WORKING PAPER 541

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

S.E. EDEN

School of Geography
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT

November 1990

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

Preface.

This paper is the second in a series of three Working Papers dealing with contemporary aspects of public expressions of environmentalism. Two primary behaviours expressing such pro-environmental ideas are the purchasing of products according to their environmental impacts - a phenomenon often labelled green consumerism - and the growing subscriptions and donations to voluntary environmental organisations.

This paper explores the two-way influence between public expressions of environmentalism and the embodiment of environmentalism in the ideologies of the organised environmental groups. There is a discussion of the development and differentiation of the environmental movement alongside wider social changes and growing public support and also consideration of the present status of the movement in terms of its membership, methods and foci.

Although environmental ideas about protection and conservation of wildlife and natural systems such as the atmosphere are very much in the public eye, the background to the arguments publicised is often inadequately presented or fragmented. The first paper, Environmental Issues in the Green Consumer Debate: A Contemporary Guide, aims to provide an adequate background by collating and clarifying the technical data regarding those environmental processes which have a high public profile. The coverage is wide-ranging and presents the central academic arguments as continuing rather than conclusively

resolved.

The third paper, Green Consumerism and the Response from Business and Government, deals with two other sets of agents in the environmental debate: business and government. The recent emergence of green consumerism has brought about changes in technology, marketing, legislation and the political process. Such changes are discussed in terms of their development and also in terms of the critical response they have received from other groups, including environmentalists.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

November 1990

CONTENTS

TABLES

1. Introduction.

This paper looks at the organised environmentalism - the pro-environmental ideas - in the emergence and development of voluntary environmental groups. As complementary to public environmentalism, they are the embodiment of many ideas which are more diffusely expressed by the public in their unorganised, individual actions of consumer choice - green consumerism - and their financial support of many environmental organisations.

Environmental groups are the active agents of pro-environmental lobbying, research and publicity. They represent the public and the environment to commercial and government agencies, and direct media and public attention to specific environmental issues requiring action. The environmental movement acts collectively as a source of ideas and information for public environmentalism, and its growth means more encouragement for green consumerism and other environmental activities on the part of individuals.

The movement must demonstrate that it has adequate support for its objectives from the public, in terms of finance, through donations and membership, and in terms of public opinion. This legitimises its actions and ensures its survival in the face of commercial or political opposition (Lowe and Goyder 1983).

The voluntary organisations embodying environmentalist ideas and the public expressing such ideas, e.g. as green consumers, are thus interactively connected. Consideration of one must also acknowledge the influence of the other. Here, the influence of the environmental movement is examined, through its ideas and

public support, as a long-established context for the younger phenomenon and also therefore as a source of strength and direction.

Mitchell (1980) has defined environmentalism as:

> "the set of ideas which emphasizes the interrelationship between humans and the ecosystem and the various threats human activity poses to its continued viability."
>
> (Mitchell 1980, p.217)

These ideas are officially adopted by the voluntary organisations of the environmental movement, where a loose hierarchy of committed individuals seeks to achieve aims defined upon a belief in such ideas. Their aims relate to environmental improvements and the prevention of more damage, but different organised environmental groups may concentrate on different aims. Some are more issue-specific, e.g. CLEAR - the campaign for lead free air; some have a more general environmental focus, e.g. Friends of the Earth, publicising varied campaigns from rainforest protection to recycling viability projects; some groups are politicised, taking part in elections or political activities. Coalitions, permanent or shifting, may be formed of several groups around one particular environmental threat in order to amalgamate their strengths, expertise and support bases. Most organised environmental groups depend upon public support and money to survive, although they may accept donations from commercial or governmental concerns. The groups survive to

nurture public support and awareness of environmental issues, to expose and prevent environmentally damaging processes and to encourage a societal change to actions which threaten the environment. They lobby businesses, local and national governments and special interest groups related to the two. The ideas and actions they promote filter down to their own memberships and other sections of the public, thereby affecting the growth of public environmentalism outside the organised movement.

Both the movement and public expressions of sympathy with its environmentalism are influenced by wider societal contexts, political climates and media attention. The movement's historical background is therefore outlined in this paper, with particular assessment of the last three decades - a period of real emergence and major change.

Political environmentalist success, which would depend upon a voting public sharing the environmental ideas of the formal political groups, would have implications for the future of environmentalism as a whole. More political, and therefore legislative, power would allow the environmental movement to promote its activities more strongly and to enforce commercial change through the law. Green consumers and other environmentalist sympathisers could form a possible constituency, a reliable voting support base or electorate, for the campaigners and the political leaders thereby elected could direct the growth of green consumerism.

The discussion of elitism is important because of the influence of any class emphasis on the public support received by

environmental organisations. If the public perceive the environmentalist leaders to be acting out of self-interest, public support would be lost in disillusionment with environmentalist ideas. The basis of green consumerism would then become very unstable.

The reasons for some predicting the decline of environmentalism and its actual continuation as a public issue are also examined. These illustrate both the recent (post 1970s) development of environmentalism, despite a changing social and economic context to that in which it first flowered, and also the difficulty of predicting the future of such social trends.

The final section in this paper assesses the current status of the environmental movement in terms of its size and present internal groupings. The twofold division of environmentalists into radicals and traditionals, depending upon their aims and methods, is useful in distinguishing possible attitudes to green consumerism, which has been encouraged by some traditional groups which have consultative roles on the edges of the political establishment. Those radical groups which promote the fundamental change of society as necessary for true environmental protection see green consumerism as a halfway measure and lacking any real potential for change.

There is an overall emphasis upon the links between the organised environmentalism of the voluntary groups and the unorganised public expressions of sympathy with environmentalism, as these two manifestations of one set of ideas are interdependent in terms of strength and growth..pa

2. History and Development of Environmentalism.

2.1. Environmentalist Beginnings in Preservation and Conservation.

Environmental ideas began to emerge in the late nineteenth century when individuals and groups sought to restrict the use of those features of the natural world which they felt were under threat from mankind. The main aim was therefore preservation of the natural environment (McEvoy 1972) and some of the existing groups set up to forward this aim are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Early environmental preservation groups.

Date	*Environmental Group*
1889	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK)
1892	The Sierra Club (USA)
1895	The National Trust (UK)
1912	The Royal Society for Nature Conservation (UK)
1925	Rambler's Association (UK)
1926	Council for the Preservation of Rural England (UK)
1936	National Wildlife Federation (USA)
1946	The Soil Association (UK)

source: Cotgrove 1982, McEvoy 1972.

From the early peaks of interest in environmental issues, from the 1890s through to the early 1910s (McEvoy 1972, Lowe and Goyder 1983), and the later 1920s (Pepper 1984), environmental issues became prominent again after the Second World War, when more emphasis began to be placed upon problems of the urban

environment as well as the natural (McEvoy 1972). The old style of preservationism was joined by a new conservationism, which did not urge for non-use of environmental amenities and resources via authoritarian restrictions and limitations, but for their careful use and management. This was to be achieved through encouraging the adoption of conservation practices by individuals and commercial interests. Examples of this are the conservation of energy through insulation of private homes, efficient use of fuel, and agricultural practices aimed at conserving soil nutrients and structure rather than just increasing yields. The emphasis was placed not upon *stopping* environmental use, but upon positive methods to improve behaviour so that the environment suffered less harm.

2.2. The Rise of the Environmental Movement in the 1960s and 1970s.

> "Contemporary environmentalism was born in the 1960s."
>
> (O'Riordan 1976, p. 51)

Public interest in environmental issues became widespread in these two decades and the environment succeeded in reaching both the general public and political agendas at the national and international level.

The emergence of the environment as a political issue was confirmed around 1968-1970 by the numbers of pressure groups and government initiatives, some examples of which are given in Table

2.

Table 2: 1960s and 1970s environmental groups and initiatives.

Date	*Environmental Group or Initiative*
1966	Conservation Society (UK)
1969	Friends of the Earth (USA)
1970	Department of the Environment (UK)
1970	Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (UK)
1970	Earth Day, 22 April (USA)
1972	United Nations First Conference on the Environment (Stockholm)
1972	Values Party (New Zealand)
1973	People (later The Ecology Party and then the Green Party) (UK)

source: Cotgrove 1982, Rudig and Lowe 1986

Morrison and his colleagues writing in 1972 spoke of a participation orientation amid "media-led euphoria" over the environment and other related issues such as women's rights, Black Power and the students' movements. Buttel (1986) has since characterised the period 1968-1972 in the USA as one of "mass mobilisation" and many writers have referred to the atmosphere of change and the presence of a 'counter culture' (Roszak 1978, Capra 1982, Morrison 1986). Social movements were radicalised under the influence of these unconventional ideologies. New-born organisations sought methods other than traditional political action to achieve their aims, and stressed the support and involvement of the public; Amnesty International for one adopted this approach. The emphasis was placed upon collective action

and macroprotest (Fortmann 1988) and individuals began to organise their resources and expertise in order to promote the new values which were emerging. Capra (1982) characterised this social climate as the beginning of the turning point for Western society in its search for individual freedom and expression, and Cotgrove described it thus:

> "It is significant that the new environmentalism emerged at a point of crisis in recent history. The mid 1960s onwards saw a convulsive wave run through all advanced industrial societies, challenging the complacent optimism of the affluent society."
>
> (Cotgrove 1982, p.22)

3. Themes in Research into Environmentalism.

3.1. The Politicisation of Environmental Groups and their Possible Electorates.

Increasing public political involvement and radicalisation of society in the 1960s heralded the evolution of the political arm of the environmental movement. Public support for environmental reforms increased and became widespread across sectors of society. McEvoy (1972) illustrates this with survey data showing an eleven fold increase between 1968 and 1969 in the percentage of the American public who considered that environmental problems were major national problems.

Non-environmental political parties recognised the potential of such public concern and groups within them developed to attempt to tap this support - the Conservative Ecology Group and the Liberal Ecology Group were both established in the UK in 1977. The level of environmental support and political activity prompted suggestions of, and investigations into, a possible environmental mandate or constituency in the electorate (Mitchell 1980, Morrison 1980, Lake 1983), i.e. that particular sectors of the public would vote on the basis of a party's ecological ideology and resultant policies. But such an environmental electorate was not conclusively found, and Buttel and Larson noted that:

"... since the benefits secured by environmentalists are distributed so broadly, environmentalism has no natural constituency among enduring social categories."

(Buttel and Larson 1980, p.326)

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was also an ideological radicalisation of environmental and non-environmental groups - a process which reduced the distance between them. Many social movements gravitated towards the political ideology of the Left (Morrison 1986), due to common commitments to equity and an aversion to the principles and practices of capitalist economics.

The environmental movement also tended in this political direction, but, unlike the labour movements, it could not be truly committed to economic growth. Such an objective would be antagonistic to the environmental stability towards which the movement worked. It was therefore not truly aligned to the ideologies of the other Left groups, which could advocate economic growth provided the benefits were equally distributed across society.

The political arm of the environmental movement saw little electoral success in the 1970s in Europe, with the UK's green party, then People, achieving only 1% of the vote in 1979. Gradually, through the 1980s, Green voting became more widespread, particularly in those countries whose political system incorporated proportional representation. There were environmental representatives in the parliaments of Belgium, Finland, Switzerland, Luxembourg and West Germany by 1986 (Rudig

and Lowe 1986), and environmental M.P.s were successful in the Euroelections of 1984. In the UK in 1989, the Green Party succeeded in getting 15% of the vote in the Euroelections despite being described as "Britain's muddled little Green Party" (The Economist 1989 p.14).

3.2. Elitism within Environmentalism.

Many workers, (O'Riordan 1976, Morrison 1980, Lowe and Goyder 1983, Morrison and Dunlap 1986) have characterised the activists at the core of environmental organisations as the 'elite' of the movement, in that they are more educated, affluent and committed to the environment than those on the periphery. They are also the implementors of ideas through action and as such are a minority in the movement: some 58% of groups surveyed in 1982 said that less than 10% of their members were "actively involved" (Lowe and Goyder 1983 p.40).

The elite of the movement are more populous than the small number of policy makers in environmental and non-environmental sectors which they lobby for reforms. In turn, the 'attentive public' are greater in number than the elite, they are often non-active - but paying - members of environmental groups and have been described by the activists as a "passive or instrumental resource" (ibid. p.40). Together with the elite, they comprise the 'mobilised public' from whom the movement can elicit support. Below these sectors is the 'non attentive public' (Miller 1980).

The core members of some environmental organisations have

been well researched (e.g. Weigel and Weigel 1978, Tucker 1978, Mitchell 1980b, Manzo and Weinstein 1987), and it seems clear that they, the leaders and organisers, are generally more educated and of a higher economic status than individuals at the periphery of the movement. However, the periphery is both less well researched and less well understood. It involves both the non-active members of environmental organisations and those of the general public who are not members but sympathise with the aims of the groups to some extent.

Having assumed these categories of elite and non-elite, researchers have often sought to establish how far organised environmentalism is elitist (Morrison 1980, O'Riordan 1976). The accusation is that it seeks to improve the lot of the environmentalists - the elite and their supporters characterised as a more educated, privileged group - rather than the prospects of the public as a whole. Morrison (1980) identified three forms of elitism: *compositional*, where the activists in environmentalism happen to be people of high economic status; *ideological*, where the intent of the elite is to distribute the benefits of environmental reform to environmentalists and the costs to non-environmentalists; *impact*, where the effect, but not necessarily the intent, is the distribution of benefits to environmentalists and the costs to non-environmentalists. Morrison and Dunlap (1986) have investigated these three forms and found that only impact elitism seemed to be significantly represented in the movement.

It seems likely that any elitism which is present in the

movement is not ideological. Environmental activists seek to build up a broad public support base for their groups in order to push forward their arguments and give them strength in lobbying for change. This is especially true if the group is a political one dependent upon votes to survive. There is moreover a common ground of shared values in the concerns of the elite and the concerns of the non-elite: the environment is seen as a public right and good, not restricted to any one group.

> "The very fact that environmental concern has developed as a mass movement means that elite opinions must resonate with pre-existing values to produce such general appreciation."
>
> (Lowe and Goyder 1983 p.32)

Also, the very structure of many environmental organisations rejects strong hierarchical patterns and a dependence upon an active elite, concentrating rather upon giving everybody the opportunity to speak and to act on behalf of the environment. This rejection is indicative of the rejection of the modern consumer economy, which is identified as the ultimate cause of environmental damage due to its selfish and unbridled need for more, its domination of larger but poorer groups by smaller but powerful sectors and its inherent inequality.

The environmental movement's activists are not working for environmental quality merely for their own benefit but for many people and equally for generations into the future. Indeed, often the worst environmental conditions are suffered by the

poorer, less politically effective, less mobile groups (Lowe and Goyder 1983). However, the activists are often also those who, through education and social position, have information about the environment, are aware how to publicise their concerns and have the education and political capability to act for change. As Morrison and Dunlap conclude:

> "It is time to disaggregate the notion of environmental elitism, or perhaps even dispense with it. At the very least we should stop searching for an easy, general answer to the questions of whether environmentalism is elitist and whether environmental protection and social justice are incompatible. There is no inherent reason why environmental protection and social justice must constitute conflicting social goals."
>
> (Morrison and Dunlap 1986, p.588)

3.3. The Predicted Decline of the Environmentalism.

The energy crisis and recession beginning in 1973 were thought by several writers to herald a decline in popular environmentalism (e.g. Morrison et al 1972, Dunlap and Van Liere 1974, Van Liere and Dunlap 1978 and Buttel 1986). Different arguments were put forward as to why this should be the case.

Morrison and his colleagues, writing a little after the organised promotion of environmental issues under the banner 'Earth Day' (22 April 1970) in the United States, believed that the then current participation orientation of the environmental

movement, generated by the public's enthusiasm, would change in time due to a realistic reappraisal of the situation. The change would come about when the core concepts of environmentalism, such as the stabilisation of economic growth and population, were recognised by the public. This, the argument went, would cause a disenchantment with the goals of environmentalism as a movement and reorient the public to the economic goals of the non-environmentalists. Public support would therefore shift away from the movement and towards the 'growthists' (Buttel 1986) - high level decision makers, e.g. managers of corporate businesses and politicians, and their supporters who are committed to economic growth built upon ever-increasing production and consumption.

Buttel (1986) described the period from 1973 to the early 1980s as one of conflict and counter movement in environmental circles, due to the realisation of the costs of environmental reform. He, like Morrison, suggests that this realism led to the rejection of the 'no growth' ideas and hence that:

> "...after nearly ten years of sustained global recession, we are now all 'growthists'."
>
> (Buttel 1986, p.227)

In this period, there was considerable splintering of mainstream groups, with the formation of issue-specific lobbies, and a conversion from more radical commitment and methods to strategies based more on consultation with non-environmentalist opponents. However, Buttel's comment seems overstated in

retrospect. Certainly, the deep ecology approach, centred upon the concept of zero growth which was so opposed by the non-environmentalist pro-growth lobby, is not now widely evident in environmental organisations. A new thrust in the vanguard of environmentalism was an emphasis upon the possibilities for sustainable growth. New environmental problems were publicised and old ones continually resurfaced in the media. Environmentalism was not succumbing to economic priorities as easily as some had thought it would. This was evident by the turn of the decade to some writers:

> "Throughout the 1970s support for environmental protection, reflected by impressive majorities in national polls, consistently confounded those who regarded environmentalism as a temporary fad."
>
> (Mitchell 1984, p.52)

This comment stands in direct contrast to Buttel's above and Buttel and Larson's further assertion that the so-called environmental decade of the 1970s "failed to materialize" (Buttel and Larson 1980, p.327) because of the failure of organised environmental groups to address the real issues of resource scarcity and survival. Despite the above predictions of declining in public support for environmental issues, the environment is still ranked as an important issue by the general public. 77% of the British public for example agreed in 1985 that industry should be prevented from causing environmental damage even if this causes costs to rise (Young 1985). A 1989 MORI poll (quoted by Elkington 1989) suggested that 42% of the

public had already chosen products because of environmental performance. It is also difficult to show satisfactorily any dominant cleavages in the general public on this issue. Morrison wrote in 1986 that:

> "there is now important evidence that environmental consciousness has 'trickled down', i.e. that support for environmental reforms has now diffused well below the stratification position occupied by the core environmentalists, and that there is neither a clear, nor strong, nor consistent pattern of support for this prediction [that the public would be against environmental reforms]."
>
> (Morrison 1986, p.189)

3.4. Why the Predicted Decline did not Occur.

Like many decision makers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially the Reagan administration in the USA (Mitchell 1984), researchers assumed that environmentalism would be relegated to a backseat and other policy issues begin to dominate.

Mitchell (1984) has described this assumption as the "salience trap", where the interpretation of polls and other data depended upon the relative priority given to environmental goals versus economic and political goals (also discussed by Lake 1983). Although the relative *priority* or salience of environmental issues fell below that of other issues, its *strength*, or overall support, remained fairly steady. In assessing the future of any public issue, it is necessary to look

at both strength and salience in order to understand an issue's relevance and to avoid easy but delusive predictions for decline. As Lake puts it:

> "A policy may no longer be at the top of the nation's agenda but may retain a wide margin of support for its implementation. Environmental policy clearly illustrates this phenomenon."
>
> (Lake 1983, p.218)

Downs (1972) was more prosaic about the ability of the public to continue supporting the environmental movement. His conceptualisation of the issue-attention cycle of the public postulated that, after a period of time in the headlines, most issues were bound to take a backseat to newer issues. However, special features of environmentalism made that cluster of issues likely to remain in the public's attention longer than other issues (Downs 1972, Lake 1983).

Several reasons for the continuance of popular environmentalism were given by O'Riordan (1976): a broad base of different social strata suffering from environmental damage; information and education about the issues, in the media and schools; high standards of living reducing public acceptance of low environmental quality; public mistrust of government and a growing desire to act themselves.

Mitchell (1984) also itemises four causal factors (the first two of which relate to two given by O'Riordan): the broad public appeal of the environment as a common public good; the high visibility of environmental issues in the media; value shifts

leading to the emergence of the new ecological paradigm - suggested by Dunlap and Van Liere (1978) and DeVall (1980); the fact that ten years of environmental reform had not solved the problems.

Like Downs (1972), both Mitchell and O'Riordan speak of the special features or characteristics of environmentalism which will assure its continued existence even if its momentum as a lobbying movement decelerates, whereas other social movements may lose their standing entirely.

It is difficult to predict how well environmentalism will do in the future, particularly if we bear in mind the outcome of predictions made in the early 1970s. Although the basis of environmental support may become less unified, the general awareness of environmental issues seems to be an important social feature for now and the future.

The movement seems now to be consolidated as a useful public force, especially due to its standing as a research and information service and with age eradicating its image of a subversive, revolutionary and fringe outfit (see: Current Characteristics of the Environmental Movement). On the evidence so far, the mainstream of the movement seems to be following the second of the two paths offered by Mitchell some years ago:

"Environmentalism seems destined ... either to a process of slow disintegration as the hard facts of scarcity create conflict within the movement and disillusion those of the general public who are sympathetic with its aims or, as presently seems more likely, to a continued role as a reformist movement which harbours a vision of an 'appropriate' society but which presses for reforms that are neither too deep nor too left to alienate either its middle class constituency or its potential allies among the less affluent sectors of society."

(Mitchell 1980b, p.358)

4. Current Characteristics of the Environmental Movement.

4.1. The Membership of the Movement.

The above discussions have illustrated the past development of the environmental movement and described some of the earlier differentiations within it. At present, the movement seems to be gaining support all the time from all sectors. Much of the initial disparagement of the 1970s stirrings of radicalism has dissolved into an acknowledgement of the value of the organised groups in 'blowing the whistle' on the activities of big business and governments. Environmentalism has gained a new social acceptability as a movement for all rather than those at the extremes of behaviour, characterised as hippies, drop-outs or merely a little deranged. It is becoming increasingly important in some quarters to be environmentally conscious and environmentally active and the vocabulary of environmentalists is heard on all sorts of news features.

One outcome of this new blossoming of environmentalism is seen in the rising membership rolls of the environmental groups, accompanied by a welcome increase in income via subscriptions. The 13 largest environmental bodies in the UK had a combined income of over £160 million per year and nearly five million supporters in mid 1989, with membership increasing at 20% - 30% per year - Greenpeace were recruiting between 3,000 and 4,000 members per week (Nelson 1989 p.10). To illustrate the size of the environmental groups to some degree, Table 3 shows the approximate membership of some of the largest groups in the UK in 1989.

Table 3: Present Membership of Some of the Larger Environmental Groups (UK 1989).

Membership	*Environmental Group*
1,700,000	The National Trust
540,000	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
282,000	Greenpeace
240,000	The Royal Society for Nature Conservation
125,000	World Wide Fund for Nature
100,000	Friends of the Earth
70,800	Rambler's Association
62,000	Woodland Trust
38,000	Council for the Preservation of Rural England
5,000	The Soil Association

source: Pearce et al 1989 p.75.

4.2. The Relationship between Different Environmental Groups and the Political Establishment.

The environmental movement has not been stable in its short history. As mentioned above, Buttel (1986) referred to a period of conflict following the energy crisis of 1973, when divisions emerged within the movement due to ideological differences. Cotgrove suggests that this led to a shift in the emphasis of organised environmentalism:

"... from a consensual to a conflictual movement, from a concern with reform within a framework of consensual values to a radical challenge to societal values."

(Cotgrove 1982, p.10)

However, it seems that the concepts of both reform and radical challenge still exist within the movement and various groups have been established by activists in order to pursue one or both of the two. Researchers have therefore divided environmental activists into those working with the established political agencies and those adopting new and often aggressive methods to influence public opinion and policy decisions. These groups use conventional and radical methods respectively, and these terms can be used to describe the groups as a whole (Cotgrove 1982). Such labels are somewhat simplistic - some groups adopt, or profess, both methods - but seem more useful than other research distinctions (discussed below), as they refer directly to lobbying methods whilst avoiding the complications of terms such as ecologist outside their usual place of reference (referring to an expert).

All the labels adopted and used by different writers merely mark points along a continuum of method and ideology. The views and methods of individual activists, non-activists and groups may lie anywhere along such a continuum. The labels are therefore useful as descriptive devices, but should not be taken as absolute categories of behaviour.

4.2.1. Traditionals.

Traditional, or conventional, environmental activists within the political system are those who work in connection with institutionalised agencies, such as the Nature Conservancy Council, which have a utilitarian view of the environment (Morrison 1986) and may work with government and commercial corporations in an advisory capacity. They offer expertise, scientific research or advice and lobby in a recognised and conventional manner established by earlier preservationist activitists. Buttel and Johnson (1978) describe this type of action as indicative of an "ameliorative" concern for the environment, in that it seeks to improve matters within current societal structures. The World Wide Fund for Nature operates mainly through funding research and advising and managing projects in connection with commercial usage of the environment. The group also accepts grants directly from business and government, unlike most environmental groups, and thus takes a banking role in the movement (Brown 1990). Friends of the Earth (FoE) lobby government by publishing and publicising research on environmental damage and by other established techniques, such as petitions.

Such activists have been labelled 'conservationists' (Porritt 1984), as they do not promote deep social change, or 'environmentalists' as opposed to 'ecologists' (Mitchell 1980), which stresses the managerial aspect of their activities within the establishment. Groups such as Friends of the Earth have used their established expertise in research and publicity to promote

the concept of environment friendly products as a compromise between the targets of industry - growth oriented - and the targets of environmentalism. They may also recognise the possibility of green consumers slowly becoming more sympathetic to the wider issues and targets of environmentalism, through their acceptance of green consumerism, and thus moving towards a more ecological society.

4.2.2. Radicals.

Radical environmental activists ('ecologists' (Mitchell 1980)) work outside the establishment, seeking a fundamental change in social values simultaneous with a recognition of the overwhelming importance of environmental protection. They are associated with the deep ecology movement (DeVall 1980) and concepts such as zero population growth, anarchic methods of community organisation and communal lifestyles based on voluntary simplicity (Robertson 1978). Such groups have links with other organisations such as the peace movement, Amnesty International and the animal rights movement, in that they do not operate within the establishment and do not seek to influence policy from the inside as 'candid friends' of governments and commercial interests (Elkington with Burke 1987) as do some traditional environmentalists. They use publicity and the media to communicate with the public directly, and often adopt controversial methods, not excluding sabotage of anti-ecological programmes and the use of publicised gestures made in person against those perceived to be harming the environment, e.g. bodily blocking bulldozers in Antartica. They also seek to

involve the public far more in actions and to avoid the charge of elitism. This group may view green products as a weak compromise rather than a preliminary stage for change (e.g. Rose 1990, Irvine 1989), and thus as far less valuable than do the traditional environmentalists.

There are a very few environmental groups adopting extreme, militant tactics along the lines of the more familiar Animal Liberation Front. Earth First! is an American group which adopts subversive, usually illegal, tactics to sabotage environmentally damaging commercial operations. The group is not organised in the sense that FoE or Greenpeace are organised, with offices, clerical staff and membership lists, but operates as an underground movement. It has been accused of driving iron nails through trees, causing electrical saws used in logging to be obstructed or incapacitated or to bounce back onto the operator (Walker 1990).

4.2.3 Other groupings.

Porritt (1984) and Mitchell (1980) both identify a middle ground between the traditional and radical ideologies outlined above. This is occupied by the centrists or reformists according to Porritt, and characterised as the shallow ecology movement by Mitchell (1980).

One consequence of some environmentalists adopting a consultative role towards the establishment was the development of a soft technology approach or 'soft energy path' after Amory Lovins' work in 1976 (Morrison 1980). Without advocating

reductions in growth, those environmentalists adopting the soft path pressed for research into energy options, such as solar power, which would remove pressure from fossil fuel sources and lead to more careful management of energy. Likewise, the advocation of appropriate technology, as explored by Schumacher (1973) but without his emphasis on the societal and educational changes to complement its introduction, was an important direction for the environmental movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Morrison has termed these ideas of soft energy and soft technology "evolutionary" rather than revolutionary, as they were generated by a critique of the application of 'hard' technology, not by a rejection of the value basis of society.

5. Concluding Remarks.

This paper has explored the development of the environmental movement in terms of its ideologies and activities, and its membership as its source of support and therefore of survival.

The movement is a prime source of environmental ideas and information for the public practising pro-environmental behaviour such as green consumerism. The movement highlights problems it has identified as important for action, thereby directing public and media attention according to its various objectives. It also acts as a representative of public interest in lobbying commercial and government interests in favour of the environment. To do this, the movement must secure enough financial support to be able to publicise and protest, and it must demonstrate that it has adequate support through public opinion in order to legitimise its demands.

The organisations embodying environmentalism and the public expressing it are thus closely linked in an interactive way and any consideration of one must recognise the influence of the other. Together they are forces for change in the way the environment is treated by humanity.

The other papers in this series deal with two other factors influencing and influenced by public environmentalism as expressed in green consumerism. The first provides clear and comprehensive information on the environmental problems which are related to the emergence and promotion of environment friendly products, and are high profile in the public eye.

The third paper deals with commercial and government

responses to green consumerism. The mass growth of the trend is dependent upon manufacturers seizing the demand opportunity and supplying environment friendly goods. The problems entailed by such demand and supply - misinformation, inertia, cosmetic technological change rather than social change - are also discussed, as are legislative responses, such as the 1990 White Paper statement of government environmental strategy. Also discussed is the response of the environmentalists to these problems, through its insistence that green consumerism should be only a part of a wider shift towards a society which treats the environment in a sustainable and benign way.

Further research is continuing into the motivations of green consumers as individuals integral to the continued growth and spreading influence of public environmentalism.

6. Bibliography.

Brown, Paul (1990) *The Guardian* August 3 p.19

Buttel, Frederick H. (1986) Discussion: economic stagnation, scarcity, and changing commitments to distributional policies in environment-resource issues. 221-238 in: Schnaiberg, Allan, Nicholas Watts and Klaus Zimmerman (eds.) *Distributional Conflicts in Environment-Resource Policy*. Aldershot: Gower.

Buttel, Frederick H. and Donald E. Johnson (1977) Dimensions of environmental concern: factor structure, correlates and implications for research. *J. Environmental Education* 9(2) (Winter), 49-64

Buttel, Frederick H. and Oscar W. Larson III (1980) Whither environmentalism? The future political path of the environmental movement. *Natural Resources J.* 20(2), 323-344

Capra, Fritjof (1982) *The Turning Point* London: Wildwood House.

Cotgrove, Stephen (1982) *Catastrophe or Cornucopia: the environment, politics and the future.* New York: John Wiley

DeVall, Bill (1980) The Deep Ecology Movement. *Natural Resources J.* 20(2), 299-322

Downs, Anthony (1972) Up and down with ecology - the "issue-attention cycle". *Public Interest* 28, 38-50

Dunlap, Riley E. and Kent D. Van Liere (1978) The "New Environmental Paradigm". *J. Environmental Education* 9(4), 10-19

The Economist (1989) July 22, 14-15

Elkington, John (1989) Going greener about the gills. *Marketing Week* 12(38), November 24, 56-60

Elkington, John with Tom Burke (1987) *The Green Capitalists.* London: Victor Gollancz.

Fortmann, L. (1988) Predicting natural resource microprotest. *Rural Soc.* 53(3), 357-367

Irvine, Sandy (1989) *Beyond Green Consumerism.* Friends of the Earth Discussion Paper No. 1. London: Friends of the Earth.

Lake, Laura M. (1983) The environmental mandate: activists and the electorate. *Political Science Q.* 98(2), 215-233

Lowe, Philip and Jane Goyder (1983) *Environmental Groups in Politics.* London: George Allen & Unwin.

Manzo, L.C. and N.D. Weinstein (1987) Behavioural commitment to environment protection: a study of the active and inactive members of the Sierra Club. *Env. and Beh.* 19(6), 673-694

McEvoy, James III (1972) The American concern with the environment. 214-236 in: Burch, William R. Jr., Neil H. Cheek Jr. & Lee Taylor (eds.) *Social Behaviour, Natural Resources and the Environment.* New York: Harper & Row.

Miller, J.D. (1980) A conceptual framework for understanding public attitudes towards conservation and energy issues. 61-78 in: Conn, W.D. (ed.) *Energy and material resources: attitudes, values and public policy.* Colorado: Westview Press.

Mitchell, Robert Cameron (1984) Public opinion and environmental politics in the 1970s and 1980s. 51-74 in: Vig, Norman J. and Michael E. Kraft (eds.) *Environmental Policy in the 1980s: Reagan's New Agenda.* Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly.

- (1980a) Introduction to a symposium on 'Whither Environmentalism?' *Natural Resources J.* 20(2), 217-219

- (1980b) How 'soft', 'deep' or 'left'? Present constituencies in the environmental movement for certain world views. *Natural Resources J.* 20(2), 345-358

Morrison, Denton E. (1986) How and why environmental consciousness has trickled down. 187-200 in: Schnaiberg, Allan, Nicholas Watts and Klaus Zimmerman (eds.) *Distributional Conflicts in Environment-Resource Policy.* Aldershot: Gower.

- (1980) The soft, cutting edge of environmentalism: why and how the appropriate technology notion is changing the movement. *Natural Resources J.* 20(2), 275-298

Morrison, Denton E. and Riley E. Dunlap (1986) Environmentalism and elitism: a conceptual and empirical analysis. *Environmental Management* 10(5), 581-589

Morrison, Denton E., Kenneth E. Hornback and Keith W. Warner (1972) The Environmental Movement: some preliminary observations and predictions. 259-279 in: Burch, William R. Jr., Neil H. Cheek Jr. & Lee Taylor (eds.) *Social Behaviour, Natural Resources and the Environment.* New York: Harper & Row.

Nelson, Elizabeth (1989) Shades of Green *Survey* (Winter), 9-11

O'Riordan, Timothy (1976) *Environmentalism.* London: Pion

Pearce, David, Anil Markandya and Edward B. Barber (1989) *Blueprint for a Green Economy.* London: Earthscan

Publications Ltd.

Pepper, David (1984) *The Roots of Modern Environmentalism.* London: Croom Helm.

Porritt, Jonathon (1984) *Seeing Green, the politics of ecology explained.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Robertson, James (1978) *The Sane Alternative* London: the author.

Rose, Chris (1990) *Perception and Deception: the Collapse of the Green Consumer* Wildlife Link White Paper Conference 1990. London: Wildlife Link.

Roszak, Theodore (1978) *Person/Planet* London: Gollancz.

Rudig, Wolfgang and Philip D. Lowe (1986) The withered 'greening' of British politics: a study of the Ecology Party. *Political Studies* 34, 262-284

Schumacher, Ernest Fritz (1973) *Small is Beautiful.* London: Abacus

Tucker, L.R. (1978) The environmentally concerned citizen: some correlates. *Env. and Beh.* 10(3), 389-418

Van Liere, Kent D. and Riley E. Dunlap (1978) The social bases of environmental concern: a review of hypotheses, explanations and empirical evidence. *Public Opinion Q.* 44(2), 181-197

Walker, Martin (1990) *The Guardian* August 17 p.21

Weigel, R. and J. Weigel (1978) Environmental concern: the development of a measure. *Env. and Beh.* 10(1), 3-16

Young, Ken (1985a) Shades of Opinion. 1-31 in: Jowell, R. and S. Witherspoon (eds.) *British Social Attitudes: the 1985 Report.* Aldershot: Gower.