
Environmental Politics

Domestic and Global Dimensions

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Jacqueline Vaughn Switzer

Northern Arizona University

with

Gary Bryner

Brigham Young University



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CHAPTER 2

Participants in the Environmental Debate

“Our goal is to destroy, to eradicate the environmental movement.”

—Ron Arnold, author, *The Wise Use Agenda*

“[Wise use] is the dark side of conservation, environmentalism’s evil force.”

—*National Parks*¹

There are various approaches to studying the policy process outlined in the Preface, but one theory that appears to be especially applicable to environmental politics is group theory. Adherents to this approach believe that political decisions are the result of the struggles among competing interests who have access to the political process. Key to understanding group theory is the acceptance that some groups will have more access than others, because of superior financial resources, leadership, organization, or public support for their cause.²

Although this book does not attempt to delve into the theoretical debate over *how much* influence various groups have in the making of environmental policy, or to apply the pluralist tradition of American politics to other countries to explain their environmental policies, it does describe their *role* in the political debate.³ This chapter attempts to identify the key groups on both sides of the political debate in the United States as well as to provide an overview of international environmental organizations and green parties. It touches briefly on the groups’ strategies, successes, and failures and provides a summary of their participation in the policymaking process.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

In the one hundred years since the founding of the first American environmental associations, there has been a gradual evolution of the movement. Seven of the ten most powerful groups (known collectively as the “Group of Ten”) were founded before 1960. Most have influential local or regional chapters and have broadened their interests from land and wildlife issues to broader “second-generation” issues that are not necessarily site- or species-specific.⁴

These mainstream organizations, identified in Table 2.1, have as a common strategy an emphasis on lobbying, although their specific focus often varies. The Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the National Parks and Conservation Association, for example, have tended to emphasize the preservation of public lands for future generations, while groups such as the National Wildlife Federation and Izaak Walton League, with a large percentage of sports enthusiasts and hunters within their constituency, are more involved with habitat preservation for wildlife. Some groups, such as the American Lung Association, are primarily interested in pollution and its impact on public health. But they sometimes work with nature-oriented groups on issues such as air pollution.

When the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) was founded in 1967, a new breed of organization joined these mainstream groups. EDF and later the Natural Resources Defense Council made environmental litigation an art form, moving group strategy from the legislative to the judicial arena. These groups have benefited from the citizen suit provisions in virtually every federal environmental statute since the 1970 Clean Air Act. The provisions allow "any person" to sue private parties for noncompliance with the law, and to sue not only for injunctive relief but also for civil penalties. This allows those who sue to recover the cost of attorneys' fees and "mitigation fees" in lieu of, or in addition to, civil fines. The groups often receive from offending companies direct transfer payments, which help fund their operations and projects, making litigation an attractive group strategy (see Chapter 3).⁵

Other mainstream groups, although smaller in size and resources, conduct research or grass-roots campaigns. Two of the most prominent are Environmental Action and the League of Conservation Voters. Founded in 1970, Environmental Action, which merged with the Environmental Task Force in 1988, conducts lobbying, research, education, and organizing efforts. The group developed a

Table 2.1 Ten Largest U.S. Environmental Organizations

<i>Group</i>	<i>Year Founded</i>	<i>1995 Membership</i>
1 Sierra Club	1892	570,000
2 National Audubon Society	1905	570,000
3 National Parks and Conservation Assoc.	1919	450,000
4 Wilderness Society	1935	310,000
5 National Wildlife Federation	1936	1.8 million
6 Nature Conservancy	1951	825,000
7 World Wildlife Fund	1961	1.2 million
8 Environmental Defense Fund	1967	300,000
9 Greenpeace USA	1969	1.6 million
10 Natural Resources Defense Council	1970	185,000

Source: John Seredich, *Your Resource Guide to Environmental Organizations* (Irvine, CA: Smiling Dolphins Press, 1991), and data from individual organizations.

“Dirty Dozen” campaign to spotlight the environmental records of members of Congress and has actively lobbied against utility companies and for bottle-deposit legislation. Also founded in 1970, the League of Conservation Voters has two goals: to help elect pro-environment candidates and to monitor Congressional performance. It is not the group’s members that give it clout, but its annual report, the *National Environmental Scorecard*, which ranks the voting records of each member of Congress on environmental legislation.

Some environmental organizations are characterized by their emphasis on a single issue. These types of groups rarely shift from their area of concern to another issue, although some overlap is developing. Clean Water Action, founded in 1971, conducts research and lobbies on issues related to drinking water and groundwater resources. Recognizing the interrelatedness of pollution, Clean Water Action also became involved in the passage of the 1986 Superfund legislation and the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments. The Clean Air Network is an umbrella organization that brings together national and grass-roots groups to promote implementation of the Clean Air Act and oppose efforts by industry to weaken its provisions. The Defenders of Wildlife work, as their group’s name implies, to protect wildlife habitats through education and advocacy programs. Founded in 1947, the group is now working to strengthen the Endangered Species Act and develop funding for wildlife refuges.

Among the more recently created environmental organizations are those, often with a purely regional base of operation, seeking to preserve individual species. Many of these groups were organized in the 1980s after the initial burst of momentum in the environmental movement had passed. Although these groups limit their activities to individual species, they often form coalitions to preserve natural habitats and wildlife ranges. Their membership is typically smaller (ten thousand to forty thousand) and may include researchers dedicated to scientific study of the species. Typical of such groups are Bat Conservation International, founded in 1982, and the Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation, founded in 1986. Both of these organizations emphasize education as well as research and habitat studies. The Mountain Lion Preservation Foundation, for example, has developed an aggressive media campaign in California to educate the public on the habitat needs of this animal, as well as lobbying for a permanent state ban on the hunting of the mountain lion, also known as the cougar, puma, or panther.

Property-oriented groups, such as The Nature Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited represent examples of two long-standing organizations that focus their efforts on management and preservation. Both groups have invested private funds for purchasing lands that are then reserved for wildlife habitats. One of the older environmental groups, Ducks Unlimited, with chapters throughout the United States, was founded in 1937 by hunters seeking to preserve wetland habitats. The Nature Conservancy, founded in 1951, has privately purchased land for habitat protection throughout the United States as well as global ecological preserves that are home to endangered species.

Another subgroup is comprised of organizations that originated or are based in the United States, have members throughout the world, and have broadened their interests to more global concerns. The largest international environmental organization, Greenpeace, was founded in 1969 as the Don't Make A Wave Committee by a small group of Sierra Club members and peace activists. Greenpeace drew its name from a rented boat used to protest nuclear weapons testing in the Aleutian Islands. Its initial effort was the Save the Whales campaign, later expanded to include other sea animals such as the Steller sea lion and dolphins. Since then, Greenpeace has extended its concerns to issues ranging from the use of chlorine bleach during paper processing to nuclear disarmament and weapons testing to toxic pollution to nuclear power to drift nets to protection of the Antarctic. Greenpeace activities have often bordered on the radical, as was the case in 1989 when a Greenpeace ship protested a Trident missile test and was rammed by a U.S. Navy vessel. The group is known, too, for its ability to use the media to its advantage, as demonstrated when its activists are pictured in small boats placing themselves between whales and whaling ships.⁶

One other type of group participating in the environmental debate is the radical environmentalists, many of whom shun the group label altogether. "A movement, not an organization," is how the members of Earth First! characterize themselves. Radical environmental organizations shun traditional organizational structure and administrative rules, preferring militant action termed "monkey-wrenching," "ecotage," and "ecodefense." The group is best known for "spiking," the practice of putting large metal spikes in trees about to be cut by timber workers. The tactic poses a threat to workers when the spikes come into contact with saws either in the forest or at the mill. Other group members have blocked logging roads and threatened to sabotage utility power lines in forested areas. In 1996, the *Earth First Journal* included an announcement from the radical Earth Liberation Front calling for activists to "take action against those who are destroying the Earth" by participating in five "Earth Nights" beginning on Halloween. On October 30, a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) ranger station in Oregon was destroyed in what federal officials termed a suspicious fire, and USFS offices throughout the Northwest tightened security as a precaution against potential violence. The ranger station was located in a region where tensions over federal timber sales had resulted in the arrests of dozens of protestors and where a week earlier vandals had set a truck on fire and painted antilogging slogans on the walls of another USFS station.⁷

Although Earth First! is the most well known of the radical groups, there have been other flare-ups of radical environmental activity throughout the United States, although it is often difficult to trace the violence and militancy to a particular group. During the 1970s, an individual calling himself "The Fox" targeted polluting industries in the Chicago area, and the Billboard Bandits in Michigan and Bolt Weevils in Minnesota also operated sporadically in their regions. Another major radical group, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, was founded in 1977 by former Greenpeace Director Paul Watson. The group has called itself

“an independent policy body,” whose purpose is to protect sea mammals and bird.⁸

Those who have studied radical environmental organizations believe there are several factors that distinguish them from mainstream groups:

1. There is an emphasis on confronting problems through direct action, including breaking the law.
2. The main point of radical protests is the preservation of biological diversity.
3. Most radicals act on their own, without direction from an organizational hierarchy.
4. Most radical environmentalists are destitute by choice.
5. These individuals usually have minimal hope they will be successful at affecting a total policy change.⁹

Radical groups are driven by what has been termed “deep ecology,” a form of ecological consciousness founded on the idea that humans are no more important than any other species. Deep ecology has two philosophical underpinnings: self-realization and ecocentrism.¹⁰ Generally, radical groups are shunned by virtually all other environmental organizations, whose members often believe the movement’s efforts are hampered by the radical groups’ emphasis on violence. But mainstream groups also use the radicals as a foil, realizing the posturing and activities of such groups cause their own agendas to be perceived as much more reasonable and acceptable.

Environmental organizations have periodically attempted to put aside their individual interests and have formed coalitions in an attempt to advance their collective interests. In 1946, the Natural Resources Council of America was formed to bring together conservation organizations to serve as an information-sharing body and sponsor policy briefings and surveys of public opinion on issues such as energy needs and conservation. Coalitions have also been formed to lobby specific pieces of legislation, such as the National Clean Air Coalition, which came together during debate over the 1977 and 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments. Consensus reports are becoming more commonplace, such as the 1985 publication of *An Environmental Agenda for the Future*¹¹ and the 1989 *Blueprint for the Future*,¹² which was prepared to assist the Bush administration in developing environmental policy. Such reports also give groups the appearance of more clout, since legislators perceive them as presenting a unified front.

The membership of environmental organizations has ebbed and flowed over the past three decades, often in response to the government’s environmental initiatives or electoral change. With the flurry of environmental legislation enacted in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the membership of the organizations grew enormously. When energy replaced the environment as a key issue during the Carter administration, the groups’ direct mail campaigns generally yielded just enough members to replace those who failed to renew. But two of Reagan’s appointees, Secretary of the Interior James Watt and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Anne Burford, were perceived as a threat to the movement, which re-

sulted in a surge in membership as environmental organizations warned potential members of what might happen if they did not have the funds to closely monitor Reagan administration policies. The Wilderness Society's membership grew by 144 percent between 1980 and 1983, with the Sierra Club increasing by 90 percent and the Defenders of Wildlife and Friends of the Earth by 40 percent each. Another surge took place at the turn of the decade, when the national environmental lobby's U.S. membership exceeded three million and attention was focused on Earth Day 1990. But by the early 1990s, even though the environment appeared to be a core value for most Americans, membership decreased again, with many of the groups reducing staffing, closing field offices, and narrowing their program focus to just a few key issues. Despite the loss of members among the largest organizations, small, grass-roots groups appeared to be gaining in strength, with their concentration on local or regional issues. Still, contribution levels to environmental and wildlife groups showed strong gains at mid-decade, growing to four billion dollars in 1995, an increase of 10 percent over 1994.¹³

There have been two major criticisms relating to the membership of the environmental movement. One complaint is that the movement's size has been grossly exaggerated and actually represents only a small percentage of Americans. A second criticism is that the movement's leadership has failed to include members of ethnic and disadvantaged groups and that environmental groups have failed to address the greater environmental risks affecting minority communities. Such criticisms appear to have been warranted. Surveys have found that environmentalists, when compared to the larger population, are considerably better educated, more likely to have white collar jobs, and more likely to have high incomes.¹⁴ Other critics argue that the environmental movement has been largely based in the West and does not represent the opinions and beliefs of the majority of Americans. They point to the fact that the Sierra Club did not open its first chapter outside California until 1950—over fifty years after its founding.¹⁵ The second criticism—that people of color are noticeably absent from mainstream groups—is part of a perception by minority leaders that environmentalists do not share the same interests as the disadvantaged community. Those complaints were publicized in 1990 when two small but aggressive groups, the Gulf Coast Tenant Leadership Development Project in New Orleans and the Southwest Organizing Project in Albuquerque charged the country's biggest environmental groups with racism.

One survey of African American leaders gave higher priority to issues such as health care, jobs, and education, especially in urban areas.¹⁶ However, African Americans have taken on urban environmental ills through multipurpose organizations rooted in churches and civil rights efforts. Crime, schools, trash collection, lead paint, and incinerators are often all part of the agenda of these groups. Minority group members also participate in local grass-roots organizations such as Mothers of East Los Angeles, Toxic Avengers of Brooklyn, and West Harlem Environmental Action. Minority participation has been tied to the environmental equity movement, which focuses on the disproportionate environmental burden borne by disadvantaged neighborhoods. Environmental equity advocates argue

that regulatory agencies are less aggressive and take longer in regulating problems affecting communities of color, that penalties for violations in minority areas are generally smaller than those imposed in white areas, that African Americans and Latinos are much more likely to live in areas with high levels of air pollution than are whites and to have higher levels of lead in their blood, and that governments tend to locate undesirable facilities such as incinerators in those communities because land values are lower and political power is weak.¹⁷

Like the large mainstream groups, minority organizations are realizing the advantages of coalition-building. Environmental organizations have often emerged from established social action groups that have a broader base of interests. Among Native Americans, for example, many of the grass-roots organizations are an outgrowth of the American Indian Movement and struggles against multinational corporations seeking to site projects on tribal lands. The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was held in October 1991, bringing delegates from every state and representatives of the mainstream environmental movement as well.¹⁸ In the early 1990s, the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) brought together local organizations to defeat a landfill proposal on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. Although there is general support for tribal sovereignty and a desire for environmental protection, some Native American leaders have been criticized for the loss of the jobs that sometimes accompanies environmental activism.¹⁹ Still, civil rights groups nationwide have established programs specifically dealing with issues such as environmental health and the cleanup of toxic waste sites and have forced the EPA and other agencies to look more closely at the ethical issues involved in environmental policymaking.²⁰

The environmental justice movement has also forced mainstream groups to reevaluate their own policies and, as political scientist Robert Bullard notes, broadened the very definition of environmentalism. Bullard points out that civil rights organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Liberties Union have begun working side by side with environmental organizations such as the Natural Resources Defense Council. Larger environmental groups, for example, the Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society, have made attempts to diversify their governing boards and staff, with a corresponding "trickling down" to state governments that have begun to enact some form of environmental justice laws.²¹

What is significant about environmental organizations generally is what some observers call a "great schism" between grass-roots activists and the leadership of the large mainstream groups. Part of that perceived split is a result of style. Where the national organizations pay their executive officers high salaries and run massive fund-raising operations, most grass-roots groups are strictly volunteer-based and funded on minimal membership dues. A deeper conflict among the groups may be the substance of their interests. The Association of Sierra Club Members for Environmental Ethics, founded by dissident members in 1991, accused the Sierra Club of compromising its principles in order to get legislation through Congress. The Sierra Club experienced a similar split in 1996 over

the issue of whether or not the group should support a ban on all commercial logging, with the issue pitting the club's first executive director, Dave Brower, against former Earth First! founder Dave Foreman. The highly publicized internal controversy resulted in the organization's supporting the logging ban by a two-to-one vote, but it also led to the creation of another spinoff dissident group, John Muir Sierrans, that had supported the logging ban for several years.²² While such disputes may not be enough to cause a permanent rift among groups, they are symptomatic of the fragmentation in the environmental movement that keeps it from speaking as one voice in the political arena.

ENVIRONMENTAL OPPOSITION IN THE UNITED STATES

The Progressive Era ideals of the conservation movement had almost universal support throughout the early twentieth century, although the early groups were still dominated by business organizations that were much more influential in the political arena. As the goals of the movement began to expand from conservation to environmentalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s, so too did the potential impact on business and industry, which had never really felt threatened before. The development of an organized environmental opposition involved three interests, farmers and ranchers, organized labor, and industry, and has recently coalesced into three grass-roots opposition movements: wise use, property rights, and county supremacy.

The initial concern of farmers and ranchers was the tremendous influx of city dwellers who sought the tranquility of rural life after World War II. "Recreationists," as they were called, brought tourist dollars to rural economies badly in need of them, but they also brought with them litter, congestion, and noise. Urban visitors seldom paid much attention to property lines, and major battles developed over public access along the California coastline and through inland wetlands. Farmers who were used to controlling predators on their private property were suddenly facing raptor protection programs and angry wildlife enthusiasts who sought preservation of wolves and coyotes. Agricultural land use also came under fire, as environmental groups sought to legislate farm practices relating to pesticide use, soils, and irrigation. As development, including oil pipelines and utility transmission lines, began to intrude onto rural areas, farmers felt even more threatened. The two issues that have most galvanized farmers have been proposals to restrict the use of agricultural pesticides and herbicides and agricultural use of water. In the case of pesticide use, rural interests have formed a coalition with chemical companies and their associations, bringing together such disparate groups as the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Agricultural Chemical Association, along with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the Association of American Plant Food, Pesticide and Feed Control Officers, the National Association of County Agents, and the Christmas Tree Growers Association.²³ But the land-use issue has become even more controver-

sial as a result of the Sagebrush Rebellion and the development of the grass-roots environmental opposition movements discussed later in this chapter.

Organized Labor

There are a number of environmental issues that have had an impact on workers, who have often been forced to take sides in the policy debate. On the one hand, organized labor has traditionally supported attempts to make a safer workplace and working conditions. Most labor unions have also supported programs that involve occupational health issues, such as exposure to airborne particulates and toxic chemicals. The United Steelworkers of America, for example, has long-time supported clean air legislation, an environmental problem caused to some extent by the steel industry.²⁴ Farm workers in California have been active participants in federal pesticide legislation, and cotton dust exposure led the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union to lobby the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to develop rules to protect workers in textile mills.

Labor has often opposed pollution control efforts (and more recently, implementation of the Endangered Species Act) that affect job security. The United Auto Workers have consistently supported environmental regulations except when they affect the auto industry. The fear of loss of jobs because of environmental regulations has permeated many regions of the United States, often when the real reason for job loss is technological change and innovation. Environmentalists working within the energy industry unions have repeatedly argued that energy conservation has no negative impact on jobs and is in fact beneficial to workers.²⁵

Industry Interests

Industry interests have traditionally opposed environmental rules for one reason: the cost of complying with regulations threatens a company's ability to make money and there is little incentive for voluntary compliance. Sometimes, their opposition results from disagreement over the goals or means used to protect the environment. Yet, industry leaders recognize that they (and their employees and their families) breathe the same polluted air and face toxic contamination like the rest of America. Industry's role has been described as "marked not by agreement on values but by tactics of containment, by a working philosophy of maximum feasible resistance and minimum feasible retreat."²⁶

Businesses were initially slow to recognize the potential impact of the environmental movement on their operations, characterizing the activities of most groups as no more than a fad. But officials within the pulp and paper industry began in the late 1950s to understand how desires for more recreation land would likely mean a call for reduction in logging activities and expansion of wilderness area designations. Eventually, other industry leaders became alarmed at the rapid pace of environmental legislation, which accelerated during the late 1960s and

into the 1970s. They countered by forming trade associations and nonprofit research groups or think tanks to further their aims, pouring millions of dollars into education and public relations. The American Forest Institute, for example, was specifically created to justify the need for increased, rather than reduced, timber production. The oil industry has been especially hard hit as the environmental movement gained more clout. Companies have been ordered by the courts to pay for special cleanups or fines and have faced lengthy and costly litigation as a result of compliance suits brought by environmental groups.²⁷

Today, industries affected by environmental regulations rely on a threefold approach in their opposition to environmental groups. One, there is a continuation of the public relations campaigns that began in the early 1960s to paint industry with an environmentally green bush. Chevron Oil, for example, ran advertisements in national publications promoting its "People Do" projects to protect the habitat of endangered species to counter the public backlash that results after every oil spill, and Dow Chemical Company's efforts included sponsorship of the 1990 Earth Day activities in the company's hometown of Midland, Michigan.²⁸

Two, virtually every sector of the economy relies on a stable of federal and state lobbyists to review legislation that could potentially have an impact on its operations. Southern California Edison, one of the nation's largest publicly owned utilities, hired Leon Billings, an influential former aide to Senator Edmund Muskie, to press its cause in Washington during the debate over the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, and has other lobbyists monitoring the state capital in Sacramento. Although federal law prohibits them from contributing directly to candidates, corporations can form political action committees that funnel campaign contributions directly to legislators as a way of enhancing their access to the political system. Companies and trade associations also employ their own scientists, economists, and policy experts to refute the claims made by environmental groups, and usually have more financial resources to devote to this strategy than do grass-roots groups.²⁹

Three, once programs reach the implementation stage, most industry interests regroup to press their case through the administrative maze. Since many of the implementation decisions are made by low-level administrators, or in a less public arena than Congress, industry has been much more successful in molding programs at this phase of the policy process. EPA rule development has frequently been hampered by companies who argued that information about products and processes constituted trade secrets or are proprietary. Industry lawyers have also launched a flurry of lawsuits aimed at regulations and enforcement actions.

Perhaps the biggest change in industry's role in opposing environmental legislation is that these efforts have now shifted toward industry's taking an active, rather than a reactive stance, forming coalitions to enhance their overall effectiveness. During debate on the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, for example, utility lobbyists brought with them to Washington dozens of amendments designed to reduce the cost of compliance with proposed acid rain legislation. The

Clean Air Working Group, the major industry coalition, actively fought each amendment proposed by environmental groups.³⁰

Some industry groups have become more responsive to environmental concerns as negative publicity surrounding their emissions have generated adverse public relations. The chemical industry, which for years was accused of intransigence, decided in the late 1980s to move toward a pollution prevention approach as a way to improve the marketability of its products. They were active in the debate over the 1990 Clean Air Act, and politicians gave the industry's lobbyists credit for drafting its own legislation rather than just opposing what was on the table. Monsanto Company's Charles Malloch told fellow industry representatives that such initiative was imperative at the rule-making phase of the Clean Air Act. "Anyone sitting on their hands waiting for the regs to come out is way behind the eightball."³¹ Similarly, the Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy and the Nuclear Energy Institute coordinate the efforts of hundreds of companies, speaking with one voice for their interests and using their financial resources and technical expertise to counter efforts by environmental groups to strengthen existing environmental protection rules.³²

One reason why industry is taking a more activist role is the tremendous increase in environmental issues finding their way onto the ballot. From the early 1970s to 1986, citizens confirmed eighteen environmental measures placed on the ballot for popular approval. Yet in the single election of November 1988, American voters approved at least seventeen environmentally related propositions, including measures dealing with recycling, water quality, natural resources, and funding for environmental programs.³³ Faced with another round of ballot measures in November 1990, industry coalitions were up against their biggest fight in California with Proposition 128, known as "Big Green." A group of oil and chemical firms spent more than six million dollars to oppose the measure, which would have banned pesticides, prohibited new offshore drilling, stopped the cutting of virgin redwood forests, and mandated major reductions in carbon dioxide emissions from utility plants. The voters defeated the ballot initiative nearly two to one.³⁴ Both the timber industry and chemical industries decided to fight back by gathering signatures for their own ballot measures—the Global Warming and Clear-Cutting Reduction, Wildlife Protection and Reforestation Act of 1990 and the Consumer Pesticide Enforcement Act, termed by environmentalists as "Big Stump" and "Big Brown," respectively. Such measures are being called "trojan horse initiatives" because they are perceived as disarming the initiative process, one of the most effective tools for environmental protection in California.³⁵

Subsequent elections have seen the defeat of recycling and nuclear power measures in Oregon, growth control initiatives in Washington, stream protection laws in Missouri, and environmental bond issues in New York.³⁶ Despite such defeats, the citizen initiative process is still a key strategy used by environmental groups in states like Oregon. In 1996, for example, environmental organizations submitted comments on four measures, including an expansion of the state's

pioneer bottle bill and another measure prohibiting livestock from grazing in riparian areas. But the record is uneven. In 1996, initiatives to protect the Everglades and Maine old-growth forests were defeated because of the well-organized opposition of business groups.

Some industry strategists have attempted to work more closely with environmental groups, leading to charges that some organizations have been captured by big business. Companies like Apple Computer and Hewlett Packard were heavily criticized when they donated equipment for Earth Day 1990, as did Shakelee, the first official sponsor with its \$50,000 donation. Businesses have made major financial contributions to previously adversarial organizations or have voluntarily adopted policies to make environmental management an integral part of their operations.³⁷ While it is unlikely that the two sides' interests will ever coalesce completely, there is a growing sense that business, at least, has more to gain from cooperation than from confrontation. For companies continually under the regulatory hammer, such cooperative efforts may become the rule rather than the exception. Conversely, the Environmental Defense Fund has been forced out of some environmental coalitions because its support for market-based approaches to regulation and negotiations with industries have been seen by some groups as too accommodating to polluters.

Grass-Roots Opposition

In 1988, a different type of environmental opposition surfaced as an outgrowth of a meeting of 250 groups at the Multiple Use Strategy Conference sponsored by the Center for Defense of Free Enterprise. One of the group's leaders, Ron Arnold, applied the phrase "wise use" (originally used by conservationist Gifford Pinchot) in describing twenty-five goals to reform the country's environmental policies, including opening up national parks and wilderness areas to mineral exploration, expanding visitor facilities in the parks, and restricting application of the Endangered Species Act.³⁸ Now, grass-roots opposition is focused on three movements led by large umbrella organizations: wise use, property rights, and the county supremacy movement. The umbrella groups serve as a clearinghouse for information and share a deep antigovernment sentiment and opposition to efforts by government and environmental groups to further regulate the use of public and private lands and natural resources. Although some of their efforts are supported by private interests, ranging from the Mountain States Legal Foundation to agricultural groups and oil, timber, and mining companies, there is a strong grass-roots component of individuals who perceive the government to be intruding into their lives by telling them what they can do with their private property or how lands and resources within the public domain ought to be used. It is difficult to estimate the membership of these groups, since so many individuals are members simply because they belong to another group that has supported one or more of the umbrella groups' tenets. The four million members of

the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), for example, are counted as members of the wise use movement simply because the AFBF has endorsed some wise use policies.

The Sagebrush Rebellion began in the 1970s as an effort by wealthy ranchers and others to gain control of public lands in the West. The movement had proponents in government in the 1980s, particularly Interior Secretary James Watt. The movement was reinvigorated in the early 1990s as the wise use and county supremacy movements garnered attention. Although there are similarities between the wise use movement and the Sagebrush Rebellion of the late 1970s and early 1980s, one difference between the two is that the current efforts are marked by steps to broaden the base of support beyond purely western issues. Like other political movements, the groups employ a wide variety of strategies and tactics to push their agenda forward. For example, the annual September "Fly In For Freedom" lobbying effort in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the Alliance For America brings in representatives from diverse groups who are urged to wear work clothes—with special attention to gloves, boots, hard hats, and bandannas—when they rally. The Blue Ribbon Coalition, which represents motorized recreational interests, tracks legislation and alerts its members to contact their Congressional representatives when a bill affects their members. Some of the more militant opposition groups, like the Sahara Club, boast of vandalizing property or disrupting environmental group activities. In addition to cattle ranchers resisting higher grazing fees, the grass-roots efforts tap into gulf shrimpers opposing the use of turtle-excluding devices, Alaskans seeking to expand oil drilling, and private property owners from eastern states battling the National Park Service over boundary disputes. The three movements are well organized, tapping into an electronic network that keeps even the most isolated adherents in touch with one another.³⁹ Sporadic violence has occurred, aimed at federal agency facilities and employees.

From a political standpoint, the grass-roots opposition has had moderate success legislatively. During President Clinton's first term, it stalled proposed grazing fee increases and was able to get Congressional approval for a brief moratorium on listings under the Endangered Species Act. Organizations like the Mountain States Legal Foundation and the Individual Rights Foundation have led the legal fight against federal lands. Between 1991 and 1995, fifty-nine western counties passed ordinances that claimed authority to supercede federal environmental and land use laws and regulations, and thirty-four counties in Nevada, California, Idaho, New Mexico, and Oregon had passed ordinances challenging federal control of local lands.⁴⁰ The resolutions declared that federal land in the county actually belonged to the state and that the county alone has the authority to manage it. Although the resolutions are not technically law, local officials were enforcing them as though they were. The Justice Department challenged the ordinances as illegal and sought an injunction to ban their enforcement.

The courts have dealt a serious blow to county supremacy groups by striking down ordinances that would have given counties the right to determine how

Another View, Another Voice

THE CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Environmental activists have almost always been thought of as a part of a liberal social movement, sharing many of the same core values and perspectives as those of the political Left. But during the past few years, a new form of environmentalism has emerged that is closely associated with Christianity, and often its members are part of the more evangelical branches of the faith.

In 1996, the Evangelical Environmental Network announced it was launching a one-million-dollar public education and advertising campaign to support the Endangered Species Act (ESA). What makes this action unusual is that the ESA has traditionally been part of the target deregulation package of the Republican Party. Ron Sider, president of Evangelicals for Social Action, made a special appeal to his fellow Christians and noted, "The religious right are our sisters and brothers. . . . Our plea to them is to go back and reread the scriptures."

The source of Christian environmentalism is a very literal interpretation of the Bible and, in particular, the book of Genesis, in which is described Noah building an ark to save animals from destruction. Christian environmentalists believe that species should be preserved because they are created by God; therefore, species preservation becomes a moral rather than an economic issue. Humanity is given dominion over the world's species, and thus there is a corresponding duty to serve as stewards over animal life. Unlike some animal rights groups that argue that animals should not be eaten or used for exhibition in zoos or circuses, Christian environmentalists use scriptural interpretation to denote the "right use" of animals, including the preservation of species and maintenance of their fruitfulness.

Although the partnership of Christianity and environmentalism is not new, its development into an activist movement is relatively recent. The idea of caring for God's creatures dates back hundreds of years to the writings of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315–386 C.E.), St. Francis of Assisi (1182–1226 C.E.), and Martin Luther (1483–1546). More recently, religious leaders such as the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham and Pope John Paul II have referenced Christian responsibility for caring for animals.

From a political standpoint, this group of environmental activists began as many grass-roots groups often do, calling awareness to a perceived problem, alerting their members, and then attempting to gain additional public support for their view. In 1995, the Christian Environmental Council of the Evangelical Environmental Network adopted a petition urging Congress to oppose any "action that would weaken, hamper, reduce, or end the protection, recovery and preservation of God's creatures, including their habitats, especially as accomplished under the Endangered Species Act." The group also sought additional funding for endangered species recovery worldwide. The petitions were circulated at various places of worship, and their distribution to Congress was co-

ordinated by The Christian Society of the Green Cross, a nonprofit Pennsylvania-based ministry.

Other forms of Christian environmentalism have begun to emerge, although their overall impact on policy appears to be minimal thus far. Some church groups are attempting to form coalitions with other environmental or social activism organizations to enhance their political efficacy. One group, the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, has coproduced a video, *Endangered Species and the Natural World*, with the Union of Concerned Scientists. Green Cross has sponsored a half-hour Virginia Public Radio program, *Creation Song*, which features interviews with noted Christians on their attitudes about the environment and has developed a book on how congregations can conduct energy consumption audits. Smaller organizations, such as the United Methodist Rural Fellowship, have developed guides on how to make a church "more ecological," and the Evangelical Environmental Network mailed thirty thousand packets nationwide on how to make churches "Noah Congregations" and "Creation Awareness Centers."

In January 1996, leaders of the public awareness campaign met with President Bill Clinton's Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, and with House Speaker Newt Gingrich to add their voice to the groups fighting efforts to revise the ESA. Environmental organizations have yet to fully embrace the Christian advocates who share their beliefs about species preservation, but the evangelicals seem committed to the cause with or without the support of the mainstream groups.

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public lands within their boundaries would be used (see Chapter 4). Most individuals involved in the property rights movement are mired in a legal system that takes years to resolve issues, reducing their ability to accomplish their goals. The grass-roots movements have as much success as they do because they have been led by *policy entrepreneurs*, charismatic individuals who have capitalized on the public's distrust of the government's natural resource policies as well as mistrust of the federal government in general, and turned that distrust into self-perpetuating organizations. Although they have often been at odds with most environmental organizations, some opposition group leaders appear to be seeking common ground and compromise as a more effective way of affecting environmental policy during an era when the vast majority of

Americans still adhere to a protectionist ethic. But the wise use movement's adherents are highly motivated, are well organized through a network of web pages, e-mail, and grass-roots chapters, and continue to press their concerns forcefully.

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS, GROUPS, AND PARTIES

Concern about the environment is universal, and although this chapter has thus far focused on the development of the environmental movement and opposition groups in the United States, the environmental debate involves a number of international actors. Some international activism paralleled what was taking place in the United States, beginning with the founding of the Commons, Open Spaces and *Footpaths Preservation Society in Britain in 1865*. There appears to be a trend in industrial nations that ties the development of environmental awareness to business cycles; in Britain, for example, support for environmental protection has been strongest toward the end of periods of sustained economic expansion. With greater economic prosperity, people shift their interest from immediate material needs to the nonmaterial aspects of their lives. As a result, economic advances in the late 1960s and early 1970s led to a tremendous growth spurt in the membership of existing nature groups and the formation of new groups, paralleling activity in the United States during that same period.⁴¹

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) now play a key role in environmental policymaking in both industrialized and developing countries. The term is used to describe all organizations that are neither governmental nor for-profit, and may include groups ranging from rural people's leagues and tribal unions to private relief associations, irrigation user groups, and local development associations.⁴² NGOs can be classified as grass-roots organizations (membership-oriented, often in developing nations), service NGOs (supporting the development of grass-roots groups), or policy-specific (environment, human rights, family planning).⁴³ One characteristic many of the groups have in common is that they are often parochial—concerned almost exclusively about environmental issues in their region. A typical example is the group Dasohli Gram Swarajya Mandal, which began a logging public awareness campaign in India in 1964 that led to the Chipko Andalan movement. Chipko, which means “to cling to” is literally India's tree huggers, Himalayan Indians who launched protests over logging. Indian environmentalists developed political clout over the issue of proposed dams and hydroelectric projects, but have often limited their activism to specific projects.⁴⁴ Not only do these groups help shape policy, but they play a major role in generating demands within individual countries for governments to comply with and implement the global agreements they have signed.

NGOs are growing in both number and influence, particularly in developing

nations. Unlike their counterparts in Northern Hemisphere countries, NGOs in the south perform somewhat different functions. They often fill a vacuum left by ineffective or nonexistent government programs or extend the reach of resource-poor national governments. They may also forge links with NGOs whose issues are decidedly nonenvironmental, such as the networking that is beginning to occur with human rights and economic development NGOs. Lastly, NGOs in developing countries may serve as an independent voice for public participation, either in opposition to a government program or by placing pressures on government to create new programs.⁴⁵

Studies of NGOs indicate that they are evolving in three directions: the southern NGOs are seeking greater autonomy from those in the north; NGOs are forming international networks and coalitions to keep abreast of issues; and they are performing new roles in legal defense and policy research. The first trend appears to be the most critical as southern hemisphere NGOs seek to distance themselves from their dependence on their northern partners. Long dependent for financial support on their northern donors, these groups now seek the transfer of the technical expertise they need to gain independence. They hope to set their own environmental protection agendas rather than have the terms of their activities dictated by outside sources whom they perceive to be less familiar with local problems. Technological advances such as facsimile machines and computer-linked networks have allowed groups to coordinate their efforts on a global scale, and they have steadily increased their presence in the diplomatic world as well. NGOs held a parallel conference at both the 1972 and 1992 United Nations environmental meetings, and several organizations were accredited by the UN to participate in the preparatory meetings leading up to the Earth Summit. Although these trends indicate that NGOs are growing in both numbers and importance, their influence on global environmental protection is still limited by a lack of stable funding sources and political sophistication.⁴⁶

Only a handful of organizations, called international NGOs (INGOs), have begun to address the global issues of concern to many of the mainstream organizations in the United States, such as global warming and stratospheric ozone depletion. Friends of the Earth International, for example, has affiliates throughout the world, as does Greenpeace. INGOs often designate specific issues for their political activism and are more structured and financially stable than most NGOs. INGOs are especially important in regions where environmental concern has only recently begun to emerge, as evidenced by the founding of a Russian affiliate of Greenpeace. Without the support of an international organization and its resources, environmental activists in the republics of the former Soviet Union would have little voice for their efforts to draw international attention to decades of environmental degradation.⁴⁷

Cultural differences are the major factor behind the variations in how environmental interests become structured or operate. In democratic nations, the pluralist system legitimizes interest group membership. But acceptable tactics in one nation may be considered unacceptable or even criminal in others. Why, for example, are there few groups demanding better air quality in Mexico, despite the capital city's

pollution problems? One study of Mexican political beliefs and values concluded that Mexicans generally do not relate easily to abstract or impersonal organizations but rather to the individual who leads the movement. Mexicans' *personalismo* makes it difficult to start and sustain groups that lack such high-profile figures.⁴⁸

In nondemocratic countries such as the People's Republic of China, the government crackdown on Western influences has made it difficult even for INGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund to have much of an impact, leaving little room for environmental groups, domestic or foreign. International pressure and the government's expanded involvement in international trade and politics have led to substantial advances in China's environmental policies, but they have not come about as a result of organized citizen activism.⁴⁹

The most cohesive and powerful environmental movements are found in western Europe, where public opinion polls have shown that support for the environment is especially strong and continues to grow. Coalition-building is a common strategy, with umbrella groups like the European Environmental Bureau monitoring proposed legislation and lobbying on behalf of more than a hundred organizations within the European Union. Group activism has frequently been focused on the issues of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, leading to massive public protests in 1995 when the French government resumed weapons testing in the South Pacific. The environmental movement in Europe is best characterized as diverse, with each group developing its own structure, strategy, and style.⁵⁰

Green Political Parties

Unlike the environmental movement in the United States, which has failed to capture (or be captured by) one of the two major political parties, green parties have formed in dozens of countries, with the major ones identified in Table 2.2. They vary considerably in strength and impact on their respective political systems, in membership, and in the percentage of the electorate they represent. International green parties are often difficult to track, since they frequently change their names or form new alliances with other groups to bolster their political clout. The term *green party* is sometimes used generically, and many groups represent a broader social movement or consist of activists focused on a single issue. In Hungary, for example, "greens" were called "blues" in reference to the Blue Danube Circle (those opposed to the building of the Nagymaros Dam), and in Poland, the largest environmental organization was not a party, per se, but the Polish Ecology Club.⁵¹

The first green party was the United Tasmania Group, which contested the local elections in the Tasmanian region of Australia in 1972. Although the party was unsuccessful in the ten elections it contested before its dissolution in 1976, it was instrumental in placing the environment at the top of the Australian political agenda. The major wave of green party activity has been in Europe, primarily because the structure of European political systems allows political parties, even small ones, a role in policymaking.⁵² During the 1970s, one of the first green

parties to form was in Germany, where a loose coalition of groups, the Bund Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz (BBU) organized massive demonstrations opposing nuclear energy but exercised little political power. Over the past two decades, the German greens have formed several electoral alliances, becoming what many believe is the most powerful environmental force in Europe. Their increasing role in national politics has come despite the death of one of their most influential leaders, Petra Kelly, in 1992. Although the German green party has been split internally, with some factions seeking to move even closer toward the political center, it has gradually dropped some of the demands made in the party's infancy. In 1996, for example, the party agreed to lift a ten-year boycott of computers, which was exemplary of how out of touch with prevailing social attitudes some of the group's demands had been.⁵³

The achievements of the German greens has not been matched elsewhere, however. Initially, green parties' successes seemed to be limited to getting their members elected at the local and regional levels. In countries such as Sweden, where legislative seats are allotted based on a threshold level of representation, green parties have struggled to attract the necessary numbers of voters or often have been shut out of the process entirely. Even in those countries with proportional representation, most green parties have had little support, in large part be-

Table 2.2 Major Green Political Parties

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Political Party</i>	<i>Year Founded</i>
Australia	United Tasmania Group	1972
	Nuclear Disarmament Party	1984
	Rainbow Alliance	1988
Austria	Die Grune Alternative	1982
Belgium	Agalev	1982
	Ecolo	1980
Canada	Green Party of Canada	1984
Denmark	DeGronne	1983
Finland	Vihrea Liitto	1987
France	Les Verts	1982
	Generation Ecologie	1990
Germany	Die Grunen	1980
Ireland	Comhaontas Glas	1981
Italy	Federazione delle Liste Verdi	1986
Luxembourg	Die Greng Alternativ	1983
Mexico	Partido Ecologista de Mexico	1984
Netherlands	De Groenen	1983
New Zealand	Values, Green Party of Aotearoa	1972
Sweden	Miljopartiet de Grona	1981
Switzerland	Le Parti Ecologiste/De Grune Partei	1983
United Kingdom	People/Green Party	1973
United States	Green Party USA	1984

cause they modeled their strategy on the atypical German model.⁵⁴ The “fading of the greens,” as the phenomenon has been called, is not an indication of the lack of the public’s environmental interest or its saliency as a political issue. One observer has argued that in one sense the national green parties simply outlived their usefulness once the major political parties adopted the greens’ issues as their own. In addition, many environmental activists, sensing that structural barriers limited their ability to attain status as a potent political entity, shifted their energies toward affecting legislation and policy through the NGOs described earlier.

SUMMARY

The debate over how best to protect the environment has involved a wide spectrum of environmental organizations, from mainstream groups that operate out of Washington, D.C., and utilize traditional interest group strategies such as lobbying, to organizations focused on a single issue to radical groups. Although attempts have been made to form coalitions, the environmental movement remains fragmented. While these groups support an enhanced governmental role in environmental protection, the United States has also experienced waves of environmental opposition, led by industries facing government regulation of their business practices and, more recently, by groups that are part of the wise use, county supremacy, and property rights movements. As a result, industry has more recently taken a proactive approach to legislation, and some efforts at cooperation with environmental organizations are beginning. Internationally, the primary participants in the environmental debate are nongovernmental organizations, international nongovernmental organizations, and green political parties that began to develop in the 1970s, with the strongest political clout represented by the German greens.

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