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GLOBALIZATION, ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS, AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES

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Political opportunity structure refers to the specific features of a political system (e.g., a country) that can explain the different action repertoires, organizational forms and impacts of social movements, and social movement organizations in that specific country. With the globalization of environmental problems and solution strategies, important parts of the environmental movement have also become global. To what extent could the concept of international political opportunity structure (IPOS) be useful for analyzing transnational environmentalism in the 21st century? In this article, four of the most important constituent parts of IPOS (United Nations [UN], European Union [EU], World Bank, and World Trade Organization [WTO]) and their interactions with environmental movements and environmental movement organizations are analyzed. Whereas the UN and EU provoke the participation of a large number of transnational environmental lobby groups whose impacts, however, remain limited, the World Bank and WTO provoke more unconventional actions with potentially farther reaching impacts.

Keywords: *environmental movements; globalization; political opportunity structure; World Bank; WTO*

Environmental movements and environmental movement organizations (EMOs) have become a vital part of contemporary politics in many parts of the world.[1] They have not only influenced substantive politics, for example, in the field of nuclear energy (Flam, 1994; Kitschelt, 1986), but they have also contributed to a change in public values and attitudes and to a revitalization of civil society (Wapner, 2002).

One of the distinctive contributions from political science to the study of environmental and other social movements has been the concept of political opportunity structure (POS; Flam, 1994; Kitschelt, 1986; van der Heijden, 1997). To a large extent, POS could explain the different successes, strategies, action repertoires, levels of mobilization, and organizational structures of environmental movements in individual countries. As for the antinuclear struggle, it could, for instance, explain why France persisted in its nuclear energy policy whereas Germany did not, or why the action repertoire in these two countries was much more radical than in countries like Sweden and the United States (Flam, 1994; Kitschelt, 1986). It could also explain why the total constituency of national Dutch EMOs is larger than that of German EMOs, although Germany has five times as many inhabitants (van der Heijden, 1997).

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However, with the increasing globalization of environmental problems and solution strategies during the past two decades, important parts of the environmental movement have also become global, and the concept of (national) POS is no longer sufficient. EMOs intensively lobby the European Union (EU) in Brussels (Webster, 1998), try to influence global environmental regimes on issues like climate change, biodiversity loss, and desertification (Arts, 1998; Porter, Brown, & Chasek, 2000) or try to turn World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) decisions in a more environmentally sound direction, for instance, with respect to financing the construction of large dams (Khagram, 2000) or environmental trade restrictions (Desombre & Barkin, 2002). At the same time, the environmental movement itself is increasingly becoming a transnational movement (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Smith, 1999).

How, from a political science point of view, could we deal with these developments? Is it possible to turn the concept of POS from the national to the international level in order to explain or even predict the different successes, strategies, and action repertoires at that level? What would such an international political opportunity structure (IPOS) for transnational environmentalism look like?[2] To what extent could it be a useful concept for analysing transnational environmentalism in the 21st century? In this explorative article, a preliminary answer to these questions will be attempted.

In the first section, different conceptualizations of (national) POS are dealt with in order to define, at the end of that section, the concept of IPOS. Which are the relevant variables, and how does IPOS relate to national POS? In the second section, four of the most important constituent parts of IPOS for transnational environmentalism (United Nations [UN], EU, World Bank, and WTO) will be charted, resulting in a number of preliminary propositions. To substantiate these propositions and thus to contribute to theory building, in the third section, the role of IPOS for environmental movements will be explored further by means of a concise secondary analysis of literature on the relation between global institutions and transnational environmental movements. Finally, the research question will be answered.

POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

POS is the core concept of the political process approach to social movements. This approach should explicitly be seen as complementary to other approaches like the New Social Movements Approach that focuses on issues related to the identity of new social movement actors, and the Resource Mobilization Approach that, among other things, deals with the interaction of social movements with the corporate sector and the media (Kriesi et al., 1995).

The first mention of POS in the literature goes back as far as 1973, when Eisinger used the term *structure of political opportunities* to help account for variation in riot behavior in 43 American cities (McAdam, 1996, p. 23). Eisinger (1973) found that the incidence of protest was related to the nature of a city's POS, which he defined as "the degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system" (p. 25). The basic distinction Eisinger made was between open and closed POS, pointing to the responsiveness that movements can expect from government institutions. The relationship between protest and political opportunity, Eisinger argued, is neither negative nor positive, but curvilinear. Neither full access nor its absence encourages the greatest degree

Table 1: Political Opportunity Structure: The Kitschelt Typology

	Political Input Structures	
	Open	*Closed*
Political output structures		
Strong	Sweden	France
Weak	United States	West Germany

Source: Kitschelt (1986, p. 63).

of collective action; protest is most likely to occur in systems characterized by a mix of open and closed factors.

Whereas for Eisinger the local level within one nation-state was the level of analysis, most scholars after Eisinger took the national level as their starting point. In 1986, Herbert Kitschelt compared the antinuclear protest movements in France, Sweden, the United States, and West Germany. According to Kitschelt (1986), conceptualizations like Eisinger's are one-sided as they only consider input processes, not the capacity of political systems to convert demands into public policy (p. 62). As the output phase of the policy cycle also shapes social movements and offers them points of access and inclusion in policy making, POS can be considered the sum total of political input and output structures.

For Kitschelt (1986), the openness or closedness of political input structures is determined by the number of political parties in a country, the relative independence of the legislature from the executive, the existence of patterns of intermediation between interest groups and the executive branch, and of mechanisms that aggregate demands. The larger the number of parties and the independency of the legislature, the more pluralist the patterns of intermediation, and finally, the more viable the procedures to build effective policy coalitions, the more open a political input structure is supposed to be (p. 63).

The second dimension, the capacity of political systems to effectively implement policies (including policies that address the concerns of social movements; political output structures), is characterized by a centralized state apparatus, government control over market participants, and a relatively independent and authoritative judiciary (Kitschelt, 1986, pp. 62-63). These two dimensions result in the typology and categorizations shown in Table 1.

In 1994, Sydney Tarrow observed that political opportunities indeed provide the major incentives for transforming mobilization potentials into action. Political opportunities, however, are not only static, they also have a dynamic aspect.

The concept of POS helps us to understand why movements sometimes gain surprising, but temporary, leverage against elites or authorities and then quickly lose it despite their best efforts. So, whereas Kitschelt stressed the institutional differences between individual nation-states, Tarrow (1994) emphasized temporary changes that give social movements the capacity to act. In the latter approach, four changes in opportunity structures were salient: the opening up of access to participation; shifts in ruling alignments; the availability of influential allies; and cleavages within and among elites (pp. 85-86).

With respect to the structural, stable aspects of opportunity, two variables are being distinguished: the strength of the state, and the strategies of political elites toward social movements. According to the "state strength argument," centralized states attract collective actors to the summit of the political system, whereas decentralized states provide a multitude of targets at the system's base. Tarrow (1994)

Table 2: Political Opportunity Structure: The Kriesi Typology

	Informal Elite Strategies	
	Integrative	*Exclusive*
Formal institutional structure		
Open	Switzerland	Germany
Closed	Netherlands	France

Source: Kriesi et al. (1992).

warned, however, against the "seduction of statism": Strength and weakness are relational values that vary for different social actors, for different sectors of the state, and for differences in how political opportunities evolve (p. 90). "If variations in movement structure and strategy could be predicted from differences in state structure, then all of a country's movements would resemble one another. But they do not: even in the same movement sector, there are great differences in movement strategy" (p. 91).

As for the strategies of political elites, Tarrow (1994) distinguished between two basic strategies: repression and facilitation. Generally speaking, authoritarian states are inclined to repress social movements, whereas representative ones facilitate them. Repression and facilitation, however, should not be seen as polar opposite characteristics of different types of states (p. 92).

The fourth and final conceptualization of POS was developed by Kriesi and his collaborators (Kriesi et al., 1992, 1995; van der Heijden, 1997). For these authors, POS for social movements is created primarily by the formal institutional structure of the state and the informal strategies of political elites vis-à-vis their challengers.

The formal institutional structure of the state is subdivided into four elements:

1. centralized or decentralized state system;
2. "horizontal" concentration of state power: the power relations among the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary;
3. nature of the electoral system: majority system versus proportional representation; and
4. availability of direct-democratic procedures (referenda, as in Switzerland).

The more decentralized a state system is, the more balanced the power relations among legislative, executive, and judiciary are, the more proportional the electoral system is, and finally, the more available the instrument of the referendum is, the larger the number of points of access for new social movements (open political input structure).

With respect to the informal strategies of political elites, the basic distinction is between integrative and exclusive strategies. By means of integrative strategies (facilitation, assimilation, cooperation), political elites try to integrate challengers into the political system; with exclusive strategies (repression, polarization, confrontation), they try to exclude them.

Based on these two variables, a fourfold typology can be constructed and modern nation-state examples can be tentatively identified for each typology (see Table 2).

Although the way Kriesi et al. have operationalized POS closely resembles Tarrow's concept of POS, its extra value is in the way they have subdivided formal institutional structure and informal elite strategies. The four dimensions of the for-

mal institutional structure are more precise than Tarrow's distinction between strong and weak states, whereas the triads of facilitation, assimilation, and cooperation and of repression, confrontation, and polarization could be seen as indicators of Tarrow's two criteria of facilitative and repressive elites.

Based on this elaboration of POS, a number of hypotheses have been developed about the relationships between different impacts, action repertoires, levels of mobilization, and organizational structures of new social movements on one hand, and POSs on the other hand (Kriesi et al., 1995; van der Heijden, 1997). For instance, when comparing modern-day Germany and the Netherlands, Kriesi et al. concluded that Germany's open political input structure ("weak state") and exclusive elite strategies was most favourable for having "reactive impacts."[3] Procedural impacts were not very likely because of the prevailing exclusive strategy of political authorities toward challengers (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 213). In the Netherlands on the other hand, procedural impacts became more likely because the authorities tended to adopt inclusive strategies when facing challengers. In addition, the relatively strong Dutch state, combined with a prevailing inclusive elite strategy, created favorable conditions for proactive impacts, because the government was at the same time willing and able to respond positively to the demands of new social movements (Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 213-214).

With respect to the relationship between POS and action repertoires, van der Heijden suggested that a small number of points of access for new social movements (little territorial decentralization, large horizontal concentration of state power, etc.) enhanced the occurrence of unconventional actions, simply because other possibilities were hardly available. A large number of points of access thwarted the occurrence of unconventional actions (van der Heijden, 1997, p. 34).

Operationalizing International Political Opportunity Structure

How, based on the different variants of POS described above, could the concept of IPOS be operationalized? Three preliminary remarks should be made.

First of all, whereas national POS always refers to a state, obviously there is no such thing as an international or global state. IPOS is a composite of a number of International Governmental Organizations (IGOs) like the UN, the EU, the World Bank, and the IMF, establishing a number of formal treaties, international regimes, systems of global governance, as well as, sometimes, structures of norms and values. Between 1909 and 1989, the total number of these IGOs has grown from 37 to almost 300 (Held, 1996, p. 346). Most of them have a rather technical character, such as the Universal Postal Union, the World Meteorological Association, and a host of other bodies, but others have a highly political character. Of course, in most cases, this last category represents the most important part of IPOS for social movements.

Second, due to processes of globalization, the level of political decision making to a considerable extent has shifted from the national to the international level. The national (and subnational) levels, however, remain important for co-decision and implementation of politics ("multilevel governance"). This implies that environmental movements will also act at these different levels of politics ("multilevel environmentalism").

Third, IPOS may be partly different for different social movements. Whereas, for instance, the WTO is of vital importance for environmental movements because of environmental trade restrictions, it might be less important for movements such as the human and gay rights movements.

What would IPOS look like? In this article, four different dimensions of IPOS are distinguished, largely covering or summarizing the different dimensions of national POS as analysed above:

1. formal institutional structure (open–closed)
2. informal elite strategies (integrative–exclusive)
3. configuration of power (divided elite–united elite)
4. political output structure (weak–strong)

Following Tarrow, all four dimensions will be seen as four separate continua rather than as reflecting merely polar opposites, characteristic of different types of IGOs. Consequently, statements on characteristics of IGOs will be relational ones, phrased in forms such as, "the political output structure of IGO A will be weaker than that of IGO B," and so on.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE FOR TRANSNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

From the point of view of transnational environmental movements, the almost 300 IGOs as distinguished by Held could be subdivided into several different kinds: global IGOs with multiple goals, among which environmental protection is one (best example: the UN); regional IGOs with multiple goals, among which environmental protection is one (best example: the EU); and global IGOs with specific goals that have consequences for the environment, either directly, like the World Bank, or more indirectly, like the WTO. In this section, the UN, EU, World Bank, and the WTO will represent the different elements of IPOS. Other IGOs that could have been included are the IMF (Korten, 1998), the Asian Development Bank, NAFTA (Grossman, 2000; Marchak, 1998), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), and several others.

The United Nations

Despite its well-known limitations, the UN is the most important global political power centre, where decisions, many of them involving every country and every citizen in the world, are made. The UN is the platform for building multilateral environmental agreements (Mason, 2004, p. 78) and international political regimes (Porter et al., 2000, p. 13), such as the Biodiversity and Climate Conventions. For various international regimes, the UN also controls the implementation of the norms and rules agreed upon.

What are the opportunities offered by the UN to environmental movements and EMOs?

As for the first variable, formal institutional structure, the UN political structure offers challengers formal access. Since its very beginning, the UN has been formally open to social movement organizations, article 71 of the UN Charter explaining the legal basis for such access (Passy, 1999, p. 153). These organizations have, however, only consultative status, which allows them to make oral and present written statements—in commissions, subcommissions, conferences, and working groups—but does not give them the right to vote, that is, the right to participate in political decisions (p. 154).

As for the second variable, informal elite strategies, Passy (1999) has observed that to the UN social movements are important pools of knowledge. For this rea-

son, the UN elite primarily enact integrative strategies toward environmental movements and EMOs, for instance, by offering them financial, administrative, and other material support (p. 155).

The third dimension of IPOS is the configuration of power. At the international level, this dynamic dimension of IPOS should be seen as the configuration of states, which could be qualified as very divided, as indicated by the frequent occurrence of "blocking states," "swing states," and "veto coalitions" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 10). For certain questions, nation-states even may become social movement allies by facilitating their lobbying, by signing resolutions drafted by organizations, by disseminating their reports, and by exerting pressure on other states (Passy, 1999, p. 158).

The fourth and final dimension of IPOS is political output structure. The UN's political output structure is definitely weak, as the sovereignty of states remains the prevailing paradigm. Obstacles to effective implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the level of individual countries include inadequate translation of the agreements into domestic law, lack of respect for the rule of law, high relative costs of compliance, inability to monitor compliance, and finally, low administrative capacity (Porter et al., 2000, pp. 150-153).

In conclusion, UN IPOS for environmental movements could be summarized as follows:

Formal institutional structure: (rather) open
Informal elite strategies: (very) integrative
Configuration of power: (very) divided elite
Output structure: (very) weak

The European Union

Although in academic literature the EU has been framed in different ways (intergovernmentalism, federalism, etc.), the past decade has witnessed the "governance turn" in European studies (Jordan, 2001). Seen from this perspective, the EU has evolved into a system of multilevel governance, as opposed to state-led government. Environmental politics is a case in point. With more than 300 items of environmental legislation now passed at the EU level, the past three decades reflect the development from near nonexistent European environmental politics to the present situation in which most environmental legislation is decided on in Brussels, but implemented, contested, and reshaped at the national and subnational levels (e.g., Sbragia, 2000; Zito, 2000).

What does the European POS for environmental movements and EMOs look like? With its dispersed competencies, contending but interlocked institutions, and shifting agendas, EU multilevel governance opens multiple points of access for interests (Hooghe & Marks, 2001, p. 28). Four key European policy-making institutions are identified below: the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Court of Justice, and the Parliament (Wallace & Wallace, 2000).

The European Commission is a hybrid executive/civil service, formally responsible for initiating and drafting legislation, which it submits to the Council of Ministers and the Parliament for approval. The Commission structure is open, but it has a bias toward information that will enable it to formulate legislation that can sustain majorities in the Council and Parliament (Marks & McAdam, 1999, p. 105). Some groups, including EMOs, that are part of the system of interest representation are facilitated by the Commission (indicative of integrative elite strategies; Webster,

1998, pp. 193-194). Due to its budgetary power, the policy implementation capacity of the Commission could be assessed as relatively strong.

The European Council of Ministers, made up of representatives of member state governments, is the most important legislative body in the EU. The logic of the council for unconventional political activity, indeed political pressure in general, is clear: operate within respective member states rather than at the European level (Marks & McAdam, 1999, p. 105). In political terms, the members of the council are largely bound to national interests and voters. Decisions are often blocked because one or two countries use their veto power (indicative of a divided elite; Rucht, 1997, p. 197).

The European Court of Justice is not at all open to unconventional claims making. However, as some environmental groups often lack the necessary resources and political clout required to influence the formulation of EU policies, for these groups the Court has in the past proved a fruitful means of exerting pressure on EU policy makers (Mazey & Richardson, 1993, p. 213).

The most logical target for conventional and unconventional political action at the European level is the Parliament. The accessibility of the European Parliament for unconventional activity is enhanced because its members are not insulated from external pressures by strong party organizations. The different transnational party factions in the Parliament are relatively loose organizations with little control over the voting of their members.

As EU POS includes four different components, one has to weigh the relative importance of each of these components for environmental movements and EMOs in order to sketch a general picture. Based on an analysis and comparison of the literature aforementioned, it seems fair to summarize EU POS for environmental movements as follows:

Formal institutional structure: (relatively) open
Informal elite strategies: (relatively) integrative
Configuration of power: (rather) divided elite
Political output structure: (relatively) strong

The World Bank

The World Bank Group is a collection of five closely associated institutions, with the term *World Bank* typically referring to only two of these institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and the International Development Association (IDA).[4] According to its mission statement, the bank provides loans, policy advice, technical assistance, and knowledge-sharing services to low- and middle-income countries to reduce poverty. Many of its activities (e.g., loans for the construction of dams and highways) do have environmental consequences. Among the bank's 10,000 employees are more than 300 environmental specialists.

The World Bank's ultimate decision-making authority is the Board of Governors, in which all 184 member-states are represented. Votes are quota-based with one quarter of the member-states controlling three quarters of the votes. This generally facilitates the existence of a united elite. The governors, usually ministerial-level government officials, meet annually behind closed doors to decide key bank policy issues. Apart from this, the World Bank has 24 executive directors, delegated by the Board of Governors to make general operational decisions (World

Bank Group, 2003, p. 11). The formal institutional structure of the World Bank could be assessed as closed.

As for the informal elite strategies, World Bank's Articles of Agreement preclude any direct-bargaining-type dealings with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs; Wade, 2004, p. 81). On the other hand, responsibility for NGO dialogue within the World Bank has moved from External Relations to the Strategic Planning and Review Department, showing the increased importance of this dialogue (Mason, 2004, p. 577). In the late 1980s, the NGO–World Bank Committee began to include southern NGOs and more radical northern ones (Wade, 2004, p. 93). In the 1990s, the bank created a semiindependent inspection panel and instituted a new information policy, both in response to NGO demands (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 147). In sum, the informal elite strategies toward EMOs could be called somewhat integrative.

With respect to the political output structure, due to the World Bank's financial power as well as to its stringent project evaluation procedures, this output structure could be qualified as strong.

In sum, the World Bank's POS could be charted as follows:

Formal institutional structure: closed
Informal elite strategies: somewhat integrative
Configuration of power: united elite
Political output structure: strong

The World Trade Organization

The WTO, established in 1995, is the only global organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations and has emerged as one of the key institutions of global governance in the international political economy (Williams & Ford, 1999). Some trade rules could have severe environmental impacts (Hoad, 2000).

The WTO is run by its 147 member governments. All major decisions are made by the membership as a whole, either by ministers (who meet at least once every 2 years) or by their ambassadors or delegates (who meet regularly in Geneva). Decisions are normally taken by consensus. This allows all members to ensure that their interests are properly considered even though, on occasion, they may decide to join a consensus in the overall interests of the multilateral trading system. The result is a very united elite.

A second level of decision making, the day-to-day work in between the ministerial conferences, is handled by the General Council, the Dispute Settlement Body, and the Trade Policy Review Body. Three more councils, each handling a different broad area of trade, report to the General Council and represent a third level of decision making: the Council for Trade in Goods (Goods Council), services (Services Council), and the Council for Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Council). In addition, a number of other bodies with a smaller scope of coverage also report to the General Council, among which is the Committee on Trade and the Environment (CTE).

All WTO negotiation meetings are closed to NGOs, but four modes of civil society access have become significant for transnational EMOs: derestriction of documents; symposia on trade and environment; briefings on WTO council and committee work; and attendance at ministerial conferences (Mason, 2004, p. 568). Contrary to the World Bank, however, the WTO has delegated its civil society liai-

Table 3: International Political Opportunity Structure: The Relative Positions of Four Intergovernmental Organizations

Formal institutional structure	open	UN	EU	WB	WTO	closed
Informal elite strategies	integrative	UN	EU	WB	WTO	exclusive
Configuration of power	divided	UN	EU	WB	WTO	united
Political output structure	weak	UN	EU	WB	WTO	strong

sons to its Public Affairs Division. In organizational terms, environmental questioning of its policies remains for the WTO an issue of reputation management rather than of internal regulation (Mason, 2004, p. 577). All this contributes to a formal institutional structure that could be qualified as closed and to informal elite strategies that are "symbolically integrative" at their best (cf. Williams & Ford, 1999, p. 273). With no support among members for NGO access to negotiations, the WTO has maintained its strategy of truncated NGO involvement.

The WTO's political output structure could be assessed as very strong. The WTO rules that impose disciplines on countries' policies are the outcome of negotiations among WTO members. The rules are enforced by the members themselves under agreed procedures that they negotiated, including the possibility of trade sanctions.

The POS of the WTO for environmental groups can be charted as follows:

Formal institutional structure: very closed
Informal elite strategies: symbolically integrative
Configuration of power: very united elite
Political output structure: very strong

As has been stated before, the four dimensions of IPOS should be seen as four different continua rather than as representing polar opposites. They show the relative positions of the four IGOs under review, which could be summarized as shown in Table 3.

Of course, it is no mere coincidence that the four institutions are all positioned relative to one another in the same order for each of the four dimensions. POS theory suggests that there is often a strong correlation between, for instance, closed political input structures (best example: the WTO) and strong political output structures (best example: the WTO). On the other hand, however, it is perfectly possible that, for instance, in the next couple of years, the WTO will adopt more integrative elite strategies and that the World Bank and the WTO will change positions on the continuum of informal elite strategies.

As has been said before, a number of propositions could be formulated about the relationship between different aspects of POS, on one hand, and the level of mobilization, the action repertoire, and the impacts of environmental movements and EMOs, on the other hand.

We restrict ourselves to four composite propositions, which, taken together, cover the most important aspects of the relations between IPOS and transnational environmentalism.

Proposition 1. The more open the formal institutional structure and the more integrative the informal elite strategies, the larger will be the number of NGOs that try to influence the politics of the IGO by conventional means (low costs of participation; cf. McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

Proposition 2. The more closed the formal institutional structure and the more exclusive the informal elite strategies, the larger will be the number of unconventional (demonstrative, confrontative, violent) actions (cf. van der Heijden, 1997, p. 34).

Proposition 3. The stronger the political output structure and the more divided the political elite, the more likely proactive impacts for environmental movements will be evidenced (cf. Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 211-213).

Proposition 4. The more open the formal institutional structure and the more integrative the informal elite strategies, the more likely procedural and reactive impacts for environmental movements will be evidenced (cf. Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 211-213).

TRANSNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISM AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES

What does transnational environmentalism look like? Up to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, a number of international environmental EMOs did exist, including Greenpeace, WWF, and Friends of the Earth International. In addition, organizations like the Worldwatch Institute and International Union for the Conservation of Nature have been seen by most authors for a number of years as part of transnational environmentalism (Arts, 1998; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Porter et al., 2000).

The 1990s gave rise to the emergence of two new, closely connected parts of the transnational environmental movement. First, for many environmental groups, especially from southern countries, the 1992 UNCED in Rio and the preceding preparatory meetings represented the first opportunities to exchange experiences and ideas and to develop strategies with EMOs from other parts of the world. In this way, the Earth Summit contributed to the emergence of a global network of environmental organizations. Second, the information communication technology revolution of the 1990s contributed to a mushrooming of the number of transnational environmental networks, including the Biodiversity Action Network, the Climate Action Network, and the Rainforest Action Network, among others.

Currently, the transnational environmental movement can be subdivided into at least seven different parts (see also van der Heijden, 2002, pp. 193-195).

1. Global mass membership organizations, like Greenpeace, WWF, and Friends of the Earth International;
2. Large Western, in particular North American, EMOs with international programs, like the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund;
3. Environmental "think tanks," like the Worldwatch Institute and the International Institute for Environment and Development;
4. Transnational umbrella organizations, like the International Union for the Conservation of Nature;
5. Global networks dealing with specific environmental topics, like the Rainforest Action Network mentioned above;
6. Regional environmental groups, like the European Environmental Bureau; and
7. The environmental part of the antiglobalization movement.

The role each of these groups plays in international environmental politics is different, and the importance of IPOS for them is equally different. Some are heavily involved in lobbying or even perform government functions like the implementation and monitoring of compliance of environmental decisions (Tamiotti & Finger, 2001). Others take a pure rejectionist stance toward IGOs like the World Bank and the WTO (Williams & Ford, 1999). As has been stated before, the POS approach should be seen as one part of social movement theory, complementary to approaches dealing with environmental identities, public opinion, and the role of the corporate sector. In the remainder of this section, we restrict ourselves to those groups and movements that have tried to influence environmental or environment-related decision making in the UN, EU, World Bank, and WTO. By means of a secondary analysis of some relevant parts of the extensive literature, we will try to further substantiate the four propositions that concluded the former section.

The United Nations

The UN's open formal institutional structure and its integrative elite strategies are supposed to result in a large number of EMOs that will try to influence its politics by conventional means and into largely procedural and reactive impacts.

The political influence of transnational EMOs on the establishment of two major global environmental regimes, the climate and biodiversity conventions, has been charted by Arts (1998). Whereas the participation of EMOs in the formation phase of the Biodiversity Convention was restricted to groups like WWF and IUCN, their participation numbers grew immensely during the implementation phase (1992-1997), when 75 to 100 NGOs attended the meetings of the International Negotiation Committee (INC). Unconventional actions, however, did not take place (Arts, 1998, pp. 169-170).

As for assessing the impact of EMOs, Arts subdivided the convention into different parts, each dealing with a different topic: indigenous people, in-situ conservation, marine biodiversity, financial mechanisms, and so on. In sum, EMOs exerted only substantial influence on the inclusion of the notion of intrinsic value and of the paragraph on women in the Preamble of the Convention. They influenced some aspects of, for instance, in-situ conservation measures (Arts, 1998, p. 227), but generally speaking, the impact of EMOs was rather limited indeed.

With respect to the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), EMOs were able to participate in the negotiations as observers, both in the sessions of the INC and the meetings of the Conference of Parties (COPs). INCs were visited by approximately 50 to 100 NGOs, one third of which were environmental organizations. Most of these EMOs collaborated under the umbrella of the (global) Climate Action Network and its seven regional offices (Arts, 1998, p. 109).

As for their impact, EMOs had no direct impact on the FCCC text. With regard to the period after its adoption (1992-1995), EMOs substantially impacted the AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) Protocol, whereas they had some impact on the Joint Implementation Pilot Phase, and the Berlin Mandate (Arts, 1998, pp. 155-156).[5]

These findings largely corroborate this article's preliminary propositions with regard to the number of NGO participants, the existence of unconventional actions, and the type of impacts. It is interesting to note that most NGO influence was achieved during the implementation of the convention, rather than during its formation. The emergence of the Berlin Mandate was also one of the very few instances during which (complementary) protest actions took place (Arts, 1998, p. 236).

The European Union

Like the UN, the EU has an open institutional structure and the elite strategies are relatively integrative. As a consequence, the participation of a large number of EMOs, maintaining a conventional action repertoire, and the occurrence of predominantly procedural and reactive impacts could be expected, although less than at the UN level.

The increasing role of the EU with respect to environmental policy making is reflected in the emergence of a number of environmental organizations in Brussels. The first one was the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), founded in 1974, a European federation of environmental groups. During the 1980s and 1990s, European branches of Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF, Birdlife International, and the Climate Action Network were founded, as well as the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E). In addition, in recent years, about a dozen other European environmental groups were founded (Rucht, 2001; Webster, 1998). Militant protest tactics for environmental protection during this period were scattered, rare, and small, although some transnational environmental protests did occur in Brussels (and Strasbourg), organized by Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and animal rights groups (Rucht, 2001, p. 128). Basically, however, the action repertoire of the groups was limited to negotiations with officials, lobbying, expert studies, and press releases.

As for the impact of environmental organizations, in the literature no proactive impacts are mentioned. One example, among many, of a reactive impact could be the outcome of the European conflict over the labeling of genetically modified products (Kettnaker, 2001).

An important example of a procedural impact could be the introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for Trans-European transport Networks (TENs), an extensive network of cross-border high-speed trains, motorways, and waterways, aimed at providing the infrastructure for a single European market.

Although the literature does not include clear examples of proactive impacts of EMOs, one proactive impact of European environmental policy making can be identified. European environmental legislation has pressed many "laggard" member states to adopt more stringent environmental policies than these states had before EU action (Sbragia, 2000; Zito, 2000). In this respect, the EU as an environmental policy maker could be conceived as an ally rather than as an antagonist of environmental movements in many European member states.

The World Bank

The formal institutional structure of the World Bank is closed and its elite strategies are not very integrative; as a consequence, unconventional actions could be expected. The political output structure is strong and its elite are united; as a consequence, no proactive impacts for environmental movements are to be expected.

Until the early 1980s, the environmental politics of the World Bank had a low profile for NGOs. The first pressure for change occurred with the Polonoroeste, a 1,500-kilometre highway from Brazil's densely populated south-central region into the sparsely populated northwest Amazon. The bank's environmental critics held up Polonoroeste as the bank's biggest and most disastrous involvement in forest colonization in the tropics (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, ch. 4; Khagram, 2000, p. 98; Wade, 2000, pp. 75-76).

In 1983, three American EMOs with international programs (Natural Resources Defense Council, the Environmental Policy Institute, and the National Wildlife Federation) started a campaign to build pressure on member governments with a large share of voting rights to move the World Bank, through the executive directors, to initiate environmental reforms (Khagram, 2000, p. 97).

In October 1984, 31 NGOs from 11 countries sent a letter to World Bank president Clausen, asking the bank to enforce its loan covenants with the Brazilian government by immediately suspending disbursements. The NGOs scored a significant if partial victory in June 1986, when Secretary Baker directed the U.S. executive director of the bank to vote against an Electric Power Sector Loan to Brazil (Wade, 2004, pp. 81-82). In response, the World Bank started to hire environmental staff and to institutionalize environmental assessment procedures.

By the late 1980s, the World Bank came under a second wave of attack, this time mounted by an international coalition of NGOs who opposed the Narmada Dam project in India. In 1989, the U.S.-based NGOs in the campaign persuaded a congressional subcommittee to hold hearings on Narmada. As a result, an independent review panel was established that, in its report, confirmed much of what the NGO campaign had been saying. Thereafter, a serious conflict between the Board of Directors and the bank emerged, resulting first in the decision to continue and then to cancel the bank's support of the dam project (Wade, 2004, pp. 87-88).

The cumulative effect of transnationally allied civil society lobbying against World Bank support for dams over the past 25 years is demonstrated by the more than 60% decline in bank funding for these projects—from approximately $11 billion between 1978 and 1982 to an estimated $4 billion between 1993 and 1997 (Khagram, 2000, p. 95).

As for the two propositions about the World Bank, the huge and manifold demonstrations against it by the "antiglobalization movement" (Smith, 2002) corroborate the first proposition. The second one, however—strong political output structure, united elite, no proactive movement impact—cannot be corroborated. Due to successful lobbying at the national (i.e., American) level, the environmental movement several times succeeded to split the World Bank elite, resulting in the canceling of numerous big dam projects. Again, this points to the fact that POSs should not be seen as static. In the long run, it is definitely possible to change them.

The World Trade Organization

Similar to the World Bank, WTO POS predicts many unconventional actions but no proactive impacts for environmental movements.

Contrary to the World Bank, during the 1980s, GATT (WTO's predecessor) did not receive much attention from transnational EMOs, mainly due to the low level of political awareness of both GATT and the environmental impact of international trade (Boas & Vevatne, 2004, p. 95). In the early 1990s, GATT's lack of concern for environmental issues came under fire in the United States due to the tuna-dolphin dispute between the United States and Mexico (Wright, 2000).

From 1995 onward, the increased scope, permanence, and rule-making authority of the new WTO alarmed environmentalists and other civil society actors. The environmental activism of the NGOs challenged the very foundation of WTO, namely its free trade theory; when confronted with this criticism, staff members closed ranks around the WTO and its core ideas (Boas & Vevatne, 2004, p. 96). Nevertheless, the WTO was forced to take some of these criticisms seriously. One of the suggestions was that NGOs could be consulted through the dispute settle-

ment mechanism. NGOs themselves have argued strongly that membership of the CTE should be enlarged to include NGOs, but currently NGOs are not allowed to participate (Boas & Vevatne, 2004, pp. 101-102). Despite these institutional barriers, some moderate EMOs, mainly from the United States, have had some influence on the handling of environmental disputes, for instance, the shrimp-turtle dispute (Desombre & Barkin, 2002).

On the other hand, the People's Global Action and other parts of the antiglobalization movement presented a radical departure from attempts to lobby the WTO and influence debates (Smith, 2002; Wissenburg, 2004). In Seattle, the issue of trade liberalization brought together a coalition, united against an organization that appeared to put the profit and good of multinational corporations before the interests of people and the environment (Hoad, 2000, p. 125). This rejectionist approach perceives environmental management as a technocratic problem-solving approach that is not concerned with the eradication of environmental degradation, as mediated through social, economic, and political relations, but with the smooth functioning of the system (Williams & Ford, 1999, p. 287). Since the Seattle meeting, developing countries in particular have forced lobbying alliances with northern development NGOs over issues such as opposition to agricultural subsidies in the United States and the EU (Mason, 2004, p. 571).

As for this article's propositions, the WTO has provoked many unconventional actions, Seattle being a paradigm case. Most of the time, WTO elites seem to operate rather like-minded, and as a consequence, the impacts of EMOs are procedural (e.g., symposia on trade and environment) rather than proactive. In some cases, however, EMOs and even the environmental part of the antiglobalization movement appear to be able to drive a wedge between WTO elites, and in such cases, very important proactive impacts are not impossible.

CONCLUSION

The main question to be answered in this article was to what extent it is possible to turn the concept of POS from the national to the international level in order to explain or even predict the different successes, strategies, and action repertoires of environmental movements at that level. To contribute to theory building and to make suggestions for further empirical research, in this article the concept of IPOS was developed. Second, this article developed and provided initial evidence for the propositions resulting from this concept by means of a concise secondary analysis of literature on four IGOs.

Like national POS, the concept of IPOS seems to be a useful tool for analysing the different strategies, action repertoires, and impacts of transnational environmental movements and EMOs. IPOS, for instance, may help to explain why IGOs like the UN and the EU provoke the participation of a large number of transnational environmental lobby groups. It also seems to predict that the proactive impacts of these groups will remain limited. IPOS also helps to explain why closed and relatively exclusive organizations like the World Bank and the WTO provoke more unconventional actions by groups with a rejectionist stance, like the People's Global Action. It also tentatively predicts that the number of unconventional actions will decline if and when the World Bank and the WTO adopt more integrative elite strategies.

Transnational environmental campaigns, however, always take place at different levels (global, regional, national: multilevel environmentalism) and this could not only alter the impacts as predicted by IPOS theory but also, sometimes, change

the very nature of a set of political opportunities. For instance, as American EMOs successfully lobbied the American government with respect to World Bank lendings for the construction of large dams, this led to splits in the World Bank elite and, as a consequence, to the canceling of several dam projects. The multilevel character of transnational environmental campaigns helps to explain how closed input structures and strong output structures could lead to favourable proactive impacts when EMOs and movements succeed in driving a wedge between political elites. Likewise, European environmental legislation could press laggard states to adopt a more stringent environmental policy, advocated and monitored by EMOs.

As Tarrow has emphasized, POS also has a dynamic aspect, and transnational environmental campaigns take place in different stages with different cleavages within and among elites. Whereas, for instance, EMOs could hardly impact the formation of the climate convention, they could influence the implementation of the convention (AOSIS Protocol, Joint Implementation, Berlin Mandate). It is probably no coincidence that during this stage, some complementary unconventional protest actions took place.

In this article, a distinction was made between seven different parts of the environmental movement. Obviously, the roles these different parts play in international environmental politics are very diverse, ranging from replacing government in the implementation or monitoring of environmental politics to rejecting the very structures of the World Bank and of the WTO by some parts of the antiglobalization movement. More specific research, especially case studies, is necessary to chart the relationship between IPOS and the different parts of the environmental movement and to deduce strategic recommendations to further improve their impacts.

NOTES

1. In most literature, the terms (environmental) nongovernmental organization (NGO) and social movement organization (SMO) are used almost interchangeably. Although there are important differences, many of these groups have their origins in the environmental movement, and for that reason, in this article, systematically the term environmental movement organization (EMO) will be used, referring to both environmental NGOs and SMOs.

2. In this article, the term transnational environmental movement will be used in opposition to international environmental movement to emphasize that the (universal) interests of the movement transcend the (national) interests of individual states but that movements have to operate within the framework of interstate cooperation.

3. Reactive impacts imply the prevention of new disadvantages, that is, challengers avoid a worsening of the situation with regard to their goals. Proactive impacts imply the introduction of new advantages, that is, challengers obtain substantive concessions by political authorities. Procedural impacts, finally, refer to access to the system by challengers, for instance, by formal recognition or by their participation in consultation procedures (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 210).

4. Apart from these, the World Bank Group also includes the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. All five specialize in different aspects of development.

5. The AOSIS Protocol was aimed at strengthening the FCCC to better protect some of the southern victim states against the consequences of climate change. Joint implementation refers to the possibility for (industrialized) countries to realize some of their emission reduction obligations in other countries by means of technological assistance to those countries. The Berlin Mandate was a mandate, agreed upon during the 1995 Berlin Conference of Parties, to start negotiations on strengthening the commitments for the period beyond 2000 through the adoption of a protocol or another legal instrument (Arts, 1998).

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