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The communication at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and a scrutiny on the replacement of current EU support scheme

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ABSTRACT

The Lithuanian government wants to amend existing EU support scheme, which should promote renewable energy within the country. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association is, however, against the amendment procedure on the pretense that it hinders the development of renewable energy and this thesis work is an investigation on the communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and its relationship with different actors on the amendment of current support scheme. This paper presents activities, relations, strategies and the role of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and brings significance of environmental communication at forefront on this phenomenon. This issue is investigated on the basis of findings from collected data along with the analysis of theoretical concepts. However, it must be noted that qualitative data collection of this study is mostly restricted to Lithuanian Wind Power Association's impression and interpretation of the problem and process. During the replacement of current support scheme, the Lithuanian Wind Power Association has been mostly engaging with the government. Although the government does not take any suggestions into consideration from associations, both sides do not describe the situation as a conflict. The findings of this thesis also demonstrate that strategies and activities are not efficient enough and much work needs to be done on this matter. Based on the conducted small-scaled survey, even though people are aware of renewable energy sources, they are still oblivious of the EU support schemes and amendment issue at the parliament. Consequently, activities in order to raise awareness of public and effect the decision made by the government need to be overhauled. Building on findings and data gathering, employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association are not satisfied regarding the content of probable support mechanism, and to top it all off, there are some shortcomings even on the current support scheme, which does not correspond with the principles of sustainability.

Key words: *support schemes, renewable energy, communication and sustainability*

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1. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of the introduction of the first mandatory EU Directive, each member state has determined targets in order to meet its total energy consumption from renewable energy sources. In this case, there are some main EU support schemes, shaping usage of renewable energy to meet the EU member countries' targets by 2020 (Directive, 2009). Lithuania has been using "fixed-feed in tariff" support scheme as its renewable energy policy (Rosende, et al., 2010) and nowadays there is likelihood of amending current support scheme at the parliament, thereby generating disparate ideas between involved actors. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association is against the replacement of new supportive so-called tariff scheme on the ground that this will hinder the development of renewable energy within the country (Alvydas, 2011). Therefore, the Lithuanian Wind Power Association plays a central role in this work to see its overall communication process as well as its relationship with different actors on this phenomenon in terms of environmental communication. Further on, it is tailored to roles, effects and significance of communication process so as to demonstrate the specific activities and strategies implemented by the Lithuanian Wind Power Association in order to oppose the amendment of current support scheme. In addition to these, this amendment issue might be associated with sustainable energy development and power relations within the country and therefore to what extent the decision made by the government corresponds with sustainability is examined in this work.

1.1 Background

In this chapter, the scope of work is presented and background information is given in order to provide a sound understanding towards Lithuania's renewable energy and main support schemes used in the EU Member States along with the first mandatory EU Directive. This is useful to have a better understanding of the whole process. The main activities of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association are also stated prior to proceeding toward comprehensive investigation of research questions.

1.1.1 Scope of Work

The features of environmental communication are going to be united with symbolic interactionism in order to demonstrate the correlation of environmental issues with the core of human communication. Some communication methods shed light on communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association on this matter. Conflict management is also used to demonstrate the relationship of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association with the government during the amendment of current support scheme. Building on this, an account of environmental communication along with symbolic interactionism are taken into consideration in attempt to provide a sound understanding to communication models, which will be used to approach towards communication of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association, especially with local people and its member companies. Besides, this scrutiny is supported along with other important aspects of communication process. Lastly, sustainable development will be drawn on in order to analyze the sustainability of existing and probable support schemes in Lithuania. It must be taken into account that data collection of this study is mostly restricted to Lithuanian Wind Power Association's impression and interpretation of the problem and process. In the last chapter, the results are analyzed with the help of collected data and given theories.

1.1.2 Lithuania's Renewable Energy Situation

Even though Lithuania has a good opportunity to utilize its wind energy sources to generate renewable energy, the first wind project was carried out in 2004 and subsequent two years there was not any wind energy projects and therefore the government has given precedence to wind power (Coenraads, et al., 2008). The country has managed to increase its production level from 47 MW (2007) to 91 MW (2009) in terms of wind energy. On the other hand, Lithuania has not taken advantage of its geothermal and solar energy resources to generate electricity, where they can be found and exploited in the western part of the country. Especially, biomass stays as a big potential for Lithuania because it is an important renewable energy source if it can be utilized thoroughly. The energy generated from hydropower along with big and small scale of hydro electric power plants comprises the country's most renewable energy production (Rosende et al., 2010).

The generation rates of renewable energy sources differ from electricity, heating and transport. Table 1 shows that renewable energy from heating is expected to be dominant sector by reaching up to 41.4 % amongst renewable energy sectors according to the estimated target until 2020 (Rosende, et al., 2010).

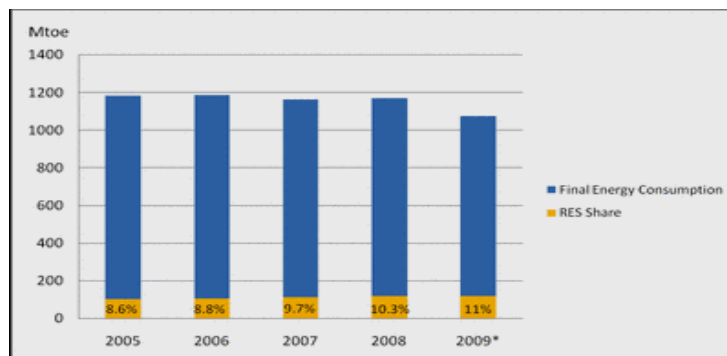
Table 1: Estimated renewable energy rates from electricity, heating and energy by 2020

Lithuania		ACT (proactive support - realisable deployment)					
Indicator	Unit	2005	Average 2011 - 2012	Average 2013 - 2014	Average 2015 - 2016	Average 2017 - 2018	2020 Targets
Expected Gross Final energy consumption	Ktoe	4,941	5,718	5,971	6,220	6,431	6,714
Total share of RES in final energy consumption	%	14.8%	19.1%	21.0%	23.2%	25.5%	27.8%
Gross Final Consumption of RES-E	Ktoe	35	102	151	213	276	330
Share of RES-E in gross final electricity consumption	%	3.6%	8.6%	13.6%	18.0%	21.6%	23.5%
Gross final energy consumption RES-H	Ktoe	695	926	1,014	1,126	1,243	1,383
Share of RES-H in final Heating and Cooling consumption	%	27.3%	31.8%	33.6%	36.0%	38.7%	41.4%
Final energy from renewable sources consumed in transport	Ktoe	3	61	87	101	118	156
Share of RES in gross final transport energy consumption	%	0.4%	4.4%	6.0%	6.7%	7.7%	10.0%

Source: (Rosende, et al., 2010) based on Eurostat

1.1.3 EU Directive 2009/28/CE and binding targets

The goal of the European Directive 2009/28/EC is to accomplish 20 % energy generated from renewable sources in the EU's gross final energy consumption by 2020 (Directive, 2009). Figure 1 shows the rates of renewable energy in the EU from 2005 till 2009.



Source: Erec based on Eurostat (2010)

Figure 1: Rates of renewable energy in the EU

“The gross final consumption of energy from renewable sources in each Member State shall be calculated as the sum of: gross final consumption of electricity from renewable energy sources; gross final consumption of energy from renewable sources for heating and cooling; and final consumption of energy from renewable sources in transport.” (Directive, 2009)

According to European Directive 2009/28/EC, Lithuania has to increase its energy from renewable sources to 23 % until the year 2020 (Rosende, et al., 2010). It is sole responsibility of member countries that considerable improvements should be undertaken in all sectors in order to meet their targets for renewable energy (Directive, 2009). Table 2 shows the estimated and projected renewable energy targets for Lithuania until 2020.

Table 2: Estimated renewable energy targets for Lithuania

2005	Average 2011 - 2012	Average 2013 - 2014	Average 2015 - 2016	Average 2017 - 2018	2020
15.00%	16.60%	17.40%	18.60%	20.20%	23.00%

Source: (Rosende, et al., 2010) Based on Directive 2009/28/EC

1.1.4 Main support schemes used by the EU Member States

There are three main support schemes used in the EU member countries in order to meet their targets and increase energy produced from renewable sources. (1) Feed-in tariff, (2) quota and (3) tendering are the prominent policy instruments in the EU member states (Ecn, n.d.). Feed-in tariff is the most popular support mechanism used in the EU states amongst all the support schemes. There are also different variations of feed-in tariff schemes such as stepped, tariff degression, premium and payment obligation (fixed price) (Klein, 2008). Lithuania has been using fixed feed-in tariff (payment obligation) support mechanism since 2002 (Rosende, et al., 2010). Fixed feed-in tariff mechanism, entails distributors of electricity networks to purchase renewable energy at a tariff price (fixed price), which is higher than market price for the long-term (Prest, 2008). Fixed feed-in tariffs are the most common and prevailing renewable energy support schemes in the world since they guarantee that electricity is purchased over the market price for long time. The success of fixed feed-in tariff in many European countries has made fixed feed-in tariff support scheme the most popular and used renewable energy support policy compared to other support mechanisms (Rickerson & Grace, 2007).

1.1.5 The Lithuanian Wind Power Association

The Lithuanian Wind Power Association has been active since 2005 and there are 17 members, nine of which are energy producing member companies and the rest is facility and service providing member companies. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association is striving to obtain the most promising conditions for the advancement of wind energy projects. One of the most important objectives of the Lithuanian wind Power Association is to provide the decentralization of the national energy market, which might help to accomplish the development of wind energy in order to implement the EU renewable energy policy (Lvea, 2010).

Nowadays, the main attempt of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association is to prevent probable support scheme from coming into force on the pretense that new support scheme is going to encourage conventional energy rather than renewable energy. In Lithuania, the government recently has prepared and offered a new support scheme to replace with the fixed feed in tariff, which is the current support scheme. The draft has been voted three times so far, but has not been accepted by the majority and therefore is still pending (Alvydas, 2011). The director of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association has been taking initiatives in getting the Lithuanian Wind Power Association's opinions across to the government because it is believed that new draft support scheme is going to hinder the promotion of renewable energy, in particularly wind energy sector (Saulius, 2011).

1.2 Problem Formulation and Aim

The EU support schemes aim at promoting renewable energy at different sectors, such as heating, wind and transport. Lithuania has been using fixed feed in tariff support scheme together with the most of the EU countries to promote its renewable energy (Directive, 2009). There is a possibility of changing this current support mechanism. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association is in opposition to amending of current support scheme and therefore the significance of strategies, activities and decisions of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association on environmental communication can be seen as important factors in this situation. As a result of this, the objective of thesis work is the investigation on the decision made by the Lithuanian government as well as overall communication process and initiatives taken by the Lithuanian Wind Power Association regarding changing the current support scheme. This will be examined within the scope of communication process during the replacement of existing support mechanism. It must be noted that gathering information of this work is mostly restricted to Lithuanian Wind Power Association and its members' impressions and notions of the problem and process.

1.3 Research Questions

In order to obtain a better understanding towards the objective of this thesis work, research questions are following:

1. How does the communication process take place at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association with different actors and its repercussions on the amendment of current support scheme?
2. To what extent does the decision made by the government correspond within the context of sustainability?

2. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, data collection methodologies and how the information has been obtained are described. Face to face interviews constitute the main part of information gathering of this study. Lastly, limitations, encountered hardships and reflections regarding the research process are explained in the last part of this chapter.

2.1 Data Collection

The data collected for this thesis is mostly based on (1) face to face interviews, (2) e-mail correspondences as well as (3) written documents, which were available on the internet. Semi structured interviews have been carried out and they are going to be delineated in the upcoming parts. On the other hand, it is important to note that data collection of individual interviews is mostly restricted to Lithuanian Wind Power Association and its members' impression of the problem and process. The permission has been gained in order to refer to all the interviewees as their names or titles for this thesis work.

Apart from the interviews, a small-scaled survey has been carried out in order to gauge the knowledge of local people regarding renewable energy sources, EU targets, amendment issue as well as initiatives and activities of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. In addition to that, some e-mails have been sent to the members of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association in order to get opinions of the representatives of member companies. One e-mail also has been sent to Viktorija Sankauskaite, head of renewable energy sources division at Ministry of Energy in Vilnius, to see the situation from the government perspective. Written sources and documents, which mostly published by the EU Commission, have been analyzed concerning the structure and functions of the support schemes. Lastly, access to special publications has been gained thanks to the Lithuanian Wind Power Association that has provided their membership account.

2.1.1 Qualitative Semi Structured Interviews

Semi structured interviews have been carried out with three employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association, as well as with one representative of its member companies in order to comprehend the complex situation. Semi structured interviews are regarded as qualitative research methods.

One of the main goal of the qualitative research is to promote our understanding as to why people behave the ways they do, how individuals are influenced by the situations as well as why things are the way they are. The gathering of data is mostly through interviews or observations which comprise the feelings, experiences and opinions of people rather than conducting a simple experiment. Since the collecting of data takes more time when it comes to qualitative research, information is usually gathered from smaller number of people compared to quantitative methods. "Individual interviews" are one of the most common ways of collecting qualitative data and semi structured interviews have been conducted for this study. Semi structured interviews not only allow interviewers to ask some follow-up questions but also, serve its purpose if the interviewer has some specific topics or approaches that need to be addressed to (Beverley, 2002). In this study, semi structured interviews consisted of open ended questions, which gave opportunity to both sides to talk over the issue at hand in more detailed ways. In order to elaborate on the topic and to have more quality discussion with the interviewees, from time to time, some follow-up questions were considered necessary when the answers found unsatisfactory during the interviews.

Qualitative interviews should be conducted in a more informal way, which might give the impression to interviewees that they are in a conversation or friendly discussion, yet it requires good skills in order to do that thoroughly. It must be noted that well-prepared interviews entail a thorough preparation, starting from the appointments process to analyzing the data, which will lead to well-conducted interview process. Interviewers either take notes or use a tape recorder during the semi structured interviews. There is a risk when taking notes because the interviewer might prone to write some comments or sentences which can be seen the most interesting or relevant to his questions. On the other hand, the tape recorder enables to interviewers to capture the whole data of the interview process, which might lead to better analysis process (Beverley, 2002). In this study, all the interviewees were called up and asked for an available date and time to schedule the interviews. Furthermore, basic questions were prepared beforehand and brief information was given about the content of the interviews. Lastly, interviewees were gently asked to speak at slow pace due to the lack of a tape recorder.

Below, some of the questions asked to the interviewees are listed, see table 3. They can be considered as the main questions in order to cover the topic, yet these questions were not asked to all the employees since their roles and tasks differ from each other.

Table 3: Main questions asked to the interviewees

1. Could you tell me more about your overall communication process or strategy?
2. What kind of activities have you done to reach out to local people and to raise awareness of them about renewable energy sector?
3. How would you define your relationship with the government? i.e., any conflicts?
4. How do you communicate with your member companies?
5. What do you think about current and probable support schemes in terms of sustainability?

2.1.2 E-mail Correspondences

E-mail correspondences have taken place with one employee at Ministry of Energy and with one representative of the member companies of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association throughout this thesis work. E-mail interviews can be considered as one of the qualitative research methods and have recently become widespread in order to collect information thanks to Internet access. There are some suggested principles to carry out e-mail correspondences more efficiently. First and foremost, interviewers should introduce themselves and state that how the interviewee's e-mail address has been obtained in order to build up trust. Second, the topic, details of the project and the deadline to answer the questions should be mentioned clearly to interviewees. With the help of an explanatory introduction part, interviewees can decide whether they want participate or not. The questions should be explicit enough and if it is necessary, some follow-up questions should be sent by summarizing important points to the interviewee in order to clear the air. Besides, instructions play an important role in completing successful interviews. In order to stimulate spontaneity, it is specified that there is no any right answers to questions (Lokman, 2006).

There might be some disadvantages of e-mail correspondences compared with individual and telephone interviews. It is believed that e-mail correspondences could provide less data compared to face to face interviews because the interviewer is not able to see any gestures or body language of the interviewer. Furthermore, the research by Hodgson, (2004) cited by Lokman in Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (2006, p 1288) showed that “the longer it takes to complete an interview with a participant, the higher possibility of dropouts.” Throughout this thesis work, many e-mails have been sent along with clear instructions to avoid any misunderstandings. In the end, two e-mail correspondences were completed successfully. The reason of fewer e-mail correspondences might be attributed to the language barrier or the lack of interest or time of the respondents. In contrary to these drawbacks, e-mail correspondences give opportunity to interviewees to express themselves more clearly, especially if the communication language is not their mother tongue. In this study, since the participants’ language was not their primary language, in this case, it must be seen as an advantage. In order to overcome setbacks and avoid the lack of oral communication, some cues or emotions could be used within the text. Besides, the participants can feel more comfortable since they are in charge of controlling the flow of the interview and therefore valuable information can be gathered if it is applied thoroughly (Lokman, 2006).

2.1.3 Survey

A small-scaled survey was carried out for one week during this thesis work. The reason for this survey was to make a comparison with the omnibus survey conducted by the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Even though this survey does not represent the whole picture, at least it gives an idea about how many percentages of people are aware with regard to renewable energy sources, EU targets, amendment issue at the parliament and activities of the Lithuanian of Wind Power Association. Questions were translated into Lithuanian language for those who do not know English and fifty people have taken place from different ages and background.

Surveys are considered as a quantitative research methods, which are more “scientific, deductive and experimental” in comparison with qualitative data (Beverley, 2002). Structured surveys are not flexible and give small room for respondents to specify their answers. The biggest advantage of surveys is that collection of data can be obtained promptly. Findings of quantitative research methods can be expressed with numbers and figures. It is more likely that shorter surveys are completed compared to long and complicated ones with the needs for lengthy answers. Ideal surveys should be well-designed along with small number of questions (Cohen, 2000). Below, four questions can be seen for this survey.

Table 4: Questions for the small-scaled survey

1. Could you name at least three renewable energy resources?
2. Do you know any activities of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association? [YES or NO] If yes, can you name one of them?
3. How many percentage of energy should come from renewable energy sources until 2020 according to the last EU Directive? A)9 B) 13 C)19 D) 23 E)29
4. Are you aware of possibility of amending the current renewable energy support scheme at the parliament? [YES or NO]

2.2 Hardships, Limitations and Reflections on the Research Process

The most challenging hardship can be against biased opinions of the employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. It is crucial to mention that since the data collection is mostly constraint to impression, understanding and interpretation of their problem and situation, they might have been biased in order to promote their activities and works during the interviews. In order to deal with this situation, the opinion of the one employee from the government and the findings of the survey have been taken into consideration. Besides, since without having any stake in this case, considerable attention has been paid to interpretation of data by displaying a neutral behavior on this matter.

Another encountered difficulty was to contact with the representatives of the members companies of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Even though there are not many energy producing member companies, it was really hard to get in touch with all of them, which gave rise to carrying out fewer interviews than intended in the first place. Besides, most of the member companies are scattered in different cities and therefore it was hard to reach all of them due to limited time and economic resources. Maybe, more information could have been received if the individual interviews had been done with all the representatives of the member companies and with the employee at the Ministry of Energy rather than engaging through e-mails.

Regarding limitations, this thesis work represents the perspectives of the interviewed people at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and interpretation of the collected data throughout this study work. It is important to reiterate once again not to be under the illusion that the goal was to investigate research questions properly rather than being critical or judgmental towards communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and support schemes. Reflection on interviews has played an important role during the process of interpreting and assessing the data. The data was gathered from one employee at the Ministry of Energy and from two representatives of the member companies, which might have limited the knowledge and interpretation of what the rest of the members or representatives would think about the issue. However, the opinions of other members and more representatives from government would not have changed the course of this thesis work.

Last but not least, during the interviews, lack of a tape recorder as well as taking notes and listening to the interviewees at the same time made the interview process a bit harder than expected. From time to time, it was hard to find available time even to contact with the employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association because of the tight schedule of the employees and the replacement issue of current scheme at the parliament.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, important aspects of environmental communication and symbolic interactionism are going to be presented along with communication models in order to evaluate and have a better understanding of the communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. This will be useful for assessment as to how they actively engage with the public to raise awareness of local people as well as how they provide flow of information between its member companies. Further on, some important factors are going to be touched upon regarding communication aspect. In addition to these, conflict management issue is explained in order to make a profound analysis whether there are some disagreements over the issue. Last but not least, sustainable development is going to be depicted in an attempt to assess the relevance of energy support schemes within the framework of

sustainability. With the help of given theories, investigation of the research questions would be more functional to build up a sound understanding.

3.1 Environmental Communication & Symbolic Interactionism

Our relationship with each other, our understanding of nature - environmental issues and our behaviors to environment is not merely based on the field of science, but closely related with communication, human interaction, internet websites, media and even our daily conversations within societies, organizations and individuals, which has made environmental communication prominent study over the last years. In order to analyze this field, at first Shannon-Weaver's (1949) model of communication, explained by Cox (2006), gives account of human communication in a simple way that does not place emphasis on how communication shapes our understanding, gives meaning to situations and extend our perspectives. On the other hand, all these elements can be considered and embraced under the roof of symbolic action according to Cox (2006). In the following paragraphs, the significance of symbolic action and how important role it plays in determining and implementing the right models within environmental communication area are specified.

Cox (2006, p12) stated that "symbolic action assumes that language and symbols do more than transmit information." Needless to say, they play vital role in establishing our understanding and in shaping our point of views, thereby leading to broader environment in communication sphere. As a result of this, it is the symbolic action, which moulds human communication that influences environmental problems along with our attitudes and behaviors (Cox, 2006). From symbolic interactionism point of view, Mead (explained by Charon 1995) mentions that human beings interpret their environment in various ways, giving rise to innumerable perspectives which establish our realities. In order to interpret our environment and engage with other people, we also need symbols, which are used to communicate with others. In this case, symbols play crucial role in forming our realities by actively building and re-building our world. Charon (1995, p55) expressed the importance of symbols with the following remark "for the human being, symbols create our reality, make complex society possible, and contribute a number of important qualities that together make human unique in nature."

Building on Cox's understanding, environmental communication can be considered as "pragmatic" and "constitutive" instruments which form our understanding of the environment and determine our relationship with the world when we take symbolic action into consideration. As a pragmatic approach, it instructs, convinces, and assists us to take some actions against environmental problems in the hope of solving them. As a term of constitutive, environmental communication is useful in order to form the picture of environmental understanding and its problems as well as to shape our reality through language, perspectives and symbols. Hence, some people can have different ideas about the same environmental problems since their understanding of reality differs from each other, which might influence their behaviors subsequently (Cox, 2006).

To be able to see the relationship of environmental communication more connectively with human interaction, it is useful to mention the significance of symbolic interactionism, which gives excessive emphasis on symbols, behaviors, human action, self as well as social interaction. Unlike Shannon-Weaver's (1949) communication model, explained by Cox (2006), communication should be seen as an active process rather than passive within the framework of symbolic interactionism because individuals are regarded as social creatures, thinking constantly through interaction and defining the situations in which they are at the present time. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that human beings are constantly engaging with other people through social interaction as well as define the situation

rather than merely respond to it. Furthermore, human beings not only influenced by the people around us, but also affected through interaction within the self. Individuals also contact with others by the help of symbols and therefore all these functions make human beings unique with a myriad of perspectives since each individual interprets their environment differently. In communication sphere, another significant element is to “taking the role of other,” which entails individuals to gain a new perspective and understanding of the situation by trying to see the same situation from their point of view (Charon, 1995). Taking the role of other is also emphasized by Nitsch (1999) in the following section as one of the complementary factors within the communication field. After having demonstrated the relationship of environmental communication with symbolic interactionism, the following communication models can be understood in more constructive way.

3.2 Communication Models

Even though a wide range of models have been created to deal with the entanglement of communication, “classical communication” along with “diffusion theory” have been embraced and used in many societies. It is argued that they do not underlie productive communication process and what they have common is “the domination of the sender” in communication field, yet with the help of this model, it might be possible to reach to large audience in order to convey information at the same time (Nitsch, 1999).

The classical communication model comprises six steps, which are “sender, message, channel, receiver, effect and feedback.” In this model, the message is transferred to group of people by the sender to be able to carry out communication process and the sender has the authority to determine both, the content and the approach of the message. In addition to this, the effect of the message is traced through feedback. Even though the classical communication model seems to be prominent due to its extensive usage and simplicity of it in practice, there are some flaws in this model. The classical communication is merely based on the understanding of the person, who spreads the information. Thus, this model puts the sender at a central position where the target group could be considered as objects, who might receive twisted information from the sender. Furthermore, the flow of the communication is shaped with the understanding of well-organized and systematic ways and therefore it is managed from the sender point of view. It would be naive and too simple to accept the fact that this might be the right communication model for every situation. To great extent, it neglects people’s reactions and behaviors, which can be closely linked to individuals’ situation, culture or environment. In this communication model, it is believed that the person, spreading the information, might have valuable messages to the target group in order to bring about changes, yet it can not be achieved all the time due to some deficiencies of this model (Nitsch, 1999).

The main criticism against this classical communication model is that it disregards the point of view of target groups. The target group should see the relevance of the information from their perspectives. If we want to reach out to them and obtain productive communication process, the information should be understood and accepted from the point of view of the target group. In this sense, if we learn how to endeavor to take the role of others, the perspective of the target group might give rise to productive and more long-lasting outcomes within the realm of environmental communication (Nitsch, 1999).

Nitsch mentions the “relevance model,” which considers the communication as an exchange or course of information between the sender and receiver. There are two criteria to meet the requirements of the relevance model. The first criterion is “target groups perceived needs”, which can be explained that the needs of the target group should be taken into consideration. The second criterion is regarding “preconditions” and “potentials” of the target

group, which can be attributed to accessibility of the information along with the point of view of the target group. Consequently, the needs and the perspective of target group are taken into account and therefore target group's involvement could be achieved and become more intensive compared with the classical communication model (Nitsch, 1999).

Apart from the models explained above, there are also some important factors in communication sphere. Nitsch (1999) places emphasis on the importance of "taking institutional, social and psychological factors" into consideration when environmental communication is devised. In addition to these, "commitment" and "human imperfection" factors in conjunction with some characteristic of environmental problems might be useful to gain insight about communication domain. If target group has commitment regarding environmental issues or problems, it is more likely that the information is going to be used effortlessly and easily by them in environmental sphere. Conversely, if the target group does not have much commitment, they will not be interested in what the information is about, which will result in ignorance and passivity in the end. When Nitsch talks about "human imperfection," he puts forward the idea that the damage of the environmental issues might be apparent after quite a long time. Especially, environmental issues, such as usage of energy and transport have the most important environmental effects in our societies. An emphasis on "taking the role" is also significant. For instance, if people play different roles, such as politicians or administrators, they might result in showing unfavorable norms and behaviors that they do not want to display. In this sense, taking the role of other as a citizen or a representative might be different and harder, which constitutes one of the most important parts in order to structure environmental communication from the environmental point of view (Nitsch, 1999).

3.3 Conflict Management

Rosenberg (2004) believes that there is likelihood to solve disputes by meeting people's "needs" in an amicable manner. Conflicts emerge because people want their requests to be met completely. If individuals behave selfishly and think their own interests in the situations, it is not possible to break the deadlock. Both sides should know and realize that they are treated equally and this can be achieved by building trust in reciprocal manner. When there is trust, individuals tend to collaborate by taking requests into consideration. Misunderstandings, accusations and wrong perceptions should be eliminated mutually. Even though people reach to the core of their needs, sometimes there are difficulties in understanding the needs of the other side. In other words, they might not comprehend the situation as we think. It can be dealt with understanding and determining the other side's feeling by putting ourselves in their shoes (Rosenberg, 2004).

According to Hallgren, it might be possible to turn the situation around before it is too late when we face arguments. For instance, when actors notice their disagreements, they might develop strategies to find out about how to tackle with their problems. At this stage, trust is not very low and people should seek to comprehend dissimilarities to reach an agreement. They should ask question what intentions they have. This is quite similar to early diagnosis explained by Glasl (1999) for conflict management. Building on this, running from conflicts is not the solution. Conflicts emerge because sometimes people are not able to control themselves at the ideal point where there is a balance between extreme conditions. Therefore, individuals should improve "social skills" so as to deal with conflicts. Conflicts usually come to deadlocks when other opinions are heard and people are less likely to engage in discussions when there are dissimilarities in point of views. According to Glasl, "conflict capability" is crucial to anticipate conflicts before they start as well as helps to grasp the situation where any conflict could emerge beforehand. There are two maximum attitudes,

which might lead to severe conflicts. Either people tend to escape from situations or they are willing to perform aggressive behaviors. If we possess one of these attitudes, we will not be able to overcome disagreements. In order to provide this balance, we need “considerate confrontation”, which aims at supporting a specific opinion along with the feeling of apprehension. Neither aggressiveness nor evasion is useful in dealing with conflict cases. What we need to do is try to develop new perceptions, but at the same time we should not compromise our thoughts and statements. The challenge is that individuals should learn how to tackle with dissimilarities. If we can not control disagreements, they might aggravate the situations, thus conflicts start to dominate us (Glasl, 1999).

On the other hand, if actors fail in solving disputes at early stage, the situation might go to the another phase where trust is very low and individuals might try to resort to other ways, such as diminishing of other people’s rights or make them look like they are illiterate about the case at hand. In this case, it might be good to change the way we talk. In order to build up trust, there should be constructive ways instead of resorting to condescending, degrading or demeaning ways. “Meta- communication” seems to be a good way by reflection upon issues when the trust is low. People also should dwell on the issues more, before they respond to them (Hallgren, n.d.).

3.4 Sustainable Development

Environment was not considered as a concept in political area until the 1960s and there were not any solid environmental legislation and government agencies to deal with environmental issues in countries. Today, each country, however, has some environmental organizations, NGOs, environmental policies and government departments in regard to environmental issues. Governments want to enact environmental policies, with which corporations satisfy. The goal of governments is to invigorate the economy by keeping investors content about environmental legislation and procedures. In the opposite case, deterrent policies against corporations might lead to less investment rates and economic downturn (Dryzek, 1997). Besides, sustainable development demands a change in terms of power relations in order to satisfy efficient sustainable process, which might propel the participation and keeps centralized government away from the current system. Not to mention the fact that sustainable development can be achieved within the framework of collaboration that gives less emphasis to government procedures. All these features can closely be related and corresponds with the understanding of natural resource management. Unlike ecological modernization, sustainable development addresses to less developed countries more than ecological modernization and aims at integrating policies into the existing situations (Dryzek, 1997).

After 1980, sustainable development has started to play an important role especially, at international level. Different definitions have been made and diverse meanings have been attributed to sustainable development. According to the definition made in the report by Brundtland, (1987 cited in Dryzek, 1997) “sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and the institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations.” However, the definition made by Brundtland was found incomplete and unsatisfactory, thus more definitions of sustainable development have emerged ever since 1987. Some explanations gave importance to the livelihood of people and population, some of them laid more emphasis on limitations to economic growth, whereas some advocated a limit to growth. Since there are various definitions and given meanings to sustainable development, it is regarded as a discourse rather than being a concept. On the other hand, because there are diverse definitions and

understandings about sustainable development does not mean that we can attribute any meaning we want. What makes sustainable development important that its contestation at its core and many people have belief in it when it comes to environmental issues. Actually, the report written by Brundtland illuminated the combination of developments, environmental issues, population, manufacturing, energy and institutional change, all of which had been kept in the background for long time. Yet, Brundtland did not attempt to show the possibility of this futuristic view and did not demonstrate the stages that would be necessary to implement it (Dryzek, 1997). In this combination, energy and institutional change can closely be attributed to sustainability along with the existence of support schemes, whose aim is to assist the EU countries to bring about necessary changes in order to meet their targets.

4. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the findings of the communication process and the relationship of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association are presented with different actors. Figure 2 can be useful in order to see the structure of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and its relationship with different actors prior to commencing this chapter. In the last part, the findings are discussed by explaining the results associated with the literature.

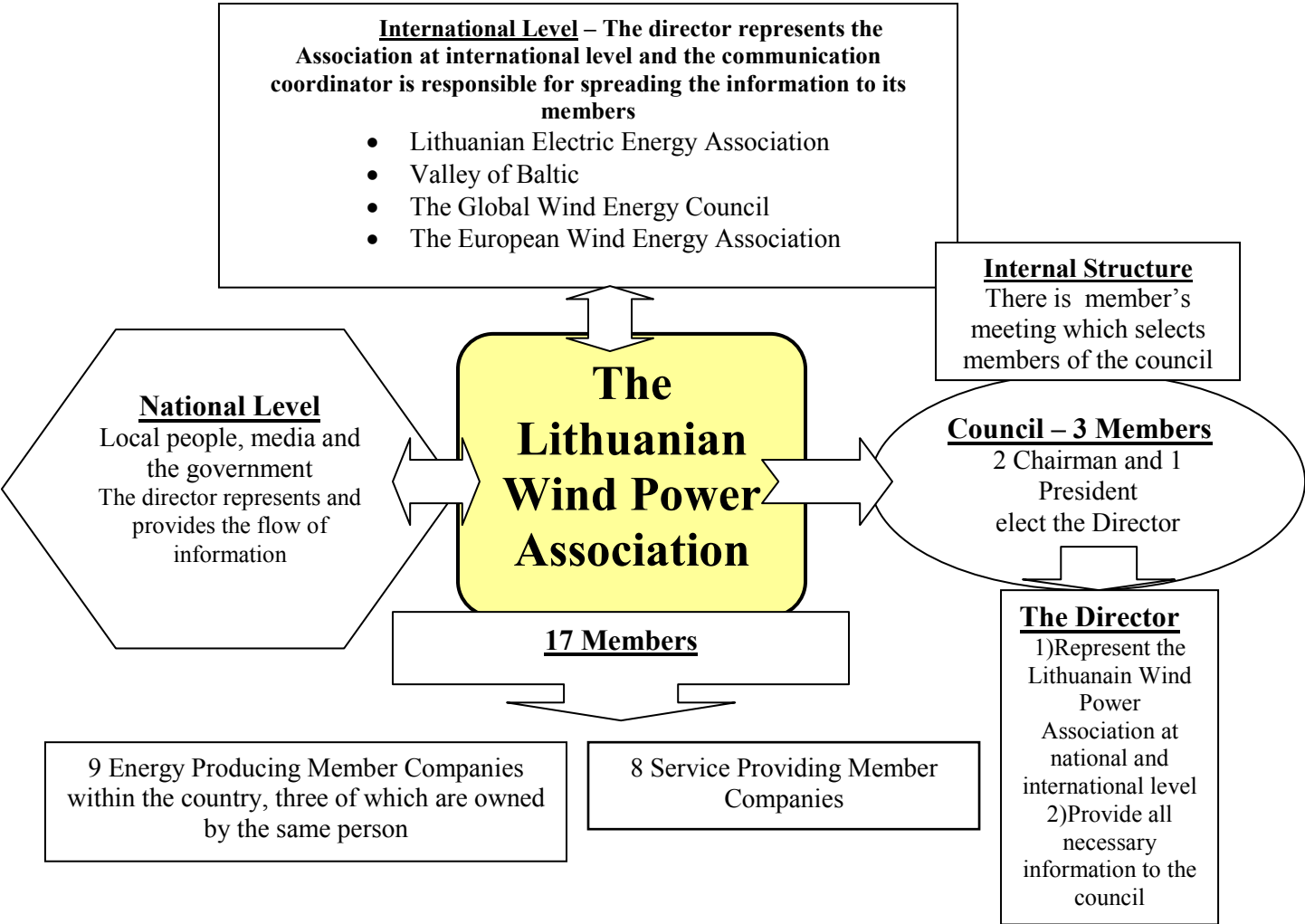


Figure 2: Structure of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association in Kaunas, Lithuania based on the data collection and interpretation

4.1 Findings and results

4.1.1 International Level

How the communication process take place with international actors as well as how the information is shared and diffused with member companies are explained based on the qualitative data collection of the employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Even though the Lithuanian Wind Power Association has seventeen members companies, it is also itself member of some international organizations, such as the European Wind Energy Association or Valley of Baltic. In fact, the relationship with international actors is not as intimate and complex as actors at national level because there are fewer direct and indirect interactions with international actors annually. The workload is mostly on the director, who is the most active employee at both, international and national level. The director represents the Lithuanian Wind Power Association at international level, where he attends some conferences and exhibitions held in the field of renewable energy. The director diffuses and shares the information gathered from those meetings when there is a convention with the council. Yet, it is the responsibility of the communication coordinator is to filter out the information and to send it to the representatives of the member companies. The information received from international organizations is usually press releases and e-mails. The communication coordinator explained that “I usually send the information through e-mails.” In this case, the communication coordinator decides the content of the information and spreads it to its member companies since the information is received in English language and translated into Lithuanian language in order to make it understandable for representatives of the member companies. The communication coordinator stated that “the flow of information is sufficient and the representatives of members companies can have an access to the whole information if they want. The information is available under the headings of news section on our website and can be reached at any time.”

Information received from international organizations, such as bulletins or reports comprise valuable information regarding results of some international events or important evaluations of renewable energy sector in the world. This information might be useful for representatives of the member companies. Even though the information is received in another language, filtering out and summarizing the information for representatives might restrain the diffusion of information to some extent. It is stated by the communication coordinator that information can be found at “news section” on their web site, but this information is mostly summary of published sources in Lithuanian language and still it is not very clear for representatives how they can access to the whole information all the time. Moreover, even though there is up-to-date information in Lithuanian language on the web-site, the flow of information does not seem to be up-to-date in English language at all because the last update of English information was nearly one year ago. This means that the flow of information on the website can not as sufficient and up-to-date as the employees stated. It is emphasized by Nitsch (1999) that the information encompasses us has many inadequacies. Since the information is important, its content and quality play a vital role. What kind of information, what part of it and how it is going to be explained, mostly determined by group of people, who might change the goal of the information. This is roughly the picture we might encounter if we want to present and convey genuine and valuable information regarding environmental issues (Nitsch, 1999). It seems that the communication process and flow of information from international organizations to member companies is somewhat predetermined at higher level at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. As a result of it, the most important question crops up at this stage: Is there any way or likelihood to let individuals, representatives or any related

actors decide and create some opportunities or situations where they can select information freely, as well as have an access to genuine knowledge and information?

4.1.2 Members

How the information is diffused between the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and its members is explained based on the information gathered from the employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association along with two representatives of the member companies. Building on this, two meetings are held per year with the representatives of the member companies. Except these two meetings, the representatives of companies are not obliged to attend any meetings. Two representatives of the member companies pointed out that “the flow of information and communication process is enough for them.” They said that “there are mainly two channels used in order to provide the flow of information, which are e-mails and writings where they can be found on the web site of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association.” The director usually summons meetings with the president and two chairmen every couple of weeks or if there is a hot topic on the agenda, it can be more often, once a week. For instance, the director thinks that “the amendment issue is a hot topic and therefore we needed to arrange more meetings than usual.” It is believed that the communication with the board is enough and they do not have any communication problem among themselves. The director also stated that “if there is any interested representative, who wants to take place at meetings, are welcome to receive information by calling us or attending our meetings.” On the other hand, one representative pointed out that “even though we have had some minor problems over the years, all of them have been resolved in a friendly way without having any conflict.”

Although the communication process and flow of information seem to be adequate based on the remarks of the respondents, they might have displayed biased opinions in order to promote their works. Even though it might be enough to have two meetings with all the representatives during the whole year in order to transmit necessary information and knowledge, to what extent this fulfills the expectations of the representatives is ambiguous. It seems that employees at high level usually decide what the hot topic is without taking any suggestions into consideration from the representatives. In this sense, there is no chance for all representatives' ideas to be heard and taken into account. Moreover, since it is up to the willingness of representatives whether to attend all the meetings, this might lead to discouragement or passivity amongst them. Thus, there might be a possibility of deterring representatives from taking place at each meeting. Besides, it is also questionable to what extent factors of symbolic interactionism are taken into account since the communication seems to be one-way process in this case. It is argued by Cox (2006) that communication should not be considered as a one-way process to convey information from one sender to another sender, which neglects the essence of symbolic action regarding human communication. We can have broader definition of environmental communication with the understanding of symbolic action rather than simply based on transformation of human communication. Since the way we communicate builds up our and others perspectives when we actively engage with the world, which results in obtaining diverse realities through gaining new understandings towards environmental issues and problems (Cox, 2006). Consequently, the flow of information and communication do not seem very effective in order to extend knowledge and to take the needs of representatives into consideration.

How the information is understood and interpreted is predicated on several factors, which are not definitely stable throughout our lives. There can not be exact answers concerning how to communicate perfectly since all relevant factors are complex, different and volatile in their context for each situation. It is, however, possible to determine some actors

and constituents that will have more influence on implementing the most favorable communication strategies (Nitsch, 1999). In this case, determined factors and chosen ways by the Lithuanian Wind Power Association might not be the favorable ones to encourage participation or to give rise to decent flow of information. Considering the main objective of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association is to give precedence to the rights of its member companies, it is more likely that there is a tendency to value their ideas more than adequate and it might be the reason that representatives seem to be content with the communication process. Besides, protecting the rights of the member companies for wind energy sector does not make the communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association very good with its member companies.

4.1.3 National Level - Local People

Apart from international level and member companies, there are more actors, with which the Lithuanian Wind Power Association engages at national level. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association engages with local people since one of the main objectives is to inform and to raise awareness of local people. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association has recently established a website about the hazards of nuclear power plants. It is a website that can be reached when visitors click on the “green button” and it shows that how many people have visited and voted for green energy. So far 10.444 people have clicked and visited the website. Apart from this, the president also actively engage with the media to demonstrate the shortcomings of this policy, but the president himself stated that “all these activities were not good enough to bring about profound changes.” The reason is that activities are not regarded well enough can be related to the relationship with the government and local people. Since the government has not backed out of changing the content of the support scheme, it might be the reason that activities are not efficient in the eyes of the president. Since the demands and desires of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association have not met totally, the president might have self- criticized towards their works and activities. Local people also might be satisfied with the current situation since they have the energy they need. It is attributed to the case explained by Nitsch (1999) that we do not perceive or think what kind of energy we use as long as it is convenient, cheaper and gives us satisfaction we need. Biel (1994), Sjoden (1992) and Smith (1991) have indicated that comfort of people takes precedence over what it is seen as a proper behavior by people, which makes us realize the importance of the understanding of people about environmental issues and for this reason symbolic interactionism becomes part of this process at this point. Building on this, this might be the case in Lithuania that as long as local people receive energy, they do not question whether it is the right way to consume it. In fact, in the short term, this might not cause any effects or severe consequences for societies. On the other hand, it is obvious that, in the long term, a group or society can provide sustainability by displaying favorable behaviors that differ from the one that has been widely accepted by majority of people. This issue varies from usage of energy to even very simple thing, such as sorting the garbage out. Consequently, we need to take some actions as individuals to make way for sustainability for future generations (Nitsch, 1999).

Both, the president and the director claimed that they have conducted an omnibus public survey and based on it more than 75 % of people are aware of renewable energy sectors, amendment issue and their activities. On the other hand, both admit that “the government does not pay attention to the public opinion at all and therefore more serious actions should be taken to make the government implement the right policies to promote renewable energy sector.” The director himself has been taking initiatives to show deficiencies and possible negative effects of this policy. He also unified other associations, wrote letters and petitions to the government and took place in the media in order to raise their

voice. The director stated that “the best way to reach to local people might be through television or newspaper and we will try to approach to media more.” Apparently, they have not been so active with mass media so far and most likely, this might have to do with their budget. The president wants take more actions and place more emphasis on relationship with the media. Besides, Nitsch (1999) states the “characteristic of environmental problems,” and building on this point, if there is a likelihood of displaying data or information pertaining to environmental issues, such as discharge of greenhouse gasses into the air or air pollution rate, this should be presented through media or computer based information system to make people see what they confront with (Nitsch, 1999).

The conclusion can be drawn that they have not taken advantage of media in order to reach out to local people and therefore they seem to have been regret not engaging with the media more. Of course, the Lithuanian Wind Power Association might need to allocate more money for widespread campaigns to actively engage with local people through televisions or newspaper and it might be really beneficial for them at this stage.

Their aim is to inform local people as much as they can about this issue. Based on the data they have provided, they stated that “75 % is really good enough for them.” On the other hand, based on the survey carried out for this study shows that actually this number might be too positive. The most important reason to carry out this survey was to challenge to biased thoughts of the employees of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Especially, after the interviews, 75 % seem to have been too fulfilling for the activities that they have carried out so far. Especially, the lack of widespread campaigns and deficiencies in communication area can be considered as stimulant factors for conducting this small scale survey. Based on the small-scaled survey, even though 83 % of individuals are aware of renewable energy sources, unfortunately they are still ignorant regarding the amendment issue and the EU support schemes. 24 % of people know that Lithuania needs to reach 23 % energy from renewable energy sources until 2020 and 52 % of participants are not aware of activities of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Moreover, 42 % of local people know the amendment issue at the parliament. Considering just 10.444 people have visited the web-site in a country with over 3 million inhabitants so far, these numbers make sense to great extent.

4.1.4 The Government

The most intimate relationship can be seen with the government since it has been in the process of preparing a new support policy to replace with the current one in order to promote renewable energy within the country. During this process, the director has been active and occasionally taken place in the committee of preparation law. The director said that “I have been trying to get my message across to the government about the content of the new support scheme because I am not happy with the content of the new policy at all.” Actually, both the director and the president articulated that “even current fixed-feed in tariff is not working the way it should be in Lithuania.” They think that “well-prepared fixed-feed in tariff schemes should guarantee that electricity generated by energy producers is purchased by electricity distributors or government over the market price for long time, which lead to increase in the rate of investment.” Besides, the president mentioned that “the government has changed some provisions even in the current support policy and has replaced it with kind of tendering option.” In order to clarify this remark, it can be said that energy producing companies must be willing to receive the lowest premium (extra) price amongst other energy producing companies in order to win the bidding to produce electricity over the market price instead of purchase obligation system. According to remarks of both, the president and the director, small and local Lithuanian companies are not able compete with the big renewable energy corporations and therefore those small companies can not feel secure to enter the

renewable energy business. It is most likely that they can not get a loan from banks to find enough capital for their investment. Even if they have their own capital, there might be some barriers in their ways, such as shorter duration of tariff.

Based on the content of the well-prepared fixed feed in tariff, the duration of the tariff should be prepared for long time, such as fifteen or twenty years to give enough time for energy producing companies to exceed their break-even point and start to make profit (Rickerson & Grace, 2007). In Lithuania, even though it is so-called fixed-feed in tariff until 2020, it does not apply to companies that will enter the business. The director stated that “if one renewable energy company wants to get into the business, it might spend just three or four years on building and constructing the foundation of wind parks. During this time, the company is not going to make profit, but has to continue to pay the loan without running the business.”

The president also explained the disadvantages of limitation on producing electricity from wind turbines. He articulated that “there is no limit in feeding electricity into the grids in well-planned fixed feed in tariff system, yet the Lithuanian government has set maximum 500 MW limits for generating electricity from wind turbines” and the president stated that “280 MW of which already has been generated.” The president claims that “Lithuania can produce more than 500 MW and due to this limit, companies are not willing to take place into renewable energy sector because they know that there might not be long term business opportunity for them.” Building on these remarks, with the possibility of amending this policy, it can be the last straw in this sector because the government wants to introduce “premium market plus feed in tariff,” which gives no guarantees at all to companies that electricity is going to be purchased for long time. On the other hand, companies should offer the minimum price on the market spot to be able to generate electricity, which might lead to less investment rates and more unfair market conditions (Rosende, et al., 2010). The both, director and president are agreed on that there are many shortcomings on this current policy, and the replacement of current support scheme might make the situation worse than it is already.

All these dissimilarities and remarks have been shown to analyze the relationship with the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and the government in a more accurate and effective way. It is too palpable that the government and the Lithuanian Wind Power Association have different interests and stakes, because the government’s decisions contradict with the understanding of the employees at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Yet, even though they have disparate goals and demands on this matter; neither side describes the situation as a “conflict.” The president articulated that “the relationship with the government is very bad, but there is no conflict between us and everything is solvable in logic frame.” The head of the renewable energy sector at Ministry of Energy expressed that “I do not remember any conflicts and I believe that the worst way of working together is conflicting.” She also stated that their relationship with the Lithuanian Wind Power Association is “quite formal and it mostly consists of their opinions regarding the drafts of legal acts they release and publish.” The president stated that “we will act and try to keep our relationship with the government in a friendly manner rather than having conflict with them.” All these remarks seem to be a convincing sign to believe that there is no any conflict between them, yet how sincere these remarks are questionable. Besides, how come both sides do not describe the situation as conflict when both of them are in the pursuit of looking out for themselves? There is a likelihood that both sides might be already in conflict, but either they do not want to admit it or they do not realize that they are having conflict.

Apart from this approach, the reason that both sides do not label the relationship as conflict can be ascribed to the following explanations. Hallgren (n.d) describes conflicts as social circumstances which might lead to diminishing of trust between actors. People usually

reply to situations impulsively rather than dwelling on the issue. In this case, at least the director ponders over and thinks what he is going to argue or say against the government's legal acts rather than acting thoughtlessly. According to Hallgren, we can not categorize each situation as a conflict in this sense. Divergent interests and ambiguous situations are not necessarily regarded as conflicts. On the other hand, conflicts are closely related to social circumstances. How parties understand each other, how their perception about the issue, how they answer to each other and take roles are important factors in social interaction. In the end, if this leads to negative situations, it is most likely that social interaction gives rise to having severe arguments, thereby decreasing the level of trust (Hallgren, n.d.). Building on these explanations, the situation might not be seen negative from both sides. Since it is an ongoing process and trust is not very low at this stage, it makes sense that there might not be conflicts whenever there are divergent interests between people or actors if the level of trust is not so low.

The president also stated that “the committee, which has prepared the new policy, has not taken the needs of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association and other organizations into consideration at all and therefore profound changes are necessary in this policy in order to promote renewable energy.” The director claimed that “there was not participation from public or energy companies because the decision is always taken at high level without involving any suggestions from other actors.” The respondent from the head of the renewable energy sector did not express her opinion clearly on this matter, but she mentioned that “other countries also need to revise (some of them are already in the progress of revising) their support schemes within the framework of last EU Directive” and she claims that that is the reason that the government wants to change the current support scheme.

4.1.5 Sustainability Context

The informants agreed on that new support scheme are going to hinder the development of renewable energy in many ways. On the other hand, Viktorija Sankauskaite at Ministry of Energy stated that “current support scheme has shown success in wind energy, but the government needed to make some changes to promote renewable energy sector based on the last EU Directive.” However, she is not clear enough that this new mechanism will support renewable energy to great extent because she mentioned that “there are different support schemes with some advantages and drawbacks”, but she does not explicitly say that which one might be the best for Lithuania.

According to the respondents at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association there are already some main barriers which reduce the promotion of renewable energy. The main barriers defined by the informants are:

- Non-transparent policy
- Duration of granting permits
- Lack of participation,
- Centralized, administrative government

In fact, these four mentioned barriers are associated with the legislative act of the last EU Directive. For instance, decentralization, the understanding of effective management of renewable resources, adequate coordination between involved actors, transparent policies and well-organized domestic and regional administrative bodies play important roles in raising awareness of advantages of renewable energies, thereby encouraging new energy plans and actions for countries to develop their different renewable energy sectors in an appropriate way. Any obstacles, such as long-time permissions for renewable energy plant constructions,

complicated procedures or ambiguities, might hinder the generation of energy from renewable sources. Within the framework of support mechanisms, member countries should adopt their support schemes to increase usage of renewable energy, which leads to decrease in the cost of energy (Directive, 2009).

Based on the remarks of the respondents, obviously, the problem is still with the structure of the current support scheme. The informants are agreed on the deficiencies in the policy and thinks that the government should work on them rather than introducing a new support scheme, which favors the conventional energy producers. The director stated that “it takes so much time to build up wind farms because the procedure is complicated.” The companies want to get into the energy business facing many obstacles to overcome. First and foremost, they need good conditions from grid operators. Second, they have to apply for Ministry of Energy and third, the purpose of the land must be changed and become a “useable land” rather than agriculture land. Next step is the necessity of the environmental impact assessment and after all, papers must be signed by the municipality. The director also mentions about variety of different stakeholders during this process, which make the situation more complex and harder. By the time all the procedure is done, this time the companies need to supply machines to build up wind parks, which are still not clear how much time it takes. The director said that “it mostly takes more than two years to receive a permit to be able to start to lay the foundation of the business.”

Building on his remarks; for instance, it takes less than one year to spot a place and come to agreement where to build wind farms in Germany, where promotion of renewable energy has increased dramatically over the last decade due to well-designed and prepared fixed feed in tariff. Regulation barriers are very low and the country assigns some specific areas for the construction of renewable energy sector projects, which makes these administrative and governmental barriers convenient. A decrease in the number of authority bodies, more decentralized administration understanding could reduce the burden on renewable energy sector for its improvement and development (Rosende, et al., 2010). Besides, the ideas of involved actors and different stakeholders have to be taken into consideration, thus making the process more complicated and longer in order to consummate adequate transactions for renewable energy production.

Another disadvantage of this law is that the understanding of decentralized government and lack of participation according to understanding of the employees at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. Because of all these hindrances, the fixed feed in tariff is not working the way it should. For instance, in Germany, duration of taking necessary permit is less than one year thanks to the decentralized government policy. Besides, tariff is fixed for long time, at least twenty years; thereby companies and investors are willing to enter the renewable energy business (Rosende, et al., 2010).

Nevertheless, there are still some prominent advantages of the current support scheme in Lithuania. Since the tariff level until 2020, which guarantees purchased system for companies that win the bidding, yet with the possibility of replacing this current scheme the informants believe that principles of sustainability is not going to be met. All their attempts to prevent this law coming into force or to change the structure of the law are to promote the renewable energy and have a well-designed feed in tariff.

The director also articulated that “one of the most important reasons that the government wants to amend the current is that there are already signed agreements and subsidized projects for nuclear power plants with other countries.” Based on his remarks, it is also stated that in the report Foratom (2009) “Lithuania has to import its electricity from Russia because the country does not have good connections to electricity grids in Europe and Scandinavia, which makes the country highly dependent on Russia (Foratom, 2009). To be able to reduce the export level of electricity received from Russia, Lithuania has been in the

process of building a new nuclear power plant by 2018. This initiative will be undertaken with other Baltic countries as well as with Poland (Ebrd, 2010). Apart from that he stated that “Lithuania can generate more renewable energy, but there are no any good connections to European grids in order to sell the electricity and therefore there might be surplus of electricity, which can not be sold or exported to other countries.” Besides, he articulated that “the government has not done anything over the last five years to pave the way for promotion of renewable energy.”

4.2 Discussion

The relationship of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association with member companies corresponds with the classical communication model explained by Nitsch (1999). Based on this model, “domination of the sender” is prominent in this case. The information is diffused by the sender, who determines the content of it. Besides, needs are taken into consideration according to this model. Even though, two representatives stated that “communication and information gathering is enough”, to what extent their needs or priorities are taken into account is doubtful. Furthermore, the relationship with actors at international level might be the case in order to demonstrate us the importance of language and symbols, especially if the communication is different from mother tongue and the flow of information take place at international level. It is stated by Charon (1995) that it is the symbolic interactionism that gives emphasis on symbols and language in communication sphere. Charon (1995) also states that people might understand and perceive the information differently, thereby resulting in diverse realities. Building on this, the communication can not be seen as an active process in this case and contradicts with the understanding of symbolic interactionism. Individuals’ experiences are not expected to be the same and therefore they perceive the situations the way they interpret, which creates diverse understandings of the situation. It is questionable that to what extent representatives of the member companies fully aware of the information are received from international organizations because the information has the ability of effecting people’s thoughts, actions and interpretations. Besides, as Nitsch (1999) expressed that our discernment and interpretation are closely related with our knowledge, experience as well as the situation that takes place within the society (Nitsch, 1999). Besides, how the representatives perceive or give meanings to the information is obscure. Press releases might be important and this is filtered out by the sender, which might restrain the content of information. Moreover, even though two representatives of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association are content with the flow of information, it might be biased approach since one of the main objectives of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association is to favor and protect the rights of its members.

It is really surprising that the government and the Lithuanian Wind Power Association are in pursuit of collaboration on the amendment issue rather than having any severe conflicts with each other. Hallgren (n.d.) states that, divergent interests can not be seen as a conflict, but social interaction itself could be the conflict in the situations, which might lead to diminishing of trust. For instance, how actors understand each other, how their perceptions are on the issue, how they respond to each other and take roles are important factors in determining the course of the social interaction. The relationship of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association with the government corresponds with the definition made by Hallgren (n.d). Even though the level of tension is high and both sides want their needs to be met, they do not consider the situation as conflict. Rosenberg (2004) expressed that the situations might reach a stalemate if involved actors do not tend to collaborate and always think their respective interests. That might be the reason that still the government and the Lithuanian Wind Power Association have not found a common ground on this issue.

As Hallgren (n.d. p.9) remarks “when the actors of a common issue have different interests or perspectives, but have appropriate trust to communicate with each other then to focus should be to understand the differences and opportunities.” Based on the remarks of the director and the head of renewable energy sector, trust is not very low at this stage yet, because their interaction with each other is quite formal and consists of exchanging ideas on the legal drafts released by the government. On the other hand, if the conflict overrides the situation, both parties might resort to humiliating ways to make look like their side right on the matter. However, this is not the case at this stage because they are not at the point where they both need to use degrading and demeaning statements. It must be noted that both sides do not regard the situation as a conflict for now and it is still riddled with questions marks what might happen later on if one side displays belligerent or negative behaviors.

It is doubtful that “taking the role of others” can be the reason that both sides do not describe the situation as conflict. Based on the remarks of the director about the lack of involvement of suggestions from other associations might contradict with the understanding of taking the role to great extent. If the government had taken the needs of other organizations, it would not have turned a blind eye to the notions of other actors in the process of preparation of the law, yet what the government has done might be call as a “denial” in this case. The government did not ask the opinion from any association, such as theirs, hydro or any organizations. The person in the head of renewable energy did not mention anything about this issue clearly, which might show that she wants to refrain from expressing her true remarks. It is most likely that she might be aware of the situation, but because of her role and task in the government might make her act in different way rather than she would act in different roles. Building on this, it can be said that she takes the side of the government on this amendment issue, however she does not say it explicitly and it is not very clear from her standpoint that this might be effective step to change current support scheme. What lies behind it can be attributed to the remarks of Nitsch (1999), explains that when people have different roles, they might tend to act differently. Considering she is an employee at the government organization, where there is hierarchical system and power relations, which might lead her to display different behaviors.

Although the classical communication model seems to be a good alternative in rising awareness of individuals regarding a specific topic and to address many people at the same time; it, however, neglects the needs and point of views of the target group. In the case of amendment issue, the Lithuanian Wind Power Association does not seem to be trying to change any behavior of people, but it still stays as a question mark how they can properly introduce or apply any communication models in order to inform people. According to Nitsch (1999) there are not specific outcomes corresponding to communication strategies and how people react and act towards information is still partial and absent. The choices we make and how we interpret the information are shaped through our experiences, which cause human beings to be unique (Nitsch, 1999). In this case, can relevance model regarded as a good option? Building on this question, it can be said that this seems to be a way better option compared to classical communication model. People are already aware of renewable energy sources, but apparently with the understanding of the classical communication model, it was not enough to inform majority of people regarding the government’s decision and still most of the people are not aware of the amendment issue based on the survey carried out for this work. It shows that even though people know renewable resources, they are not aware of the targets set by the EU, support schemes and some activities of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. The conclusion can be drawn that the Lithuanian Wind Power Association might need to accommodate widespread and detailed activities to make people fully informed. As it is expressed in previous part, people’s comfort mostly takes precedence over their appropriate behaviors. In Lithuania, it seems to be the case that people do not care what kind of energy

they use or where the energy comes from as long as it is convenient and available for them. It is a fact that environmental problems, in particularly in energy field, might have severe effects on the environment. Nitsch (1999) explained about the “commitment” factor, which is not strong enough and prevalent amongst the people in this case. Furthermore, with the lack of interest and commitment, it is more likely that people become more passive and ignorant regarding environmental problems and if we want people to be more assertive, committed or responsive, it can not be achieved with the understanding of one-way communication, which ignores the perspective of target group, who will have an impact on the environment. On the other hand, models, such as relevance communication might help us to come to our senses if they include other important factors and merges with the understanding of symbolic action.

In this case, the Lithuanian Wind Power Association might need to cooperate with other associations, such as working in the field of heat or hydro within the country and try to find out more about the opinions of target groups. In this case, target group is seen as the local people, since it is a nation-wide issue and what they have understood so far, to what extent they are well-informed regarding renewable energy sources, what sort of energy they use could be investigated. Based on this, surveys might be a good way of measuring it, and therefore an omnibus survey was carried out by the Lithuanian Wind Power Association. However, 75 % seem to be so positive and contradict with the findings and numbers of the small-scaled survey made for this study. Even though the Lithuanian Wind Power Association has engaged with the media, has prepared web-sites and launched small-scaled campaigns to raise awareness of the public, all these activities seem to have been not very fruitful and to what extent they have become successful is still ambiguous and doubtful at this point. It is important for individuals to take some actions for environmental issues and energy field plays a vital role in this sense. Nitsch (1999) claims that legislation can come in handy to make way for sustainability by providing regulatory laws and thanks to binding EU Directive, Lithuanian has needed to change its renewable energy policy.

Dryzek (1997) stated that most of the countries’ governments want to keep big investors within the country and therefore they mostly favour the benefit of them rather than compatibility or priority with environmental legislations. This is the case how the Lithuanian government wants to replace fixed feed-in tariff with more market oriented one in order to keep bigger investors of conventional energy on the market. Since energy producers of renewable energy sector are not big corporations as conventional energy producers, this situation exactly serves the purpose of the government.

Overall, it can be said that feed in tariff schemes are considered more effective compared with other schemes in terms of sustainability. Besides, countries using feed-in tariff are leading in renewable sectors. Another big advantage of feed-in tariff is that they are more efficacious in diminishing greenhouse gases as well as combating with climate change compared to other schemes. In terms of innovation, technology and efficiency, feed-in tariff has been criticised on the ground that they can not quickly adjust or accommodate to diminishing costs. It is, however, argued that feed-in tariff encourages competition between technology producers. Since there is no market price risk at all, the success and profitability of the projects are subjected to governing costs, which makes technology manufactures compete with each other. They strive to offer lower costs and more stable and adequate arrangements to plan and project developers. It is also argued that equipment competition created by feed-in tariff is more valuable rather than price competition created by other schemes (Rickerson & Grace, 2007). On the other hand, to what extent these support schemes are useful or can be functional on this road still raises some question marks if they are not implemented properly. The EU has set out to sustainable path in terms of economic, social and environmental for member states, by the time estimated targets were determined (Directive, 2009). The EU directive mandatory laws for EU member states could be attributed to the situation in order to

follow sustainability, which will bear fruit in the long term. It is not easy, but still organizations, interest groups and authorities play a vital role in diffusing information, which makes way for sustainability and promotes communication if the perspectives, needs and external factors are properly taken into account.

Based on the combination of Brundtland mentioned in the theory chapter, energy and institutional changes can be attributed to the scope of the last EU Directive, which has enacted binding rules for the EU member countries to generate energy from renewable resources. It is incumbent on member countries to bring about changes in terms of renewable energy sector and therefore support schemes in order to stimulate renewable energy sources are closely linked with the definition made by Brundtland. Support mechanism change the way the countries utilize their resources, direct the course of their investments, promote institutional arrangements and encourage technological developments to meet the EU targets, which paves the way for sustainable energy within the context of sustainability.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this work was to demonstrate the overall communication process of the Lithuanian Wind Power Association as well as its relationship with different actors on the amendment issue and relevance of support schemes with sustainability. Qualitative research, small-scaled survey and e-mail correspondences were used in order to gather data and to analyze this process. Yet, it must be noted that qualitative data collection of this study is mostly restricted to Lithuanian Wind Power Association's impression and interpretation of the problem and process. The Lithuanian Wind Power Association has been active in affecting the decision made by the government and engaging with local people within the country. Based on the findings of gathering information, the employees at the Lithuanian Wind Power Association accept the fact that their actions are not good enough on this issue and therefore more serious and widespread activities should be undertaken to reach more people and make the support scheme more favorable for promotion of renewable energy. It is accepted that well-designed fixed feed-in tariff mechanism is more productive and low-priced in stimulating the generation of renewable energy in comparison to other support schemes if they are supported with the understanding of less centralized administrative, more participation and less duration of permits. Along with the possibility of replacing the current support scheme with more market-oriented, the development of renewable energy might be obstructed. In addition, both, the current and new support schemes have deficiencies in terms of sustainability because both of them are in favor of developing conventional energy rather than renewable energy.

Today, individuals are aware of environmental threats, deadly catastrophes and deteriorations that inflict heavy damage on our environment. They, however, are not well-informed as to what they can do regarding them. The amount of environmental problems has recently increased, some of which even have long-lasting global consequences for human beings in the world. Therefore, it must be incumbent upon organizations, associations, institutions, such as the Lithuanian Wind Power Association to inform people with the right information system and methods, which will raise their awareness, increase level of knowledge and open their eyes. In doing so, individuals might not be oblivious regarding environmental issues and become more active in taking actions. This amendment issue of the current support scheme at the parliament is definitely an important phenomenon because from now on, Lithuania needs to accommodate itself by gravitating towards renewable energy sector in order to provide a sustainable future. In this thesis, this investigation has been completed through the eyes of Lithuanian Wind Power Association by taking the importance of environmental communication to the centre stage.

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