

Global Civil Society 2005/6

Climate for Change? Civil Society and the Politics of Global Warming

Contributors: Peter Newell

Book Title: Global Civil Society 2005/6

Chapter Title: "Climate for Change? Civil Society and the Politics of Global Warming"

Pub. Date: 2006

Access Date: October 04, 2013

Publishing Company: SAGE Publications Ltd

City: London

Print ISBN: 9781412911931

Online ISBN: 9781446212714

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446212714.n4>

Print pages: 90-120

This PDF has been generated from SAGE knowledge. Please note that the pagination of the online version will vary from the pagination of the print book.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446212714.n4>

[p. 90 ↓]

Chapter 3: Climate for Change? Civil Society and the Politics of Global Warming

Peter Newell

Introduction

Climate change is increasingly recognised as one of the most serious environmental threats facing humankind. The rapidly growing consensus about the severity of the issue is at odds with the slow rate of progress to date in addressing the problem through international cooperation. The re-election of President Bush in 2004 in the United States did nothing to stem the tide of concern about the fate of the Kyoto Protocol, the key pillar of the global political architecture for tackling climate change, despite the agreement's recent entry into force as a result of its ratification by the Russian Duma (UNFCCC 2004)¹. Against this background, Pettit (2004: 102) cites a climate activist who suggests that 'The chances of our getting anywhere near where we need to be with international diplomacy are grim'. Other activists, though increasingly frustrated at the low returns from continued engagement with the negotiations, see Kyoto as the only game in town and are unwilling to give up on an agreement they worked so hard to secure. Stalemate continues to prevail over the extent to which, and the ways in which, developing countries should assume commitments to reduce their own emissions. This, and other key issues regarding the mechanisms for delivering the goals of Kyoto, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) before it, have served to create divisions within the environmental movement, mirroring those which continue to cause fissures within the broader international community.

The scale of the challenge this implies for concerned civil society should not be underestimated. Aligned against action are not only the most powerful country and simultaneously the world's largest polluter, but a strong and well-organised front of

the world's most important companies in strategically key sectors such as oil. These industries have been active from the earliest stages of the debate about how the international community should respond to the threat of climate change, questioning the case for action through bodies such as the Global Climate Coalition and Climate Council, representing broad sectors of industry at the international level. This is in addition to national media campaigns against the Kyoto Protocol, for example, and more localised types of organising in the form of industry-funded environmental front groups such as the Information Council for the Environment², disseminating information materials that challenge the prevailing consensus about the severity of the problem (Newell and Paterson 1998; Newell 2000; Levy 2005). Through the provision of funding for the work of scientists sceptical about the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) consensus, industry groups have been able to find allies in the scientific community able to validate their doubts regarding the science and lend legitimacy to claims that might otherwise be dismissed as based on nothing more than self-interest. Prominent figures who have performed this role include Fred Singer (George Mason University), Richard Lindzen (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and, more recently, the controversial Bjørn Lomborg, whose widely publicised critique of the assumptions behind many environmental threats has been enthusiastically endorsed by industry groups (Lomborg 2001; see [Box 3.1](#)).

These challenges merely add, then, to the generic barriers environmentalists must overcome in promoting action on environmental issues, including classic problems of scientific uncertainty that allow politicians to claim that more time and research are required before action can be justified, and intergenerational issues whereby benefits of action will be felt in years to come but sacrifices have to be made now. Politically, imposing costs on current electorates to tackle problems that are seen as long term is often unpalatable. Finally, the fact that environmental problems, perhaps especially climate change, are **[p. 91 ↓]** created by everyday patterns of consumption means asking people to forgo luxuries they either already have or aspire to having. This makes the agenda that many, though certainly not all, environmental groups are seeking to advance, both politically controversial and unpopular at a societal level.

Business as usual: Bangladeshis are used to flooding ©Dieter Telemans/Panos Pictures



Despite this, a wide variety of groups across the world have sought to deploy a range of strategies to promote action on climate change, engaging state and non-state actors in the public and private sectors and employing a range of levers to enhance their influence. This chapter surveys some of these strategies and seeks to provide an account of the degree of influence they appear to have on the contemporary course of public-political debate on this key global environmental challenge.

The chapter is structured in four main sections. The first section briefly summarises the politics of climate change and the negotiations to date by way of understanding the landscape of power and coalition building within which civil society organisations operate. The second section explores the diverse strategies that groups have adopted, with a particular emphasis on the ways in which strategies have evolved over time and continue to adapt to the changing realities of global climate politics. The third section looks at the key issue of the internal politics of civil society mobilisation: issues of representation and the differences that have emerged between groups over specific aspects of the climate change debate. The final section draws out some of the main insights from the chapter and suggests future challenges for civil society in promoting effective action on climate change.

[p. 92 ↓]

Box 3.1: The sceptics

Not all civil society actors support action against climate change – particularly not through reductions in CO

2

emissions as envisaged in the Kyoto Protocol. Some of the most outspoken criticism of action on climate change comes from think tanks, largely of a free-market persuasion, as well as from individuals and organisations linked to the scientific community.

Examples of such groups and individuals who challenge the science of climate change and/or the tactics of its mitigation are outlined below, and their strategies summarised.

Anti-Environmental Civil Society

Most sceptical groups are based or originate in the United States, but anti-environmentalist or ‘wise use’ organisations can be found in other countries – especially where there is a strong environmental movement. Overall, three kinds of anti-environmentalist civil society can be identified. First, established think tanks and policy institutes have adopted stances against climate change environmentalism. Mostly, these are free-market think tanks such as the US-based Cato Institute and <http://Heartland.org>, which continue to campaign actively against the Kyoto Protocol and the ‘scare tactics’ of environmentalists by advocating an ‘evidence-based’ and ‘balanced’ environmental policy. Likewise, the Competitive Enterprise Institute promotes ‘free-market environmentalism’ arguing that ‘Although global warming has been described as the greatest threat facing mankind, the policies designed to address global warming actually pose a greater threat’ (CEI URL).

Second, elements of the scientific community have been active in the dispute about global warming. Individual scientists have organised petitions (see below) and the George C Marshall Institute, a non-profit organisation set up to ‘preserve the integrity of science’ in policy making, suggests that actions concerning climate change ‘should flow from the state of knowledge, should be related to a long-term strategy and objectives and should be capable of being adjusted – one way or the other – as the understanding

of human influence improves' (George C Marshall Institute URL). Richard Lindzen, of MIT, argues that global warming may dry out the troposphere, reducing water vapour and thereby dampening the greenhouse effect. This 'negative feedback', which could cancel out the positive feedbacks that would amplify warming, has not been factored into climate change predictions, he argues (Pearce 2005).

Third, engaged individuals have sometimes made significant impacts on the policy debate. Bjørn Lomborg, author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* (2001), became a virtual one-man pressure group, first in his native Denmark and then globally. Originally disputing evidence of man-made global warming, he later switched his focus to the costs of mitigation and especially the Kyoto Protocol. Lomborg was listed in *Time Magazine's* 100 most influential people in 2004 after he organised the Copenhagen Consensus, which sought to assess the relative costs and benefits of tackling various global problems, including global warming. Similarly, British botanist David Bellamy argues that:

Global warming is a largely natural phenomenon. The world is wasting stupendous amounts of money on trying to fix something that can't be fixed ... The climate change people have no proof for their claims. They have computer models which do not prove anything.

(Leake 2005).

Civil Society or Corporate Interests?

Some would question whether anti-environmentalism even qualifies as 'civil society', due to the support and involvement of business interests. Most notoriously, the Global Climate Coalition (URL), now defunct, was set up in 1989 by various US business associations to 'coordinate business participation in the international policy debate on the issue of global climate change and global warming'. Other organisations rely on a combination of corporate and private funding, such as the Greening Earth Society (URL), which according to its website is 'a not-for-profit membership organization comprised of rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities, their fuel suppliers, and thousands of individuals'. The oil corporation ExxonMobil funds several

think tanks and research programmes that question the science behind global warming or challenge the viability of mitigation strategies. Recipients of ExxonMobil funds include the Marshall Institute, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, and the Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Climate Change at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Mooney 2005).

However, funding civil society groups is different from direct business sector lobbying and some in the scientific [p. 93 ↓] community have acted entirely without support or promptings from corporate interests. Furthermore, the strategies pursued have been typical of those normally associated with civil society.

Anti-Environmental Strategies

Strategies of sceptical civil society actors include disputing the science of climate change and questioning the economics of climate change mitigation. First, some groups contest the reality or scale of global warming, challenging the notion of a scientific consensus on climate change. Various petitions have been organised by scientists including the so-called Oregon Petition organised by Frederick Seitz, professor emeritus at Rockefeller University, which has gathered over 18,000 signatories (though their authenticity has been the subject of controversy). Organisers claim that signatories are predominantly fellow scientists who subscribe to the petition's view that:

There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gasses is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate. Moreover, there is substantial scientific evidence that increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide produce many beneficial effects upon the natural plant and animal environments of the Earth. (Petition Project URL)

Likewise, the Leipzig Declaration on Climate Change (URL) garnered signatures in support of the position that 'drastic emission control policies deriving from the Kyoto conference' lack credible support from the underlying science and are therefore 'ill-advised and premature'. The declaration was first drafted in 1995 by Fred Singer (an

atmospheric physicist who also started the anti-environmentalist organisation The Science and Environmental Policy Project), and then revised it in 1997.

A second strategy employed is to concede that global warming is happening but to dispute the idea that this is exclusively a negative thing (or assert at least that it is not as catastrophic as many environmentalists claim). For instance, <http://www.CO2andClimate.org> is used to disseminate debate and research that casts doubt on the gravity of the situation, suggesting, for example, that human activity may have averted or postponed the arrival of the next ice age (see for example Ruddiman, Vavrus and Kutzbach 2005).

Third, a related stance is to accept the reality of man-made global warming but question the way in which future scenarios have been arrived at and the economic logic of pursuing CO

2

reductions. This is largely the position of the Danish Environmental Assessment Institute, set up by the Danish government at the suggestion of Bjørn Lomborg, who became its first director.

A final strategy is to challenge the philosophical basis of environmentalism that underpins the arguments in favour of climate change mitigation. Anti-environmentalism often fuses belief in free markets, anthropocentrism (according humans sovereign rights over other animals and nature) and a belief in 'evidence-based' policy making. For example, the Environmental Conservation Organisation (URL) argues that:

the environment includes human beings who prosper or perish as the result of their stewardship of natural resources. We reject the notion that the environment is 'fragile' and must be protected from human use by massive federal and international regulations.

This view tends to value the environment in terms of human welfare – resources available to humans – and is critical of those who view nature as intrinsically valuable or as qualitatively different from other 'factors of production' or 'welfare goods'. Thus, climate change is reframed in terms of market solutions rather than government

intervention, an exclusive focus on human welfare supported by cost-benefit studies of measures to mitigate climate change, and arguments about 'sound science', rather than the precautionary principle, as the basis for action. In historical terms, the battle within civil society concerning climate change policy echoes earlier skirmishes between environmentalists and 'wise use' movements that see exploitation of resources and wilderness as the 'manifest destiny' of human beings (Brulle 2000). The argument is not only about the science of climate change, but about the rights of individuals and the right of the human species to make fundamental changes to nature.

Olaf Corry, University of Copenhagen

[p. 94 ↓]

Background

In many ways, the threat of human-induced climate change represents a classic collective action problem. It is a problem that affects everyone and that, to different degrees, is caused by everyone. The scale of international cooperation that is required is in many ways without precedent. The sources of the problem are widespread and ingrained in the everyday practices of production and consumption. The problem spans from the global to the local level and therefore requires changes at all levels of human activity from the household upwards. This presents an enormous challenge for effective interventions. As Geoffrey Heal (1999: 222–3) notes, carbon dioxide is produced as a result of 'billions of decentralised and independent decisions by private households for heating and transportation and by corporations for these and other needs, all outside the government sphere. The government can influence these decisions, but only indirectly through regulations or incentives.'

There is also a clear North-South dimension, both in terms of vulnerability to the effects of climate change (particularly sea-level rise and changes to agricultural systems) and in terms of responsibility. This dynamic affects the success of any attempt to provide global public goods in this area. Industrialised countries have historically contributed to the problem far more than developing countries. Nevertheless, larger developing countries such as China, India and Brazil, experiencing rapid industrialisation, are

seeing their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) rise significantly. Given this, there is an ongoing debate about whether, and if so in what form, developing countries should take on their own emission reduction commitments. There is a perception among some in the North that newly industrialised countries, in particular, will be able to free-ride on the sacrifices made by European and North American countries. The related concern is that industries will uproot and relocate to areas of the world not covered by the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol, resulting in 'carbon leakage' (Barrett 1999: 207). In the meantime, technology transfer, climate aid and private sector investments in carbon abatement initiatives will play a central role in inducing parties to the agreements to meet their existing commitments. If a degree of 'leapfrogging' for developing countries is to be achieved, enabling a transition from pollution-intensive forms of production to energy-efficient and energy-conserving modes of production, fresh sources of finance and new institutional mechanisms will be required to create the right sets of incentives and disincentives to steer government and market actors towards a climate-benign development path.

Climate change clearly also has a strong intergenerational element in that the current generation is being asked to bear the costs of a problem that was also created by previous generations but whose most severe impacts will be felt by future generations. This creates an important political obstacle to action, or 'incentive gap', in that those being asked to make sacrifices now are not likely to reap the benefits of that action. The scientific uncertainties that also characterise climate change lend support to those that argue that the costs of action outweigh the benefits of protecting ourselves from a threat that may not turn out to be as serious as we currently predict. Attempting to address the problem of climate change is riddled with such dilemmas, which involve trade-offs with enormous implications for the future of humankind.

The response of the international community to the threat of climate change dates back to the 1980s, when the scientific community was organised to provide state-of-the-art reviews of the science of climate change to policy makers. Assessments of the latest understandings of the climate change problem produced in 1990, 1995 and 2001 have repeatedly underscored the need for immediate action justified by the latest scientific thinking. The negotiations towards the UNFCCC began in 1991 and ended with the conclusion of the convention at the Rio Summit in 1992. With scientific assessments of the severity of climate change becoming increasingly common, and a

growing awareness of the inadequacy of existing policy responses, momentum built for a follow-up to the convention. Negotiations thus began towards a protocol that would set legally binding targets to reduce GHG emissions, unlike the UNFCCC, which requires parties only to 'aim' towards stabilising their emissions at their 1990 levels by the year 2000³. The Kyoto Protocol, concluded in 1997, sets differentiated targets for industrialised countries while setting in train a process to further elaborate joint implementation schemes, set up an emissions trading scheme and to create a Clean Development Mechanism (see [Box 3.2](#)).

[p. 95 ↓]

Box 3.2: The Kyoto Protocol in brief

Commitments:

Instruments:

Source: United Nations (1997)

[p. 96 ↓]

Despite the recent entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol with its ratification by the Russian Duma, the future of the Kyoto Protocol is currently in serious doubt given the ongoing non-cooperation of the largest single contributor to the problem: the United States. Arguably, the greatest single challenge to the further elaboration and effective implementation of the protocol continues to be the refusal of the US to sign the agreement. On being elected US President in 2000, one of George Bush's first moves was to make clear that he had no intention of signing the Kyoto Protocol. His rationale was that, unless developing countries also sign the agreement, which they are currently unwilling or unable to do, the protocol will have a damaging effect on the competitiveness of US firms. The withdrawal of US support for the protocol has leant

urgency to the search for alternative ways of providing and financing action on climate change, given that many of the key actors currently involved in the financing of climate change action rely upon the financial support of the US (these include the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) most notably).

We should recognise at the outset that many of the world's most important political and economic actors benefit enormously from the processes and practices that create climate change. Most systems of large-scale industrial production and energy provision are based on the use of fossil fuels that contribute to climate change. To the extent that climate change highlights the unsustainability of the fossil-fuelled growth trajectory that underpins the contemporary global economy, it focuses scrutiny on the economic growth strategies promoted by the world's leading global economic institutions, most notably the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Because of the enormous global climate footprint that results from the increased movement of goods transported around the world as a result of lower trade barriers, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the governments that created and sustain it, necessarily also enter the spotlight. Internalising the externality of dangerous climate change amounts to demanding that the richest and most powerful economies of the world transform the economic structures that have brought them their economic wealth (the abundant supply and exploitation of cheap reserves of fossil fuels). We should not underestimate the political obstacles to doing this. The threat that action on climate change poses to traditional patterns of economic production and energy consumption is evident in the response of the Bush administration in the US to the Kyoto Protocol.

While in theory, therefore, no one can be excluded either from the public bad of global warming or from the public good of measures to protect the climate, some populations are affected more than others and some stand to gain more from action to combat climate change than others. In the political negotiations on climate change, for example, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), those most vulnerable to sea-level rise, have consistently argued for tougher action to combat climate change, while other countries have not only been reluctant to reduce their emissions and therefore their contribution to the problem, but have argued, on occasion, that some global warming may actually be beneficial to regions with colder climates. Countries are also differently placed in terms of their ability to adapt to the climate change that most scientists now feel is inevitable. While wealthier countries can build sea defences, for example, to

protect themselves from sea-level rise, poorer low-lying countries that have contributed very little to the problem are likely to suffer loss of land and livelihood as a result of the same process. This is what makes climate change first and foremost an issue of equity and social justice.

Despite a significant degree of consensus on the causes and proposed solutions to the problem, the science that underpins the problem has been subject to repeated challenge by those claiming that global warming is not a problem at all, or not as serious a problem as many suggest, or that it may actually be beneficial. Hence, consensus about the level of political action that is appropriate to address the threat of climate change or the funding that it requires is unlikely to come from greater scientific consensus about the scale and impacts of climate change. Experience to date suggests that we already have the political tools to tackle the problem: it is political will to use them that is missing.

Mapping the Role of Civil Society

By the time negotiations towards an international agreement on climate change began in 1991, there had already been almost 20 years of institutional activity, albeit mainly in the scientific realm. Scientific programmes such as the International Biosphere Programme had been running since the 1970s, [p. 97 ↓] helping to consolidate an international network of scientific institutions working on the different dimensions of global climate change. Although such groups should also be considered part of civil society, the focus here is environmental pressure groups, and particularly those groups that have evolved strategies aimed at influencing and shaping international policy on climate change.

©Claire Martin/*Friends of the Earth*



*Claire Martin/Friends of the Earth

Some of the most significant actors in global civil society have been active on the climate change issue, particularly from the 1980s onwards, coinciding with growing interest in global threats such as ozone depletion and climate change, and rising appreciation of the global sources and impacts of threats facing the human race. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth have been among the most active groups on this issue. By the time of the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in the Hague in November 2000, however, participants from 323 intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations were present (Yamin 2001). In order to bring about a measure of coordination of their activities, pooling of resources and expertise, civil society groups have organised themselves into coalitions such as the Climate Action Network (CAN).

Created in 1989 by 63 NGOs from 22 countries, under the initial guidance of Greenpeace International and the then Environmental Defense Fund (now Environmental Defense), CAN now operates as a global network of 365 environmental NGOs working to promote action on climate change (Durban Declaration 2004). CAN seeks to coordinate the strategies of its members on the climate change issue, exchanging information and attempting to develop joint position papers to be presented at key international meetings. CAN brings together a broad church of groups working on various aspects of the climate issue and with different positions on many of the key negotiating issues discussed below. It has a number of separate working groups reflecting the breadth of their expertise and serving to consolidate a division of labour

across the spectrum of issue areas on which they work. Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004: 61) suggest:

Although CAN is more important for the less resource-rich groups than for the major ones, the CAN network is usually an effective way of communicating NGO positions with one voice during the climate negotiations.

It maintains regional offices in Latin America, Europe, Africa and South and South-East Asia. Many [p. 98 ↓] of the groups discussed in the following sections belong to the network.

Moving Targets: Changing Strategies, Shifting Goals

The strategies adopted by civil society groups shift over time and reflect their understanding of where change is most likely to come from. Their mobilisations in many ways adapt to changes in the locus of decision making authority as this regionalises, transnationalises and, in some cases, decentralises. This helps to explain the degree of attention paid by European groups to the institutions of the EU, for example (Grant, Matthews and Newell 2000). Key decisions continue to be made at the international level, however, through the ongoing negotiations on the procedures and details for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, despite the recent stalemate. The following section looks at the efforts of groups to engage with this process from agenda setting to implementation and enforcement.

The International Policy Process

In order to understand the role of civil society groups in the international negotiations on climate change, a policy cycle is described, from agenda setting to implementation and enforcement, each stage of which implies a different opportunity structure for NGOs to be able to exert influence. The key dynamic is between policy making at the national

and international levels, although the stages described in practice occur simultaneously and are rarely sequential.

There is also a sense in which influence waxes and wanes over time, consistent with 'issue-attention cycles' (Downs 1972) as environmental issues compete for policy space with other pressing economic and security issues, for example. There are also, of course, 'movement cycles' whereby outside and critical voices often set policy agendas and are then drawn or co-opted by various means into the policy process. Groups move into and out of the process over time. Strategies of engagement also appear to reflect shifting thinking among NGOs about how to affect change, manifested in differing degrees of engagement with international negotiations based on judgements about expected returns from costs (finance and personnel) incurred and assessments of competing priorities within the organisation (Charnovitz 1997). For example, Yamin (2001: 161) notes:

amidst signs of increasing US isolationism given by the Bush administration, many NGOs are privately asking whether it is time to prioritize other channels of influence to achieve results

These other possible channels of influence are discussed further below in the section on new targets.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, despite growing cynicism about the returns from continued engagement with the international negotiations on climate change, many groups remain committed to using those channels available to them to influence the future of the Kyoto Protocol. This choice takes place against a background of growing emphasis under international law, from the Rio declaration to the Aarhus Convention, on the importance of public participation (see [Box 3.3](#)). Agenda 21, for example, calls upon intergovernmental organisations to provide regular channels for NGOs 'to contribute to policy design, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of IGO activities' (United Nations 1992a).

At the same time, we have to recognise at the outset that only a fraction of global civil society organisations actively participate in these processes. Southern-based groups are under-represented in international negotiating processes because they lack the

resources required to attend and meaningfully participate in international meetings held all around the world, and which place a high premium on legal, scientific and other forms of expertise that Northern elites tend to have in greater abundance. The international reach of some groups derives from their access to the decision making process within powerful states. The influence of groups such as Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Environmental Defense (ED) on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and their ability to change the course of votes in the US Congress have provided key leverage in achieving positive environmental outcomes in the past (O'Brien et al 2000). At the same time, such leverage ensures that the groups' voice and influence is out of all proportion to the numbers they represent, generating concerns among governments. It accounts for the resistance of some developing country delegates to moves to open up regional and international policy processes to further participation from civil society. The argument is that well-resourced groups have an opportunity both to influence their own government at national level and to make their voice heard regionally [p. 99 ↓] - allowing them 'two bites at the apple' – in a way that is not possible for other less well-resourced groups.

Box 3.3: Commitments in regional and multilateral environmental agreements

The notion that public participation in environmental decision making is important to policy success has been underscored in numerous international policy instruments, including the Rio declaration, principle 10 of which declares:

Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level each individual shall have appropriate *access to information* concerning the environment ... and the *opportunity to participate* in decision making processes. States shall *facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation* by making information widely available. Effective *access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy*, shall be provided.

(United Nations 1992b, emphasis added)

Similarly, Article 1 of the Convention of 1998 on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) states that: 'each Party shall guarantee the rights of access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice in environmental matters in accordance with the provisions of this Convention'. (UNECE 1998).

The Convention contains provisions on access to information, access to justice and public participation in decision making.

In many ways, it is these better-resourced groups that are able to contribute to each stage of the international policy process described below. Some, such as WWF, have a more global reach, by virtue of having country offices across the world. This puts them in a better position to push for domestic ratification, since they can pool resources and channel them through country offices in the ratification process. Though generally considered under-resourced, total finances available to NGOs participating in these processes easily exceed the amount available, for example, to the United Nations Environment Programme. For example, WWF has around 5 million members worldwide with a combined income of around SwFr470 million (\$US391 million); Greenpeace International has more than 2.5 million members in 158 countries with an annual budget in the region of \$US30 million; and Friends of the Earth has over a million members in 58 countries (Yamin 2001: 151). Resources on this scale are not available to many other groups, of course, and of themselves explain to only a limited degree the types of influence that groups have been able to exert.

Various models have been employed to account for the influence of these groups (Arts 1998; Betsill and Correll 2001; Newell 2000). Though malleable and shifting, the distinction between groups that might be considered 'insiders' and those that are characterised more by their exclusion from the centres of decision making as 'outsiders' does help to highlight important divisions among those groups engaged in the climate change debate. Groups move between these categories over time depending on which strategies they adopt; and the insider-outsider distinction describes, in reality, a spectrum of access and influence rather than a hard-and-fast dichotomy. It is,

nevertheless, the case that some groups, by virtue of their resources, expertise and connections to key government officials, are in a position to exert a much greater direct influence upon the decision-making process than groups whose campaigning agendas, lack of resources and choice of strategy serve to exclude them from the centres of decision making power.

Sometimes it is the strategies themselves, rather than the groups, that might be considered 'inside' or 'outside'. [Table 3.1](#) (see page 114) provides a loose typology of groups and strategies that seeks to distinguish more conservative 'inside-insider' groups, which employ traditional patterns of lobbying and interest representation, from 'inside-outsider' groups, which are involved in the formal policy process but adopt more confrontational strategies to influence it, reflecting [p. 100 ↓] different ideologies regarding market mechanisms and the role of the private sector, for example. The final category identified is 'outside-outsiders', which covers the position and strategy of those groups that are not involved in the formal policy negotiations on climate change, but rather seek to draw attention to the impacts of the problem on existing patterns of inequality and social injustice through a variety of campaigning tools and technologies of protest. As with any typology, the classification does not hold in all cases, nor does it imply that groups do not move between categories and strategies, as, on occasion, they clearly do. The point is to highlight points of comparison which help to explain the diversity of aims, strategies and ideologies that characterise civil society organising around this complex theme.

Agenda Setting

Agenda setting refers to the earliest stages of the policy, when a problem is being defined and policy makers contemplate appropriate and viable courses of action. It is in this context of uncertainty and political turbulence, particularly in the light of a (perceived) crisis or amid high expectations of a policy response, that an opportunity is created for well-thought-through and politically acceptable solutions. When interests are unclear, there is scope for well-organised groups to attempt to define the dimensions of a problem, reflecting, of course, their own preferences and agendas. They can generate demand for action when policy positions are being developed, when policy responses are being defined, expertise sought and the need for international action discussed.

Besides drawing on research and policy advocacy to present scenarios and options and to build the case for a particular course of action, other strategies include drawing attention to work within the scientific community, and operating as knowledge brokers in its translation into popular and politically digestible and palatable forms by working through the media and engaging in popular education. Politically, an important strategy is to help build support for constituencies favouring action within government, where departments may look to other actors to bolster their bureaucratic negotiating position.

The ability of groups to do this is affected by a number of variables. It is important not to underestimate the significance of party politics and the nature of the administration in office. For example, though environmental NGOs in the US enjoyed frequent pre-negotiation meetings with the delegation before key meetings, 'following the change of administration (to G W Bush) environmental NGOs no longer enjoy the same access to governments and have had to adopt other tactics to pursue their agenda' (Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004: 61). Levels of access are also affected by whether groups enjoy 'insider' or 'outsider' status. Such distinctions transgress North-South divides, as groups such as The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI), Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) from India or the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) have established channels of access to their governments reflecting the unique forms of knowledge they can bring to government decision making. As Yamin (2000: 150) notes:

The ability of NGOs to influence substantive developments was (and still remains) underpinned by the fact that scientific and environmental associations possess the technical expertise that is so often needed to ground international environmental policy-making processes.

Knowledge brokers, research-based institutions such as the World Resources Institute, Union of Concerned Scientists, WorldWatch Institute, TERI and Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development (FIELD) are in many ways part of the epistemic communities that operate as conduits between the world of research and the world of policy (Gough and Shackley 2001). By providing, packaging and disseminating key findings of use to policy makers, such actors perform key roles as knowledge-brokers, agenda setting within the international negotiations, as we will see below. As Yamin (2001: 157) notes:

By publishing reports and providing information to states through briefing papers, and in many cases behind the scenes discussions with policy-makers about the implications of latest research before this has been published in peer-reviewed journals, such groups add enormously to government capacity to undertake international negotiations on an informed basis.

Yet even well-informed research-oriented NGOs may not be welcome partners to governments unaccustomed to, suspicious of, or downright hostile towards collaboration with NGOs. Many groups from [p. 101 ↓] business and the NGO community complain about the lack of opportunities made available to them for consultation and discussion by the Chinese government, for example. Clearly, then, different state attitudes towards participation condition opportunities for influence, as do the broader dynamics of degrees and forms of democratisation, shaping possibilities of media work and the degree of respect for fundamental political freedoms. As noted above, however, participation does not equate with influence. If access is confined to weaker parts of government, it is less likely that groups will be able to influence the overall direction of policy. For example, good ties with environment ministries come to nothing if trade and finance ministries get to exercise a final veto over policy initiatives.

Negotiation-Bargaining

Once international meetings actually begin, there is a perception among NGOs that national capitals exercise strong control over the negotiating space of their teams, and that, as a result, the scope for meaningful shifts in positions during negotiating meetings is often fairly minimal. In addition, NGOs do not have legal rights to put items formally on the agenda. They may be represented at Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings as observers, however, if parties agree, on the proviso that they are qualified in matters covered by the convention. Opportunities to intervene in meetings are normally restricted to opening or closing plenary sessions. NGOs' ability to make interventions is subject to the discretion of the chairperson of the meeting and ultimately rests with the parties to the convention. Spaces are provided, nevertheless, for position statements to be heard in the plenary sessions from groups claiming to represent different elements of

civil society, such that in the past CAN has spoken on behalf of assembled NGOs, and the International Chamber of Commerce has made an intervention on behalf of industry.

It is increasingly true also that the formal legal rules assigning NGOs a peripheral role in global environmental governance are at odds with overwhelming evidence of the multiple and diverse ways in which NGOs are shaping policy and strengthening the effectiveness of institutions through their day-to-day activities. Nevertheless, some aspects of the negotiating process are effectively off-limits for NGOs. The more high level the meeting, the less access NGOs tends to have. As Yamin (2001: 158) notes, 'Parties often cite concerns that last minute trade-offs and compromises are more difficult to make if each step is being watched by a large group of observers.' Informal-informals are sometimes organised whereby a member of the secretariat brings together leaders of different negotiating blocs currently experiencing stalemate to try to agree on the basic contours of a negotiating package. These are off-limits for NGOs, unless they have managed to secure for themselves a senior role on a leading delegation. Despite the existence of these mechanisms by which civil society involvement can be restricted, Yamin (2001: 58) notes how communication technologies and mobile phones make it increasingly difficult to exclude groups in practice:

In the last few hours of negotiations of the failed Hague climate change summit in November 2000, the 'big' NGOs were able to 'number crunch' the figures and submit their analysis via phones more or less in 'real time'. Because some of the deals being struck were made in the corridors outside the ministerial meeting, some of these NGOs were actually more in touch with what was going on than developing country negotiators in discussion with President Pronk. What counted was who was an 'insider' not who was physically outside.

Membership of delegations remains the most direct way in which NGOs are able to participate in the negotiating process and to attempt to influence government positions. Following this logic, those with access to the most powerful delegations, see their influence extend further. As Raustiala (1996: 56) notes, 'many US based NGOs, because of their size, expertise and influence on the government of the US were particularly influential'. At the same time, groups also play key roles in bolstering the negotiating capacity of delegations with fewer resources and personnel and

less voice in the negotiations. The use of non-national technical or legal experts to assist delegations in complex negotiations, in the way FIELD lawyers have assisted representatives of AOSIS, is now commonplace. (Yamin 2001: 157) argues:

The provision of NGO analysis and recommendation of policy options is, of course, not new – it is indeed the hallmark of their lobbying efforts – but the degree to which it appears to be relied upon by many governments, without further checks, may be far [p. 102 ↓] more widespread than previously seems to have been the case.

The ability of groups to play this role is enhanced by the negotiations fatigue experienced by many delegations, but particularly those with fewer resources, who find themselves over stretched. Diplomats from developing countries and countries-in-transition in particular ‘rush from meeting to meeting, often only reading the paperwork on flights, and becoming increasingly reliant on the briefings provided by their favoured NGOs in the hope that these will provide them with a sufficient analysis of the issues at stake and the stance they should take’ (Yamin 2001: 157).

‘the pledge and review’ proposal ... was dubbed by NGOs as a ‘hedge and retreat’ strategy, and governments fearful of a continued negative reaction quickly dropped the idea

Performing this sort of role is not a benign act on the part of NGOs; it provides a position of leverage and a platform from which to launch proposals. Working with supportive delegations can provide a transmission belt for ideas and proposals, even if direct presence on the negotiating team is not possible. The example of the AOSIS Protocol, thought to have been heavily drafted by FIELD lawyers, is an oft-cited example of such direct influence (Newell 2000). Identifying states that will potentially serve as collaborative partners, however small or seemingly peripheral to the negotiations, is a way of greatly influencing the debate, given that every state has an automatic right of access to committees and working groups from which NGOs are excluded.

Besides seeking to affect directly the course of the negotiations and to be present when final trade-offs are being made, attending the meetings also serves a valuable function

for NGOs from countries, often but not exclusively developing ones, where access to key ministries is difficult in a national setting. Opportunities for formal meetings and informal lobbying are potentially multiplied at international occasions, where bureaucrats are absent from their normal duties and competing demands for up to two weeks at a time.

International meetings also provide an opportunity to attempt to influence the domestic debate on climate change. Stunts, press conferences and press releases have been used to this end in the past. Business groups sought to undermine positions in favour of binding emission reductions adopted by the Clinton administration by hosting press conferences with senators vowing to veto ratification of any agreement not containing emission reduction commitments from developing countries. Likewise, NGOs supportive of action have made use of the press to expose recalcitrant positions or to maintain support for positions they approve of. A recent example would be the 'Fossil of the day awards' presented at the COP 10 meeting in Buenos Aires in December 2004, where, for example, the Netherlands was targeted, as reigning European Union President, for making too many concessions to the US in order to bring it back into the negotiating process. NGO interventions can also help governments to foresee domestic reactions to proposals; to gauge whether they will be acceptable to the public and whether NGOs will support or ridicule them 'back home'. An example would be the 'pledge and review' proposal suggested by several delegations during the negotiations towards the UNFCCC. This voluntary process of self-set targets was dubbed by NGOs as a 'hedge and retreat' strategy, and governments fearful of a continued negative reaction quickly dropped the idea. According to Susskind (1994: 127), such interventions:

can help even the most powerful leader anticipate national and international reactions and gauge the acceptability of various negotiating postures more effectively before public pronouncements are made.

NGOs can also help to break deadlocks in the process. In 1995, at the COP1, CAN helped to mobilise the support of China and India for a protocol, bringing them into the 'green group' that it had been constructing. Grubb (1995: 4) notes:

NGOs probably played a significant role in persuading Indian and Brazilian delegates to make moves that broke the impasse and that led ultimately to the developing countries' 'green paper' and thence to the Berlin mandate.

It is also important not to underestimate the power of a saleable idea at an opportune moment in the process. Amid debates about whether or which way to take the Kyoto Protocol forward, the Global Commons Institute (GCI) has successfully promoted the idea of [p. 103 ↓] 'contraction and convergence' among key developing countries and even some developed countries seeking a leadership position on the climate change issue. The concept implies a contraction of emissions from developed countries in order to create ecological space for an increase in the emissions of developing countries, towards an agreed international benchmark of per capita entitlements. In addition to support from key developing countries such as India, within the UK government Geoff Mulgan and David Miliband, former heads of the Prime Minister's No 10 Policy Unit, have both highlighted the idea publicly. More explicit support for the idea has come from Sir John Harman, chairman of the Environment Agency; Sir John Houghton, the eminent UK climatologist; and the parliamentary environmental audit and international development committee (Lynas 2004). Earlier in the negotiations, GCI was also able to contest the use of cost-benefit analysis in IPCC Working Group 3's reports and, in so doing, challenge a 'given' of environmental decision making. Masood and Ochert (1995) claim:

GCI persuaded those responsible for the summary for policy-makers to erase references to damage estimates and include phrases such as 'the literature on the subject is controversial', mention of the 'value of life' and reference to the fact that the 'loss of unique cultures cannot be quantified'.

Careful lobbying and appeals to persuasive moral claims can, on occasion, trump routinised practices of decision making.

In sum, direct and unambiguously attributable influence of NGOs is almost impossible to identify if measured in terms of its impact on the text of agreements that are generally hammered out in negotiating rooms to which NGOs are denied access. It is more easily

discernible in the process whereby agreements come into being, the issues they do and do not tackle, and the ways in which those issues are framed and ultimately acted upon.

Enforcement-Implementation

The vagueness of commitments agreed at the international level leaves enormous scope for national discretion in priority setting and policy making. NGOs rely once again on nationally oriented strategies and networks of influence described above in the subsection on agenda setting. At this stage of the process, they can bear witness to governments' commitments, use whistle-blowing when commitments are being violated and use 'naming and shaming' strategies to expose those most guilty of failing to implement their commitments. One recent strategy in this respect has centred on shaming parties that buy 'hot air' quotas from Russia and other Central and Eastern European countries in order to meet their commitments under Kyoto (Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004: 70). To dissuade parties from exploiting these loopholes, Greenpeace developed a computer 'loophole analysis' which highlights the country-specific consequences of exploiting the loopholes. As noted below, however, despite the efforts of groups such as SinksWatch and CDM Watch, monitoring the multiplicity of private transactions that may be undertaken under the purview of the Clean Development Mechanism and its associated mechanisms presents a formidable task for groups wanting to assess the extent of countries' commitments to genuine emissions reductions.

*York, Britain: flooding is increasingly common in developed countries ©Trygve Sorvaag/
Panos Pictures*



York, Britain: Flooding is increasingly common in developed countries *Trygve Sorvaag/Panos Pictures

[p. 104 ↓]

Besides such strategies of public exposure, NGOs have also undertaken detailed analysis of national communications, highlighting gaps in data and silences in reports, particularly relating to policies and programmes that might offset projected gains. Groups from the CAN network have also produced their own reviews of countries' policies and commitments and whether these are on course to be met. These have been widely distributed at the international meetings. To some extent, as Arts (1998) notes, testimony to the influence of NGO evaluations is found in the fact that they are widely referenced in governments' own policy documents.

We note below how NGOs have involved themselves in post-Kyoto debates about institutions and mechanisms. They have played an ongoing role, however, in debates about arrangements that exist within the UNFCCC regarding aid and technology transfers to help non-annex I (principally developing) countries meet their commitments. Channels of access are available to recognised NGOs with bodies such as GEF responsible for overseeing these transfers; for example, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Global Warming and Energy under the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the GEF. The patterns of access and influence reflect familiar structures of insider-outsider

NGO participation. As noted above, this includes the disproportionate influence of US groups in general, as a result of the reliance of those institutions upon funding from the US that has to be approved by Congress, where the largest Washington-based environmental groups, or the 'big 10' as they are often referred to, have channels of access and good networks of influence (Newell 2000).

The text of the Kyoto agreement having been secured, the key battleground for many NGOs has become the rules and mechanisms for realising the commitments contained in the agreement. Debates between governments, as well as within civil society, about compliance have focused on the rules for sinks⁴ and the ways in which the flexibility mechanisms contained within Kyoto can and should be used. What Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004) call 'advisory organisations', such as the Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL) and FIELD, have played a key role on many of the technical issues concerning benchmarking and measurement of activities for which credits are claimed against commitments. The authors contrast such groups with activist organisations that derive their legitimacy from a wide membership and a popular base of support.

The final negotiations on the compliance procedure for the Kyoto Protocol were conducted behind closed doors. Some NGOs nevertheless belonged to networks of experts on compliance that were able to access the discussions. Others managed to secure participation on government delegations. For example, Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004: 60) cite the case of Samoa acting as co-chair of the Joint Working Group on Compliance while having a US lawyer from FIELD on its delegation 'who is said to have played an important role in the compliance negotiations and in the G77 discussions'. The fact that questions of sinks and flexibility mechanisms attracted most attention, at the expense of time on compliance, at least until the final stages of negotiations, provided an opportunity for research-oriented organisations with these types of legal and technical competence. They operated as intellectual leaders as a result of their ability to frame the compliance issue in a novel and constructive way. To some extent, this also reflects the sort of division of labour discussed above, allowing CIEL and WWF to focus on these issues, with less involvement from more activist groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. In particular, knowledge gaps on the issue and the lack of priority given to it by most delegations meant that the

persistence and experience of these groups was important in forging the compliance regime. In this regard, Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004: 68) note:

their capacity to influence the way the issue was framed appears to have been quite substantial when compliance was coined in more technical and politically neutral terms in the early phase. As positions polarised towards the end of the negotiations, their influence was substantially reduced.

Attitudes of states towards civil society participation continue to be key to the settlement of these issues. NGOs were united in their desire for openness and public participation, against the opposition of countries like Russia that firmly rejected an open compliance regime to which NGOs would be able to submit information. [p. 105 ↓] NGOs were successful in ensuring that in their capacity as observers they could attend enforcement branch deliberations and hearings, unless the branch decided otherwise. NGOs could also submit technical or factual information to the facilitative and enforcement branch, even if these bodies were required to accept information only from 'official' sources.

some 850 local authorities in Europe are now jointly implementing local climate protection initiatives, while in Japan more than 50 municipalities are setting local environmental targets

One strategy adopted by groups at the national level to force mandates for government action involves filing legal suits. Twelve US states, several cities and over a dozen environmental groups⁵ joined forces to challenge an administrative ruling denying the EPA authority to control greenhouse gases on the grounds that these gases do not meet the Clean Air Act's definition of 'pollutant' (ICTA 2003). The plaintiffs challenged the EPA decision in the Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. Joseph Mendelson, Legal Director of the International Center for Technology Assessment, said of the case:

The Bush administration can try to ignore the science behind the causes of global warming, but it can't hide from the law. If it takes lawsuit after lawsuit to force the Bush administration to accept its responsibilities and pursue good public policy on this issue, then that's what it will face.

(ICTA 2003)

A key rationale behind the use of legal suits is that they help to focus public attention on a particular instance of government inaction. Yet it should be noted that many of the strategies of awareness-raising and public education that are adopted at earlier stages of the policy process have less traction at this stage. Put bluntly, 'the questions of verification and monitoring are extremely complex and boring for the media and the public' (Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004: 70).

At this stage of the process in general, environmental NGOs find it harder to bring the weight of public pressure to bear on governments, as such pressure is more easily dissipated by the lethargy and complexity of bureaucracy and by the realisation of the costs associated with policy options designed to meet international obligations. Frustration with the slow pace of implementation has led some groups to pressure local councils to set their own greenhouse gas reduction targets. In persuading local authorities to make commitments, NGOs have played a facilitating role in exchanging information about how other towns and cities have managed to reduce emissions. For example, some 850 local authorities in Europe are now jointly implementing local climate protection initiatives, while in Japan more than 50 municipalities are setting local environmental targets. The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) has brought together more than 400 municipalities to reduce emissions in cities in Central and Eastern Europe (ICLEI 2004).

We find further evidence in the following section of the ways in which both frustrations with existing channels of participation or perceptions of opportunities to press for change drive civil society organisations to pursue fresh strategies with new actors in order to achieve their goals more effectively.

New Targets and Strategic Alliances

Targeting the Multilateral Development Banks

The World Bank has the potential to finance a number of important climate protection initiatives, as well as reduce the climate-changing impact of other leading development actors. In addition to being an implementing agency of the GEF, the World Bank has a separate Climate Change Programme made up of three components: Climate Change Overlays Programme; World Bank Activities Implemented Jointly (AIJ) Programme and the Global Carbon Initiative. The Bank also has a Clean Coal Initiative intended to encourage the use of 'environmentally-friendly' coal technologies.

Yet a number of factors prevent the World Bank from making a greater contribution to the action on climate change. One of the most serious is its failure to integrate effectively and systematically the goals of climate change protection into mainstream lending activities. Others are its 'market-fixated' approach, [p. 106 ↓] which prevents direct support for energy efficiency and renewable energy, and the way it calculates the costs and benefits of projects, which, because it eschews life-cycle analysis, puts energy efficiency technologies at a disadvantage⁶. The Power Failure report produced by Natural Resources Defense Council and Environmental Defense in March 1994 found that World Bank task managers are currently not subject to incentives or requirements to give end-use energy efficiency a high priority in power loans, and that few loans incorporate demand-side management or address energy efficiency other than through price increases (EDF and NRDC 1994). As noted above, the more research-oriented and conservative NGOs are currently working with the World Bank to reduce its contribution to climate change, through mechanisms such as the Ad Hoc Working Group on Global Warming and Energy under the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the GEF. They face an enormous challenge, however, in pushing a reform agenda within a bank which, through a combination of ideological imperatives,

bureaucratic inertia and material necessity, systematically favours projects and forms of energy production that contribute to climate change.

Box 3.4: When global citizen action works

Brown and Fox (2001) suggest that groups able to do some the following may have a longer-lasting impact:

Alongside those seeking to engage the World Bank, there is a vocal army of critics such as the Bretton Woods project and many other like-minded environment and development NGOs that celebrated the World Bank's 50th anniversary by declaring that '50 years is enough!' There is now a rich history of social movements organising around the activities of the leading multilateral development banks that should yield some important lessons for groups mobilising around the climate footprint of these actors. Some of the key reflections from previous struggles are summarised in [Box 3.4](#).

Targeting the Corporate Sector

Although much of the civil society activity described so far in this chapter is oriented towards the state, not all groups are concerned with policy reform. There has been a growing recognition that sources of resistance and therefore, simultaneously, potential drivers of change are to be found among the business actors, who often operate as the 'street-level bureaucrats' of climate policy because of their command of the capital, technology and expertise that is central to change at the level of corporate strategy (Levy and Newell 2005).

Among some groups, this recognition has produced a form of positive engagement with like-minded elements within the business community. In this respect, there has been an important role for organisations like the [\[p. 107 ↓\]](#) Pew Centre on Climate Change, whose 'Partnership for Climate Change' has acted as a catalyst in bringing together reform-minded elements of the business community to support the science of climate change and commit themselves to meaningful action. This has undermined the ability of those industry coalitions that dispute the need to fund action on climate action to

present themselves as the voice of industry. Eileen Claussen, a former US Assistant Secretary of State for Environmental Affairs and negotiator at the climate negotiations, formed the Pew Centre on Global Climate Change in April 1998. According to Levy (2005: 92), it serves both to legitimise a position that favours action on climate change and to create a channel of policy influence for member companies.

Pursuing the same strategy of forming links to like-minded elements within the business community, some groups have sought to work with the insurance industry, forging alliances with insurance companies and banks and encouraging them to shift their lending away from fossil fuels into renewables (Paterson 1999). The aim is to mobilise the financial sector to bring about the shifts in industry necessary to promote more sustainable and climate-benign forms of energy production. The political weight of the sector is not lost on those environmentalists seeking to engage it. As Greenpeace Business (1993: 4) notes, 'the government is fully aware that the London insurance world is a major employer and contributes handsomely to the UK's invisible earnings'. The insurance industry has a particular stake in promoting these changes given that it has suffered in the past and will continue to suffer huge losses from pay-outs following climate-related damage to properties that they have insured. For example, by 1995, 'leading insurers from all the world's main insurance centres had spoken of the threat of bankruptcy from unmanageable catastrophe losses' (Jeremy Leggett cited in Paterson 1999: 25). This came on the back of hurricane Andrew in 1992, which cost the insurance industry \$US20 billion in pay-outs on weather-related damage. The fragile alliance between environmentalists and sections of the financial community provides one example of the type of strategic political coalition that environmentalists are seeking to construct to advance a proactive agenda on climate change.

Other alliances between NGOs and sectors that stand to gain more directly from efforts to combat climate change include Greenpeace's connections with clean energy companies and trade associations such as the European Association for the Conservation of Energy (EUROACE) and the European Wind Energy Association. At regional level, the umbrella coalition Climate Network Europe also enjoys close relations with the European Association for the Promotion of Co-generation (COGEN), the corporate umbrella group promoting the interests of the co-generation industries, and has supported the group's efforts to promote this form of energy within the EU. NGOs have also been supportive of the positions of groups such as the Business Council for

Sustainable Energy, representing insulation manufacturers and the renewable energy sector, but increasingly also larger companies from the gas sector such as Enron (Levy 2005: 92).

Alongside these strategies of engagement and collaboration, a range of civil society groups seek to challenge the power of fossil fuel companies in the climate change debate in more confrontational ways. Groups such as Corporate Watch, for example, aim at exposing the machinations of power that enable fossil fuel companies to exercise what they perceive to be excessive influence in the climate change debate. One company that has come under particular fire in this regard is the oil company ExxonMobil (Esso in Europe). The 'StopEsso' campaign has sought to encourage consumers to boycott Esso and lobby the company to reverse its strident opposition to the Kyoto agreement, manifested through extensive media work, funding for the Bush administration, and the use of corporate lobbyists to slow progress in the climate negotiations. Exxon has been targeted in particular because it is the oil company that makes the largest contribution to the Bush campaign coffers (\$US1.376 million to the Republicans in the 2000 campaign) and has been the most active and high profile of the companies opposed to Kyoto (StopEsso 2005). The campaign forms part of a broader 'boycott Bush' initiative launched by the *Ethical Consumer* magazine in the UK in 2001, with the aim of encouraging consumers to boycott leading companies that contribute to Republican Party funds, including other high-street names such as Microsoft and Budweiser beer, and to let those companies know why they were boycotting their products (Boycott Bush URL).

The cumulative effect of these actions may have been to bring about a shift in strategy on the part of leading firms. Levy (2005: 91) cites an interview with a Ford executive suggesting learning on the part of the [p. 108 ↓] company from confrontations with NGOs. The company official reflects:

Executive director of Friends of the Earth, Tony Juniper, explains the dangers of cheap fuel ©Tim Sander/Friends of the Earth



We lost the first round of battles. We are now trying to be more positive with the science, while still pointing to the high cost of precipitate action before scientific uncertainties are resolved. Our actions will be less strident in the future.

There is clearly a key role, therefore, for NGOs in pushing businesses to commit more resources to combating climate change and in disseminating evidence of the economic gains to be made from 'win-win' investment opportunities. Shareholders and institutional investors have also attracted attention because of the leverage they have with firms to reorient investment choices towards sustainable energy.

The extent to which NGO pressure is effective in altering company practice appears to depend upon the company in question. Some companies are far more vulnerable and susceptible to civil society pressure on climate change than others. While Shell has a long-term scenario called 'People power' that looks at the risk of significant public pressure on environmental issues, companies such as ExxonMobil take a very different view. An official from the company said:

If we appear more green, it might get us a better seat at the table, but the real question is whether it would improve our access to resources and markets. BP and Shell actually attract counter-pressure for talking green but not doing enough. There is a Norwegian saying that the spouting whale gets harpooned.

(Levy 2005: 85)

Levy suggests there is evidence of a general trend in this respect whereby European managers express far more concern for their legitimacy and image than do managers of US oil firms.

Strategies of civil regulation of the sort described above suggest evidence, according to Yamin (2001: 161), of 'NGO acceptance of the fact that traditional NGO techniques are, on their own, inadequate ways of instigating significant, real changes'. As Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004: 57) put it:

[p. 109 ↓]

As long as the Kyoto Protocol has not entered into force and as long as most states have not yet established forceful domestic climate policies, strategies aimed at influencing industry directly are potentially important parts of the activist repertoire. This is likely to continue when and if the Protocol enters into force as behaviour change by target groups is ultimately the only way to reduce GHG emissions.

Many of the key changes necessary to fund climate protection and deter activities that accelerate climate change will come not from more international cooperation alone but from changes in industry itself, and in this case from pressure from stakeholders with a clear self-interest in promoting action.

Targeting Consumers

Many of the changes in company policy are also consumer driven, and we should not underestimate the importance of consumer choice and consumer pressure in driving private sector action on climate change. As we have seen, this can be manifested in a confrontational manner, with consumers boycotting firms that continue to oppose the Kyoto Protocol and using their purchasing power to register their disapproval with companies' obstruction of international action on climate change. But it can also take

the form of deliberate individual and collective consumer choices aimed at reducing the climate impact of everyday consumption.

In this sense, consumers themselves are being asked to internalise the externalities that they impose on the environment through their consumer choices. As Panayotou (1994: 6) notes, 'consumers are indeed the ultimate polluters since without demand the polluting products would not be produced'. One way they can use this power to positive effect is by supporting markets for climate-benign products, as well as changing their own patterns of consumption in relation to energy use, transportation and the like. Many NGOs belonging to the CAN network have sought to supplement government efforts to persuade consumers to use energy more efficiently by providing booklets and other information materials on how savings can be made from changing simple household practices. Better insulation and longer-lasting energy-efficient light bulbs are examples of 'win-win' measures that activists have pointed to where there is a demonstrable economic and environmental benefit from taking a simple action.

Beyond such short-term remedies, however, tackling climate change implies persuading people to make more significant sacrifices and potentially substantial changes to their patterns of material consumption. The protests against fuel taxes in the UK in 2000, or the resistance to the introduction of the congestion charge in central London, give an indication of the unpopularity of certain measures that help to tackle climate change, even if governments do not often promote them in those terms. It is difficult for campaigners to package measures to address climate change in appealing and attractive terms where there are perceived threats to people's standard of living or freedom of choice (regarding transport options, for example). Groups such as Reclaim the Streets have made the case for car-free city centres through appeals to notions of the liveable city and the enhanced safety that results from pedestrianised spaces, rather than relying on more abstract claims about climate change. The political sensitivity of the climate change issue can be contrasted, therefore, with an issue such as ozone depletion, whereby consumers were asked merely to select brands that did not contain ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), or with campaigns on biotechnology, where activists encouraged consumers simply to avoid buying products containing genetically-modified (GM) ingredients, rather than make more difficult adjustments to their lifestyles.

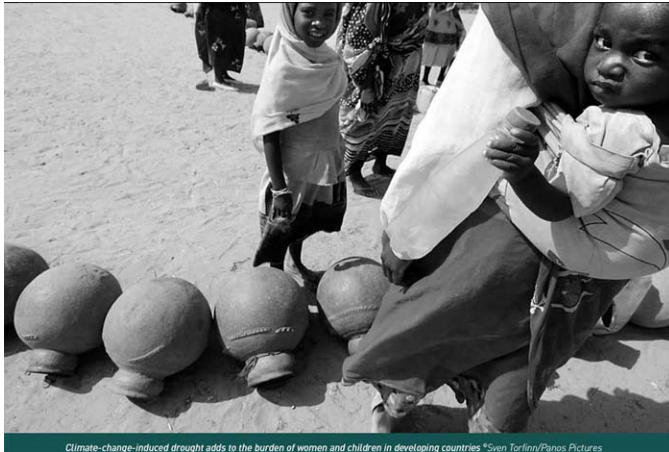
Within Civil Society: Alliances, Fissures and the Politics of Consensus Building

In the North, civil society has concentrated on climate change more exclusively as an environmental issue by environmental NGOs and researchers and has focussed on scientific and technical solutions such as emissions controls and carbon credits. In the South, however, climate change emerged primarily as a sustainable development issue, whose solutions are seen as inseparable from larger issues of poverty, trade and globalisation.

(Pettit 2004: 102)

The ways in which civil society groups have sought to engage and work with one another have changed over the course of the international community's response to the threat of climate change. Early episodes of conflict and misunderstanding, often resulting from [p. 110 ↓] insensitivities borne of inequities between groups, partly though not exclusively along North-South lines, have given way to more inclusive decision making and organisational arrangements characterised by the CAN network. As noted above, structural inequalities such as the under-representation of Southern groups at international meetings, which means that their voices are effectively screened out of global debates by resource barriers, as well as institutional structures that privilege organised inputs from civil society, continue to be important. Many of the conflicts over policy agendas and preferences transgress these divides, however, and are explored in more detail below.

Climate-change-induced drought adds to the burden of women and children in developing countries ©Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures



Current Conflicts

Just as in the international negotiations themselves, so too within civil society there is significant debate and friction regarding the role of developing countries and, more specifically, the issue of whether and at what point they should assume emission reduction commitments. Conflict over this issue of commitments transgresses the North-South divide, with the G8 Climate Action Group⁷ opposing developing country commitments at this stage, while more conservative environmental groups are pushing for commitments from developing countries on the basis that this is increasingly a prerequisite for US (re)-engagement with the Kyoto regime.

A second divisive issue for organised civil society is the role of market mechanisms and carbon sinks, where again the 'big 10' Washington-based groups are aligned against more critical groups such as Carbon Trade Watch, CDM watch and SinksWatch. While the former see important potential in market mechanisms to achieve much-needed emissions reductions, the latter view them as a distraction from the need for the largest polluters, primarily in the North, to reduce their own emissions through actions at home rather than projects sponsored in developing countries. Many of these groups attend the executive board meetings of the CDM, and seek to monitor [p. 111 ↓] sinks projects as well as challenge the use of finance for 'clean coal' and nuclear projects which they do not regard as viable or sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels. While it may be difficult

to influence the board directly – and it will certainly be difficult to keep track of all CDM projects in practice – the prospect of NGO shaming may serve to prevent some projects that NGOs would want to oppose from being funded.

NGOs generally oppose market mechanisms because they distract attention from the need for tough domestic action to reduce emissions. Groups such as Forests and the European Union Resource Network (FERN) and Climate Trade Watch have been particularly critical of the delays caused by attempts to construct a carbon market, including trading in carbon sinks (Climate Trade Watch 2005; FERN 2005). The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading, produced at a meeting on this issue in October 2004 that brought together a number of environmental groups associated with the climate justice movement (see below), stated, 'As representatives of peoples' movements and independent organisations, we reject the claim that carbon trading will halt the climate crisis'. Groups such as Carbon Trade Watch (part of the Transnational Institute) have lodged complaints over the carbon-neutral claims of companies and wealthy individuals. There has been a proliferation of organisations such as Future Forests and Climate Care, claiming that their work on tree planting, for example, can 'neutralise' CO₂

emissions (Future Forests 2005; Climate Care 2005). They offer clients, such as internationally acclaimed rock groups Simply Red and Coldplay, CarbonNeutral flights, driving and homes. Carbon Trade Watch, however, have challenged what it considers to be the 'scientifically dubious practice of planting trees to compensate for pollution'. Their critique is informed by a broader position adopted by many environmental NGOs on this issue that such practices 'distract attention away from the fundamental changes urgently necessary if we are to achieve a more sustainable and just future' (CTW 2004).

Campaigning on very similar themes is the group SinksWatch which has been critical of the booming carbon market and its principal beneficiaries, the financial services industry and organisations such as the International Petroleum Exchange. SinksWatch has also been active in monitoring and contesting the role of the World Bank's Prototype Carbon Fund as a mechanism for reducing GHG emissions. For example, it lobbied for the bank to drop from its portfolio projects such as the Plantar monoculture plantation project in Brazil on grounds of its high social costs for the rural poor and relatively modest environmental returns compared with other possible investments (SinksWatch 2004).

Key dissenters from this oppositional consensus include Environmental Defense (ED), a steadfast proponent of a market-based approach to environmental policy. In part, this commitment stems from its role as one of the principal architects of the US SO₂

tradable permit system. Gulbrandsen and Andresen (2004: 65) suggest: 'Considering its expertise, close connections with the US administration and its political clout, there is reason to believe that it has had an effect on the design of the Kyoto mechanisms – mainly a US brainchild.'

Another key divisive issue is whether there should be restrictions on the use of such mechanisms as a supplement to domestic action. ED was opposed to a cap to encourage maximum flexibility. Differences on this and other issues between groups in Europe, as opposed to the US, to some extent mirror the different regulatory approaches adopted by governments in those regions. The compatibility of the position of groups like ED, in particular, with the position of the US government generated some suspicion towards the group among other NGOs. ED was one of the few environmental NGOs supporting the position of the previous US administration on the possibility of claiming carbon credits for carbon stored in forests and soils. This issue, in particular, created tension within CAN, which suspended ED's membership during the Hague meeting (though it was reinstated later). On the issue of compliance mechanisms, ED sided with the US government and against the majority view within the environmental community that was in favour of stricter penalties for non-compliance.

The Outsiders Cohere

If these are some of the conflicts and divisions that characterise those groups closely involved in tracking and seeking to shape the negotiations, another set of groups approach the issue from a very different angle. Their focus is on the relationship between rights, environmental injustice and climate inequality. These links are manifested in the relationship between climate change and the struggles pursued by broader social movements such as the environmental justice movement and the anti-globalisation movement. Destruction of the world's climate increasingly features

in broader critiques of neoliberalism, testimony for which is the profile the issue has received in European and World Social Forums.

[p. 112 ↓]

Box 3.5: Climate change activism and the law

Frustrated by the slow progress and limitations of Kyoto, around the world activists and NGOs are turning to the law in order to combat climate change. According to the Climate Justice Programme (URL), a collaboration between lawyers, scientists and NGOs, existing international and domestic laws can be powerful tools, with the potential to force emission reductions and make perpetrators liable for the climate consequences of their actions. Using various legal principles including human rights, product liability, public nuisance, pollution and harm to other states, civil society actors, often collaborating with state or city authorities, are bringing pressure to bear on governments and companies to reduce emissions. Current legal actions on climate change, grouped by legal category, include:

Public Law

A coalition of 12 US states, several cities and a host of environmental groups are suing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its failure to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act. The EPA has argued that it does not have the authority to regulate greenhouse gases for climate change purposes under this legislation. The EPA is supported by the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the American Petroleum Institute, the National Association of Convenience Stores, the US Chamber of Commerce and 11 states. The plaintiffs are challenging the EPA's decision. <http://www.climatelaw.org/media/states.challenge.bush>

Elsewhere in the US, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, individual citizens and the city governments of Boulder, Oakland and Arcata are suing export credit agencies

for funding fossil fuel projects under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). According to the plaintiffs, the Export-Import Bank of the United States and Overseas Private Investment Corporation has provided US \$32 billion in financing and insurance for oil fields, pipelines and coal-fired plants over the last ten years without assessing their contribution to global warming, which is required by NEPA. <http://www.climatelawsuit.org/>

In Australia, the Australian Conservation Foundation, WWF Australia, Environment Victoria and Climate Action Network Australia challenged the Minister of Planning's direction to a planning committee to exclude the impact of greenhouse gas emissions from its consideration of a proposal for the expansion of a coal power plant. In October 2004, the judicial review found that such emissions were relevant and should be considered. <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/vic/VCAT/2004/2029.html>

Germanwatch and BUND (Friends of the Earth Germany) are taking legal action to force the German government to disclose contributions to support fossil fuel projects through its export credit agency Euler Hermes AG. <http://www.climatelaw.org/media/german.suit>

Civil Law

In July 2004, in New York City, eight US states and a group of NGOs filed a civil law suit against the five biggest US power companies, arguing that emissions are a public nuisance and the court should order their reduction. <http://www.pawalaw.com/html>

Human Rights

In support of the Inuit people's rights, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference is developing a case against the Bush administration at the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, based on the impacts in the Arctic of human-induced climate change. <http://www.inuit.org/index.asp?lang=eng&num=244>

Public International Law

An alliance of individuals and NGOs including the Belize Institute of Environmental Law and Policy, Foro Ecologico del Peru and Pro Public (Friends of the Earth Nepal), submitted petitions to the World Heritage Committee to place the Belize Barrier Reef, Huarascan National Park and Sagarmatha National Park on the List of World Heritage in Danger, as a result of climate change. Danger listing is a mechanism under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention requiring an increased level of protection. The petitions argue that the committee must address both the causes and impacts of climate change when drawing up protection measures, in order to ensure the legal duty of states to comply with Article 4 of the convention to transmit World Heritage Sites to future generations. <http://www.climatelaw.org/media/UNESCO.petitions.release>

[p. 113 ↓]

These movements have made links to unjust North-South relations, globalisation and long-standing traditions of environmental justice campaigning centred on the disproportionate exposure of poorer communities, often of colour, to pollution. In the latter regard, groups have sought to contest their role as the 'social sinks' for the externalisation of environmental costs. More generally, Pettit (2004: 103) notes, 'By and large, the framing of "climate justice" reflects the same social and economic rights perspectives voiced by global movements on debt, trade and globalisation'. The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading produced by the climate justice movement, for example, makes explicit links between current attempts to turn the earth's 'carbon-cycling capacity into property to be bought and sold in a global market' and historical 'attempts to commodify land, food, labour, forests, water, genes and ideas' (Durban Declaration 2004). Groups signing up to the declaration claim:

Through this process of creating a new commodity – carbon – the Earth's ability and capacity to support a climate conducive to life and human societies is now passing into the same corporate hands that are destroying the climate.

(Durban Declaration 2004)

In terms of strategy, groups belonging to the climate justice movement, such as Rising Tide, have opted for public education strategies and training (campaigning and public speaking workshops), and the production of materials (videos, fact sheets, CD-ROMs, comic books) alongside strategies directly critical of the current course of the policy debate and continued financing of new oil and gas development, for example (Rising Tide 2004). Groups working on the impacts of climate change on specific social groups have also begun to organise themselves. Genanet, which describes itself as a focal point for gender justice and sustainability, would be one example of a group drawing attention to the differential role of women with regard to the impacts and perceived risks associated with climate change, as well as their lack of participation in decision making to date (Genanet (URL)). Similarly, the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative is a coalition of dozens of religious and civil rights organisations advocating 'the fair treatment of people of all races, tribes and economic groups in the implementation and enforcement of environmental protection laws' (EJCCI 2002). Disproportionate impacts from climate change might accrue to these groups because, for example, 80 per cent of people of colour and indigenous people in the US live in coastal regions.

The Inuit people of Canada and Alaska (the Inuit Circumpolar Conference) have adopted a strategy of litigation, threatening, alongside CIEL, to file a petition with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2005 against the Bush administration for posing a climate-related threat to their survival. A briefing circulated at COP10 in Buenos Aires stated: 'It is not an exaggeration to say that the impacts are of such a magnitude that they ultimately could destroy the ancient Inuit culture' (EarthJustice and CIEL 2004). Responsible for approximately 25 per cent of global emissions, the US is targeted because of its failure to reduce emissions that have contributed substantially to the impacts felt by indigenous communities (see [Box 3.5](#)).

Although not as able to influence opinion or mobilise as effectively as its counterparts within the mainstream environmental movement, the climate justice movement has nevertheless been very active. The groups adopting more critical positions under the umbrella of climate justice held a summit by this name at the COP8 in 2002 in Delhi. The event was attended by hundreds of activists from throughout India, including farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous people and groups representing the urban poor. The

Delhi Climate Justice Declaration reveals the essence of these groups' concerns with climate change and the current nature of policy responses to the threat:

We affirm that climate change is a rights issue – it affects our livelihoods, our health, our children and our natural resources. We will build alliances across states and borders to oppose climate change inducing patterns and advocate for and practice sustainable development. We reject the market based principles that guide the current negotiations to solve the climate crisis: Our World is Not for Sale!

(India Climate Justice Forum 2002)

Before this, the Climate Justice Summit was held in 2000 in the Hague, paralleling the COP6 negotiations. It was attended by a delegation of Hispanic, black and indigenous leaders from the environmental justice movement in North America, who also held their own [p. 114 ↓] forum. They expressed scepticism about the technical nature of the UN negotiations and the role of corporate lobbyists and emission brokers therein, claiming:

Table 3.1: Typology of groups and their strategies

	Inside-insiders	Inside-outsiders	Outside-outsiders
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWF • ED • NRDC • FIELD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of the Earth • Greenpeace • SinksWatch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate justice movement • Indigenous peoples activists • Rising Tide
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advance action on climate change within existing frameworks • To gain access to government decision making • To directly influence the negotiations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advance more drastic action on climate change • To question more fundamentally how the issue is currently being addressed (adequacy of goals and the means for achieving them) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To question the current framing of the climate change debate • To raise popular awareness about the impact of climate change on the poor
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to delegations • Research (scientific and economic studies) • Provision of legal advice • Support to like-minded delegations • Diplomatic lobbying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research for public audiences • Use of media • More confrontational styles of lobbying and exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protest, demonstrations • Parallel actions and side events • Cross-movement mobilisation • Litigation • Popular education
Focus of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Regional and international institutions • Private sector (collaboratively) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments (including local councils) • Regional and international institutions • Private sector (critical approach) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • The public • Other movements (anti-globalisation movement)
Ideologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally benign view of the market • Critical view of command and control approaches but faith in governments and international institutions to respond effectively to the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical view of market mechanisms • Residual faith in international and regional institutions to deliver action and belief in the primacy of legal-based approaches to regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to act on climate change seen as part of broader failing of globalisation • Critical view of the willingness or ability of governments and international institutions to deliver environmental justice because of their ties to the corporate sector.

[p. 115 ↓]

In the end, the impetus will not likely come from within government. It is a sure bet not to come from the polluting industry. Climate justice will likely take root from meetings like the Climate Justice Summit where those most affected share their common experiences and decide to take collective action. Waiting for governments may be too deadly for communities of color and the planet.

(Bullard 2000)

The challenge, as Pettit (2004: 104) describes it, is that ‘Climate justice needs to evolve from a parallel noise maker into a genuine pincer that cannot be ignored and into a strategic force that can have a direct impact.’

In an attempt to co-opt the environmental justice agenda, some business and labour groups rejecting the Kyoto Protocol produced a report in July 2004 titled 'Refusing to Repeat Past Mistakes: How the Kyoto Climate Change Protocol Would Disproportionately Threaten the Economic Well-Being of Blacks and Hispanics in the United States' (Pettit 2004:104). The Centre for Energy and Economic Development, a coal lobby group, was responsible for the report, invoking links between race and environmental protection measures by arguing that the Kyoto Protocol would disproportionately threaten the well-being of blacks and Hispanics in the US. Attempts to co-opt and distort the intent of critical agendas have a long history in climate politics. Business groups have, in the past, established 'astro-turf' organisations – industry-funded environmental groups that provide public information on environmental issues that reflects industry view points. Their use by industry groups indicates the importance of public opinion as a battle-ground for legitimising positions on climate policy.

Reflections on the Evolving Role of Civil Society in the Climate Change Debate

This chapter has illustrated a number of overarching themes relating to civil society engagement with the climate change issue.

Drought and heat create menacing bush fires in Australia ©Dean Sewell/Panos Pictures



In this sense, many of the lessons from other environmental campaigns do not apply to climate change. In the case of ozone depletion, for example, with which climate change is often compared, alternative technologies (CFC substitutes) were available, regulation needed only to address a relatively small number of producers in a small number of countries (mainly in the North) and the scientific consensus on the issue was in many ways more robust. The issue of climate change, despite a catalogue of recent extreme weather events that resemble effects associated with climate change, has less of the immediacy or moral outrage associated with issues such as toxic wastes and whaling. This negatively affects the prospects for short-term action on the problem.

Implications for Future Strategy

Amid the diversity of mobilising and organising strategies described above, it is impossible to foresee in precise terms the future course of civil society engagement with the climate change issue. In general terms, however, we can expect to see the proliferation of new constellations of state and industry coalitions: both continued lobbying of states to implement the terms of the Kyoto Protocol and renewed efforts to target the largest polluters and foot-draggers directly through a variety of strategies of civil regulation. There is also growing interest in the possibility of forging links with other elements of civil society, including non-traditional allies such as trade union organisations (Obach 2004). Building popular awareness about the issue and strengthening the case for action may also imply an expansion of public education work by civil society organisations, important strategically for [p. 117 ↓] leveraging pressure on governments and companies. Such public education and shaming strategies exist alongside the creation of strategic links to other sectors and policy issues in order to improve the salience of the climate change issue. This has taken the form of efforts to draw into proactive coalitions those sectors most likely to be detrimentally affected by climate change, as we saw above. As in the case of the insurance industry, there is an important supportive role that can be performed by international organisations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP URL) in catalysing and providing a platform for these coalitions.

Environmental groups have also sought to mobilise counterparts in other movements, such as groups working with indigenous peoples and development NGOs, where there

is an increasing coalescence of interests. The development community, in particular, has been relatively silent on the climate change issue, until recently. Moves are now afoot to engage donors in a conversation about the need to mainstream climate change objectives in aid programming in order to avoid exposing the poor to enhanced vulnerability as a result of climate change. The challenge is to urge international development actors to 'recognise climate change as one of the greatest risks to poor people – a force capable of literally "undoing" decades of development' (Pettit 2004: 102). Despite the ongoing reluctance of donors to engage seriously with the issue, one indication of change has been a recent report by donors on Poverty and Climate Change, which calls for 'steps towards mainstreaming climate issues into all national, sub-national and sectoral planning processes such as Poverty Reduction Strategies or national strategies for sustainable development' (World Bank Group 2003: xi). Groups have been more successful in raising awareness among development NGOs that have become more involved as evidence mounts of the impacts of climate change on the poor in the form of floods, droughts and other 'natural' disasters. Groups such as the UK-based Christian Aid and Tear Fund have made their voices heard, issuing reports and statements at the climate meetings (Tear Fund 2004).

Given the rapidly changing contours of global climate policy, those groups that are flexible in their approach to the issue and that show themselves willing to engage with new actors in order to construct imaginative and diverse coalitions of interest are likely to be more successful in the long term. A reading of where power lies in the climate debate suggests that attention increasingly needs to turn to the power brokers in the global political economy. Pension funds, export credit-rating agencies, banks, as well of course as the larger multilateral development banks that oversee the allocation and use of significant sums of aid money, are central actors in day-to-day decision making, in direct and indirect ways, about whether resources are channelled into activities that benefit or undermine the goal of climate protection. Groups with more access to the legal and scientific expertise necessary to meaningfully engage the international negotiations on climate change appear to enjoy the most influence on climate policy, as traditionally understood. Yet ultimately, the real agents of change may be those groups that are able to alter the behaviour of economic and corporate actors whose decisions chart the climate footprint of the global economy in more direct and immediate ways than the governments that continue to attract most attention from civil society activists.

It is to be expected then that civil society strategies for mobilising government, corporate and consumer action on the issue of climate change will react to, and at the same time seek to change, the continually evolving strategies of each of these actors. Strategies will need to work simultaneously across the material, institutional and discursive spheres that constitute the terrain of contestation between competing actors, interests and discourses in the battle to define future policy on what is increasingly regarded as one of the most serious threats facing humankind.

As more actors enter the climate change debate, bringing with them a plurality of perspectives, ideologies and priorities, we can expect a more complex, but perhaps more nuanced, form of politics to emerge – one which views climate change not as a discrete environmental problem, but which identifies it more squarely as a function of broader processes of economic development and social exclusion. A focus up on the role of those key global economic actors that are contributing to climate change, while at the same time professing to serve the poor, as well as upon the social impacts of further climate change, may contribute to the development of such a politics. Increased emphasis on climate change as a question of social justice and, at the same time, a manifestation of global injustice, may serve to re-energise efforts to tackle the problem in a prevailing context of pessimism about the prospects of a post-Kyoto settlement.

[p. 118 ↓]

References

Arts, B. (1998) *The Political Influence of Global NGOs: Case Studies on the Climate and Biodiversity Conventions* . Utrecht: International Books.

Audley, John (1997) *Green Politics and Global Trade: NAFTA and the Future of Environmental Politics* . Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

Barrett, S. (1999) ' Montreal versus Kyoto: International Cooperation on the Global Environment ' , in I. Kaul, ed. , I. Grunberg, ed. and M. Stern (eds), *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the Twenty-first Century* . New York: Oxford University Press.

Betsill, M. and Correll, E. (2001) ' NGO Influence in International Environmental Negotiations: A Framework for Analysis ', *Global Environmental Politics* , vol. 1 (no. 4): pp. 65–85.

Boycott Bush (URL) <http://www.boycottbush.net> (consulted 19 November 2004).

Brown, D. L. and Fox, J., (2001) ' Transnational Civil Society Coalitions and the World Bank: Lessons from Project and Policy Influence Campaigns ', in M. Edwards, ed. and J. Gaventa (eds), *Global Citizen Action* . Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Press.

Brulle, R. J. (2000) ' Environmental Discourse and Social Movement Organizations: a Historical and Rhetorical Perspective on the Development of U.S. Environmental Organizations ', in R. Scott Frey (ed.), *The Environment and Society Reader* . Toronto: Allyn and Bacon.

Bullard, R. (2000) ' Climate Justice and People of Color '. Atlanta, GA: Environmental Justice Resource Centre, Clark Atlanta University. <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu> (consulted 18 November 2004).

CEI (Competitive Enterprise Institute) (URL) 'About Global Warming'. <http://www.cei.org/sections/subsection.cfm?section=3> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Charnovitz, S. (1997) ' Two Centuries of Participation: NGOs and International Governance ', *Michigan Journal of International Law* , vol. 18 (no. 2): pp. 183–286.

Climate Care (2005) <http://www.climatecare.org> (consulted 27 April 2005).

Climate Justice Programme (URL) <http://www.climatelaw.org> (consulted 5 May 2005)

Climate Trade Watch (2005) <http://www.tni.org/ctw/> (consulted 27 April 2005).

CTW (Carbon Trade Watch) (2004) ' Environmentalists Cry Foul at Rock Stars Polluting Companies Carbon-Neutral Claims ' (press release, 6 May). <http://www.tni.org/ctw> (consulted 19 November 2004).

Downs, A. (1972) 'Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue Attention Cycle', Public Interest, vol. 28 : pp. 38–50.

Durban Declaration (2004) 'Climate Justice Now! The Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading', signed 10 October, Glenmore Centre, Durban, South Africa. http://www.climnet.org/resources/docs_interest.htm (consulted 19 November 2004)

EarthJustice and CIEL (Center for International Environmental Law) (2004) 'An Inuit Petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for Dangerous Impacts of Climate Change' (circulated at COP10 Buenos Aires).

EDF (Environmental Defense Fund) and NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) (1994) Power Failure: A Review of the World Bank's Implementation of its New Energy Policy. Washington, DC: EDF and NRDC.

EJCCI (Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative) (2002) 'About Us', <http://www.ejcc.org/aboutus.html>, and 'Climate Change and Environmental Justice Fact Sheet' (press briefing, 28 January). <http://www.ejcc.org/releases/020128fact.html> (consulted 11 November 2004).

Environmental Conservation Organisation (URL) <http://www.eco.freedom.org> (consulted 22 June 2005).

FERN (Forests and the European Union Resource Network) (2005) <http://www.fern.org> (consulted 27 April 2005).

Future Forests (2005) <http://www.futureforests.com> (consulted 27 April 2005).

Genanet (URL) 'A Healthy Climate? Gender Justice and Climate Protection'. Frankfurt: Genanet. http://www.wecf.de/cms/download/Healthy_climate_english.pdf; (consulted 17 December 2004).

Genanet 'A Powerful Connection: Gender and Renewables'. Frankfurt: Genanet. http://www.genanet.de/uploads/media/leaflet__gender__and__renewables_01.pdf (consulted 17 December 2004).

George C. Marshall Institute (URL) 'Climate Change'. <http://www.marshall.org/subcategory.php?id=9> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Global Climate Coalition (URL) 'What Is the GCC?' <http://www.globalclimate.org/aboutus.htm> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Gough, C. and Shackley, S. (2001) 'The Respectable Politics of Climate Change: The Epistemic Communities and NGOs', *International Affairs*, vol. 77 (no. 2): pp. 329–45.

Grant, W., Matthews, D. and Newell, P. (2000) *The Effectiveness of EU Environmental Policy*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Greening Earth Society (URL) 'About Us'. <http://www.greeningearthsociety.org/about.html> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Greenpeace Business (1993) 'Insurance Industry Taking Climate Change Seriously'. London: Greenpeace UK.

Grubb, M. (1995) 'The Berlin Climate Conference: Outcome and Implications' (Briefing Paper No. 21). London: Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Gulbrandsen, L. and Andresen, S. (2004) 'NGO Influence in the Implementation of The Kyoto Protocol: Compliance, Flexibility Mechanisms and Sinks', *Global Environmental Politics*, vol. 4 (no. 4): pp. 54–75.

Heal, G. (1999) 'New Strategies for the Provision of Global Public Goods: Learning From International Environmental Challenges', in I. Kaul, ed., I. Grunberg, ed. and M. Stern (eds), *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the Twenty-first Century*. New York: Oxford University Press.

ICLEI (The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) (2004) 'Reducing the City's Footprint'. <http://www.iclei.org/projserv.htm> (consulted 11 December 2004).

ICTA (International Center for Technology Assessment) (2003) 'States, Environmental Groups Challenge Bush on Global Warming'. Washington, DC: ICTA, 23 October <http://www.climatelaw.org/media/states.challenge.bush> (consulted 8 November 2004).

India Climate Justice Forum (2002) ' Delhi Climate Justice Declaration '. Delhi: India Resource Centre, 28 October <http://www.indiaresource.org/issues/energycc/2003/delhicjdeclare.html> (consulted 12 November 2004).

Leake, J. (2005) ' Wildlife Groups Axe Bellamy as Global Warming "Heretic" '. *Sunday Times*, 15 May. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1612958,00.html> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Leipzig Declaration on Climate Change (URL) <http://www.sepp.org/leipzig.html> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Levy, D. (2005) ' Business and the Evolution of the Climate Regime: The Dynamics of Corporate Strategies ', in D. Levy, ed. and P. Newell (eds), *The Business of Global Environmental Governance* . Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Levy, D., ed. and Newell, P. (eds) (2005) *The Business of Global Environmental Governance* . Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lomborg, B. (2001) *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lynas, M. (2004) ' Give Blair Another Chance ', *New Statesman*, 2 April. <http://www.newstatesman.com> (consulted 1 December 2004).

Masood, E. and Ochert, K. (1995) ' UN Climate Change Report Turns Up the Heat ', *Nature* , vol. 378 : pp. 119.

Mintzer, I., ed. and Leonard, J. (eds) (1994) *Negotiating Climate Change* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mooney, C. (2005) ' Some Like it Hot ', *Mother Jones*, May/June. http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2005/05/some_like_it_hot.html (consulted 22 June 2005).

Nelson, P. (2001) 'Information, Location and Legitimacy: The Changing Bases of Civil Society Involvement in International Economic Policy', in M. Edwards, ed. and J. Gaventa (eds) *Global Citizen Action*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Press.

Newell, P. (1998) 'Who CoPed Out at Kyoto? An Assessment of the Third Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change', *Environmental Politics*, vol. 7 (no. 2): pp. 153–60.

Newell, P. (2000) *Climate for Change: Non-State Actors and the Global Politics of the Greenhouse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Newell, P. and Paterson, M. (1998) 'Climate for Business: Global Warming, the State and Capital', *Review of International Political Economy*, vol. 5 (no. 4): pp. 679–704.

Obach, B. (2004) *Labor and the Environmental Movement: The Quest for Common Ground*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

O'Brien, R. et al. (eds) (2000) *Contesting Global Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Panayotou, T. (1994) *Economic Instruments for Environmental Management and Sustainable Development*. Nairobi: UNEP Environment and Economics Unit.

Paterson, M. (1996) *Global Warming, Global Politics*. London: Routledge.

Paterson, M. (1999) 'Global Finance and Environmental Politics: The Insurance Industry and Climate Change', *IDS Bulletin*, vol. 30 (no. 3): pp. 25–30.

Pearce, F. (2005) 'Climate Change? Menace or Myth?', <http://NewScientist.com> 12 February. <http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=mg18524861.400> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Petition Project (URL) 'Global Warming Petition'. <http://www.oism.org/pproject/s33p37.htm> (consulted 22 June 2005).

Pettit, J. (2004) ' Climate Justice: A New Social Movement for Atmospheric Rights ', IDS Bulletin (Climate Change and Development special issue) , vol. 35 (no. 3): pp. 102–06.

Raustiala, K. (1996) ' Non-state Actors ', in D. Sprinz, ed. and U. Luterbacher (eds), International Relations and Global Climate Change (PIK report No. 21) . Potsdam: Potsdam Institute.

Rising Tide (2004) ' Rising Tide: Supporting the Grassroots Movement Against Climate Change '. London: Rising Tide. <http://www.risingtide.org.uk> (consulted 1 May 2005).

Ruddiman, W. F., Vavrus, S. J. and Kutzbach, J. E., 2005. ' A Test of the Overdue-Glaciation Hypothesis ', Quaternary Science Reviews , vol. 24 : pp. 1–10.

SinksWatch (2004) <http://www.sinkswatch.org> (consulted 19 November 2004).

StopEsso (2005) <http://www.stopesso.com> (consulted 10 May 2005).

Susskind, L. (1994) Environmental Diplomacy: Negotiating More Effective Global Agreements . Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tear Fund (2004) ' Climate Change and Poverty ' (Public Policy Briefing CoP10, 6–17 December). Buenos Aires: Tear Fund.

UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) (1998) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) . Geneva: UNECE. <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/treatytext.htm> (consulted 9 May 2005)

UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) (URL) 'Statement of Environmental Commitment by the Insurance Industry'. Geneva: UNEP. <http://www.unepfi.org/signatories/statements/ii> (consulted 12 April 2003).

UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) (2004) ' Russian Decision on Ratification: Major Step Towards Entry into Force of Kyoto Protocol ' (press release, 7 October). Bonn: UNFCCC.

United Nations (1992a) Agenda 21 . New York: United Nations. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm> (consulted 10 May 2005).

United Nations (1992b) Rio Declaration on Environment and Development . New York: United Nations. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-annex1.htm> (consulted 10 May 2005).

United Nations (1997) Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change . New York: United Nations. http://unfccc.int/essential_background/kyoto_protocol/items/1678.php (consulted 10 May 2005).

World Bank Group (2003) Poverty and Climate Change: Reducing the Vulnerability of the Poor through Adaptation . Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

Yamin, F. (2001) ' NGOs and International Environmental Law: A Critical Evaluation of their Roles and Responsibilities ', RECIEL (Review of European Community and International Environmental Law) , vol. 10 (no. 2): pp. 149–62.

1 The ratification was significant because the Protocol must be ratified by 55 Parties to the Convention, including developed countries whose combined 1990 emissions of carbon dioxide exceed 55% of that group's total. With the US and Australia not intending to ratify, the 55% threshold can be met only with the participation of Russia.

2 The Information Council for the Environment receives funding, for example, from the US National Coal Association and the Western Fuels Association.

3 For detailed histories of the negotiations see Paterson (1996), Newell (1998; 2000), and Mintzer and Leonard (1994).

4 'Sinks' are carbon sinks, principally forests, that absorb CO₂

. Those countries with significant forest land cover are seeking credit for preserving forests in the interests of climate protection.

5 Besides groups that have an established track record of working on climate change, such as Sierra Club, Greenpeace, NRDC, Environmental Defense and Friends of the Earth, groups such as Centre for Food Safety, Centre for Biological Diversity and US Public Interest Research Group also joined the challenge (ICTA 2003).

6 This is because these technologies are relatively expensive to install but save money over the course of their lifetime.

7 This includes Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, New Economics Foundation, Rising Tide and People and Planet.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446212714.n4>