

# **Towards sustainability audits in Finnish schools**

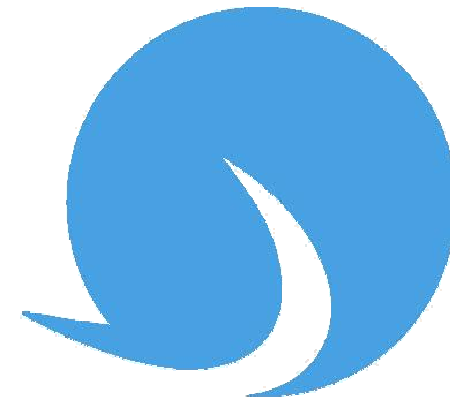
## **Development of criteria for social and cultural sustainability**



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*The OKKA Foundation*

# The OKKA Foundation

- Is a foundation for training, teaching and personal development supporting the educational sector.
- Is founded by the Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ and associations of teachers in vocational education.
- Is responsible for the Environmental Certification of Educational Establishments.



OKKA



# Sustainable development in Finnish schools

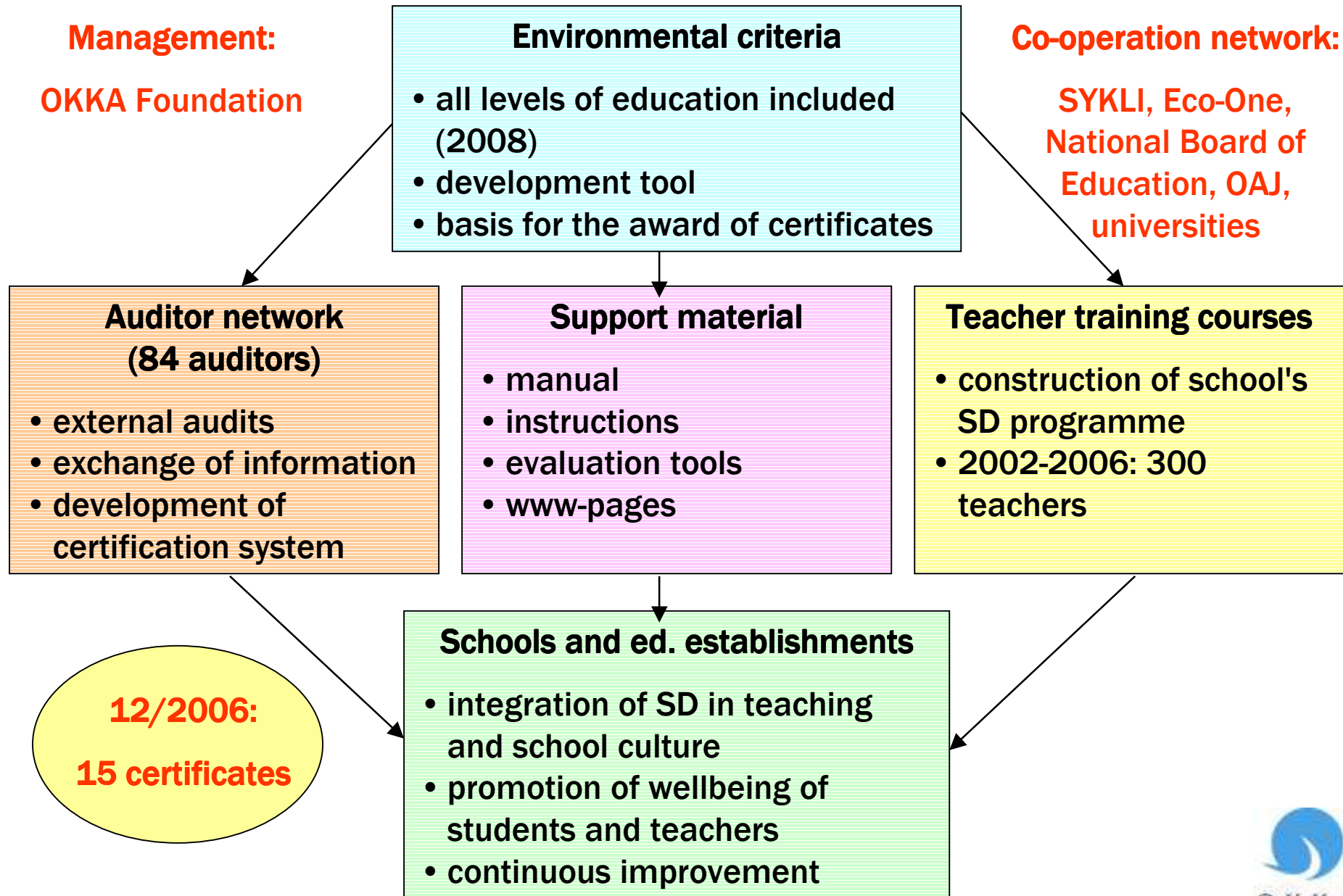
- Focus has been **on environmental education**, development of school environmental programmes and implementation of environmental projects
- **Cultural sustainability**: local and national cultural heritage, cultural diversity emerging due to increasing number of immigrants
- **Social sustainability**: e.g., wellbeing of students, stop for mental and physical violence, health education, occupational health and safety
- **National core curricula** (first and secondary level of education): value basis, school operational culture, sustainable development as a subject crossing theme

# Development tools

## National strategy of Education for Sustainable Development:

- All schools and educational establishments have sustainability programmes by 2010
- Development of SD criteria for schools and educational establishments including ecological, social, cultural and economic sustainability -> tools for evaluation and development
- 15% of schools and educational establishments have environmental certificate by 2014
- Support: Environmental Certification of Educational Establishments, Eco-Schools programme

# Environmental Certification of Educational establishments



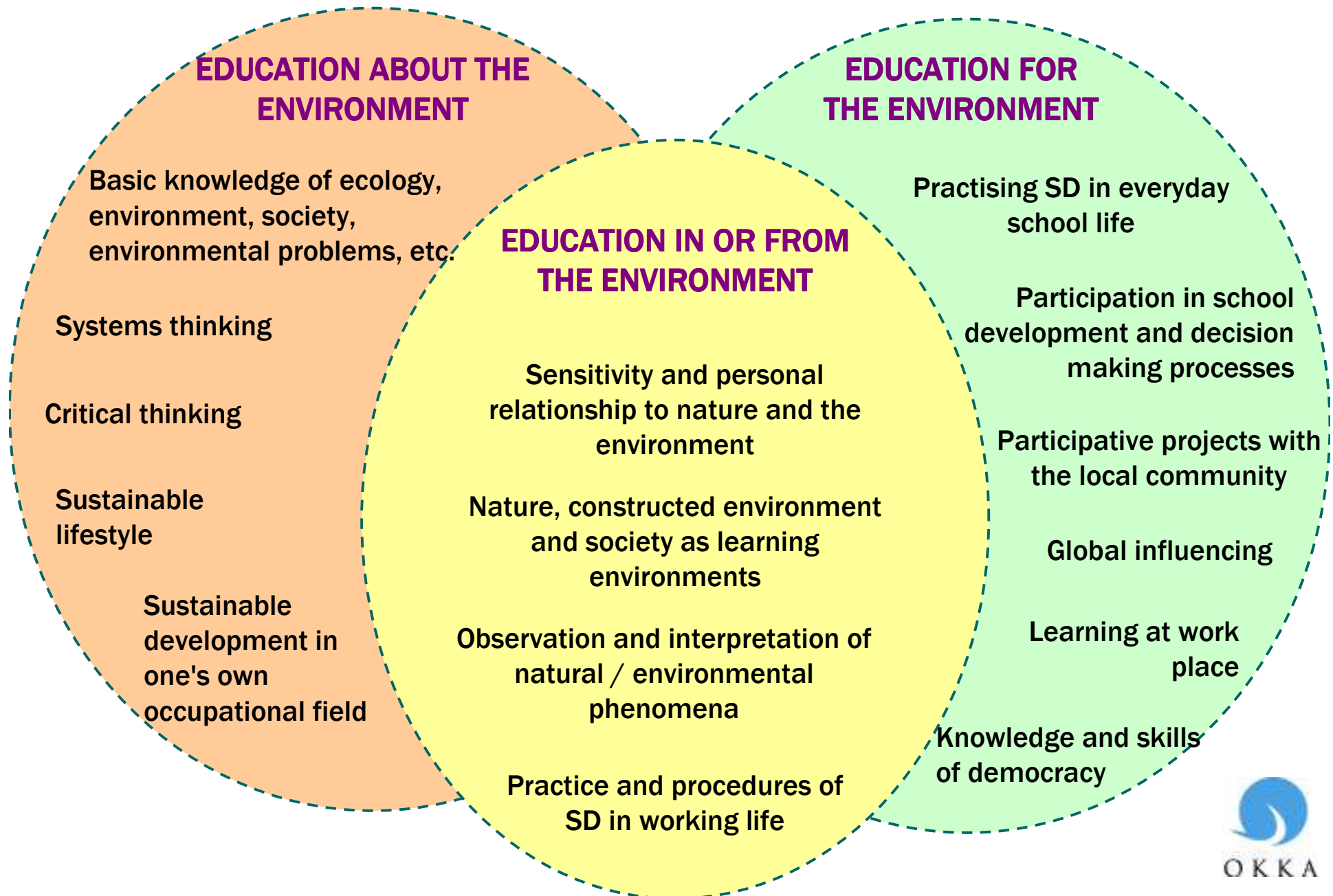
# Parts of the environmental criteria



# CRITERIA PART 1: Management of SD

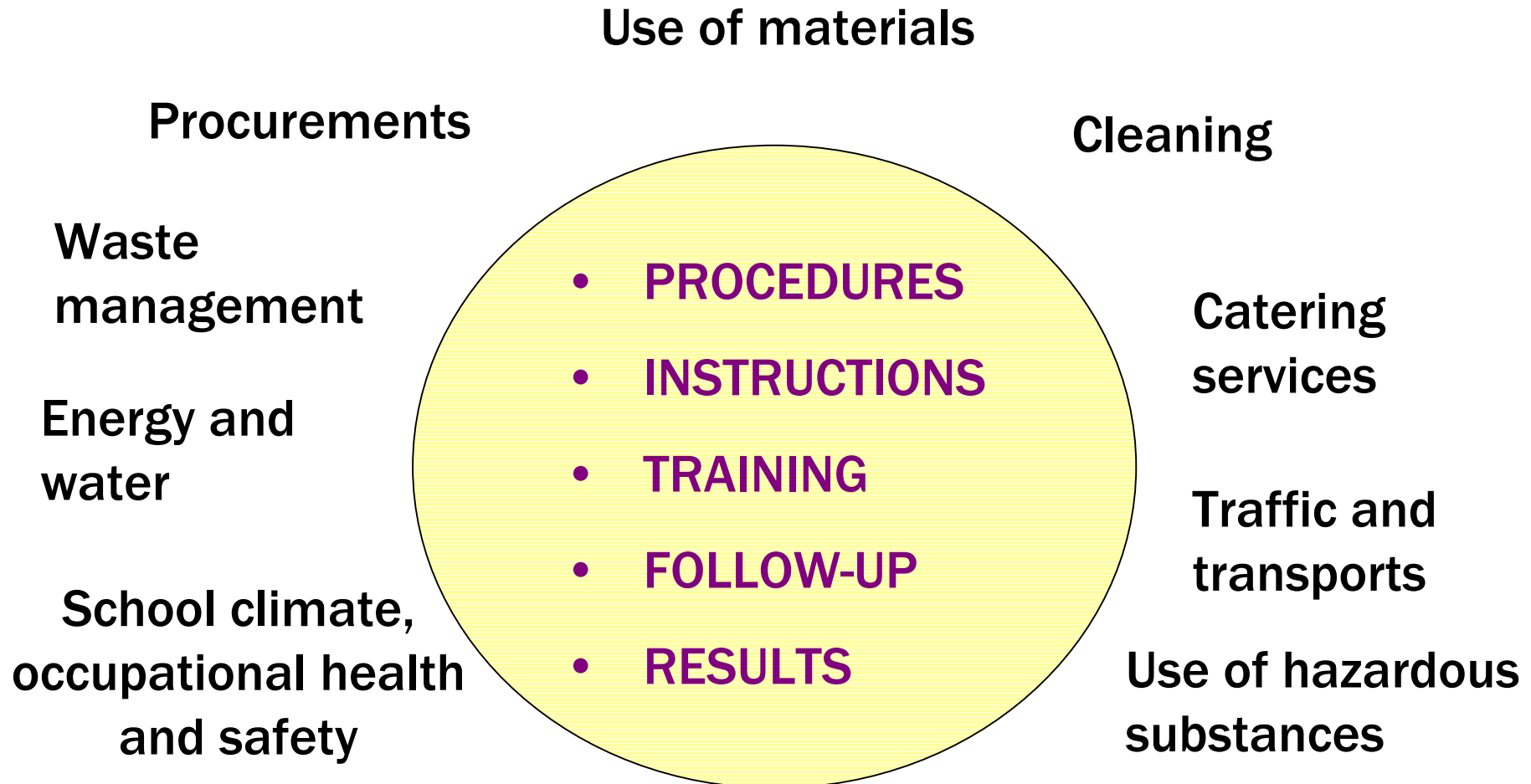


# CRITERIA PART 2: Environmental Education





# CRITERIA PART 3: Maintenance activities



**Cooperation and communication with external service providers and maintaining organisation!**

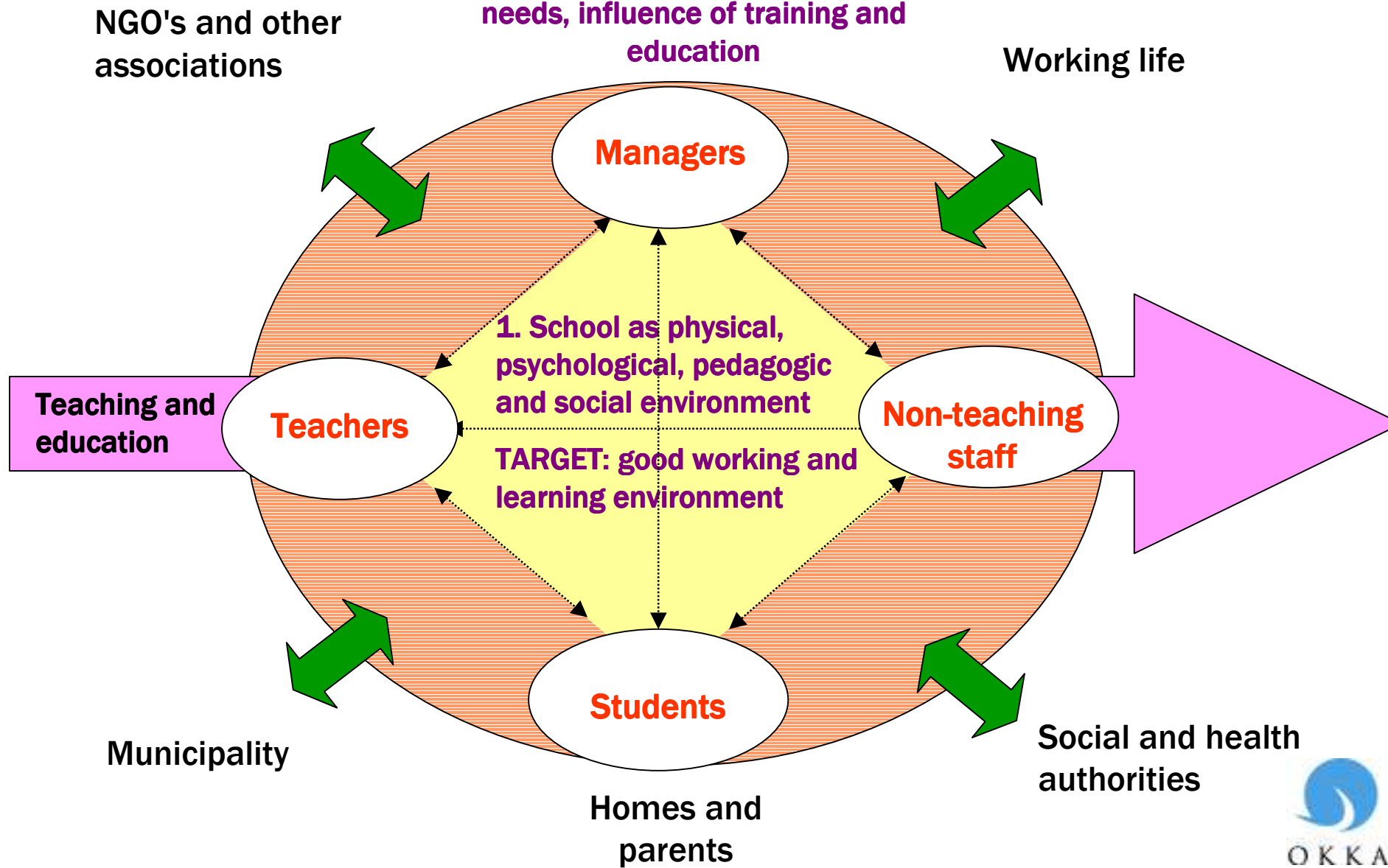
# **Development of criteria for social and cultural sustainability 2007-2008**

# Challenges for schools

- **Holistic view to sustainable development in education:**
  - definition and integration of ecological, social, cultural and economic sustainability in teaching and learning, and school operational culture
  - understanding school as a social system
- **Continuity of development work in schools**
  - from projects to processes
  - participation and commitment of the whole school community
  - integration of sustainable development as part of school management
- **Creating active contacts and new forms of cooperation with the society**

# Understanding school as a psycho-social system

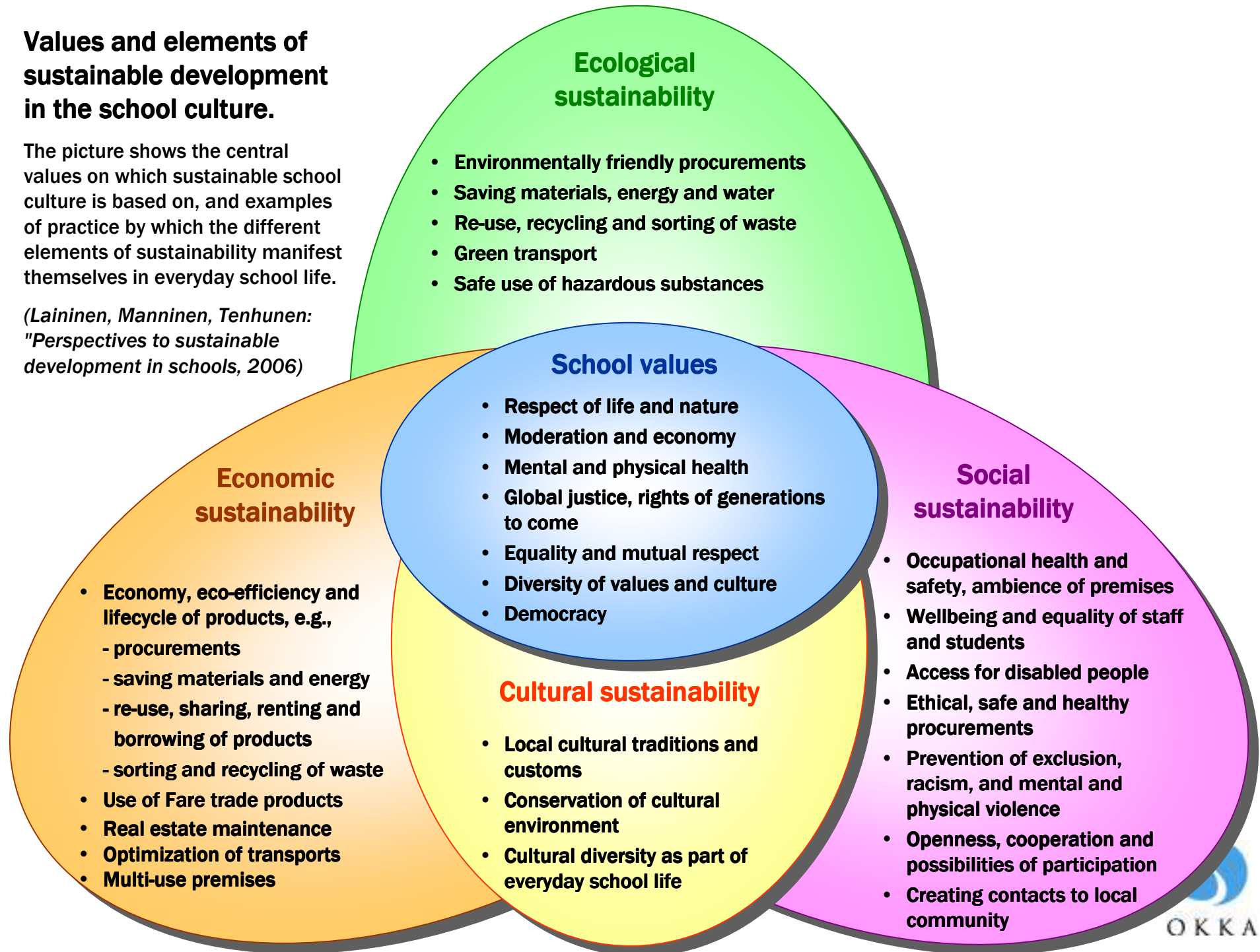
## 2. School as part of the community and society: mutual needs, influence of training and education



## Values and elements of sustainable development in the school culture.

The picture shows the central values on which sustainable school culture is based on, and examples of practice by which the different elements of sustainability manifest themselves in everyday school life.

(Laininen, Manninen, Tenhunen: "Perspectives to sustainable development in schools, 2006)



# Challenges of teaching and learning

Current teaching tradition has a strong **knowledge-based approach**:

- Do we educate children and young people to adopt one given image of the world - which is not sustainable one?
- With this prior assumption, how can we support critical thinking and finding new innovative and sustainable solutions?
- Is it more important to concentrate on learning separate facts than understanding relationships between different things and seeing the "big picture"?
- Do we miss values and ethical education in our current teaching tradition?
- How can we support students' **ABILITY** and **WILL** to act for sustainable future?

**Viewpoints to elements  
of education for  
sustainable development**

Erkka Laininen

## 1. Knowledge

- knowledge of ecological, social, cultural and economic environment in which we live in

## 2. Thinking

- search, evaluation, selection and interpretation of information
- understanding of entities and ecological, technical and social systems
- critical thinking, future scenarios
- understanding of one's own possibilities of influencing, and societal power relations
- construction of one's own values, commitment to sustainable lifestyle

## 3. Action and experiences

- creation of personal relationship to nature and the environment
- interaction with other people and cultures
- solving of real-life problems
- practicing of sustainable lifestyle
- participation and influencing in school or work community, and in society
- practicing skills of democracy

**Active citizenship** = ABILITY and WILL to participate and act for sustainable future

## PLANNING OF SD CRITERIA FOR EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS (2007)

