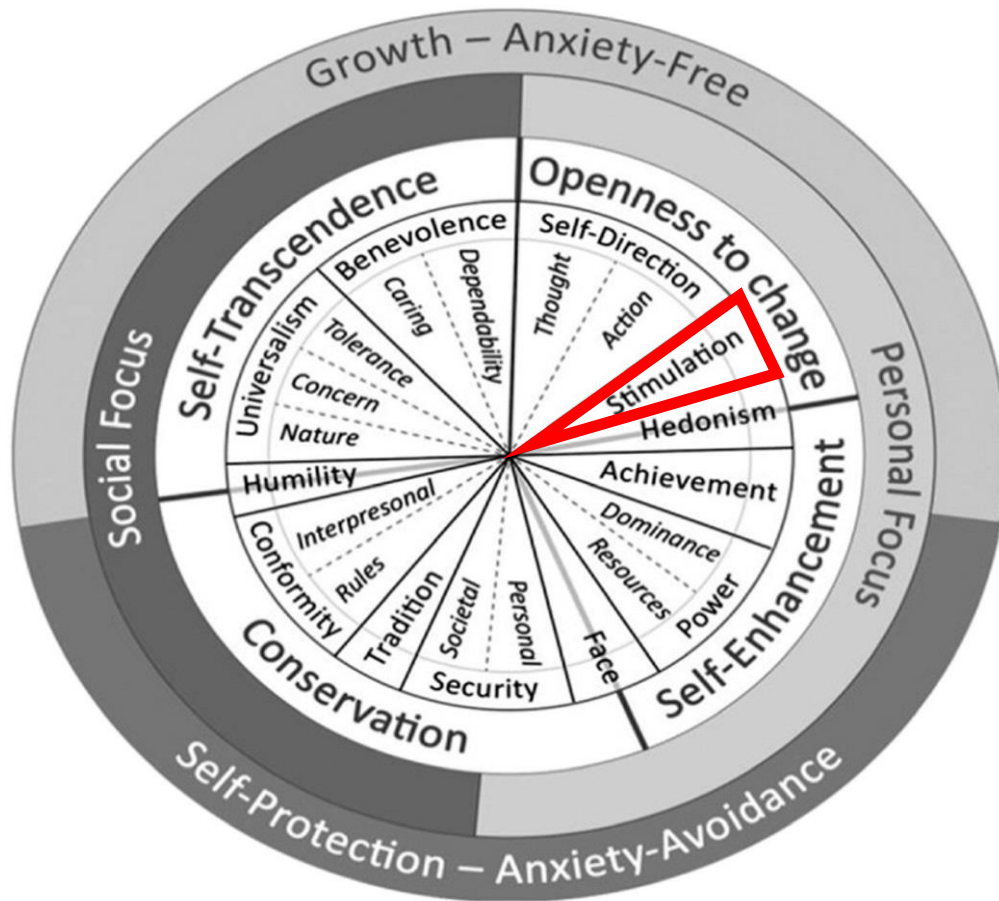
Curricular-pedagogical implications: What may facilitate motivational values supporting EC:
Developing internal locus-of-control: experiencing first-hand what it means to take on and lead initiatives, to engage in changes processes. This means also making mistakes and learning from them

Curricular-pedagogical implications: What may facilitate motivational values supporting EC:
Engaging with 'otherness' (people, ideas). Learning to understand complexity and dilemmas through roleplaying and theatrical exercises...Also engaging in critical self-reflection.

Curricular-pedagogical implications: What may facilitate motivational values supporting EC:
From personal to collective concern: learning to move from particular to general statements (laws, rules and regulations), and addressing the implications of a person's actions on the community (tragedy of the commons examples).
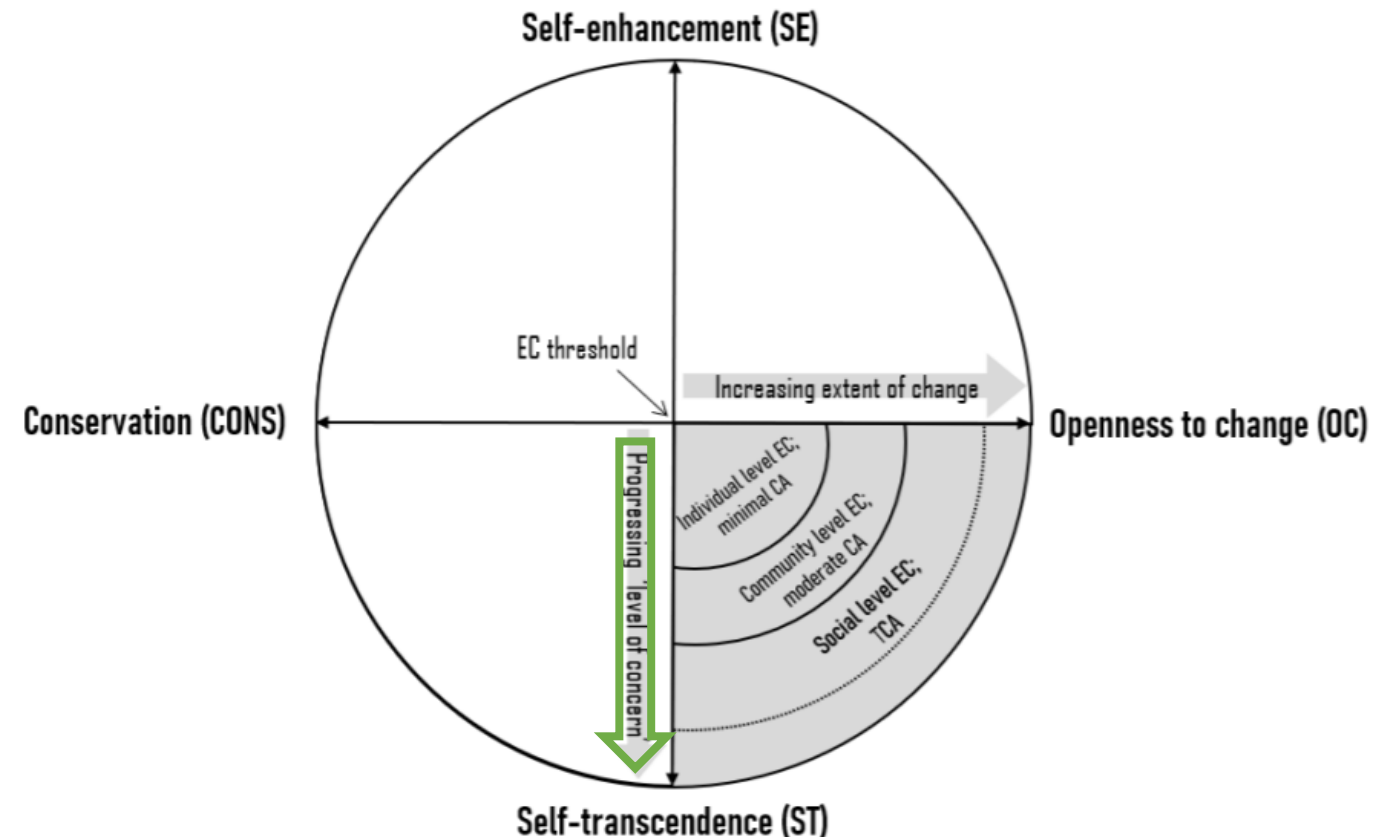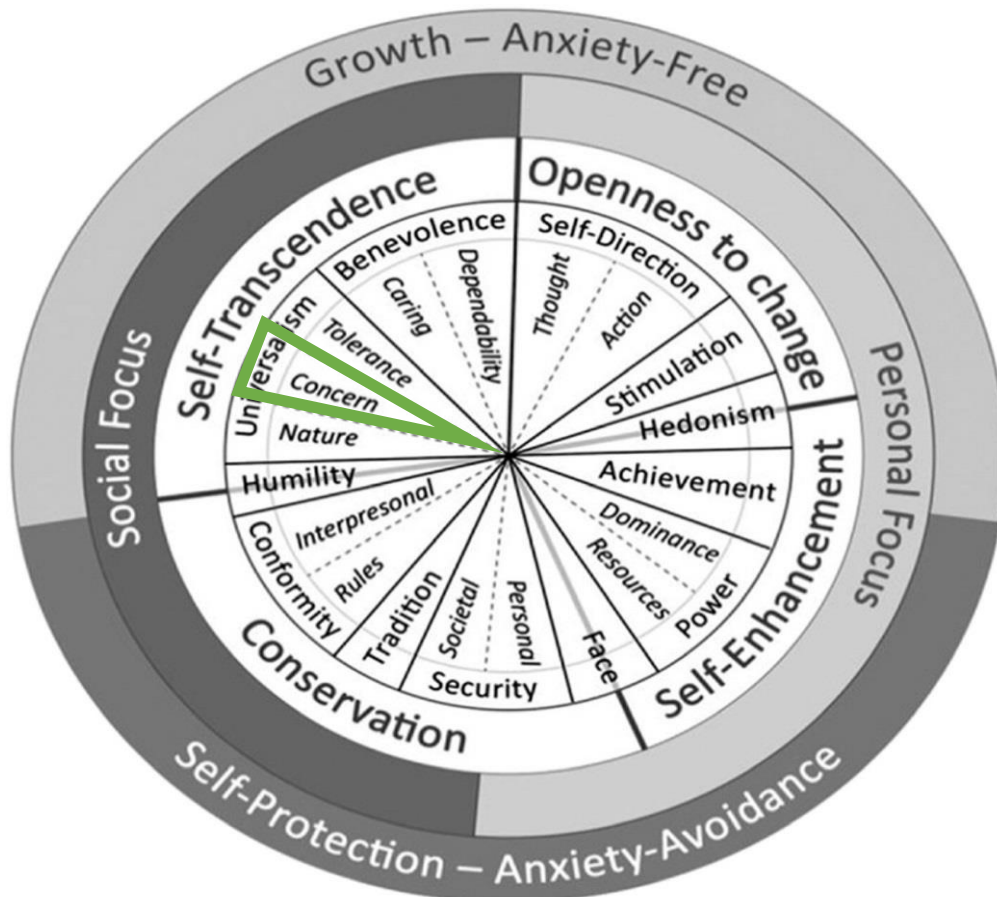
Applications and future work

School curriculum & pedagogies

- The framework provides benchmarks for identifying levels of EC-motivation at various levels of the educational organization

- The framework offers a platform for thinking about how to promote EEC (curriculum and pedagogies)

[Educational] Research

- The framework may be applied for developing a research agenda, and model for investigating EEC including:

- Developing accurate and sensitive tools for assessing the development of EC-CA and contribute to increasing accuracy & sensitivity of existing tools.

Preparing professionals (educators and others, formal & non-formal)

- The framework may be applied for development and training of sustainability change agents

Anticipating Concerns:

- We know that knowledge of environmental crisis and unsustainability is simply not enough to motivate people into action. Changes motivational values is key (but not exclusively – there are many other factors involves). But in the case of change-agents, values are considered the most important because they act sometimes despite or in the face of resistance or barriers.

- Values are hard to change and so important to start early.

- A complex combination of values: LOW ST and HIGH OC. Yes, and this is somewhat reflected in the framework given the difference between 'level-of-concern' and 'extent-of-change'. How this impacts the 3-levels is a complex question: "…*in view of the complexity and sophistication of human psychology and behavior, we are aware that there are circumstances that the framework does not account for, reflected in the different placement of the individual on each of the two dimensions*" (p. 11)