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**Thinking Globally Acting Locally:**  
**An overview of local environmental activism in Britain.**

**By**

**Rob Vickers**

**Doctoral Thesis**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the award of  
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## **Abstract**

Over the last four decades national environmental groups have become an important means of political participation for many British citizens. Since the mid-1980s these organizations have established a number of local groups. There are still some gaps in our understanding of these groups, particularly relating to participation at the grass-roots level. This investigation examines the British environmental movement, focusing on those who become coordinators of local groups, and attempts to find the correlates of their environmental activism. The research reviews the existing empirical data relating to environmental activism, and theoretical accounts relating to participation. It also considers the significance of the emergence of post-material values, and looks at the theoretical framework that informs environmental activism.

The hypothesis that the conservation and ecology movements are effectively sub-groups within the broader ecology movement is tested, and the thesis explores the possibility that those who participate in these movements have different socio-demographic and cognitive profiles, and methods of activism. The history and development of environmentalism in Britain is discussed, revealing the fundamental differences between the conservation and ecology movements. To test the hypothesis a national, internet based, questionnaire was conducted. In total, 380 activists were surveyed, all of whom were coordinators of local environmental groups that were affiliated to one of six nationally prominent environmental organisations. The findings of the research indicated that although many national environmental organizations seem to have become closer together in terms of their core beliefs and objectives. There are some notable differences between conservationists and ecologists at the grass-roots level, particularly in relation to socio-psychological variables, and means of participation.

**Key Words:** Environmentalism, Conservation, Ecology, Green, Activism, Participation, Pressure Group, Social Movement.

## **Abbreviations**

BTCV	.....	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
CND	.....	the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
DiY	.....	Do it Yourself
EEC	.....	European Economic Community
EFl	.....	Earth First!
ERM	.....	(European) Exchange Rate Mechanism
EU	.....	European Union
FoE	.....	Friends of the Earth
G8	.....	Group of Eight
GDP	.....	Gross Domestic Product
GM	.....	Genetically Modified
IMF	.....	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	.....	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MORI	.....	Market and Opinion Research International
MP	.....	Member of Parliament
NEP	.....	New Environmental Paradigm
NIMBY	.....	Not-In-My-Back-Yard
NVDA	.....	Non-Violent Direct Action
ONS	.....	the Office of National Statistics
OPEC	.....	the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PR	.....	Proportional Representation
RSPB	.....	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SPSS	.....	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TWT	.....	The Wildlife Trusts
UK	.....	United Kingdom
WWF	.....	World Wildlife Fund

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **The Ambiguity Surrounding the Environmental Movement**

### **Introduction**

The earth's environment faces dangers such as global warming and climate change due to the greenhouse effect, pollution of air and water supplies and the exhaustion of fisheries and agricultural land (Oskamp 2000). Sobering international events, catastrophic weather conditions, detectable signs of climate change and a growing scientific consensus have increased environmental concerns during the first decade of the twenty-first century. Accordingly, environmental problems have become an important issue in Britain. On a global scale, the British public's greatest international concern is the environment and global warming (Mori 2001). Poll data suggests the majority of citizens think more should be done to protect the environment, and it seems obvious to suggest that everyone is interested in a wholesome environment (Jordan and Maloney 2006:117). However, relatively few people pay dues each year to environmental organizations, with only a small percentage of these becoming personally active in groups whose main activity is lobbying for a better environment.

In spite of an impressive body of research into the environmental movement, there are still some gaps in our knowledge of environmentalists, especially in relation to those group members who have chosen to become active at the local level. Analysis has revealed that the type of grassroots activists who participate in local groups are the mainstay of the movement. Kempton et al (2001) suggest that local environmental groups are not a less influential version of the large national organisations but are significant in their own right. They suggest that local groups are the key to building the social and cultural infrastructure necessary for sustained environmental practices. By building a network of autonomous local groups national environmental organisations

hope to spread knowledge and thereby change the climate of opinion and consequently public policy (Burke 1982:111-112). It is amongst this active minority that the essence of new social movement participation seems to be located. New Social Movement theory argues that social movement activists favour this grassroots model of participation over the opportunities provided by representative democracy (Jordan and Maloney 1997:61). This investigation will look for the correlates of grass-roots environmental activism, and attempt to test the validity of some of the hypotheses that have been put forward about environmental activists by surveying local environmental group coordinators. However, before we can begin to examine the profile of environmental activists, we must firstly turn our attention to some ambiguities surrounding the terminology we will be using. This is because a certain amount of controversy still persists over what exactly constitutes the environmental movement, environmentalism and even environmental groups (Rawcliffe 1998:14). Schlosberg and Bomberg (2008:187) point out that environmentalism has never been a single entity. The environmental movement includes not only the well know professional, mainstream interest groups focused on national environmental policy, but also the whole host of additional groups, organizations and networks ranging from conservation to radical environmentalism, operating at the local, regional and global level. It is an exceptionally varied set of networks of people and organizations with a variety of origins, ideas, strategies and tactics.

Rootes (1999:2) has claimed that the term 'environmentalism' has often been left deliberately vague in order to be inclusive, but the result has been some uncertainty about the phenomena so labelled. He suggests this may be one reason why the environmental movement has been somewhat neglected in scholarly literature. Therefore, it is vitally important to be explicit about the subject matter under consideration, and explain exactly who and what is being investigated. Hence, the remainder of this chapter will focus upon outlining what is being referred to when we talk about the environmental movement, what being a member of the environmental movement entails, and what the

differences are between being a member of the environmental movement, an environmentalist and an environmental activist.

### **What is the Environmental Movement?**

Environmentalism can be defined broadly as activism aimed at protecting the environment or improving its condition (Schlosberg and Bomberg 2008:187). As environmentalism has developed it has become a very diverse scientific, social and political movement that incorporates both the conservation and ecology movements. Consequently, the contemporary environmental movement is broad in scope. This has made it difficult to draw boundaries and establish a coherent environmental category. Fortunately, Lowe and Goyder (1983:9) have provided an insightful guide to exactly what, and who, is covered by the term 'environmental movement'. They see the environmental social movement as comprising two interrelated components. Firstly, the organisational embodiment of the movement: this is essentially any number of environmental groups that pursue common concerns. These groups are identifiable by a concise core of beliefs and particular principles of action. The common concerns shared by environmental groups can primarily be thought of as supporting the sustainable management of resources, and the protection and renewal of the natural environment by transforming public policy and individual behaviour. The second component is the attentive public, held together by a common purpose and ideology. While not necessarily fee-paying members or supporters of any of the groups, to some extent they share with them their values and goals. The attentive public also includes other organisations and social actors whose core aims are not necessarily environmental protection.

Lowe and Goyder's (1983) classification means that in some respects a very large proportion of the British population can be thought of as part of the environmental movement. This is because it only requires the attentive public to share a set of values and goals, without requiring them to undertake any action or have formal ties to environmental organisations. Therefore, everyone who is concerned about such issues as nuclear power, environmental



degradation and the quality of life is potentially a member of the environmental movement.

### **Who is part of the environmental movement?**

The suggestion that the majority of British citizens can be thought of as part of the environmental movement is supported by a survey from Morgan International (2006), which discovered that 58 percent of British respondents agreed with the assertion "at heart I'm an environmentalist". However, it could be argued that pro-environmental attitudes are cheap (Jordan and Maloney 2006:123). Caldwell (1990:85) has argued that 'environmentalists' should be thought of as the most strongly committed and concerned part of the all-inclusive 'environmental movement'. This suggests that being an environmentalist involves more than expressing support for environmental causes, or sharing values and goals. Thus, an alternative analysis of the environmental movement suggests that it is the network of people and organisations engaged in collective action in the pursuit of environmental benefits (Rootes 1999, Diani 1992). This definition requires individuals to undertake some form of activity to be considered part of the environmental movement. This considerably reduces the number of people who can be classified as environmentalists. Because, as Scott and Willits (1994:240) have found, while people express a relatively high level of concern about the environment, the majority engage in little environmentally-orientated behaviour.

While environmentally-orientated behaviour consists of many actions, the activity that is most commonly associated with being an environmentalist is joining an environmental group. As Kempton *et al* (2001:559) observe, when scholars and the public think of the environmental movement, they inevitably think of national organisations and their members. Not surprisingly therefore, various attempts have been made to discover information about environmentalists by surveying the membership of various groups. Within the section of the environmental movement that is mobilised into group membership, it is possible to establish a further division in terms of their level

of activism. With participation in campaigning groups is often being limited to the provision of money. As Jordan and Maloney (2007:88) observe “the low participation, cash-cow supporter is commonplace”. Thus, by far the largest *active* group is a popular tier of financial contributors, slogan wearers, and newsletter readers, who express their environmental sentiments primarily through these means (Kempton *et al* 2001:559). Jordan and Maloney (1997:50) have termed this group ‘soft environmentalists’, because in effect they hold consumer membership of environmental organisations. The second, much smaller group is made up of those who are personally active in environmental organisations. Many leading authorities emphasize the importance of drawing a distinction between these two groups. Jordan and Maloney (1997:30-1), for instance, have written that the sorts of explanations that are commonly associated with the environmental movement (values, organisational style, etc) may be restricted to the second group, “the small dynamic fraction of the movement”. While Dalton (1994:16) proposes that on one level it is possible to see the movement as the group of individuals who are personally active in green organisations.

There is a body of research which indicates that there are significant differences between on the one hand those who are prepared to give financial support to environmental groups, and on the other the activists. As a result, there are good reasons for distinguishing between the two. For instance, Jordan (1998:11) notes that while the membership of groups such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Friends of the Earth (FoE) are often aggregated to compile a population cited as active on the environment, many of these members may be neither very environmentally aware nor willing to act in other than a very low cost way. This is reinforced by Law’s (2000:283-6) investigation into the membership of the RSPB. She suggests that most of the million plus members confine their political participation to the regular writing of subscription cheques. Maloney (2008:2) reports that groups have found that less internal participation is an attractive quality in generating large-scale support. Many groups have found that chequebook participation is an efficient way to generate support because

many find such limited involvement appealing. Jordan and Clarence (2003:10-11) have conducted research into the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), and report that active membership is a real 'turn-off' for many people. They argue that the CPRE's remit is to develop a supporter base rather than a member base, since it is much easier to recruit people into an organisation that asks people to donate money, than it is to recruit individuals into a group which requests them to commit their time. Koopman (1996:37) similarly contends that "... for many Greenpeace or World Wildlife members, participation implies little more than paying a small yearly fee and perhaps putting a sticker on the back of their four wheel drive...".

### **What is Environmental Activism?**

Because the term 'the environmental movement' can be so all-embracing, it can be useful to distinguish between public support for environmental protection, membership of organisations and participation in groups. This research will focus exclusively on this last subgroup, those who are personally active in support of environmental causes. By activism, the research refers specifically to movement-supporting activities that are promoted by environmental organisations (Tindall, Davies and Mauboules 2003:910), rather than more widespread environmentally friendly practices, such as recycling or buying energy-saving products. Some previous research has grouped activists together with those who are essentially financial supporters of a group. Consequently, the profile of campaigners may have been diluted by being analyzed as part of a larger, but less active, group.

The activists who participated in the research presented here have all been coordinators of local environmental groups, which were affiliated to national organisations. Although acknowledged increasingly since the mid-1980s, these local environmental groups have often been considered of only minor political significance (Kempton *et al* 2001:557), and there are still gaps in our knowledge relating to their actions and membership. Nevertheless, Bosso (1992) has identified the expansion of grassroots groups as environmentalism's latest wave of development. While these organisations,

and their members, are not representative of the movement in all its diversity, Kempton *et al* (2001) suggest local groups are vital because they are the key to building the social and cultural infrastructure necessary for sustained environmental practises. Thus, local environmental groups are not simply a less influential version of the larger national organisation, but are significant in their own right.

Although environmental group coordinators may in some way differ from other groups surveyed under the banner of 'environmentalists', this does not mean that earlier analysis of the movement is irrelevant to this investigation. Before gathering any data, it is essential to review the existing literature relating to environmental activism; as it is essential that research is cumulative, building on the work of others (Arber 1995:36). This process helped to establish exactly what information was required to address the central theme of the research, by revealing a set of propositions about environmentalists' characteristics, goals and ideology. By comparing the result of this research with the conclusions of other enquiries, it is possible to establish how well the profile of high-cost grassroots type activists fits with the established depiction of environmentalists. Therefore the thesis will begin by outlining some of the more relevant aspects of what is already known about the profile of environmental activists.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The Correlates of Environmental Activism**

The following chapter summarizes some of the information that is available about the profile of environmental activists. Where possible it will focus upon data referring to those who are personally active in support of environmental causes. Studies that have examined pro-environmental behaviour (primarily) fall into two main categories: ones that have focused on socio-demographic variables and those that have investigated socio-psychological constructs (Dietz, Stern and Guagnano 1998:451). This investigation will attempt to identify key trends in the demographic composition of movement activists in order to produce a profile of environmentalists. It will also look at the cognitive dimension of pro-environmental behaviour. By doing this it may be possible gain an insight into why some individuals become activists when others with similar profiles do not. By examining cognitive constructs in conjunction with socio-demographic variables, this research aims to produce an overview of the social base of environmental activism. It is also informative to extrapolate data from other sources; in particular it is useful to examine some of the more compelling hypotheses and theoretical explanations relating environmental activism to demographic and cognitive variables.

Before reviewing some of the key findings about the composition of the environmental movement, it is important to be aware that there are some potential pitfalls with the data. Firstly, it cannot be regarded as universally accepted, as there are still some disagreements about the importance of certain characteristics. Secondly, it may not be directly applicable to the population at the heart of this investigation. Many researchers have measured activism in terms of whether or not individuals join, and become members of, an organisation (Tindall, Davies and Mauboules 2003:917). Whilst this is an important form of participation, many individuals who join 'mail order'

environmental groups only have what is essentially a financial relationship with the organisation. Hence, unlike the participants in this investigation, they may not necessarily be highly active in support of environmental causes. It is feasible that the characteristics of those who take part in low-cost types of participation such as cheque-book group membership, are different from the characteristics of those who take part in high-cost forms of participation, such as becoming group coordinators.

Regardless of these minor complications, there is some very useful information to work with. Encouragingly, most of the investigations into the composition of the environmental movement have produced broadly similar results (Byrne 1997:63), which means it is possible to identify some key trends. The available evidence suggests that if there is such a thing as a typical member of the environmental movement, they are likely to be well educated, probably to degree level. They are also liable to be employed outside the private/market sector, in personal service type professions such as education or medicine, with an income which is above average, but below similarly qualified people working in the private sector. Additionally, environmentalists have often been described as middle class, left-wing and post-materialist (Byrne 1997:63, Jordan and Maloney 1997:121, Dalton 1994:64-5, Cotgrove 1982:19-20, Van Liere and Dunlap 1980:192). All of these points are reasonably uncontroversial. Perhaps less widely held is the notion that members of the environmental movement are also likely to be comparatively young (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980:189) and female (Mohai 1992). The rest of this chapter will be devoted to examining some of the evidence that supports these findings, and looking at some of the more germane explanations for them.

## **Socio-demographic Factors and Environmental Activism**

### **Education**

An individual's level of education is commonly cited as the demographic factor with the most bearing on the prospect of their becoming environmentally active. There is a respected body of research to confirm the idea that the

highly educated are the mainstay of the environmental movement. Towards the end of the 1970s Cotgrove (1982) looked into environmental group membership. He found that 63 percent had been educated for at least 14 years, compared with a national average of 28 percent at that time. A survey of Green Party members in the Midlands in the early 1990s also discovered that the majority were highly educated, with 60 percent holding a degree or diploma (Byrne 1997:67). Jordan and Maloney (1997:110-1) conducted research into the membership of FoE in the mid-1990s and reported that its membership was skewed towards those with higher educational attainment. In total, 37 percent of their sample had a degree, compared with only eight percent of the general population at that point. More recently, Jordan and Maloney (2006:121-26) have investigated concern for the environment amongst the UK population. They reported that those who join environmental organizations are more highly educated than the population as a whole, with 56 percent of members having a university education. Thus, as Ingram, Colnic and Mann (1995:123) observe, people who join environmental groups differ most strongly from the public as a whole in the level of higher education they receive.

One reason so many environmental activists are highly educated, perhaps results from the fact that the ownership of a degree (or equivalent qualification) is probably the single most important resource of those who are inclined to participate in political activism. Obviously resources are a standard, but crucial, variable in accounting for political participation (Jordan and Maloney 2006:121). Parry, Moyser and Day (1992:69) have found that "degree holders are not only an educational elite, but they are also a participatory elite". While Seyd and Whiteley (1992) have also argued that those with higher educational attainment appear to have a greater sense of political efficacy. This may have implications for the development of the environmental movement in Britain. From the mid-1960s onwards participation in higher education doubled in just a few years with the creation of polytechnics, and expansion of traditional universities. In the late 1980s and early 1990s participation doubled again with the removal of quotas on student

numbers, and the creation of new universities from the former polytechnics. All of this meant that the proportion of young people going to university to study full-time increased from 13 percent in 1980 to 33 percent in 2000. By 2005 41.5 percent of all those aged 18-30 entered higher education (National Statistics 2005). This expansion in higher education may have facilitated an overall increase in the amount of environmental activism, since it resulted in a larger proportion of highly educated people in the population who could be mobilise in support of green causes. It may help to explain why environmental group membership rose from approximately three quarters of a million in 1971, to nearly six million by 2002 (Social Trends 33).

### **Occupation**

Cotgrove and Duff (1981:102) suggest that when we look at the occupation of environmentalists, what is remarkable is the relatively high proportion employed in the personal service professions and creative arts; that is, in non-productive occupations in which material goals and values are less important. Cotgrove's (1982:20) investigation into environmental group members revealed that 64 percent were employed outside market sector occupations, the majority being employed in service, welfare and creative arts type professions such as social workers, doctors, teachers and lecturers. Subsequent research focussing on Green Party members found a similar pattern, with 38 percent of respondents being employed in the public sector, and almost a quarter being either teachers or students (Byrne 1997:67). Jordan and Maloney (1997:112) have also reported that the overwhelming majority of FoE members were in professional, managerial or senior administrative positions, with no less than 48.4 of FoE members being in professional or technical occupations, and 11 percent being managers or senior administrators. Once again the bulk of these were in non-market occupations such as doctors, teachers and local authority officers. This characteristic appears to have remained a key feature, with Jordan and Maloney (2006:125-6) having recently discovered that the majority of environmental groups members are in managerial / professional occupations.



Most analysts agree that there is some kind of deterministic relationship between occupation and social movement support that explains the prevalence of those outside the private sector. Eckersley (1989), for instance, suggests that those who work in the non-productive sector have less of a personal interest in the productive processes of industrialised society, and thus are less constrained from taking a critical stance. On the other hand Offe (1985:837-50), contends it is the relative security of an individual's economic position that is important. Public-sector employees have traditionally enjoyed relatively more economic security than private-sector workers. As a result, they could expect to be less directly affected as a consequence of their protest actions, and would therefore be more inclined to participate in social movements.

### **Class**

Judged by criteria such as education and occupation, environmentalists have been widely labelled 'middle class'. MORI (2002) suggest a social class divide with regard to green issues. Public concern was shown to reflect people's socio-economic status: "if you are professional and middle class you are more likely to be environmentally aware and more likely, or able, to take action". However, Cotgrove (1982:94-7) suggests that the concept class is of doubtful analytical value, arguing instead that environmentalists are drawn from a specific section of the middle class. This is a 'new' middle class which emerged during the post-war period. It is concentrated in the non-productive sector of the economy, deriving its occupation, status and power from its knowledge. It has developed partly because society has become increasingly technocratic; therefore it has needed more specially trained engineers and scientists to operate effectively. It has also partly resulted from an expanding welfare state. As the state took responsibility for health, education and the economy generally, a new class of health workers, educators and administrators was required to handle them. The new class is commonly divided between a technical intelligentsia (scientists, engineers, etc) and humanistic intellectuals (teachers, doctors, etc). This new class is believed to have interests and values that diverge markedly from other groups in industrialized societies, with the majority rejecting the belief in the efficacy of

the market and the overriding goal of economic growth. It is these people who are identified as the key constituents of environmental groups (Lowe and Goyder 1983:10).

Environmental problems, such as nuclear power, have presented the representative political process with special difficulties. Due to the technical complexity of many problems, decision-making has shifted away from parliament to technocrats. Thus, environmental issues can be seen to exemplify the trend of a widening gap between citizens and government. Offe (1985) suggests that the new middle class became active in alternative forms of political action, such as the environmental movement, in response to the failure of conventional political and economic institutions to solve problems in society. Despite the expansion of bureaucracy, state intervention and the regulation of social and economic life, post-industrialised societies have been unable to confront environmental problems such as pollution and global warming. Offe contends that the new middle class have the intellectual ability to understand these problems, and become active in order to advocate a course of action to resolve them. It is in their interests to solve these problems, even if the course of action they recommend is believed to benefit everyone.

### **Age**

It has frequently been suggested that young people tend to be more concerned about environmental quality than older people. Writing at the start of the 1980s Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:189) reported that the bulk of empirical evidence clearly supported this theory. When Parry, Moyser and Day (1992:214) studied participation in Britain over a decade later, they too found that amongst all the age groups, people in the 18 to 29 bracket were the strongest supporters of green ideas.

Because the young are supposed to be the most concerned about, and supportive of, green ideas, it seems logical to suggest that the environmental movement will attract a disproportionately large number of young members. There is some persuasive evidence to support this hypothesis. For instance,

Rudig, Franklin and Bennie (1991:10-14) studied Green voters at the 1989 European Parliamentary elections and concluded that the main socio-demographic links to Green voting were youth and education, and of these youth was the slightly more important. Bennie and Rudig (1993:14-9) also reported that many young people took up environmentalism as an issue in the late 1980s. They discovered that 23 percent of those under 21 were making a financial contribution to environmental associations. This data coincides with Jordan and Maloney's (1997:115) finding that FoE is predominantly an organisation of the young, with 62 percent of its new members being under 35 years old. Thus, the British green movement does seem to have a distinct social base in the young, particularly if they are better educated (Dalton 1994:67).

Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations offers us an interesting explanation of why the young maybe drawn to environmentalism. He suggests that important historical events occurring at the crucial adolescent and young adult phase of the life cycle can permanently affect a cohort throughout its existence. Those socialized in the past three decades have experienced a growing concern about the consequences of environmental degradation on human health, safety and even survival. Thus, Mannheim's theory would lead us to suspect that continued exposure to warnings about the environment from environmental groups and in the media, would leave an indelible imprint on many young people, forming an ecology-orientated generation whose desire for environmental reform should not fade in later life.

Hence, concern could encourage the young to join the environmental movement, and the stage of their lives could help to facilitate their activism. The concept of 'biographical availability' explains that the circumstances of a person's life may encourage or constrain participation. The young tend to have fewer responsibilities such as families, careers and mortgages that can act as a constraint on participation. Consequently, as McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1988:709) note, movements such as environmentalism generally have high numbers of students and autonomous professionals active within them.

Leading on from this, it seems logical to suggest that because the young are less integrated into the economic system, they have more freedom to participate in high cost or unconventional forms of participation. Thus, we would expect to find that the more radical sections of the environmental movement will draw the majority of its support from the young, because they do not have the personal constraints that increase the costs and risks of participation.

However, from recent survey evidence Jordan and Maloney (2006:125) have found that while there is only a slight variation in age, environmental tend to be a little older than non-members. While MORI (2002) have reported that there is a distinct lack of green activity undertaken by the young. Despite being future guardians of the planet, 15-24 year olds are less likely to purchase environmentally friendly products than older groups, and 39 percent of them saying they don't have time to be green.

### **Gender**

The information which is available about the way that gender is related to environmental activism is not conclusive (Tindall, Davies and Mauboules 2003:910, Mohai 1992:1, Van Liere and Dunlap 1980:185). However, accumulated research findings do show that women tend to express higher levels of concern about technology and the environment than men do (Davidson and Freudenburg 1996:302, Van Liere and Dunlap 1980:191). For example, Rudig, Franklin and Bennie (1991:16) found that in the British Social Attitudes survey, and a number of other public opinion polls, women are usually found to be more concerned about the environment, nuclear weapons and nuclear power, than are men. Parry, Moyser and Day's (1992:144) survey of British participation reported a green/peace subset that was 59.9 percent female (weighed against 56.6 percent of the whole sample being women). From these types of findings it has been inferred that women are more likely to participate in the environmental moment (Mohai 1992). It is certainly true that women are well represented in environmental groups, belonging to as many, if not more, formal and informal groups as men do. However, surveys of conservation organisations in Canada carried out by Tindall, Davies and

Mauboules (2003:910-26), found that although women engage in more environmentally friendly behaviour (such as recycling) than men do, they are not more active in environmental organisations. Jordan and Maloney (2006:126) found that in Britain however, 56 percent of environmental group members were female. This suggest there maybe a significant gender divergence, which is worthy of further investigation.

### **Political Orientation**

Studies have regularly found an association between being ideologically located on the left of the political spectrum and environmental participation. For instance, Cotgrove (1982:90) discovered that 55 percent of environmentalists identified with the left, compared with 21 percent identifying with the right. Seyd and Whitely (1992:92) also reported an apparent connection between environmentalism and the left, with 16 percent of Labour Party members being members of Greenpeace, and 8 percent being members of FoE.

Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:185) have produced a plausible explanation as to why environmental campaigning is typically split along left/right partisan lines. This is based upon the different ideological position of those on the right/conservatives compared with left-wing/liberals. They argue that the right oppose 'big government', and favour business, which leads them to reject environmental reforms because they are associated with an extension of government activities and regulations that involve additional costs for business. However, those with a left-wing/liberal stance, who are perhaps less convinced about the efficacy of the market or the overriding goal of economic growth, may be more receptive to pro-environmental action (Dunlap 1975). In addition, Evan, Taylor and Heath (1994:12) have found that those with left/liberal political orientations tend to share similar attitudes towards libertarian/authoritarian matters that make them more receptive to new agenda issues like environmentalism.

## **Socio-demographic Factors as a Determinant of Environmental Activism**

Researchers have had only partial success in discovering the social base of environmental activism. The evidence suggests that the socio-demographic variables of education, occupation, age and gender have some bearing on participation in environmental groups. However, we must be cautious about reading too much into the correlation between these variables and environmental activism. As Cotgrove (1982:18-9) warns, useful correlates are relatively few, and some of these are quite modest. Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:193) also note that environmental activism is by no means restricted to persons who have such characteristics. Furthermore, studies have found that higher occupational status and educational attainment tend to promote higher participation generally (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992, Verba and Nie 1972:12), rather than solely in relation to the environment.

Hence, while many analysts stress that support for the green movement is conditioned by an individual's social location, socio-demographic factors alone do not seem to provide a totally comprehensive account of activism. Accordingly, many theorists have also looked at cognitive factors such as values, attitudes and beliefs as an explanation of public support for environmentalism. Oreg and Katz-Gerro (2006:462-3) suggest that studies which have employed such cognitive constructs have been more successful in predicting pro-environmental behaviours than those which focus on socio-demographic variables.

## **Cognitive Factors and Environmental Activism**

Examining the cognitive dimension of environmental movement support entails getting inside the minds of those who become involved, trying to establish why they become active when others with similar backgrounds do not. One of the most influential explanations is Inglehart's (1971, 1990) theory of materialist and post-materialist values. The post-materialism hypothesis seems to involve constructs that are most directly related to the context of this study, as it includes references to environmental issues and has been previously used in environmental contexts. Studies which have applied the

post-materialist thesis to environmental research have demonstrated that public support for environmental protection stems from the emergence of post-materialist values (Oreg and Katz-Gerro 2006:467-8). Research has also documented that post-material values are the single strongest predictor of membership of environmental groups and green parties (Dalton 1994: 66-7). Having joined an environmental group post-materialists are seven times more likely than materialists to become active members, and much likelier to undertake high cost types of action such as taking part in demonstrations or contributing money (Inglehart 1995:68). As a result, the green movement is generally considered the archetypal example of post-material politics. Consequently, an assessment of Inglehart's theory is an indispensable part of this investigation.

### **Post-Materialism and Environmentalism**

Ronald Inglehart (1990:4) suggests that: "The Values of Western publics have been shifting from an overwhelming emphasis on material well being and physical security towards greater emphasis on the quality of life". This shift towards 'post-materialist' value priorities is said to have brought new political issues, especially environmentalism, to the centre of the national stage (Inglehart 1990:66). Compared to those with materialist values, who emphasize economic and physical security above all, post-materialists are considered much more likely to give high priority to protecting the environment, and to become active members of environmental groups (Inglehart 1995:57). Hence, post-materialist values can be thought of as a significant correlate of environmental activism.

Inglehart explains the connection between post-material values and pro-environmental behaviour by drawing on Maslow's (1943) theory of human motivation. Maslow claimed that people are motivated by a series of needs, beginning with basic physiological needs such as food and shelter, and progressing to social needs like belonging and status, finally culminating in self-actualisation needs. This process is sequential; the emergence of the need for self actualisation (the desire to achieving one's true potential) rests

upon the prior satisfaction of physiological and social needs (Maslow 1943:136). Inglehart modified this approach to the study of political motivation by suggesting that individuals pursue various goals in hierarchical order – giving maximum attention to the things they sense to be the most important unsatisfied need at a given time (Inglehart 1971:991). Inglehart applied this theory to Western societies since the end of the Second World War. He observed that unprecedented levels of economic growth meant that the younger, and more prosperous, groups in these societies had grown up in conditions of exceptionally high affluence. This enabled them to take material well-being and economic security for granted, hence, they could act in pursuit of goals which no longer had a direct relationship to the imperatives of material security.

As a result, Inglehart argues, progressively more people are becoming able to move up the needs hierarchy, meaning basic values and goals are gradually shifting from giving top priority to economic growth and consumption, to placing increasing emphasis on the quality of life. A consequence of this change in values has been a rise in environmental consciousness, and a higher priority for environmental protection among these publics (Inglehart 1995:61-2). Given that post-material values are believed to have an actual causal effect on behaviour, this is a potential cause of increased environmental activism in certain societies (Inglehart 1995:64). A closer examination of Inglehart's model reveals that the projected socio-demographic, and cognitive, profile of post-materialists is remarkably similar to the profile of environmental activists that was uncovered by empirical research.

### **The Model of Post-Materialism**

Post-materialism is based on two central hypotheses: a scarcity hypothesis which states that individuals place greatest subjective value on those things that are in relatively short supply, and a socialization hypothesis which contends that people's basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during their pre-adult years (Jordan and Maloney 1997:133). The scarcity hypothesis would lead us to expect the new ordering of values to manifest themselves



first, and most fully, among those groups that have attained the highest levels of affluence. The poorer sections of society will still tend to value the more basic physiological needs. Individuals with a somewhat more comfortable margin of economic security may shift their focus, coming to desire worldly goods as a symbol of affluence, more to enhance their status than for the utility of the goods themselves (Inglehart 1971:991). But, only the most affluent groups will be able to pass beyond these stages, acting in pursuit of goals relating to the aesthetic and intellectual needs at the top of the hierarchy.

Inglehart (1981:895) suggests that post-materialism infiltrated into the technocratic and professional elites from the 1960s onwards, and was thus a major contributing factor to the unique profile of the new middle class. Post-materialism's link with affluence explains why a new class with these specific characteristics emerged at this particular point in history. The new middle class was not only distinctive in its occupational and educational characteristics, but also in its values. The ideology attributed to the new middle class closely matches that of post-materialism. Cotgrove (1982:96) discovered that it was this group of highly educated and well-paid young technocrats that emerged as the main constituency of the budding environmental movement. This conforms to Inglehart's theory, since the material needs of the new middle class were relatively satisfied and secure, they did not have to be so concerned about policies designed to increase economic growth and material security. This left them free to focus on issues that were either the consequences of economic growth, such as pollution, or to do with self-expression, like the opportunity to participate. In this sense, the new middle class could be thought of as having moved on to the next level of motivation, from materialism to post-materialism (Byrne 1997:80-1).

At the level of ideology, the post-material ideals that the new middle class espoused paralleled the environmental values of the early 1970s. They both rejected the philosophy of market capitalism, and lacked commitment towards material and economic growth. They were also characterised as being

ambivalent towards authority, and lacking commitment to participatory structures. The observed relationship of environmental activists, and the new middle class, to the market place reflected these beliefs, as the majority were employed in non-productive occupations in which economic and material goals were less important, and in which non-material values were more important. Cotgrove and Duff (1981:102-3) explain this by suggesting that environmentalists try to choose occupations congruent with their post-materialist values and social ideals. Because they have achieved an above average level of education, a high proportion is able to be more selective in their choice of employment, choosing jobs that do not involve direct commitment to the goals and values of industrialism, and which match their generally anti-industrial sentiments.

The appearance of post-materialism signalled a clear change in attitudes, since previously both middle class status, and being highly educated, had been associated with a politically conservative outlook. However, the value priorities of the new middle class seem to be linked with support for radical social change. This has made them more inclined to support parties that address this political agenda. Thus, Cotgrove and Duff (1981:99) observe that political identification is a useful predictor of post-materialism: those who regard themselves as politically left are also highly post-material while those on the right tend to be materialists. This idea finds support from survey evidence produced by Jordan and Maloney (1997:135), who discovered that those who feel closest to the Conservative Party tend to belong to the materialist category, while those who feel closest to the Green, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties tend to be more post-materialist. Inglehart (1971:1009) also reported that respondents choosing post-material values are more likely to support the Labour or Liberal parties than acquisitive types. Post-materialists' political preferences are also believed to make them more inclined to participate in the unconventional political activities of the sort that have become associated with certain types of environmental activism. It has been suggested that environmentalists prefer alternative styles of participation due to their desire for individual expression, and aversion to formal hierarchies

of authority. In fact, Inglehart (1990:289) argues that "it is in the field of direct political action that the new pattern of politics emerges most vividly". Thus, as Dalton (1994:5) observes, the environmental movement has the promise of connecting abstract theories about post-material values with participation.

Inglehart explains support for post-material values as mainly the function of adolescent socialization. He suggests that the degree of economic security an individual felt during their formative years may play a key role in shaping their political behaviour. It is at this stage that basic and enduring values are formed, so that those who developed post-material values in their childhood are likely to stand by them during their adult years. While accepting that a change in values can occur during adult life, Inglehart (1971:998) suggests that the probability of such change becomes much lower after someone reaches adulthood, and probably continues to decline thereafter.

Inglehart (1971:1001) suggests that one of the most accurate indicators of adolescent affluence is an individual's level of formal education. He explains that in Western Europe someone's likelihood of obtaining a university education is very closely related to the socio-economic status of their family of origin. This still appears to be the case in present-day Britain. In comparison to other European countries, Britain has had a relatively low proportion of the population entering higher education. However, participation in higher education doubled in the 1990s with the removal of quotas on student numbers. But, many of the gains were made by young people with parents in the professions. As a result, young people in manual social classes remain under-represented in higher education in Great Britain.

Table 2.1: British Participation Rates in Higher Education: By Social Class

Percent

	Social class I, II and III (non-manual)	Social Class III (manual), IV and V
1991/92	35	11
1992/93	40	14
1993/94	43	16
1994/95	46	17
1995/96	47	17
1996/97	48	18
1997/98	48	18
1998/99	45	17
1999/2000	45	17
2000/01	48	18
2001/02	50	19

(Source: Department for Education and Skills 2003)

Although manual working class participation rates in higher education increased from 11 percent in 1991/92 to 19 percent in 2001/02, they remain well below those of the non-manual social classes whose participation rates increased from 35 percent to 50 percent over the same period. Consequently, students in higher education are still more likely to be from families with 'professional' backgrounds and least likely to come from parents whose work was classified as 'unskilled' (Grundy and Jamieson 2002:2-16). As a result, the relative affluence of one's parents also tends to be correlated with the individual's own economic status. This means that an individual's level of education, and subsequently occupation, should be a rough indicator of the degree to which someone was economically secure during their formative years. Thus, although post-material values should be most prevalent among those who currently enjoy a relatively high socio-economic status, these values are understood to be chiefly the result of affluence during their formative years.

### **Conclusion: Factors Determining Environmental Activism**

There are some gaps in our understanding of the correlates of environmental activism. What we do know is that empirical research, and various theoretical explanations, agree that the socio-demographic variables of education,

occupation and class have a strong influence on the likelihood of participation. These socio-demographic variables are largely consistent with Verba, Schlozman and Brady's (1995:468) notion of representational distortion in their work on civic voluntarism.

There is also a substantial body of research which suggests that certain cognitive factors, especially post-material values, are associated with participation in 'unconventional' political movements, such as environmentalism. The post-materialism hypothesis has the added bonus of explaining the empirically derived portrait of movement supporters, whilst allowing for a cognitive dimension. Unfortunately, these initial findings do not amount to a definitive profile of environmental activists. Therefore, in order to gain an additional insight into the correlates of environmental activism, the next chapter will look at the theoretical framework in which the environmental movement operates. Doing this helps to clarify the goals, values and styles of participation that are associated with being green, and also suggests why it may be tricky to establish a single profile of environmental activism in Britain.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **The Theoretical Framework**

It seems obvious that an environmental group's aims and methods will correspond with the preferences of the individuals who make up their active supporter network. Brick and Cawley (2008) argue that movements have members by virtue of the fit of ideas. An individual will only participate in a local group if they agree with its objectives and its campaigning strategies. Thus, an activist's choice of group will reveal certain facets of their profile, particularly those relating to their beliefs about environmentalism and political participation generally.

Beliefs and values are very important for environmental activists, because these provide the legitimacy for their demands and actions. Therefore, when developing a profile of environmental activism in Britain, it is important to take into account the ideological beliefs which inform its adherents' goals and activism. Consequently, this chapter will examine the ideological framework that informs environmental activism, highlighting the fundamental philosophical differences that exist within the movement. It will then attempt to explain how these beliefs are translated into the different goals, and approaches to participation, that are associated with environmentalism.

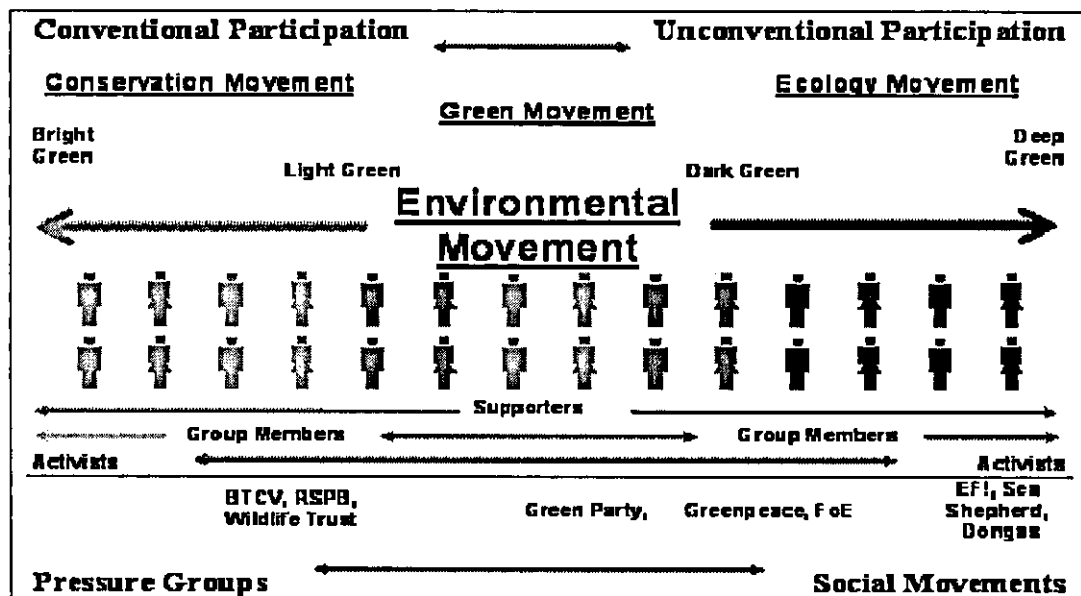
## **Conservation and Ecology**

The network of people and organisations that constitute the British environmental movement now amounts to a very substantial constituency. In 2002 the ten largest environmental groups had a combined membership of almost six million (Social Trends 33). The movement's sheer size means that it inevitably encapsulates a variety of concerns and beliefs. In practice this can result in environmentalists taking opposing sides over the same issue (Beder 1991:7). Thus, although it is possible to speak of a single environmental

movement, it is an established convention to assume that there are many shades of green within it.

Figure 3.1 gives some idea of the range of groups, concepts and beliefs encapsulated by the term the environmental movement. It is important to note that this should only be thought of as a guide to the composition of the movement. It is unlikely that any of the groups or movement supporters will fit into these categories as neatly as this, but most are recognised as having closer attachments to some ideologies, and styles of participation, than to others.

Figure 3.1: The Composition of the Environmental Movement



Due to the diversity of beliefs, groups and concepts contained within the environmental movement, it is sometimes depicted as a continuous spectrum from light to dark green. However, it is probably more accurate to see the spectrum as discontinuous, the point of divergence being marked by a paradigm shift (Beder 1991:1-3). Within the literature there is a broad agreement that the fundamental point of divergence exists between the older conservation movement, and the more recent ecology movement (Rawcliffe 1998:15-21, Dalton 1994:43-45, Cotgrove 1982:20, O’Riordan 1981).

Theorists have chosen different ways to illustrate this split; Cotgrove (1982) for instance, has described one group as Cornucopians who subscribe to the dominant social paradigm, and the other as Catastrophists who subscribe to an alternative paradigm. The difference between the two paradigms centres on material values including the goal of economic growth, with Cornucopians valuing the environment as a resource, and Catastrophists believing that the natural environment has an intrinsic worth. Other authors such as O’Riordan (1981) and Beder (1991) have also characterised two differing paradigms, rather than an uninterrupted progression from light to dark green. The basic premise remains unchanged: while the shade of green may vary substantially between environmentalists, they will all have ideological beliefs that are essentially focused on conservation or ecology.

Rather than identifying every ideological current within environmentalism, drawing this distinction highlights the fundamental differences in the ideology and goals of ‘light green’ conservation and the ‘dark green’ ecology orientation. By applying this typology it is possible to gain an insight into the types of campaigns and the methods of participation that the individual groups and their supporters are most likely to take part in. In general terms, the conservation movement can be described as a political and social movement that accepts the status quo of political and economic power. Its main aim is to protect natural areas for sustainable consumption. In contrast, the ecology movement label has become synonymous with the moral and sometimes confrontational critique of modern consumer societies, personified by social movement organisations such as Greenpeace and FoE, and that wants to see a change to the status quo.

The concept of two paradigms within the movement indicates that there are some basic and fundamental differences between conservationists and ecologists. As a result, the population of the environmental movement may be divisible into two separate groups. The research will investigate this possibility by testing the hypothesis that: because those who participate in the conservation movement and the ecology movement have separate concerns,



objectives and methods, they will have different socio-demographic and cognitive profiles and methods of activism.

### **Participation in Conservation Organisations, Ecology Organisations, Pressure Groups and Social Movements**

The hypothesis that conservationists and ecologists could have different concerns, objectives and methods, raises the possibility that they are effectively sub-groups within the broader environmental movement. This is based upon the notion that two distinct types of environmental groups exist within the movement, each having their own members and supporters. Klandermans (1988) outlines the concept of consensus mobilisation, via which a group's environmental ideology and organisation mobilise members by creating an identity that appeals to potential supporters. Thus, a group such as Greenpeace is selling a distinctive image of environmentalism with its combination of issues and tactics. Via this process Greenpeace is showing what the organisation stands for, allowing people to know what they are endorsing. Dalton (1994:11) also suggests that the identity of environmental groups is a product of the ideology of their founders and the behaviour of the group. This identity is seen by the groups' participants and the outside world. Thus, when individuals choose to participate in the environmental movement they are aware of the groups' identities, and are able to contribute to those whose ideology, goals and campaigning style reflect their own preferences. Therefore, individuals who participate in conservation organisations are endorsing a different set beliefs and objectives than those who participate in ecology groups. Consequently, they may also have different profiles.

This means that in order to test this hypothesis, it is important to establish the way in which the identities of conservation groups vary from those of ecology groups. This can be achieved by examining the theoretical framework which accounts for the way that environmental groups operate within the British political system. By analysing the range of objectives, beliefs and types of

activism that have become central to the movement, we can better understand the different paths that environmental groups have chosen, and consequently expand upon the profile of environmental activists.

There are two major sorts of discussion about environmental group participation: the pressure group perspective and the social movement perspective. In many respects the distinctions that are made between pressure groups and social movements parallel the distinctions that are drawn between conservation and ecology groups. As Byrne (1997:130) observes, the ecology movement embodies the defining features of a social movement, while conservation groups are more akin to conventional 'cause' or 'promotional' interest groups. Therefore, it is useful to consider ecology groups and their supporters under the classification of social movements, and conservation organisations and their activists within the pressure group perspective. By examining environmentalists' participation from these perspectives it is possible to shed light on some of their fundamental differences. Hence, this chapter will concentrate on identifying what the pressure group and social movement perspectives can tell us about environmental activism.

### **The Pressure Group Perspective**

The majority of environmental groups can be referred to as pressure groups (Lowe and Goyder 1983:7-10). Strictly speaking any organisation that does not put up candidates for election but tries to influence government policy can be called a pressure group. Although some pressure groups do contest elections, it is not with the intention of forming a government. Usually pressure groups have narrower concerns than political parties, contributing to the political debate from a particular standpoint without having a comprehensive programme. Along with political parties, pressure groups are the major agents of representation, facilitating the articulation of interests and causes by mobilising otherwise isolated individuals and defining their political concerns.

It is useful to review some of the sub-classifications within the pressure group perspective, because these help to clarify the position various environmental groups occupy in the British political system:

### **Cause Groups**

Within the pressure group perspective organisations are commonly characterised by the motives of their members or what they represent. In this context environmental groups are often referred to as either cause or promotional groups; alternative labels for cause groups include: attitude, ideological and preference groups. The intention of such groups is to advance the public welfare as perceived by its members. Hence, a shared ideology is a central feature of cause groups. Their goals, such as clean air for instance, can be supported by everyone regardless of social or economic status. Therefore, cause groups do not usually place any restrictions on membership as they are based on shared attitudes and values: people join because they want to support their objectives.

Snow and Benford (1988) use the term 'diagnostic framing' to describe the way a cause group's ideology provides the focus for its political action, the goals that are most important to it and the issues or objectives it will pursue. This is what Lowe and Goyder (1983:9) refer to as their core of beliefs and particular principles of action. Within the environmental context this can be seen in the issue agendas of the groups. For instance, some focus on protecting wildlife, while others are more concerned with nuclear power. Cause groups are usually subdivided according to the nature of the aims they pursue. Environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth or Greenpeace may be referred to as attitude cause groups, because their aim is to change people's attitudes towards the environment.

### **Insider and Outsider Groups**

It is also common to classify pressure groups in terms of their status, relations with government and adopted strategies. This typology highlights the way that groups use, and have available, different tactics to pursue their goals. In this context groups are either insiders or outsiders (Grant 2000:19). Insider groups

are the organisations that the government considers to be legitimate. As a result they can gain access to decision-makers. For a group to gain and maintain insider status it will be expected to play by the rules of the game. Thus, activism such as demonstrations, blockades, protest marches and other established methods of getting a message across to the public are not an option for those who wish to maintain respectability and gain the trust of decision-makers (Beder 1991:2-5). Similarly groups cannot do anything that may harm or embarrass the government of the day.

Some British environmental groups have deliberately chosen to pursue an insider strategy. For instance, Barbara Young, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency and former Chairperson of English Nature, has said of the RSPB:

We believe in a strong factual research base to our work. It's the persistent voice of reason that has been our most effective weapon in the past, rather than chaining ourselves to railings... The RSPB places great emphasis on influencing policy in incremental steps, on seeking pragmatic alliances (including industry) on an issue by issue basis, and generally working within institutional frameworks. (Kohn 1993)

Due to its policy of consensus-building rather than conflict it has been allowed privileged access to all parts of government. The RSPB is actively involved in the British government's roundtable on sustainable development (alongside the CPRE, FoE and the WWF), and has played a significant role alongside the government in key international environmental forums to the point of being the lead organisation in the establishment of the government's own Biodiversity Challenge Group.

The type of group selected for insider status will vary due to the government's ideological orientation, and other factors such as public opinion. Hence, an environmental group's status and therefore activity can be affected by factors external to the group, as well as its own ideology. However, no matter how much insider status an environmental groups enjoys, it will remain external to

the state apparatus. They only become involved in the decision-making process when expert opinion is needed. While some environmental groups can gain elite, institutionalized access to the centre of political and media power, in practice this access is not guaranteed or consistent over time. Others will remain excluded from this space of power, despite large support bases and formal organizational structures (Lester 2007).

Outsider groups have none of the advantages of insiders. They cannot expect access to ministers and civil servants, and will receive virtually no consultation during the policy-making process. As the name implies they have to work outside the governmental decision-making process. As a result outsider groups have to adopt different strategies to gain influence. Greenpeace, for example, uses actions such as blockades as a means of publicity. These stunts tend to be symbolic, aimed at gaining media attention rather than causing any real disruption. The goal is to raise public awareness about an environmental issue. Some outsider groups may aspire to obtain insider status, varying their tactics or waiting for a change in the political climate or government that may bring them insider status. Others have no chance of insider status. This could be the result of necessity; for example, none of the major political parties have supported nuclear disarmament since 1987, therefore CND has not been able to aim for insider status.

Thus some of the more radical ecology groups may not have a choice between seeking insider or outsider status. Their ideology would not permit them to become insider groups. For instance, Lowe and Goyder (1983:35) note that the most important ideological feature of an ecology group is its rejection of the values of the prevailing social order. Dalton (1994:47) concurs, claiming that ecologists want to develop a new social model, which he has termed the 'new environmental paradigm'. Cotgrove (1982:5-8) also suggests that ecologists want to replace the current economic and political set-up, claiming that all of the new environmentalists are united in a common criticism of science and technology, and an opposition to industrialisation. In the

current political climate no government would consider a group with such aims to be legitimate, and give it insider status.

Therefore, the strategy a group adopts is the product of the resources at its disposal, its public image, reputation and history. Snow and Benford (1988) have used the phrase 'prognostic framing' to describe the way a group's identity may define the political tactics available to a group. Some groups such as the RSPB, which has a conservationist identity and accepts the dominant social order, has had little difficulty in obtaining insider status. However, a group with a challenging identity, such as Earth First! (EF!), that seeks reform of the political and economic system as part of the process of environmental protection, may not be able to achieve or even want insider status. However, it is EF!'s extreme form of activism including 'ecotage' and 'monkey wrenching', which involve the disabling or destruction of equipment and property, that is its main barrier to political acceptability. Most mainstream environmental groups condemn such actions, preferring non-violent direct action (NVDA) instead; this is sometimes used by even the most moderate organisations. Nonetheless, by their very nature such actions are confrontational and for a group to choose such an approach usually demonstrates a lack of trust in the society's decision-making structures or a lack of access to formal channels of contact with decision-makers.

Some environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth can fall between insider and outsider labels. Such 'threshold' groups (May and Nugent 1982) use outsider tactics, such as organising demonstrations, whilst at the same time providing information to government officials which is an insider strategy. Dudley and Richards (1998) have argued that this is a sign of a new political era. They suggest politics is becoming a multi-level, multi-arena game, in which the use of outsider strategies by insider groups is becoming both common and acceptable. This may mean the distinction between insiders and outsiders is no longer clear-cut.

## **The Social Movement Perspective**

Many environmental organisations, especially those associated solely with conservation, can be thought of as traditional pressure groups. For example, the RSPB has always acted like a traditional cause group, relying exclusively on conventional lobbying rather than direct action. However, pressure groups and protests can be loosely connected through the pursuit of common goals. In some cases the resulting coalition can result in what social scientists often refer to as a social movement. Pakulski (1991:32) has described a social movement as recurrent patterns of partially institutionalized collective activities that are anti-systemic in value orientations, form and symbolism. While Tarrow (1998:2) asserts that the term social movement should be reserved for:

...those sequences of contentious politics that are based on underlying social networks and resonant collective action frames, and which develop the capacity to maintain sustained challenges against powerful opponents. (Tarrow 1998:2)

The ecology movement seems empirically very close to these definitions of a social movement. It is made up of networks of interaction between different actors, and groups that do not require formal organisation (Diani 1992:384). Also, the collective actions are recurrent and permanent, having taken place throughout Britain over the last four decades. Due to its composition Robinson (1992:46) suggests that many people see the environmental social movement as an open group. This means anyone can be an environmentalist; it does not require an individual to join a group or hold a definitive environmental ideology. But, in order to be a member of the movement an individual must be attached to certain environmental beliefs (Tilly 1978:9). Scott concurs, suggesting that a social movement is:

...a collective actor constituted by individuals who understand themselves to have common interests and, for at least some significant part of their social existence, a common identity. (Scott 1990:6)

Byrne (1997) has identified a social movement as something relatively disorganised, recognizable by its decentralised, open and democratic

structure. Due to their informal organisation, social movements are not the same as interest groups, although interest groups can be an important part of a social movement. While a pressure group is a formal organisation that has members, social movements can be thought of as informal, loosely organised networks, with supporters rather than members. The main thing that separates social movements from other collective actors is that they derive their main source of power from mass mobilization or the threat of it. However, they differ from protest campaigns or direct action in a number of important respects. Firstly, a social movement exists for longer than a single protest. Secondly, they have a wider scope than a single-issue campaign. A social movement can include a campaign, for example the environmental movement included anti-motorway protests in the 1990s, but this ran alongside its attempts to bring about change within society. Each campaign has the objective of contributing towards the goals of the wider social movement. Thirdly, a social movement is national or even global rather than local in the scope of the change it is trying to achieve.

A social movement's form parallels its ideological project (Scott 1990:27-30); part of the social movement idea is that they are deliberately unorganised, decentralised and diffuse in terms of their support. A central ideological theme of social movements in general and the ecology movement in particular, is an aversion to elitism and hierarchy (Dalton 1994:8). Ecologists are not interested in power; they have no desire to take economic or political power. However, the ecology movement is inextricably bound up with politics: "to save the environment you need to change everything" (Budge et al 1998:287). Nevertheless, social movements are primarily social or cultural in nature, and only secondarily political. Rather than trying to bring about change through the political system and political action, the ecology movement is more concerned with cultural innovation, the creation of new life-styles and the challenge they present to traditional values (Scott 1990:16-17). This can be anything from communal living to organic farming, but a recurrent theme is the rejection of hierarchy, sexism and racism in all aspects of their lives. This ideological stance means that formal representative democracy is viewed with suspicion,



because it does not provide sufficient opportunity for mass involvement. This makes it an unsatisfactory, and incomplete, solution to the problems of popular participation in the political decision-making process. Social movements offer a better solution to ecologists because they place an emphasis on control from below, and the desire to prevent an increasing distance between the leadership and the grass roots. Scott (1990:16-28) notes the distrust of representative democracy within the ideology of new social movements, asserting that this is the result of power being weighted in favour of the representatives who enjoy extensive autonomy, and away from those they represent. He goes on to say:

This critique of formal democracy is turned not merely upon existing social institutions, but also upon those social movements which have allowed themselves to be drawn into institutionalised politics and have developed large bureaucratic and oligarchical forms in the process. (Scott 1990:27-8)

Although social movement adherents may resent a change from the non-institutional collective action of social movements, towards the more institutionalised action of pressure groups, there is evidence that the character of the environmental social movement is changing, with some previously participatory and unconventional organisations becoming more professionalised and more willing to employ conventional tactics. For example, Weston has claimed that:

Friends of the Earth has moved from being the amateur, evangelical, fundamentalist ecocentric pressure group of the 1970s to a professional pragmatist organisation which is run virtually like any other modern company. (Weston 1989:195)

However, it would be wrong to suggest that the environmental movement has undergone a change from being a mass participatory social movement to a series of institutionalised interest groups. Like all social movement organisations, environmental groups face the choice between professional and mass participatory forms of organisation, and between orthodox and

unorthodox forms of action. Many groups have attempted to combine the two by having local campaigns groups connected to national organisations. It is these grassroots groups that Bosso (1992) has identified as environmentalism's latest wave of development, and they form the basis of this research. If the environmental movement ever became totally institutionalised it would no longer retain the identity of a social movement. But, as long as there is dynamism within the environmental movement there are likely to be those who will resist the compromises entailed by institutionalisation (Rootes 1999:2-8).

### **Instrumental Participation and Environmental Activism**

The type of group within which an individual chooses to participate discloses some potential differences between conservation and ecology group coordinators. But, an equally important part of this theoretical review, entails looking at the reasons why they became active in the first place. This helps to reveal why all of the group coordinators may have a fairly consistent socio-demographic profile.

Political theorists have identified a number of different accounts of what motivates some to participate in politics while the majority do not. An examination of the foremost of these theories helps to explain why research has produced a similar profile of activists. The major studies of political participation in liberal democracies have all assumed an instrumental position. Meaning that they have assumed participation is intended to promote or defend the goals of participants with the minimum of cost and the maximum effect. In this context instrumentalism is interpreted widely in that participants' goals may be altruistic, such as trying to save the Whale, or more narrowly self interested such as preventing a wind farm in a residential zone. Frequently these goals may overlap, as is the case with a number of local environmental campaigns (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992:9). Therefore, it is assumed that the fundamental reason why some people participate, while most do not, is that they consider that their participation is likely to bring about

the changes they favour; this will result in benefits for them that outweigh any of the costs involved.

### **The Economic Model of Participation**

There are some important differences within the instrumental perspective, with some proponents seeing participation and non-participation as a direct, rational calculated reaction to a given situation. This rational economic model of participation emphasizes the context in which people act, the issues that they wish to deal with, the interests that are at stake and the opportunities available for political involvement. Within this perspective people are supposed to act in instrumental terms, assessing the value of public involvement in terms of the likelihood of achieving their objectives, measured against the time, energy and aggravation that could be anticipated. The reason why someone is compelled to participate would start with the issues, needs and problems which they face and with economic and social issues.

Following this line of reasoning, to understand participation we must start with the issues and with the needs and interests of individuals and groups which they affect. Obviously peoples needs, interests and requirements are varied. They may be produced by their economic position, their education or their leisure pursuits, for instance. Hence, if someone is unemployed, lives in the inner city, or witnesses the impact of pollution on a regular basis, this will tend to push their participatory activity in certain directions rather than others. Research by Lowe and Goyder (1982:13) discovered that higher status social groups, showed a much greater awareness of specific environmental threats than did lower social groups. Similarly a 2002 survey by MORI found that public concern for the environment reflects people's socio-economic status, it suggested professionals and the middle class are more likely to be environmentally aware and more likely, or able, to take action. MORI reported that those who are in higher managerial, administrative or professional occupations were 30 percent more likely to take part in activities such as recycling their household waste, than those in economic groups composed of semi-skilled, unskilled or casual workers. This may help to account for the

social class divide with regard to green issues, and the prevalence of people with higher status backgrounds amongst environmental activists and group members.

The economic model does not view participation as purely a matter of an economic calculation of the likely costs and benefits of action. There are also social and ideological contexts as well as a personal context to participation. In addition, prospective participants must have envisioned their situation in a way that they believe can be modified via action in the public sphere. Such attitudes are normally a social rather than an individual experience, affected by interaction with people in similar situations and often developed by political parties, pressure groups and social movements which can raise a topic into an issue. Collective action can be regarded as a means of challenging the balance of power, giving those with little influence an effective voice. Hence, explaining the decision to become active means bearing in mind not only the individual calculation of costs and benefits, but also the ways in which the social milieu can affect individuals' perceptions of what their interests are. For instance, researchers have suggested that commitment to environmentalism reflects a political syndrome of middle-class radicalism (Dalton 1994:64). Ergo, the new middle class, the group of highly educated and well-paid young technocrats that Cotgrove (1982:96) discovered as the main constituency of the budding environmental movement, were not only distinctive in terms of their occupational and educational characteristics. There were social and ideological contexts as well which motivated this group to participate within the environmental movement.

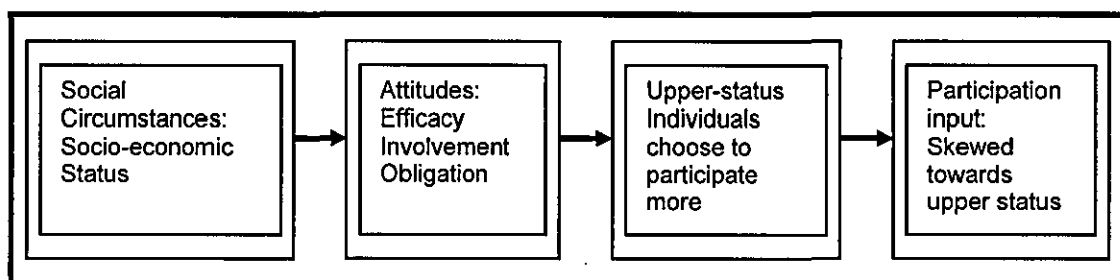
### **The Socio-psychological Theory of Participation**

An alternative instrumental theory argues that the decision to participate results from a number of social forces affecting the general outlook an individual has regarding political life, in particular affecting their self-confidence about any action they choose to undertake. It suggests that certain people develop civic attitudes which predispose them to participate. Their socialisation and personal environment encourage the development of skills

and resources which are encourage political interest and involvement. Civic attitudes include an interest in, and knowledge of politics, a sense of political effectiveness and also a feeling that there is an obligation to participate.

It is alleged that civic attitudes are generally more likely to emerge amongst higher status individuals, such as the new middle class. These individuals are better-educated, and, therefore, it is argued, more knowledgeable about politics. Understanding how to manoeuvre within the political arena they have a greater sense of efficacy. Their financial security permits them to dedicate time, energy and money on organisations which can gain political advantage. They are also surrounded by like-minded people who reinforce this general civic orientation. It is possible to express this relationship figuratively as below:

Figure 3.2 Verba and Nie's Socio-economic Status Model



(Source: Parry, Moyser and Day 1992:10)

Hence, it seems that many of the correlates of environmental activism are also the variables that are associated with the profile of activists generally. However, there are variables that are more specific to environmental movement, the majority of these relate to their cognitive profile.

### **What can the Environmental Movement's Theoretical Framework tell us about the Profile of Activists?**

From an ideological perspective, conservationists and ecologists seem to be separate populations. In many regards the distinctions that are used to differentiate between them closely resembles the contrasts that are drawn

between pressure group members and social movement supporters, with conservationist/pressure group members being thought to support the existing political and social order that is based on society's dominant values. This means that they are expected to recognise government by a parliamentary elite as legitimate, their aim being simply to influence decisions made by the governing elite. On the other hand, those who participate via ecology/social movement organisations are understood to prefer to influence policy through political pressure and the weight of public opinion, rather than becoming involved in conventional politics. As a result, they are characterised as being inclined to reject political parties, preferring instead to adapt their lifestyles in ways directed by their ideologies and values. By supporting alternative ways of organising politics and society they challenge the values of the ruling elite, and question their authority as conventional politics is replaced with the new politics of direct action.

Thus, the environmental movement seems to reflect the clash of materialist and post-materialist world views identified by Inglehart (1981:895), with the goal of ecology being to realize a society in which alternative post-material values and institutions can take root. It seems therefore, that the emergence of post-materialism, social movements and ecology are interrelated. Predictably, Inglehart (1981:890) proposes that post-materialists will be relatively supportive of the types of social change, and unconventional and disruptive political action, synonymous with the ecology movement. He justifies this by saying that since post-materialists feel relatively secure about physiological needs, they are more inclined to invest time and effort in other priorities and causes. As these causes have traditionally been given relatively little emphasis in industrial society, post-materialists tend to be relatively dissatisfied with the established order and relatively supportive of social change. Also, post-materialists have a stronger protest potential than other groups, because the disruption and property damage that sometimes results from unorthodox politics seems less negative to them, as they threaten things they value less than materialists. Hence, it appears that it is possible to draw a distinction between conservationists and ecologists based on their beliefs and

values. However, the existence of any coherent ideology within the minds of identifiable groups can only be discovered by further empirical research amongst the membership. Consequently, this thesis will explore the possibility that conservationists and ecologists have separate cognitive and socio-demographic profiles. It will do this by surveying local environmental group coordinators associated with a cross-section of national environmental organizations, and comparing their socio-demographic and cognitive profiles. Perhaps inevitably, theoretical distinctions in environmentalism will blur when tested against reality. Therefore, the next chapters will test these hypothetical predictions against the reality of development and change in the environmental movement and Britain socially, economically and politically. If these theories are correct we should be able to detect some sign of them in each of these spheres.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **The Development of the British Environmental Movement**

The beliefs, goals and organisations that exist within the environmental movement today are a reflection of the changes the movement has undergone throughout its history. This makes it difficult to fully appreciate the character of contemporary British environmentalism without knowing something about the way it has developed. Reviewing the history of the movement is beneficial because it reveals the diverse set of interests and approaches that have been embraced by various environmental groups and their supporters. As a result, examining the development of the movement can highlight why conservationists and ecologists may have different socio-demographic profiles, and help to enhance our understanding of the cognitive dimension of environmental activism.

#### **Environmentalism's First Wave: the Origins of the Movement**

McCormick (1991:34) has described the British environmental movement as "the oldest, strongest and mostly widely supported lobby in the world". Its evolution has been marked by episodic growth in environmental concern that has resulted in the changing number, membership, type and nature of environmental groups. Lowe and Goyder (1983:1-16) have identified separate and distinct phases, or waves, of growth in the environmental movement, each of which has witnessed the broadening and deepening of the environmental agenda. It is significant that the origins of conservation and ecology were established at different times by separate mobilising waves. Environmentalism's first mobilising wave established the British conservation movement in the period from approximately 1880 to 1910. Rawcliffe (1998:15) has argued that the environmental movement emerged at this time as part of the romantic and utopian reaction in Britain to the changes wrought by the



industrial revolution. It was during the first mobilising wave that many of today's most prominent conservation organisations were founded, for example, the RSPB in 1889, and the National Trust in 1895. Socially, established as upper-middle class organisations, many of the groups founded at this point were essentially preservationist in nature. The RSPB, for instance, was formed to prevent the extinction of the great crested grebe, which was being heavily used in ladies' fashion at the time. The society maintains that it was founded in response to this real conservation problem, rather than as a response to cruelty in the fashion industry. The RSPB contends that throughout its history it has been guided by such conservation principles rather than emotion (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds 2007). The main objective of many groups established during environmentalism's first wave was frequently to protect rare species or areas of natural beauty. Thus, while it is possible to distinguish separate components of the environmental movement at this stage, in practice their actions were often complementary. Although these organisations are perceived as moderate by today's standards, a group such as the RSPB could be described as a radical organisation at its conception, being both a campaigner on the use of plumage in 'ladies' fashion, and also a women's organisation (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:3-4).

Britain's concern for environmental causes came to almost a complete standstill with the onset of World War One. Nevertheless, the interwar years saw the conservation movement expand as another cluster of groups became established. The groups formed at this point were able to draw on a broadening social base of environmental concern. These included the Council for the Preservation of Rural England founded along with its Welsh and Scottish Equivalents in 1926; the Youth Hostels Association was formed in 1930; and the Ramblers Association was founded in 1935. It was not only newly formed groups that were making an impact, some of the groups that were created during environmentalism's first phase also made progress. For instance, in 1930 the RSPB named its first nature reserve at Romney Marsh, and a year later successfully prosecuted an oil company for allowing oil to

escape from one of its vessels. However, the Second World War seriously undermined the conservation movement. Hence, although important foundations had already been laid, contemporary environmentalism is fundamentally a post-1945 phenomenon.

Conservation concerns began to surface once again during the late 1950s and early 1960s; this was mainly due to fears that post-war urban development was threatening beautiful and historic buildings. Groups such as the Civic Trust, founded in 1957, and the Victorian Society established a year later, were primarily created to deal with these concerns. Local civic societies affiliated to the Civic Trust became a powerful force for conservation as they grew in number from 200 in 1957, to more than 1,000 groups in the 1970s. While this network of local conservation groups was comprised mainly of middle-class members, and was motivated largely by 'not-in-my-back-yard' type issues, they went on to provide recruits, frequently highly skilled and well connected politically, for the more radical environmental causes that were to follow (Wall 1999:25).

### **Environmentalism's Second Wave: a 'New' Movement**

The modern environmental movement emerged along with several other 'New Social Movements' during the late 1960s, and early 1970s. This was the time at which the post-war generation, the first group socialised entirely under conditions of rising affluence, started to become politically relevant (Inglehart 1981:894). According to Inglehart's thesis, value priorities are shaped by social and economic conditions, with post-material values developing when conditions of long-term economic security enable some people to emphasise higher-order values (Abramson and Inglehart 1986:5). It is therefore possible that environmental concern increased in Britain at this time due to changing value priorities amongst some of its citizens.

Environmentalism's second phase saw a new type of ecology-centred environmental concern sweep across Europe. It was also the stage at which environmentalism became a mass movement of global importance

(McCormick 1989:47). Environmental activity increased in two ways; firstly, there was a rapid growth in the number of organisations concerned with environmental protection. Group density (Lowery and Gray 1992:191) almost tripled between the start of the 1970s and the early 1990s, by which time there were just over 1,600 environmental organisations registered in Britain (Frisch 1994:140). Secondly, the membership of environmental groups increased dramatically. In 1971 the major British environmental groups had an estimated membership of three quarters of a million. By 1981 this figure had risen to just under two million, and by 1991 over four and a half million people in Britain had joined an environmental organisation (Social Trends 33). Nicholson has noted:

Quite suddenly, the long struggle of a small minority to secure conservation of nature has been overtaken by a broad wave of awakening mass opinion reacting against the conventional maltreatment and degradation of the environment which man finds he needs as much as any other living creature (Nicholson 1970:11).

Some of the organisations that emerged from the 1960s onwards, such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), were similar in nature to those that had been created in earlier mobilizations. But a new category of group was also emerging, stressing the increasingly global nature of environmental concerns. In contrast to the older style conservation groups these new environmental pressure groups, which included North American exports FoE and Greenpeace, used high-profile symbolic direct action to create media attention and place issues on the policy agenda (Robinson 1992:9). Along with home-grown green organisations, such as the Soil Association and the Green Party, these groups represented a new ecology consciousness in environmentalism. Their endeavours have helped to bring about a new type of environmental politics in terms of ideology, organisation and tactics (Byrne 1997:131).

### **The 'New' Environmental Groups**

In 1969 David Brower held a press conference in the U.S. announcing the birth of a new organisation call Friends of the Earth. Brower had previously

been involved in U.S. conservation organisations such as the Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society. But, he had become increasingly distant from conservationist organisations pursuing a 'wise use' agenda, because he felt they had come under undue influence from corporate interests, and had strayed from their original intentions (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:7). In 1970 Brower came to Britain to network FoE. He gave a speech to a group which included student activists such as Graham Searle (Vice-President of the National Union of Students) and Jonathan Holliman (author of *The Consumers' Guide to the Protection of the Environment*). A group was set up to clarify the strategy of FoE, and in 1971 the first UK branch was established. This was the first instance of an ecology group operating in Britain.

The seven founding members had not originally intended it to be a mass organisation, instead they had envisaged it to be 'small, centralised and dynamic' group (Weston 1989:34). However, one of their first, and most famous actions, was the high-profile Schweppes bottle drop in 1971, when 60 people left 1,500 non-returnable bottles outside the headquarters of Cadbury-Schweppes in London. This was the first occurrence of a British environmental group using direct action. The media attention it generated resulted in the FoE office being deluged by phone calls from people asking how they could get involved. Consequently, by the end of its first year in operation, it had attracted around 1,000 members. By the end of the 1970s this figure had risen to over 18,000, with almost 200 local groups being established. After initially being asked only to do things such as write letters to their local MP, or organise local bottle drops on Schweppes, by 1973 the local groups had begun to demand more involvement in campaigns. But their focus was mainly on running solutions campaigns like home insulation projects and recycling schemes, and they remained outside the organisation's formal decision-making process (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:7-8).

The ideology of Friends of the Earth includes an explicit commitment to participatory democracy, on the grounds that only a major expansion of democratic participation can deliver the necessary commitment to effect a

change to sustainable development. Therefore, there is an expectation that supporters will 'live out the cause' in their personal lives (Byrne 1997:133). Consequently, it is FoE that provides the major opportunity for the ecologically minded to take part in action at the local level. Whilst it encourages local groups to take part in national campaigns, each local FoE group is autonomous, and controls its own budget and decides upon its own activities. Therefore, they are free to undertake their own campaigns at the local level. Local groups make decisions by consensus, and voluntary input, rather than by a hierarchical structure. It is amongst FoE's local activists that direct action is most likely, although in practice they often combine conventional tactics, such as lobbying, with less orthodox methods such as demonstrating and leafleting.

Another ecology group, Greenpeace, began in America in 1971 as an organisation committed to the principle of non-violent direct action (NVDA), rejecting attacks on people or property. From its very first campaign against US nuclear weapons testing on Amchitka Island, Alaska, it has been very successful in choosing actions that have maximised media exposure. As a result, Greenpeace has become probably the best-known environmental group in the world, and has been outstanding for the consistency it has shown in its campaign priorities. It has continued to champion environmental protection in the areas of climate change, nuclear power, ocean ecology (especially whales) and preserving forests.

Although Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth are very close ideologically, when it comes to their organisation and decision-making they are very different. Greenpeace has an organisational structure that is not dissimilar to that of any private sector company. It does not have a conception of internal democracy in the sense of mass participation. Its mass membership is not there to set an agenda; its main function is to provide financial assistance and moral support. Nor are members expected to take an active role in campaigning, Greenpeace has front-line troops whose job it is to carry out its actions.

The first Greenpeace UK was founded in London in 1977 with four members and a budget of £800. By the early 1980s it had attracted over 30,000 members. This remarkable development has been repeated virtually world wide, so that Greenpeace was able to become an international organisation during the 1980s, with 49 offices in 32 countries. With an expanding resource base it has extended its tactics into more conventional areas. While direct action has remained at the core of its thinking, it now also exerts pressure for environmental protection via such things as reports on pollution, and exposing the safety records of nuclear establishments (Byrne 1997:138-42).

As a new environmental consciousness emerged the possibility of a green political party was voiced by an article in *The Ecologist* entitled 'A Blueprint for Survival' (1972), which proposed a political programme for the creation of an ecologically aware Britain. It anticipated the creation of a 'movement for survival' to influence government policy, and encouraged the formation of an ecological political party that would seek to win governing power if its demands were ignored. In 1973 two ex-Conservative Party members from the West Midlands, with the support of FoE activists, set up the Green Party (initially under the name the People's Party). The Green Party has participated fully as a political party, making it the only environmental group to attempt to engage directly with the political system. Almost from the outset there were strong differences of opinion within the party. The most problematic being between those who adopted a roughly left-wing standpoint, and those individuals whose political leanings had more in common with a right-wing perspective. The former identified capitalism, and the kind of urbanised life it encouraged, as the basic cause of Britain's malaise. While the latter rejected industrialisation as well, they also tended to support authoritarianism in family and political life. These disagreements resulted in resignations from both sides of the party. Gradually a new leadership emerged, and in 1975 the party became organised nationally under a new name: the Ecology Party. The party's philosophy was no longer defined in terms of its relationship to capitalism or socialism. Instead, decentralisation and an end to the pursuit of

economic growth were the cornerstones of its programme (Rudig and Lowe 1986). These ideas have remained central to the party's ideology.

The increased interest in environmental causes did not only benefit groups with an ecology orientation: conservation groups also flourished during the 1970s. For instance, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) had been formed in 1959 as a practical environmental charity, with a remit to provide a 'hands-on' approach to conservation activities. At the end of the 1960s it had a membership of 600 volunteers, providing around 6,000 working days per year for projects such as clearing woodland, recycling and education. By 1974 the BTCV had over 3,000 registered volunteers, and 57 local groups had registered with its affiliation scheme.

It was not simply groups formed post-1945 that prospered during this period; long established organisations were also able to increase their membership and activity. The Wildlife Trusts (TWT) had been formed as the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves towards the end of environmentalism's first mobilizing wave in 1912. However, the majority of its membership had been made up of specialist naturalists, and its growth had been quite slow. But by the mid 1970s the total membership of the Trusts had reached 100,000, and it had established 850 nature reserves covering almost 60,000 acres (The Wildlife Trusts 2007). The RSPB also enjoyed similar success, in 1960 it had around 10,000 members, by the end of the decade this increased to 50,000, and during the mid-1970s membership broke the 200,000 barrier (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds 2007).

### **The Background to Modern Environmentalism**

The environmental concern that began to emerge from the late 1960s onwards was triggered by a variety of factors. Amongst the most important were a number of influential publications such as Carson's *The Silent Spring* (1965) that highlighted mankind's potentially destructive use of chemicals and The Club of Rome's *The Limits to Growth* (1972). Their message was clear: that if the industrialised world carried on as it was, then crisis and collapse

were inevitable. This conclusion was supported by new scientific data gathered by some of the established conservation groups. In addition, a number of dramatic events took place in the late 1960s that provided a tangible illustration of the environmentalists' argument. For example, In March 1967 the super tanker Torrey Canyon ran aground in the English Channel, spilling tens of thousands of tons of oil. Then in January 1969, an oil-drilling platform off the coast of Santa Barbara blew out, covering 800 square miles of the ocean's surface in crude oil and causing widespread destruction to the Californian coastline. By the end of the decade toxins had massively polluted the Rhine River, an important source of drinking water for millions in Europe.

As a result the environment was getting greater media coverage. For instance, analysis of the proportion of space devoted to environmental issues in *The Times* between 1953 and 1973 revealed steady but minor coverage until 1965, followed by a three-fold increase up to 1973 (Brookes et al 1976). Dalton (1994:36) suggests that all of these factors combined to convince many ordinary citizens that environmental problems had become a potential threat. It is possible that these events had the greatest impact upon younger cohorts. Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations proposes that events going on at the crucial adolescent and young adult phase of the life cycle can permanently affect a cohort throughout its existence. His theory would lead us to expect that continued exposure to warnings about the environment from environmental groups and in the media during the late 1960s and 1970s would leave an indelible imprint on many young people. The 1960s cohort was the first to experience a growing concern about the consequences of environmental degradation on their health, and perhaps even survival. The result may have been an ecology-orientated generation whose views have not changed during adult life.

The new environmental groups that were established in the late 1960s and 1970s sought to deal with the newly emerging environmental problems. They employed a more activist orientated strategy and assertive political style than had previously been the case. Groups such as FoE illustrated a new model of



citizen action on environmental issues, frequently challenging the predominant social paradigm of western industrialised democracies. In doing so they moved beyond the issue interests and social base of traditional conservation organisations (Dalton 1994:26). For them environmentalism was not simply about conservation or preservation: while these things were viewed as important, their main focus was on the problems they took to be inexorably linked with the consequences of advanced industrial society. As a result, these groups had a more ideological and political view of environmental policy that was rooted in an ethical critique of industrial capitalism. They warned that the Earth had a limited ability to sustain contemporary levels of economic and population growth, which were placing ever-increasing demands on resources. Materialism and excess consumption in modern societies were cited as the main cause of shortages and pollution. Therefore, such environmental groups are involved in an important symbolic and ideological challenge to the apparently 'natural' dominance of the market and capital over the environment, stressing the importance of human, non-commodifiable values (Carrol and Hackett 2006:85). Hence, many greens have argued that the only solution to environmental problems is to change humanity's relation to production, and that the economy should only produce enough to meet people's essential needs. Thus, although the ecology movement draws on the findings of the pre-existing science of ecology, the two should not be confused because the movement has an ideological component, and within deep green ecology especially there is often a spiritual element.

Within the modern environmental movement, a belief was emerging that an impending environmental catastrophe could only be avoided by fundamental and radical changes in values and institutions of industrialised societies (Jordan and Maloney 1997:12). This was entrenched in a reaction to the impact of technology on the built environment and against the broader features of industrialism (Cotgrove 1982:11). In 1972 an article in *The Ecologist* entitled 'A Blueprint for Survival' reasoned that:

The principal defect of the industrial way of life with its ethos of expansion is that it is not sustainable. ... Radical change is both

necessary and inevitable because the present increases in human numbers and per capita consumption, by disrupting ecosystems and depleting resources, are undermining the very foundations of survival. (*The Ecologist*, A Blueprint for Survival 1972:15)

During the same year Commoner's book *Closing the Circle* (1972) spelled out some basic laws of ecology: everything is connected to everything else; everything must go somewhere; nature knows best; and, there is no such thing as a free lunch. Commoner put forward a powerful case that economic growth since World War Two has had an increasing impact on the environment. Production was characterised by new technologies replacing natural products, such as man-made fibres replacing many woollen goods. These consume more energy, and as a result can cause damage to the environment. The impact of technology has continued to generate an increasing number of issues for environmentalists including the impact of nuclear power and genetically modified (GM) crops. Therefore, from the new environmental perspective, continuing the trend towards industrialisation, growth in the scale of organisations and increased centralisation in decision-making was potentially disastrous. This means that supporting the environmental movement is seen as a threat to the established socioeconomic system (Dalton 1994:3).

A belief in impending environmental crisis was not the only factor to account for the emergence of the ecology movement. The catalyst was widespread support from the young. Although campus radicalism was relatively muted in Britain compared to some other European states, the student and environmental movements began to overlap. These new activists were more than just environmentalists' they were also social critics. The 1960s counter-culture was supportive of these new environmental beliefs (Cotgrove 1982:9), which mirrored the radical student concerns of the time. This meant the ecology argument could be seized upon as an additional criticism of the materialist society and conventional politics they disliked (Byrne 1997:131). Inglehart (1981:895) suggests that this echoed the clash of materialist and

post-materialist world views, with the environmental movement becoming involved in questions of whether to give top priority to economic growth, or to the individual's right to self-realization and the quality of life.

### **Environmentalism as a New Social Paradigm**

The new ecologists painted a gloomier picture of the future than earlier environmentalists had. Along with the liberation movements, environmentalists launched an attack on the optimism of the affluent society (Cotgrove 1982:22). The result was to challenge the post-war consensus in British politics that economic growth was the driving force of social progress (Cotgrove 1982:41-2). It had previously been taken for granted that economic growth was inherently good. However, a number of environmentalists began to argue that economic growth does not always justify the impact it makes upon the environment. Some of the more ecologically orientated section of the movement went further, suggesting that due to the scarcity of natural resources economic growth had become either undesirable or even impossible (Inglehart 1981:895). Nas (1995:275) proposes that it was this change in outlook that marked a turning point in environmentalism from an essentially conservationist agenda to a critique of prevailing methods of production and patterns of consumption. Previously environmentalists had not been anti-industry or anti-technocratic. Therefore, their goals had not conflicted in any clear-cut way with widely held social goals. This meant they were able to try to achieve their aims within the confines of the existing socio-economic system. However, the ecology movement's focus of concerns has meant they are sometimes in direct opposition to the values of the wider society (Lowe and Goyder 1983:35). The belief that the system as a whole will only survive if humans learn to coexist with other life forms, not dominate and exploit them, is what gives ecology its radical ideology. It is also the reason that ecologists argue for fundamental political, economic and social change (Byrne 1997:130).

Thus, the solutions the new environmental groups have offered to environmental problems pose a challenge to widely held social values. Much

of the post-war consensus was built on the assumption, common to all political parties, that it would be economic growth that would provide the extra resources needed by an expanding welfare state. During the 1950s and 1960s the overriding political goal had been the pursuit of growth, efficiency and modernisation. Politics was reduced to a debate about means rather than ends. However, the counter culture and student movement, of which environmentalism was an integral part, was critical of materialistic values. It marked the start of a rejection of industrialisation and the policies of economic growth, which placed the movement in opposition to many of the norms and institutions of the dominant political order (Dalton 1994:3). Thus, green politics has been described as 'new politics' in so far as it does not fit into the framework of conventional Parliamentary politics.

By the late 1960s the dominant political culture was under attack, as new demands were emerging that stemmed from non-economic values (Cotgrove 1982:75-90). Environmentalists attached particular importance to the need for fundamental changes in values if humanity was to survive. From the green perspective environmental problems were largely the result of the attitude and practices of large industrial and corporate interests, and the political system that tolerated them. A technological solution to avert rather than postpone an environmental catastrophe was ruled out (Cotgrove 1982:3). This meant underlying changes were required to the way society operates, not only in terms of actions that have an impact on the environment, but also in the way democracy operates. Big government was as much a problem as big business; only decentralisation and an increase in the ability of citizens to have an input can produce awareness and sustainability. Thus, Chisholm (1972) has suggested that ecology is not simply a strategy for human survival; it is also a new morality. Accordingly the new environmental movement represented a self-conscious attempt to introduce innovation into the social system. For instance, a major component of Green Party ideology has always included a commitment to political reform and devolution of power to regions within the UK.

While the conventional political system has remained dominant in Britain, new political identities have emerged. People and issues are no longer simply left or right wing; it is now just as common to speak of individuals as being green, feminist, peace or anti-capitalist in their orientations. It was not via traditional political parties that citizens have tried to bring about social changes, as they are often regarded as part of the problem. Instead the energies of campaigners have been focused towards social movement organisations such as Friends of the Earth and CND, which have structures that match with their participatory ideals.

### **Expansion of the Movement: Environmentalism's Third Wave**

The environmental concern that had begun in the 1960s and 1970s gained new impetus in the 1980s. This gave a sizeable boost to the movement; Lowe and Goyder (1983:1) assert that by the early 1980s the environmental movement constituted a major social phenomenon, having a larger membership than any political party or trade union. Environmental anxiety was intensified at this time by a number of issues surrounding Britain's greater dependence on military and civil nuclear power. Nuclear power had come to symbolize everything the post-materialists opposed, carrying connotations of complex technology developed by governments and large corporations in the name of economic growth (Inglehart 1981:896). Consequently, CND came to the forefront of the peace movement; it was dominated by the traditional left, but also had some degree of sympathy for green politics. Increasingly the peace movement absorbed the direct action energies of green activists worried about Cruise and Trident Missiles (Parkins 1989:222). But this did not impede the environmentalist cause; organisations such as the Green Party had always opposed both nuclear weapons and nuclear power. Hence, peace movement activists were increasingly identifying themselves as 'greens'. During the 1980s acts of non-violent direct action, including the creation of peace camps became familiar. These were strongly support by feminists and greens who tried to introduce a new critique to the peace movement by linking the threat of nuclear weapons to nuclear power, patriarchy, technocracy, centralisation and economic growth. The foremost product of this critique was

the women's peace camp at Greenham common, the eventual site of Cruise missiles (Wall 1999:33).

As the 1980s progressed environmental concern seemed increasingly to be a response to the growing awareness of the new environmental problems. These included the depletion of the ozone layer, the destruction of rain forests and the risk of global warming through increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The increased significance of environmentalism amongst citizens was reflected in greater media attention. Since the late 1980s all the major media have had permanent environmental correspondents. This has meant that it is no longer just the green minority watching programmes and reading articles about the environment. The increased media interest has benefited environmental groups, which have been able to exploit television and newspapers to boost the effectiveness of their campaigning. The increased publicity has also helped to extend their membership and financial base amongst a newly informed public. For instance, Jordan and Maloney (2006:127) explain that the leading position of the RSPB in the UK and its massive increase in membership over the last 30 years (from just under one hundred thousand in 1971 to over a million in 2004) reflects the success of regular high profile press advertising and a professional approach. They suggest the efficient recruitment is more relevant to an understanding of organizational growth than a spontaneous increase in the public's affection for birds.

The broader changes that had taken place in the social, economic and political fabric of Britain could also have contributed towards the increased importance of the national environmental groups. Inglehart (1995:63) suggests that it is no coincidence that as the post-war generation was becoming politically active, post-materialism became a significant social force and that shortly afterwards environmental concern took on a new salience. Cohorts born after 1955 were not part of the adult population when the environmental movement came to prominence in the early 1970s. But, by the mid-1980s these cohorts made up 27 percent of the adult population

(Adamson and Inglehart 1986:8). Thus, ten or fifteen years after the era of prosperity began the post-materialists, cultivated by the fact of spending their formative years in these affluent conditions, had started to enter the electorate. By the start of the 1980s this group had begun to occupy positions of power and influence in society (Inglehart 1981:882). This meant that the influence the environmental movement had initially exercised via protests was supplemented by the activities of young elites.

From 1983 onwards, the estimated combined membership of the environmental movement became greater than the membership of political parties. This proliferation in group membership meant the movement had to be taken seriously by politicians. However, it was not until the late 1980s that the national groups underwent their real explosion of membership. At this time environmental groups were collectively recruiting an estimated 20,000 new members each week. *The Economist* was prompted to write:

Environmental groups command attention in Whitehall in a way that Labour and the Liberal Democrats cannot. They and other pressure groups are already taken seriously by policy makers ... Who did ministers listen to hardest over the issue of water quality for consumers – Friends of the Earth with its 230,000 supporters or the Commons. No Contest. (*The Economist* 30 May 1992:36)

Rawcliffe (1998:16) has argued that the period from the mid-1980s onwards represented another distinct phase in the development of environmentalism. This was qualitatively different in nature from earlier movement cycles, because it has been characterised by a massive increase in the membership of existing groups, rather than the development of new ones. The membership of environmental groups tripled between the early 1980s and 2002, by which time the combined membership of the most prominent groups was around six million in Britain (see Table 4.1). It is notable that in terms of recruiting members, competition between groups was skewed in favour of those that were already well resourced. “In the UK organizations such as FoE and Greenpeace have to a certain extent, flourished at the expense of *both*

smaller and / or more local environmental groups (Jordan and Maloney 2007:178).

**Table 4.1: Membership of selected United Kingdom environmental organisations**

Thousands

	1971	1981	1991	1997	1999	2002
National Trust	278	1,046	2,152	2,489	2,643	3,000
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	98	441	852	1,007	1,004	1,022
Civic Trust	214	..	222	330	..	330
Wildlife Trusts	64	142	233	310	325	413
World Wide Fund for Nature	12	60	227	241	255	320
The National Trust for Scotland	37	105	234	228	236	260
Woodland Trust	..	..	63	60	63	115
Greenpeace	..	30	312	215	176	221
Ramblers Association	22	37	87	123	129	137
Friends of the Earth	1	18	111	114	112	119
Council for the Protection of Rural England	21	29	45	45	49	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>1,908</b>	<b>4,538</b>	<b>5,162</b>	<b>4,992</b>	<b>5,996</b>

(Source: Social Trends 33)

Rawcliffe (1998:73-4) contends that mobilisation on this scale suggests that the national environmental groups had become the major focus of public concern for the environment. A growing membership meant a growing resource base for many national environmental groups. This allowed them to develop as political actors, and enabled them to tackle a more ambitious and wider range of campaigns. Another result of this expansion was that some groups began to evolve into corporate organisations, with complex management structures, scientific research capabilities and sophisticated public relations and campaigning mechanisms.

Throughout the 1980s the environmental issue became increasingly politicised as a better scientific understanding of global change started to emerge. For the first time there was a scientific consensus on the major environmental problems ranging from acid rain to ozone depletion to the greenhouse effect (Rawcliffe 1998:65). In spite of increased public concern and mounting support, environmental organisations continued to appear



marginal to the political process. Bradbeer (2001:90) characterises the Conservative government of the 1980s as indifferent towards environmental policy. This was apparent by its lack of interest in environmental regulation: during the Conservatives' first two terms in office post-1979, the only major piece of environmental legislation was the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act. It appeared the major political parties would continue to lag behind public opinion until 1988 when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher shocked the Conservative party by giving a series of high-profile speeches in which she broke with earlier statements and proclaimed her commitment to environmental protection and conservation. For instance in October 1988 she asserted that:

We conservatives ... are not merely friends of the Earth – we are its guardians and trustees for generations to come. The core of Tory philosophy and the case for protecting the environment are the same. No generation has a freehold on the Earth. All we have is a life tenancy – with a full repairing lease. And this Government intends to meet the terms of this lease in full. (Speech at Brighton, 14 October 1988)

It could be argued that this apparent conversion by a mainstream party leader may have contributed towards legitimating the environmental issue. It has also been insinuated that this was merely an attempt to halt the rise of the greens. Nevertheless, Thatcher's endorsement had given unprecedented respectability to the articulation of environmental concern (Rootes 1995:70), which made many people who had previously ignored environmental groups and the greens take notice. Thatcher's expressed support for sustainable development was seen as a sign that environmental issues were moving to the centre of the political agenda (Jordan and Maloney 1997:9-10).

At the 1989 European parliamentary elections the Green Party won 14.9 percent of the vote, this was a ten-fold improvement on the party's share of the vote at the 1987 General Election. At the international level, the UN was encouraging the concept of sustainable development, and the European

Community was implementing stronger environmental regulations. In Britain, Mrs Thatcher removed the markedly unsympathetic Minister of the Environment Nicholas Ridley from office, as all the established political parties scrambled to obtain a green profile during the late 1980s (Rudig *et al* 1993:21). As green ideas became more significant, the policy-making process appeared to be more open to environmental demands. This enabled some environmental groups to gain increased access to decision-makers, meaning they could pursue more conventional tactics to lobbying the government. However, in order to gain and maintain this type of insider status, groups would be expected to function more like conventional pressure groups rather than social movement organisations, abandoning some of their more radical aims and strategies. In return they gained the opportunity to influence the government's environmental policies. From his review of green politics Robinson (1992:217) concluded that the parties had begun to address such issues as energy consumption, recycling and sustainability. However, he concluded that "the sacred cow of economic growth has not been sacrificed, nor is it likely to be in the near future". Thus, the sections of the environmental movement that were entrenched in a moral critique of industrial capitalism continued to find it impossible to push for their central aims via conventional means. The major political parties are still committed to achieving economic expansion but the new environmentalists have deemed this policy to be the basic cause of many problems at the heart of contemporary society.

However, if election results are anything to go by, it would seem that most voters find it difficult to support a party whose policies do not place a high priority on the material standard of living. In spite of the rise of environmental concern and post-materialism, the Green Party has had difficulty persuading citizens to vote for it in great numbers. Part of the problem has been Britain's first past the post electoral system. However, it is probably fair to say that the party's uncompromising ecological stance has also had something to do with its lack of electoral success. Since it was first established in 1973, the party has maintained a commitment to an ecological agenda which acknowledges that the pursuit of economic growth will have to come to an end. This would

mean restructuring trade so that Britain was no longer an important trading nation. The Greens favour a move to a different kind of economic system, on a reduced scale, based upon small units. They would like to see the development of stronger local economies that have their own banks and provide local investment. The result would be small communities that are as self-sufficient as possible, with people living and working locally (Byrne 1989). This alternative to the consumer society might be viewed sympathetically by the deep green portion of the environmental movement, but it is at odds with the prevailing consensus in British politics, and the way of life for the majority of its citizens.

### **Shifting Strategies and New Social Movements**

Throughout the post-war period many developments with major environmental impact such as power stations, motor-ways or the exploitation of North Sea oil and gas, have been promoted directly, or indirectly, by government. Hence, in the absence of a strong Green party, the environmental groups formed in the 1960s and 1970s have tended to focus on government as the initiator and promoter of economic activity. One method they have used to persuade the administration to apply an environmental perspective to its energy, transport and agriculture policies is by producing research (Lowe and Goyder 1983:24). Due to this practice, organisations that were regarded as the radical, activist end of the environmental movement, such as Greenpeace and FoE, became recognised as unofficial experts in various environmental policy areas and have increasingly been admitted to policy making circles. Crenson and Ginsberg (2002:147) assert that the new politics of policy-making advantages expertise and technical knowledge over the mobilization of large numbers of citizens. This new politics is open to all those who have ideas and expertise. For instance, Tom Burke, former Director of FoE and the Green Alliance, became special advisor to successive Secretaries of State at the Department of the Environment between 1990 and 1997, a clear sign that institutional doors once closed to environmentalists were in the process of opening, and that FoE's influence over government has increased considerably since the 1970s (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:3-10).

Increasingly during the 1990s many of the other groups whose traditional strength had been in more confrontational, media conscious campaigns also began to broaden their approach. As FoE has matured, for instance, conventional lobbying has become more central to its activities (Byrne 1997:135). Consequently, environmental campaigns became increasingly sophisticated, particularly in the use of the media, law and new communication technologies, and involved several elements ranging from lobbying and scientific assessment to consumer pressure and public protest. Doherty and Rawcliffe (1995:242) suggest that the energies of those who sought to create a green movement had been largely incorporated in conventional forms of political and social participation. Groups like Greenpeace are now seeking a role in constructively contributing to more environmentally friendly policies: so-called 'solutions campaigning' (Jordan and Clarence 2003:6). This change in stance was reflected in the Greenpeace Annual Report for 1996, which asserted that the task of environmentalists had expanded from identifying and explaining problems to making solutions to those problems happen. Gottlieb (2005) has argued that environmental groups have become like any other institutionalized interest group, defined by structure and devoid of independent agency. This is perhaps to be expected, Saurugger (2007:397-8) has noted that organized civil society, ordered as groups or social movements, has a tendency to become increasingly professionalized to represent the interests of their constituency in a efficient way.

Rawcliffe (1998:103) sets out the Weber-Michels law which suggests that bureaucratisation is the inevitable fate of social movement organisations. From this perspective, goal transformation takes place within groups meaning that an increased priority is place on the survival of the organisation. Change within the groups is characterised by increasing functional specialisation and professionalisation. Hence, as the groups age, the process of institutionalisation is accentuated as the internal structures of groups tend to become more oligarchic over time. Therefore, the need for fresh ventures

becomes more pronounced as existing groups lose their original enthusiasm and crusading zeal. Instead of championing new environmental reforms, they becoming the guardians of the ones they have already secured. Rawcliffe argues that during the 1990s, the personnel of many British groups has increasingly felt that the management of the groups has become preoccupied with organisational goals, and have lost sight of the groups' wider campaigning aims. Similarly, Murphy and Bendell (1997:58) have proposed that the type of technical expertise required by the large groups means they have to recruit specialist staff. The problem with this is that:

... in the near future environmental groups may have people in top management with no fundamental ideological commitment to environmental issues. These people may have more in common with company directors than ... the people whose environments they are meant to be protecting. (Murphy and Bendell 1997:58)

The gradual acceptance of environmental organisations by, and occasionally within policy communities, was seen by some within the movement as evidence of further institutionalisation of the environmental groups. Lester and Hutchins (2009:582) suggest that in an effort to be heard groups such as Greenpeace are mimicking the structures and practices of the governments and corporations that they lobby, thereby reproducing a regressive and conservative political structure. The wish for legitimacy in the eyes of business and political establishments, as well as the general public, limits their political capacity to spur genuine political transformation. Wall (1999:37) wrote that after several years of green movement growth, radicals were normalised, realists marginalised and stagnation had set in: "... the recreation of green radicalism had become a necessity for the green movement family".

### **A Changing Approach to Political Participation**

Conventionally, political parties have been the main means of channelling demands into the British political system. Their function has been to aggregate diverse interests into coherent policies in order to maximise support. However, some groups such as environmentalists have found it

difficult establishing a niche in the traditional political party spectrum. Because it is frequently taken for granted, the dominant social paradigm can systematically repress the articulation of alternative viewpoints. This means minority interests can find it difficult to find political expression, especially if they reject the importance of economic growth, science and technology (Cotgrove 1982:98). In the absence of a Green Party strong enough to raise these issues at the national level, those environmentalists who see the existing system as unjust and requiring fundamental change have no political voice (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:11). Consequently, some sections of the environmental movement have found it difficult to exert influence through orthodox means such as voting, party membership and contacting MPs or councillors. Not all problems are political issues being actively considered by governments. However, the agenda building function of groups can turn problems into issues (Jordan and Maloney 2007:8).

Whilst politicians have begun to see the environment as an issue of mass appeal, the programmes of the mainstream parties have continued to overlook many of the post-material concerns of the darker green sections of the environmental movement. Traditional left-right parties are still committed to the policies of economic growth that many within the ecology movement see as the cause of contemporary environmental problems. The result has been to undermine the confidence of some greens in the political process, since it supports a social paradigm that justifies and legitimates the action they oppose (Cotgrove 1982:89). Commonly, when people do not feel any party represents their views or interests then they may feel their influence over the system is reduced. This is perhaps why some sections of the environmental movement have chosen to replace or supplement conventional politics with unorthodox participation, such as protests, demonstrations, and marches. Dalton (1994:52-3) suggests widespread support for environmental causes alone has not been enough to see public policy changes. Environmentalism only moved onto the political agenda as individual citizens have taken action. Direct action has always been at the core of much green thinking. For example, in the spring of 1978 *The Ecologist* suggested, "the only course

open is a programme of non-violent direct action...". This type of participation has been a consistent feature of the tactical repertoire of ecology groups. FoE, for instance, has always argued that the scale and immediacy of the environmental crisis justify direct action (Byrne 1997:132-4). Hence, ecologists have not simply made their discontent with the dominant social order known to elected representatives. When faced with problems they have taken direct action, made changes to their lifestyles, and organised their own activities and campaigns.

Before the 1990s the rise of a radical environmental movement in Britain was considered unlikely (Rootes 1995, Rudig 1995). However, as the green agenda became more institutionalised into the British polity during the early 1990s, a more radical, anarchic and grass-roots fringe emerged. Partly as a response to the consequences of institutionalisation of older groups such as FoE, new groups, characteristically organised as networks rather than formal organisations, grew up (Rootes 1999:4). Direct action networks, such as EFi which had come to Britain from North America, managed to mobilise a constituency that had become increasingly disenchanted with the established national groups and their campaign strategies aimed primarily at Westminster, Whitehall and Fleet Street (Rawcliffe 1998:84-91). Just as FoE had its origins in its founder's dissatisfaction with the seeming ineffectiveness and unresponsiveness of the then established mainstream environmental groups, so EFi was started by people dissatisfied with the established groups of the 1990s.

Lowe and Goyder (1983:24-5) suggest that the emergence of new, and more radical, groups is a familiar pattern in the episodic development of the environmental movement. In general, a particular configuration of groups prevails until a new generation identifies new environmental problems, or views old problems from a new perspective, or wishes to create its own institutions to express its separate social identity and style of participation. Thus, throughout the history of the environmental movement each new wave has represented the influx of new social groups into the movement.

Significantly, the new ecology groups tend to have a younger membership and more confrontational style than the older groups they supplant at the radical end of the movement. It seems new groups start from a desire to do something more striking, more radical and more directly effective than the actions of the older organisations, but the more established groups provide the invaluable resource of a network of contacts by which the new groups can grow. This suggests that the process of institutionalisation will only go so far before triggering new more radical groups to emerge; hence the development of institutionalisation may be self-limiting.

The establishment of direct action networks has been an important variation during the most recent phase of environmental development. Unlike earlier groups the direct action networks cannot be termed organisations since they are collections of autonomous groups with no formal membership requirements, no central offices or paid staff. Therefore, it is more accurate to describe them as movements (Byrne 1997:146). Direct action movements like Road Alert! and the Genetics Engineering Network were seen by activists as 'biodegradable'. This is symptomatic of an anarchist ethos that is hostile to the establishment of permanent organisational structures. Hence, such groups differed from all previous environmental campaigners in terms of their ideology, tactics and organisational structure. Another key difference is their almost total reliance on direct action or 'do it yourself' (DiY) campaigns to champion their deep green agenda. Activists view their campaigns as a new type of direct action. The protest actions they engage in are not predominantly designed to change government policy or to shift the climate of public opinion through the media, but to change environmental conditions around them directly. What distinguishes direct action from other forms of protest is the directness of the impact on social and ecological problems, as opposed to the indirect effect bought about by the media or via its effect on politicians that are the tactical goals of most conventional actions (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:15). Bosso (1992) perceives the expansion of grassroots groups as a distinct wave of environmental activism, and argues that unlike the



membership of national environmental groups, local protestors on local issues are often working-class.

EF! UK was the first network of direct action groups, influenced by the original EF! groups set up by Dave Foreman in the U.S. All EF! groups are autonomous, and in effect there was no attempt by founders of pre-established networks to determine the philosophy or actions of new groups (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:15). The British EF! groups were established by a new generation of radical activists who were critical of both national ecology organisations like Greenpeace, FoE and WWF, and the older conservation groups such as the National Trust and RSPB. The first open and successful group was set up in Hastings, East Sussex by Jake Burbridge and Jason Torrance, who had grown disillusioned with the green groups they had participated in previously. The first EF! mass action was in December 1991, when around 200 people, with support from anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd, attempted to stop a ship filled with rainforest timber from docking. However, in 1992-3 the early focus on rainforests was overtaken by the emergence of protests against the Roads to Prosperity road building programme. The Twyford Down M3 protest was particularly influential in launching the anti-roads movement and shaping the Future of EF! in subsequent years.

EF! along with Road Alert!, an organisation run by activists with close links to EF!, were amongst the first to use e-mail and internet technology to network different kinds of environmental activists. The new technology was used to give information about the location of new protest sites, and the type of equipment the activists needed at particular sites. By July 1995 *Action Updates* listed 50 local EF! groups, which appears to have been the high point in number (Wall 1999:60). The 1999 edition of *Do or Die*, EF!'s annual journal, list only 22 local groups (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:11-17), while the tenth, and according to EF! reports, final edition of *Do or Die*, listed just 10 local groups in 2003 (*Do or Die* 2003). Some of this reduction in group numbers is probably the result of smaller groups disbanding or joining with

larger groups. During the height of the anti-roads protests in the mid-1990s newcomers to the direct action movement used to enter mainly by arriving at protest sites. However, with the decline of new road building schemes after 1997, the groups have become a more important entry point for those wanting to become active in the movement. Given that activists are often suspicious of newcomers due to the fear of being infiltrated by the police or journalists, the net result of this has been to make the movement less open.

From 1997 onwards the targets of EF! protests have broadened out from road building and the car culture to airports and genetically modified foods. Increasingly, the focus of protests has been directed towards global capitalism. Regular protests have been staged against 'the Iron Triangle' of the G8, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation. While they are still quite critical of the more professionalized environmental organisations and groups such as the National Trust who are viewed as part of the establishment, EF! no longer seems so dismissive of Greenpeace and FoE. Several EF! actions have been supported by some of the more established groups as their agendas have moved increasingly closer, focusing upon the role of financial institutions in environmental degradation (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:16). In this way, the direct action networks have helped to promote a shift in emphasis of environmental campaigning towards local activism.

During the 1990s survey evidence indicated that environmental group members wanted to become more involved with the organisations they supported, and their work. Consequently, national groups are increasingly finding ways to mobilise their memberships. This indicates that a new aspect of campaigning has emerged. Greenpeace, FoE, WWF and RSPB have reviewed their approach to volunteers and local groups, and are committed to increasing their involvement in campaigning and fund raising. FoE, for instance, has restructured in an attempt to further integrate local groups into the work of the national group, and in 1996 it re-launched *Earth Matters*, its membership magazine, to include a Take Action section. In addition, many

groups are now increasingly making use of new computer technology such as e-mail and the internet to communicate more directly with both members and the general public (Rawcliffe 1998:92).

### **The Matured Environmental Movement**

Throughout the whole of the early and mid-1990s the number of environmental protests and direct action campaigns against government policies increased steadily. For instance, there were prolonged campaigns against the road building programmes at Twyford Down and Newbury. Significantly, underlying public concern for the environment, and green activism, remained high and in some areas was continuing to grow. For example, *Social Trends 32* reported that concern for the environment increased across all types of issues between 1986 and 1993 (See Table 4.2). In general people reported being most worried about pollution issues, such as traffic fumes and contamination of rivers. Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) have been surveying green activism since 1988, and according to their typology, 23percent of the adult population could be considered 'active greens' by the mid-90s, up from 14 percent at the start of the period. It is worthy of note, that they found activism to be more concentrated amongst the middle-aged rather than the young, and that activists are statistically more likely to be women or middle class. This is a significant shift away from the image of activism in the late 1960s.

**Table 4.2: Selected Environmental Concerns England and Wales**

Percent	1986	1989	1993	1997	2001
Pollution in rivers and seas	54	64	63	65	55
Traffic exhaust fumes and urban smog	23	33	40	48	52
Loss of plants and animals in the UK	30	45	43	45	50
Loss of trees and hedgerows	17	34	36	40	46
Fumes and smoke from factories	26	34	35	41	43
Acid Rain	35	40	31	31	34

(Social Trends 2002, No.32)

Despite growing concern, the environment did not register as a popular issue at the 1997 general election. By this time the Green Party was operating more

in the nature of a pressure group than a political party with parliamentary ambitions. 'Green 2000' had been intended to re-launch the party as a real contender for power. But some greens did not believe that the party could operate within the party political system. In particular some Deep-green party members saw 'Green 2000' as a sell-out to what they viewed as the failed system of power politics. This echoed the ideological differences that have always existed in the Party, between those who have an environmental or anthropocentric agenda, and those who take an ecological or biocentric stance. While the former value the environment chiefly as a benefit to humans, the latter stress the rights of the planet as much as the rights of people, and have a strong commitment to participatory values which makes them unwilling to accept strong leadership even in order to make electoral gains. Regardless of internal disagreement, the Greens won two seats in the 1999 European Parliamentary election, which was contested under a system of proportional representation (PR); this resulted in the party taking a more orthodox approach in the 2001 general election. It selected candidates for 145 constituencies and won an average of 2.45 percent of the vote, meaning the Greens consider themselves the fourth party behind the main three, but it appears only a system PR of can win them political representation.

The election of the New Labour government in 1997 did not signal a major change in environmental policy. However, in a speech to the Green Alliance in 2000 Prime Minister Tony Blair claimed that:

No other British Government has put the environment at the heart of its policy making across the board – from foreign affairs to the national curriculum – in the same way this government has. (Blair 2000)

Some have questioned whether New Labour has lived up to this rhetoric. It is clear that the Labour government values positive environmental outcomes, though some analysts have suggested they have been better at making environmental commitments than environmental achievements. Blair said he would "make no apology for the priority we have given to education, health

and crime" (Blair 2000). Humphrey (2003:307) suggests that absence of the environment indicates its status in New Labour thinking. Consider the realities of the British political system; it would appear that if the main parties had to choose they would always opt for living standards and jobs rather than environmental protection. Labour has been no exception. Their strategists are aware that the party's success at elections relies on what might be termed materialist concerns. Consequently, much of Labour's environmental policy has come under attack from campaigning groups within the green lobby. A salient note of scorn came from Jonathan Porritt, who as ex-director of Friends of the Earth and chair of the UK Sustainable Development Commission has had considerable access to government decision-makers. Porritt (2002) criticised Tony Blair for a lack of leadership on environmental issues, and for showing "naïve adulation" of the business world, which is "bad for democracy".

Concerns about the impact of big business, industrialization and consumerism have been a recurrent theme within the environmental movement since the late 1960s. Certain groups have always called into question the 'dominant social paradigm', which emphasises human ability to manage the environment with limitless natural resources enabling unlimited industrial growth. Accordingly, the 'new environmental paradigm' emerged to argue for such things as environmental protection, pollution controls and limited industrial growth. Initially this resulted in the new environmentalists appearing as radicals; however, the goals and concerns that were originally associated solely with ecologists, have gained wider recognition. As a result, all sections of the movement have increasingly started to pull in the same direction, with most organisations agreeing about such issues as biodiversity and climate change. Over the last decade groups such as the RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts have adopted a more far-reaching approach to conservation, which reflect the challenges to the global environment. The RSPB, for example, is still devoted to campaigning on behalf of birds, but it also seeks to protect the environment for all wildlife, and aims to help to create a better world for all (The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, 2007). Politicians also seem to

have accepted certain environmental arguments. In light of mounting evidence about the effects of climate change, the need for emissions quotas are now accepted by parties of all sides of the political debate.

During 2001, 178 countries agreed to tackle climate change, meaning the Kyoto Protocol, the global climate treaty, could come into force. Kyoto required industrialized countries to cut their emissions of six gases thought to be intensifying global warming. This paved the way in 2007 for leaders of the G8 nations to call for a United Nations framework to replace Kyoto by the end of 2009. They called for new targets to be set requiring a 50 percent reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050. Hunt (quoted in Murphy 2003) suggested that politicians and business people have now adopted the language of environmentalism and sustainable development because it is consistent with their own mounting insecurity about the future. He suggests that “nobody is that sure about capitalism anymore, half the world still lives in great poverty – which isn’t good for business – and the confidence that used to exist in the system has evaporated”.

Clearly new issue priorities have emerged in Britain. Evidence of a paradigm shift could first be observed from the late 1960s onwards with the emergence of the new middle class. Cotgrove (1982:94-7) observed that the majority of this class reject the ideology of market capitalism, were ambivalent towards authority and lacked commitment towards material and economic goals. Whilst such sentiments are still prevalent amongst certain environmental factions, alternative post-material or environmental ideals have not gained wide acceptance within British society. However, the rejection of market capitalism has gained new impetus from the ‘anti-globalization’ movement. The protests against the World Trade Organisation in Seattle during November 1999 were widely regarded as the coming of age of the anti-globalization movement. Although being an anti-globalization activist does not necessarily entail an anti-capitalist agenda, the movement has attracted greens who are hostile towards multi-national companies, which are increasingly regarded as unaccountable and responsible for environmental

damage. It is feasible that anti-globalization represents the contemporary manifestation of the social movement tradition within environmental activism. However, as will all social movements, it is deliberately unorganised and decentralised, this has made it difficult for anti-capitalists to formulate a coherent set of demands. Nevertheless, most anti-globalization activists unite behind the slogan 'other worlds are possible', signalling the continued commitment to social change.

Recently evidence has emerged which suggests that the development of new technology has altered the nature of the environmental movement. For instance, Horton (2004:734) claims the internet has entered into, and become central to, the culture and politics of British environmentalism. However, when the new environmentalism first emerged children were still using slide rules at school in Britain, and only 35 percent of households had a telephone. The first personal computer was not released commercially until the end of 1974. By 1985 only one in eight British homes had a computer. This proportion doubled over the next eleven years to 27 percent in 1996/7, and then doubled again in the next six years to 55 percent in 2002/3 (Cook and Martin 2005:6). Thus, during most of the environmental movements' history the World Wide Web was unavailable to activists, however over the last few years the internet has emerged as one of the main methods of communication within the movement (Hoad 1998:209). Previously print and electronic news media had played a vital part in environmental politics for over 30 years. Environmentalists have used strategies and tactics created for and communicated through the news media shaping meanings and circulating symbols. Protest action has been one strategy that has become 'reflexively conditioned' in pursuit of media attention (Cottle 2008:853). The internet and World Wide Web have been an attractive option for activists over the last decade, as it offers the potential for independent information distribution without the mediating effects of news journalists and the established news media industries (Lester and Hutchins 2009:579). Research by Pickerill (2003:14) has uncovered the diverse ways in which the Internet has been incorporated into the breadth of British environmentalism. For example, activists send e-mail messages to politicians

and corporations, sign online petitions and, through their websites, environmental groups highlight their campaigns and try to secure and mobilise resources. It seems the ways that environmentalists prefer to participate and form networks and groups may be changing.

### **What does the History of the Environmental Movement Reveal about the Profile of Activists?**

The history of the environmental movement makes it clear that Britain has experienced a substantial increase in environmental concern and environmental group membership over the last four decades. The thesis contends that the escalating size of the environmental movement makes it worthy of additional analysis, because a sizable increase in membership raises the possibility that the composition and beliefs of the movement will have been transformed. The development of the environmental movement also supports the proposal that two paradigms exist within it. The modern movement has been shaped by two mobilizing waves: the first created a conservation movement while the second witnessed the emergence of the ecology movement. A number of the organisations that were created during the second mobilising wave differed from earlier groups in terms of their issue agendas, choice of tactics and alliances. This raises the possibility that the memberships of different environmental groups will have dissimilar socio-demographic and cognitive profiles. The movement has always had a mix of reformers and radicals (Cotgrove 1982:10), as the values of one set of activists became more aligned with dominant social values, so new groups have emerged to advocate more radical policies of social change. As a result, there are likely to be continued ideological and tactical cleavages within the environmental movement.

Although a vast array of environmental organisations now operate in Britain, they can be classified as essentially conservationist or ecologist in nature. The category of group that an environmental activist joins is likely to reflect their concerns about the environment and the type of action they feel is appropriate to address these concerns. Thus, environmental group membership has the



potential to reveal key features of their supporters profiles. As the conservation movement does not have a challenging ideology, its supporters are believed to accept the existing socio-political order. Hence, conservationists are supposedly more likely to support the dominant social paradigm, which emphasizes economic growth and consumerism. This perspective places confidence in authority and the power of science and technology to answer society's problems. On the other hand, ecology groups represent a different style of political action that focuses on the need for fundamental social change. Cotgrove (1982:47) has identified the rejection of the prevailing social order as the most important ideological feature of an ecology group. We would expect to find this value preference in the cognitive profile of their supporters. Ecology groups have continued to warn of an impending crisis resulting from exceeding the Earth's carrying capacity. Aligned with this is a rejection of industrial capitalism and the changes wrought by certain aspects of technology, especially those related to nuclear power. As a result, members of ecology groups are believed to reject economic expansion and lack confidence in expert advice. Thus, it appears that despite the growing acceptance of environmental concerns; the solutions offered by some within the movement continue to be at odds with the dominant values of the political system and culture.

Exploring the history of the environmental movement confirms some of the insights offered by the pressure group and social movement perspectives. Various ecology groups function like social movement organisations, having an ideology that is averse to elitism and hierarchy, and an explicit commitment to participatory democracy. The available evidence seems to suggest that the deep greens have embraced alternative methods of carrying out political action, being supportive of some unconventional forms of participation such as protests and demonstrations. Alternatively, conservationists have traditionally been content to try and solve environmental problems within the existing social, economic and political system. This means they restrict their participation to the type of orthodox campaigning that is characteristic of traditional cause groups. Nas (1990:277) has identified this difference in

campaign style as one of the most significant points of divergence between mainstream environmentalists and ecologists. It has been in local activities that direct action has been more likely. Local groups often combine conventional tactics such as lobbying or contacting, with less conventional tactics such as demonstrating or leafleting (Byrne 1997:137).

The environmental movement has obviously undergone significant changes over the last four decades. It has grown in terms of support, financial resources and respectability. This has enabled it to become a significant actor within the British political system. This transformation has not taken place in a vacuum; whilst the movement was changing, so too was the social and political system in which it operates. These developments have possibly changed the behaviour, beliefs and profile of environmental activists. To truly appreciate the changes that have taken place within environmentalism, and the effect they are likely to have had upon activists, these changes must be viewed against the background against which they have developed. Changes to the political culture are particularly relevant as they can explain variations in patterns of behavioural political participation (Evans 2003:83). Consequently, the following chapter focuses on some of the significant political, economic and social changes that have taken place since the end of the Second World War. This will help to expose whether the episodes that have taken place within environmentalism, and the development of the movement, are unique phenomena or part of a larger transformation of British society.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Britain's Changing Political Culture**

Since environmentalists are only a minority of the population, it is beneficial compare green activism with the established beliefs and participation in the political system, in order to assess what is different about their involvement. When this is done it becomes obvious that that the 'high cost' forms of participation that are undertaken by grass-roots environmental activists are relatively rare. For the most part, the majority of citizens only participate in politics in the most 'low cost' ways, such as voting or contacting officials. The fraction of people who engage in non-electoral, or unorthodox, types of political participation is relatively small. Thus, in order to establish the extent to which environmental activism can be considered something uncommon or exceptional, the following chapter looks at the political culture in Britain. It pays particular attention to support for the political system, levels of political activism and methods of participation.

Certain sections of the environmental movement are understood to support alternative ways of organising politics and society. They are primarily thought to challenge the values of the ruling elite and question their authority. Because they view formal representative democracy with suspicion, and have an aversion to elitism and hierarchy, it is assumed they wish to bring about change via non-institutional forms of collective action, meaning conventional politics is sometimes replaced with the new politics of direct action. The next section seeks to determine just how distinctive is this profile.

### **The Significance of Political Culture**

While there have been numerous high-profile political changes in Britain over the last four decades, such as changes of governments or party leaders, there have been equally striking, but less visible changes to its political culture.

While a matter of some contention, 'political culture' is usually taken to refer to sets of subjective beliefs, values, identities and understanding relating to politics (Almond and Verba 1965, Eckstein 1989). There are strong grounds to suggest that changes in values are the key to understanding social change. Values have an important role in legitimating social, political and economic institutions and practices. Thus, changes in values may have important consequences for the social system, and create fundamental demands on the political system (Cotgrove and Duff 1981:92). Public support for environmental protection is inexorably linked with such subjective cultural factors (Inglehart 1995:57).

Investigations that have employed a political culture approach have frequently explained political actions by assuming that they derive from normative orientations, learned for the most part from institutions of socialisation, such as the family. These are subject to substantial continuity over time. Hence, this approach has often had difficulty explaining short-term changes in cultural terms. However, if we accept that political culture concerns aspects of belief about politics that relate to the duty to vote, trust in politicians and perceptions of the effectiveness of the political system, then it is possible to look at the evidence about the nature of these beliefs, while detaching them from the potential role of sources of political socialisation such as family, education and the media.

### **A Deferential Political Culture**

Compared to continental Europe and the United States where religion, race and territory were important lines of division, British society in the 1950s and 1960s was marked by relatively few lines of division. The social context of British politics could be almost fully understood by reference to class divisions alone. Social scientists viewed occupation as the single most important influence on social structure, meaning the most important class groupings were primarily identified by their occupation. The essence of this division was between manual and white-collar workers. There is justification for this, since the kind of work done is frequently a key determinant of the material rewards and the status an individual enjoys. The class structure in Britain closely

corresponded to the occupational structure. Hence, definitions of class were often taken to mean occupational class. For instance, 'working class' commonly refers to those people (and their families) who earn a living from manual jobs. The central role of occupation in the political life of Britain in the 1950s and 1960s is well documented. Occupational class was an important influence on the way people voted, with the working class being more inclined to vote Labour, and the middle class predisposed to vote Conservative. Thus, work was central not only to the economic structure of the country, but also to the political structure.

Partly as a result of this class uniformity, Britain in the 1950s and 1960s was characterised as having a high level of political stability. It was also portrayed as having a deferential political culture. This depiction was supported by the work of Almond and Verba (1965:136-40). Using survey evidence, they reported that there was a high level of regime support and confidence in political institutions. For the most part, citizens were content to limit their participation in politics to the usual channels of elections and mainstream party politics, leaving the details of politics to politicians. They felt that they had an effective means of political participation, and believed that they could influence government and that the administration would listen to their demands. Participation outside the normal channels therefore seemed unnecessary. In the 1970s Rose (1974:399) claimed that Britain was outstanding for the allegiance that its citizens gave to political authority, while Marsh (1977:30) wrote that "the key feature in Britain is seen as the habit of deference". At this point the environmental movement was essentially conservationist in nature. It did not represent a threat to the status quo because it was sympathetic towards the existing political and social order, which was based on society's dominant values.

### **Declining Support for the Political System**

This picture was soon to become very different. During the 1970s there appeared to be a loss in political confidence, which was accompanied by a growth in unconventional participation such as protest and direct action. Marsh (1977:115) conducted research into these events; he reported that

people had become much less deferential towards the established institutions of government. There had also been a marked decline in the sense of civic competence, politics was viewed as being something remote from everyday life, and politicians were seen as aloof. This trend has continued, with the 2001 British Social Attitudes survey showing that a growing number of people have little faith in how they are governed. A total of 66 percent agreed with the statement that 'people like me have no say in what the government does', up from 57 percent after Labour's 1997 election victory, and 48 percent in 1987. Also, 70 percent agreed that they do not trust governments of whatever party to put the interests of the nation ahead of those of their party, once again up from 65 percent in 1997 and 60 percent in 1987. Many indices measuring political efficacy and trust in politicians have been in long-term decline. This is consistent with what has been termed 'alienation' from parliamentary politics (Evans 2003:85-6). It may well be the case that the civically orientated are not participating because they do not see it as useful (Jordan and Maloney 2006:132). The current democratic tenet suggests that unless citizens participate in the deliberation or public policy, and their choices structure government action, then democratic processes are meaningless (Dalton 2008:78).

As early as the mid-1970s only a minority of those sampled by Chamberlain (1977) thought that the best way to influence government was through the normal political channels. Citizens began looking for greater opportunities to participate and influence decision-making than the conventional avenues allowed. With a decline in political legitimacy and political trust at a low ebb, many more people were prepared to consider unconventional participation than had been the case a decade earlier. Marsh (1977:39) found there was significant support for a transition from legal to unorthodox forms of political behaviour, with 35 percent of those questioned saying that they would engage in lawful demonstrations, and 56 percent believing there are times when it is justified to break the law to protest. However, the majority of citizens continued to participate in conventional politics, if with less enthusiasm than before.

While protest action is outside the confines of conventional politics, Barnes and Kaase (1979) suggest certain forms of direct action have entered into the political repertoire of ordinary citizens. The available evidence suggests that this trend continued through the 1980s. By the time that Parry, Moyer and Day (1992:41-6) carried out research in the early 1990s, protest was firmly established as part of the array of actions citizens and groups might consider using to make themselves heard. They assert that protest cannot be ignored as part of any present-day study of political participation. From survey evidence Parry, Moyser and Day suggested that almost twice as many people had attended a protest meeting as had been to a rally organised by a mainstream political party (14.6 percent attending the former, and 8.6 percent the latter). And that "...the numbers who have taken part in protesting are roughly the same order as get involved in Britain's election campaigns and party rallies" (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992:46).

Recently unorthodox participation has been undertaken as much by conservative groups such as the Countryside Alliance as radical ones like Greenpeace. This supports the assertion by Marsh that:

...protest behaviour, far from being the occasional outburst of a hopelessly alienated minority is an integral part of British political consciousness, and is viewed under a variety of circumstances, as a legitimate pathway of political redress by widely differing sections of the community. (Marsh 1977:39)

This does not mean there has been a revolution in the conduct and practice of British politics. Unconventional participation remains the preserve of a relatively small minority of people. When compared with the size of the electorate, even such events as an estimated 1.5 million people marching in London during February 2003 to oppose the Iraq war, is relatively small scale participation. Most people have continued to participate only in an orthodox manner, and for the majority even this participation is rather infrequent. Parry, Moyser and Day (1992:228) assert that a mere 23.2 percent of the population

“actively sustain the citizenry’s role in political life”. They grouped respondents to their survey into a small number of categories ranging from ‘just voters’ to ‘complete activists’. Over three-quarters of their sample either voted regularly but undertook little other participation or did not even vote regularly. This would seem to indicate that for the majority politics remains a fairly low priority in everyday life.

**Table 5.1: Percentage of Registered Electorate Who Actually Voted 1945 – 2005**

Year	UK	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
2005	61.5	61.3	62.4	60.5	68.6
2001	59.4	59.2	61.6	58.2	68
1997	71.5	71.4	73.5	71.3	67.1
1992	77.7	78	79.7	75.5	69.8
1987	75.3	75.4	78.9	75.1	67
1983	72.7	72.5	76.1	72.7	72.9
1979	76	75.9	79.4	76.8	67.7
1975 Oct	72.8	72.6	76.6	74.8	67.7
1974 Feb	78.8	79	80	79	69.9
1970	72	71.4	77.4	74.1	76.6
1966	75.8	75.9	79	76	66.1
1964	77.1	77	80.1	77.6	71.7
1959	78.7	78.9	82.6	78.1	65.9
1955	76.8	76.9	79.6	75.1	74.1
1951	82.6	83.1	84.4	81.2	53.1
1950	83.9	84	84.8	80.9	64.9
1945	72.8	75.9	74	71.5	86

\*Figures do not include votes deliberately or accidentally spoiled

(Source: *ukpolitical.info*)

For many people, voting is the only overtly political action they regularly undertake, and this is usually only at general elections. Willingness to participate even in this way has recently been questioned. It has been suggested that the rate of voting amongst the population as a whole is in long-term decline (Henn, Weinstein and Wring 1999:7). Between 1945 and 1997 just over three quarters of the population turned out to vote in general elections. In 2001 turnout dropped to just 59 percent of those registered to vote, which was the lowest proportion since the end of the Second World War. In the 2005 general election this figure improved only slightly, with turnout reaching just over 61 percent. Curtis and Jowell (1997:98) suggest that a growing proportion of those eligible to vote fail to even register to do so. The



electoral commission suggest that between 8 and 9 percent of those eligible were not on the electoral register in 2000 (approximately 3.7 million people). This raises some questions about the general health of British Democracy. Verba et al (1995:1) observe that political participation is at the heart of democracy, they suggest that democracy is unthinkable without participation.

The young appear especially reluctant to vote. Statistics gathered from the 2001 general election show that only 53 percent of 18-24 year olds turned out. Grundy and Lynn (2002:24) suggest that the low turnout of this age group might reflect a lack of interest or alienation of youth from the political process, and there is some evidence for this. For example, it has been estimated that only 60 percent of young adults are registered to vote, compared to 92 percent of the population generally (Pirie and Worcester 2000). Also, research suggests that only a third of 18-24 year olds are liable to believe there is a moral duty to vote, while approximately 13 percent feel there is no reason to vote (Park 1999:23-44).

However, studies amongst 14-24 year olds suggest it is too naive to accuse young people of being apathetic. Qualitative research by White *et al* (2002) suggests that young people are interested in political issues, but do not see them in terms of party politics and elections. They are more concerned about less mainstream issues such as environmentalism, animal rights, drug use and bullying. Consequently, they are less interested in the main political parties, and more enthusiastic about the type of single-issue politics associated with pressure groups and social movements.

### **Declining Support for Political Parties**

Another substantial problem the British political system faces is a reduction in the support the main parties inspire amongst the population. Political parties have been vital to the way Britain's democracy works, but without strong ties to the general public the parties cannot act as a pathway for dialogue between government and citizens. Support for political parties has declined in two ways: firstly, in terms of party membership and secondly, in terms of voters' commitment. The membership of the three main parties now stands at less

than a quarter of their levels in the mid-1960s. During this period the Conservative Party has seen its membership decline from a high of 2.8 million members to around 318,000. Similarly, Labour has gone from having over a million individual members to around 248,000. Both of these parties remain well ahead of the Liberal Democrats who have approximately 70,000 members. Even though large numbers of people have joined environmental pressure groups since the 1970s, the Green Party has not benefited from this upsurge in public support, having gone from around 7,000 members in the mid-1980s, to circa 5,000 in 2003 (Butler and Kavanagh 1992, Ware 1996, *The Guardian* 28<sup>th</sup> January 2002, Hurst 2004).

Political parties have undergone an unmistakable decline in the commitment typical voters express towards them. Butler and Stokes (1974) had found that people who are 'party identifiers' are far more likely to vote than are the non-aligned. Thus, lower levels of turnout in election may be the result of declining levels of party identification. In the 20 year period from 1950 to 1970 voters were characterised as being aligned to parties on two counts: partisan and class alignment. Partisan alignment means voters aligned themselves with a party by thinking of themselves as a supporter of it, by having a party identification. Surveys conducted at the general elections between 1964 and 1970 found that around 90 percent of respondents were willing to nominate a party they supported. Around 44 percent of these people said they felt 'very strong' support for a particular party.

When Butler and Stokes (1974) began a classic study of British voting behaviour in the early 1960s, they found that people had relatively stable views both of themselves and the main parties as political actors. They reported a 'tribal' pattern of party politics, in which class was believed to be a very important determinant of the way that people thought about politics. Compared to other socio-demographic characteristics, class seemed to be strongly correlated with the way people voted (Clarke et al 2004:2-6). Voters were class aligned so that around two thirds of the working class supported

the Labour Party, and four fifths of the middle class favoured the Conservatives. Denver has written:

The interconnected phenomena of class and partisan alignment were the twin pillars, as it were, which supported and sustained stable party support on the part of individual voters and a stable two-party system overall. (Denver 1989:28)

By the early 1970s the British political system was portrayed as entering an era of de-alignment, in which electoral volatility was the trend rather than stability. There was a marked decline in the strength of party identification. The number of people who described their commitment to a party as very strong has dropped dramatically. At the 1997 general election only 15 percent of respondents would describe themselves as very strong supporters of any party, a two thirds reduction since 1970. While class voting still takes place, it does so at considerably lower levels than in the 1960s, and less than half of all voters still support their natural class party (Denver 1989:28-55). Clarke *et al* (2004:6) say that it is an empirical fact that non-manual workers have become less inclined to support their 'natural' party, the Conservatives, while manual workers have become less likely to support their 'natural' party, Labour. And that "however measured, the correlation between class and voting has weakened substantially since the 1960s."

Norris (2002:222) has pointed to the rise of 'critical citizens' who are less loyalist and deferential towards the main parties. This perspective views dwindling membership as a problem for the parties, but not for democracy. It has been suggested that groups have replaced parties as the most important participatory vehicle. In an increasingly segmented world, an increasing number of organizations are catering for ever more specialized interests. There are a vast array of environmental groups, some of which campaign for very limited interests, such as an individual species. Parties cannot afford to reflect the narrow concerns of individuals, in contrast interest groups excel at capturing the intensity of interests of a fragmented public (Jordan and Maloney 2007:5-7).

There has clearly been a significant change in the psychology of voting, and party support, over recent decades. A shift in value priorities would go some way towards explaining this, especially with regard to class alignment. The post-war rise in affluence gave the working class more of a stake in the system; as a result they may have developed underlying value preferences which make them potential recruits for the Conservative Party. In contrast, middle-class status has traditionally been associated with a preference for relatively conservative politics. But the growth of post-material attitudes appears to have made the new middle class more concerned with social issues, than the economic issues that dominated older generations' thinking. Research has shown that those with post-material values are more likely to support the Labour and Liberal Parties than are acquisitive-types (Inglehart 1971:992-1009). Accordingly, as post-material value priorities began to emerge from the 1960s onwards, the new middle class seemed to be the champions of social change, while other social groups seemed more content with continuity.

### **A Changing Approach to Political Participation**

While conventional political participation in the form of voting may have declined, other forms of political activism have started to increase. Studies have found a small increase in the proportion of people who engage in a variety of non-electoral forms of political participation. For instance, Bromley, Curtice and Seyd (2001) found that more people reported taking part in such actions as signing petitions and going on protests or demonstrations than had in the past (See table 5.1). This indicates that citizens are still engaged in certain issues and involved in politics. Unconventional political activism seems to be providing an important outlet for those who feel that their views are not adequately represented by mainstream politics (Evans 2003:97-8). Given that there is a strong relationship between post-materialism and unconventional protest, it may be a factor in this development. Inglehart (1981:890) suggests that post-materialists are less supportive of the established social order, also the disruption and property damage that sometimes results from

unconventional political action seems less negative to them, because they threaten things that they value less than materialists. From survey research Inglehart (1971:995) reported that overall post-materialists are more than four times as likely to favour demonstrations and protests as are acquisitive respondents. Thus:

A relatively high potential to use unconventional and disruptive techniques in order to intervene in the political process seems to be directly linked with the post-materialist outlook; it is not merely a spurious correlate, resulting from the fact that post-materialists tend to be young and well educated. (Inglehart 1981:891).

It is clear that since the end of the 1960s there has been a significant change to the way citizens have become involved, or chosen to participate, in politics. People have been showing less enthusiasm for the main political parties and more interest in single-issue politics (Byrne 1997:1). It is now commonplace to claim that groups may have replaced parties as the most significant participatory vehicle (Jordan and Clarence 2003:1) Prominent authors such as Almond and Verba (1963) have argued that the strength of political parties has a tendency to be inversely related to the strength of interest groups. Berry (1984:22-4) has suggested that the alienation of the public from government weakened political parties and gave interest groups a chance to increase their role. In contrast to the declining membership of political parties, the membership of certain interest groups, especially those with an environmental orientation, has gone up dramatically. For instance, the National Trust has over 3 million members, RSPB over 1 million, Greenpeace nearly a quarter of a million and FoE over 100, 000 members (see Table 4.1).

The number of interest groups also rose dramatically during the 1980s and early 1990s; the *Directory of British Political Organisations* (1994) lists over 200 concerned with the environment alone. It could be argued that this reflects disenchantment with traditional politics, a greater interest in the politics of direct action and increasing environmental concern. He argues that these groups owe their success in part to the fact that they do not merely aim

to influence government: they also direct their attention at other centres of power such as international associations, the EU and private corporations. This action became more appropriate as a neo-liberal government cut back the state to leave more quality-of-life issues to the market. Therefore, it can be argued that participation is no longer primarily pursued through political parties. As the party/electoral route to representation has increasingly been viewed as deficient, people have sought alternative means of participation. Seyd and Whiteley (1992:28) suggest that joining single-issue pressure groups and social movements is seen by many as a more effective way of achieving desired political ends than membership of formal political parties. Parties are mainly concerned with influencing or forming governments; but many in the green movement want to influence other bodies such as business or international organisations as well. The adversary is not simply the politician on the opposite side of the aisle, or the lobbyist arguing against you, but more broadly those institutionalized practices that threaten the everyday life of the community (Schlosberg and Bomberg 2008:191).

**Table 5.2: Reported Political Action 1986 – 2000**

<b>Percent saying they had</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>2000</b>
Signed a petition	34	41	53	39	42
Contacted their MP	11	15	17	14	16
Contacted TV, radio or newspaper	3	4	4	5	6
Gone on a protest/demonstration	6	8	9	9	10
Raised an issue with an organisation they belong to	5	4	5	4	5
Spoken to an influential person	1	3	5	3	4
Contacted a government department	2	3	2	3	2
Formed a group of like-minded people	2	3	2	3	2
Done none of these	56	48	37	53	47

(Source: Bromley, Curtice and Seyd 2001)

The decline of electoral participation and the growth of direct action are significant, because support for political institutions and respect for law and order are vital for the legitimacy of the political system. An important reason the British environmental movement, especially its more radical sections, is worthy of further research is because it exemplifies some of the challenges facing the political systems of advanced industrialised societies (Cotgrove

1982:97). Environmentalism has had a great impact on many diverse areas of social, economic and political life during the last 40 years. Britain has a ministry devoted to environmental issues, and more citizens involved in environmental groups of various kinds than any other state in Europe. However, the major political parties have traditionally been slow to act on environmental issues (Byrne 1997:128). Because many environmental problems have proven difficult to solve, and as new problems are emerging with startling regularity, they are likely to be a potential source of social and political conflict in the twenty-first century.

### **Environmental Activism and Political Participation**

Many of the established methods of conducting politics have been unaffected by the arrival of green politics. It is clear that politics remains a fairly low priority in most citizens' everyday life, with the majority of people only participating infrequently. Nevertheless, the beliefs and principles that underpin much green/environmental thinking seem to have become more prevalent within British society. At the same time, the loyalty people feel towards the political system, and feelings of political efficacy have fallen markedly since the 1950s. This, combined with declining voter turnout and support for political parties, suggests that it is not only deep greens who are dissatisfied with institutionalized politics. Amongst the citizens who do participate, there appears to be a growing willingness to engage in the unconventional types of politics associated with ecology and social movements. Hence, we need to be aware that some aspects of the established environmental profile may not be entirely unique members of the movement.

Since "everything that happens in politics is affected by the social and political context within which institutions have to operate" (Moran 2001:44), the changes that have taken place in Britain over the last 40 years will have undeniably influenced all of the organisations that function within the political system. The environmental movement is certainly no exception. It is also clear that the movement in the early part of the 21st century looks different

compared to how it did in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The transformation of the movement, and of the wider political culture, will undoubtedly have had an impact on those who support, and are sympathetic towards, environmentalism. Britain has also undergone a series of social, economic and political alterations that are likely to have consequences for the profile of activists. Therefore, the next chapter will review the some of the key changes that have left an impression on the British environmental movement.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **The Environmental Movement and Changing Political, Social and Economic Conditions in Britain**

A variety of significant political, social and economic changes have taken place in Britain over the last 40 years; some of these have helped to transform environmentalism into an increasingly important and sometimes contentious issue. Schlosberg and Bomberg (2008:198) have suggested that different cultural, historical and institutional trajectories help to explain the varying priorities and styles of environmentalism. It is noteworthy that some of the changes that have taken place will have influenced the level of post-materialism found amongst Britain's citizens. Whilst post-material values are not the only factor to account for mass support for environmental policies, Inglehart (1995:68) suggests they are a dynamic component which makes them particularly significant. Examining the ways that values in society have altered in response to changing conditions will help to gauge the relevance of the post-materialism hypothesis to this investigation. Ergo, this chapter will briefly review some of the pivotal changes that have had an effect on Britain, and assess how the environmental movement has been transformed when faced with these events.

#### **The Post-War Consensus 1945-1970**

It is impossible to fully appreciate the significance of the changes that have taken place in Britain politically, socially and economically since the new environmentalism first emerged towards the end of the 1960s, without considering the totality of its post-war history. In 1945 Britain was one of the three major victorious powers in the Second World War, and still the possessor of a huge empire. This meant it was able to see itself, and be viewed, as a great world power. Britain seemed reluctant to sacrifice its

pursuit of national greatness in order to focus on developing an efficient economy. This made Britain disinclined to take part in talks about closer economic union with other states, for instance the proposed links with France in 1948, or the Schuman Plan in 1950-52. The same was still true in 1955 when the Messina conference resulted in the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The treaty was signed by six European Countries (France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) but not by Britain.

During the years between 1940 and 1955, a broad consensus had emerged in Britain between the two major political parties. This was founded on a leftwards-ideological shift. Liberal democracy had given way to social democracy, with both Labour and the Conservatives embracing the new welfare state and Keynesian economics. The Welfare State was founded on a National Health Service providing free care to all, a universal system of social security and pensions, and compulsory state education until the age of 15. The government also became increasingly involved in running the economy. The Attlee government (1945-51) created a mixed economy by taking major industries into public ownership. For example, coal, steel and railways were all taken into the state sector. Successive Conservative governments retained these nationalised industries, and until the mid-1970s it seemed that the continued expansion of public ownership was an irreversible trend in Britain. The rationale for this post-war expansion in public ownership was the conviction that if enterprise was left in private hands it would run inefficiently or even fail (Moran 2001:56). By the mid-1950s the wartime regime of physical controls over the economy had almost been totally removed, and Keynesian methods of economic management were in place. Despite having a mixed economy, Britain was essentially a capitalist society in which the majority of individuals sold their labour to private firms and a minority worked in the public sector. While jobs were plentiful, even the higher-paid workers' families still had little in the way of disposable income and savings (Robins and Jones 1997:144).

The post-war consensus drew widespread support not only from elite opinion such as reformist intellectuals, civil servants, leading figures in universities, churches and the media, but also from mass public opinion. This dominant consensus lasted from the early 1950s until the mid-1970s. Throughout this period there was broad agreement, from all shades of the political spectrum, that there was an indispensable role for government in welfare and the economy. Inglehart (1995:62) has hypothesised that the rapid economic development and the expansion of the welfare state post-1945 meant that the formative experiences of younger birth cohorts were different from that of older cohorts in ways that led them to develop fundamentally different value priorities. What was important was their subjective sense of security not their economic level as such. While wealthy individuals and nationalities, no doubt, tend to feel more secure than poor ones, post-material values are also influenced by the cultural setting and social welfare institutions in which individuals are raised (Inglehart 1981:881). Inglehart (2008:131) has suggested that the remarkable economic growth that occurred during the era following the Second World War, together with the rise of the welfare state, brought fundamental new conditions in advanced industrial societies. Consequently, the post-war birth cohorts spent their formative years under levels of prosperity that were unprecedented in human history, and the welfare state reinforced this feeling that survival was secure. This produced major differences in the priorities of older and younger generations that became evident when the first post-war cohorts emerged into political relevance two decades after World War Two.

### **Britain in the 1970s: New Environmentalism and Economic Decline**

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the modern environmental movement began to take shape as traditional conservation organisations expanded, and groups that embodied an ecology consciousness, such as FoE, became established in Britain. At this point the darker green section of the movement began to argue that the Earth was unable to sustain the consumption of resources that was being caused by continued economic and population

growth. This challenged the established belief that economic growth was the driving force of social progress. Accordingly, new ambitions were emerging within the movement, not simply to address the environmental problems of the time; but to alter the social structures that they believed caused them (Dalton 1994:39-42). As the ecology movement was becoming firmly established in the national consciousness, economic decline gathered pace and inflation appeared to run out of control. In 1973 there was an oil crisis, when Middle Eastern producers The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) limited petroleum supplies. This forced oil prices upwards and created an economic crisis in Britain and other Western economies as the industrialised world entered the most severe recession since the 1930s. In Britain the economy contracted sharply, and in 1974 annual growth in Gross Domestic Product, (GDP is the commonly used measure of overall economic activity) actually fell in real terms to -1.4percent. Average annual economic growth had averaged 2.8percent per annum in Britain between 1948 and 1973, but this figure fell to a mere 1.4percent between 1973 and 1979. The term 'stagflation' was introduced to describe the new situation of low growth combined with the twin problems of high inflation and rising unemployment. The inflation rate had been around 2-3percent in the 1950s and 4-5percent in the late 1960s, but was over 9percent by the early 1970s. The era of full employment had passed; unemployment had averaged only 330,000 in the 1950s and was well below half a million throughout the 1960s. By the mid-1970s it had risen to one and a quarter million. In the decades to follow large scale unemployment was to become the norm, reaching two million by 1981, and three million by 1984.

Following Britain's economic decline the Heath government (1970-74) was forced away from the policy of neo-liberal economics and in December 1973 introduced a three-day working week to attempt to restrict energy use during a period of acute power crisis. The welfare state was also struggling by the mid-1970s. The expectation in the 1950s had been that rapid economic growth would enable welfare spending to rise without adding to the tax burden, but this notion began to seem less plausible. By the late 1970s rapidly rising

inflation, high unemployment and slow economic growth were accompanied by increasing levels of public expenditure and taxation. This led the Labour government to retreat from Keynesian methods and priorities of economic management. Faced with rising unemployment, Chancellor Denis Healey chose to place budgetary emphasis on controlling inflation rather than maintaining a high and stable level of employment. Kavanagh (1990:127) has described this government policy shift as "a historic breach with one on the main planks of the postwar consensus". By the end of the summer of 1976 the British economy was so weakened that the Labour government under James Callaghan had to seek a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF imposed the conditions of monetarism and deep cuts in public spending in return for the advance. Economic insecurity intensified as the government's relationship with the Trade Unions became increasingly strained, and labour unrest reached a peak with the 'Winter of Discontent' in 1978/9 with a number of key unions going on strike. There was more bad news for the British economy in 1979 when a second OPEC price shock resulted in economic confidence reaching an all-time low (Inglehart 1981:887).

As the atmosphere of economic security deteriorated, the sense of physical security was also declining following a Soviet arms build up and its invasion of Afghanistan. The Western response to these events led to an erosion of East-West detente. Feelings of insecurity were compounded by the political centre going into retreat in the major political parties. Consecutive governments had experienced policy failures between 1972 and 1974, and had lost authority because of their apparent inability to reverse national decline. Similarly, Labour's record on welfare and the economy was becoming increasingly called into question. The rise in single-issue pressure groups representing rights issues and those seeking environmental protection and nuclear disarmament, also undermined the political parties by providing alternative means of interest representation. These factors combined to produce a degree of complacency and insularity in British governments' environmental strategy and administration during the 1970s. The result was environmental projects suffering badly in successive rounds of public expenditure cuts.

Consequently, by the 1980s Britain could not be thought of as a leader and innovator in environmental policy. Neighbouring countries now saw Britain as an environmental laggard, preventing the development of an effective European environmental policy. It had become known as the 'dirty man of Europe'.

These more severe economic conditions were also having an impact on Britain's citizens. From the end of the Second World War onwards economic and political conditions had enabled the more prosperous groups in society to take material well-being and economic security for granted. Inglehart has argued that this enabled individuals to act in pursuit of goals which no longer had a direct relationship with the imperatives of material security. As a result, all age groups in the population were experiencing a rise in post-material sentiments, and becoming interested in issues such as environmentalism. However, as economic conditions became less favourable in the 1970s, this meant economic security could no longer be guaranteed, which raised the possibility that individuals would become more materialistic. Arguably, the almost total disappearance of student protest and other manifestations of a counterculture were an indication of this. This development was consistent with Inglehart's socialization hypothesis, which contends that periods of increased insecurity should have their greatest impact on the youngest groups which had been associated with such occurrences. From survey research Inglehart (1981:887-890) suggests the still-malleable 15-24 year old group became progressively more materialist during the 1970s, and continued to do so until the recession began to end, before staging a partial recovery. Consequently, by the start of the 1980s the 15-24 year old group was significantly less post-materialist than their counterparts had been a decade earlier. However, this was the only age group that became significantly more materialist. Post-materialism did not dwindle away in the face of diminished economic and physical security.

During the 1970s those in the 25-34 year old group became steadily more post-materialist through the decade. Thus, although the young were becoming

more materialistic and ostensibly more conformist, those in their thirties and forties were becoming less so. The explanation for this seems to be that socialization effects determine value priorities more effectively than do current experiences of affluence (Cotgrove and Duff 1981:104). Hence, the relationship between socio-economic environment and value priorities is not one of immediate adjustment: there is a time lag involved, as to a large extent an individual's basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during their pre-adult years (Inglehart 1981:881). This suggests that age, income, education and occupation may account for little of the inter-group variance in terms of post-materialism, rather it is to early socialization that we must look to find the root of partisan commitment to values. By the end of the 1970s post-materialists were, on average, older than when they first emerged. The students of the 1960s had grown older, allowing post-materialism, and inevitably environmentalism, to penetrate into the ranks of young professionals, civil servants and politicians. Hence, in spite of the political and economic climate, the environmental movement did not collapse, and support for environmentalism remained firm. The movement was even able to win some victories (Inglehart 1981:895-6). Thus, political parties had not taken the lead in environmental protection in Britain. Rather public interest in the environment was to force both the Conservative and Labour parties to adopt a range of environmental policies in the decades that followed (Bradbeer 2001:88-9).

### **Thatcherism 1979-1990**

The erosion of the post-war consensus in the 1970s cleared the way for its overthrow by the Conservative government in the 1980s. It appeared that the Thatcher government's goal was a frontal assault on post-war social democratic orthodoxy. The Thatcher administration went on to implement radical initiatives on all policy fronts, a major objective being to restore British prestige at home, and assert British interests more vigorously abroad. To that end, there was an increased commitment to defence: the defence budget was one-fifth higher in the late 1980s than it had been a decade earlier. And, despite widespread condemnation from environmentalists, Trident, a new

generation of more powerful nuclear weapons, was commissioned from the United States.

A second major objective was to 'roll back the frontiers' of the state in economic and welfare policy. The Thatcher government had taken on board the politico-economic views of Milton Friedman. Friedman proposed that the expansion of the public sector in most Western economies had undermined the willingness to accept risk-bearing and therefore the ability to increase wealth. This view manifested itself in a privatisation policy, augmented by other measures to improve performance on the supply side. Jones and Robins contend that:

The 'Thatcher Revolution' was set on replacing the so-called dependency culture of postwar popular socialism with the enterprise culture of popular capitalism. (Jones and Robins 1997:148)

By the end of the 1980s a programme of privatisation had sold into private hands about 40percent of what had been in public ownership at the start of the decade. This practically extinguished the mixed economy as it had existed since 1951. Following the privatisation of concerns such as British Gas and British Telecommunications, ownership in shares rose significantly. By 1997 21percent of the adult population owned shares, compared to 7percent in 1979. Additionally, as the result of a large-scale sell-off of council houses, home ownership increased from 52percent to 67percent during the same period. By doing this the government hoped to promote consumer culture and individualism.

In spite of this strategy, the 1980s saw a rise in citizen groups whose fundamental purpose was to secure public goods such as environmental protection. The vast majority of the members of such groups are motivated to participate by a general sense of altruism (Jordan and Maloney 1997:48). Thus, it is interesting to consider the suggestion from Lowe and Goyder (1983: 25) that it is perhaps no coincidence that each of the periods of sudden



growth of environmental concern in the 1890s, the late 1920s, the late 1950s and the early 1970s occurred at similar phases in the world business cycle – towards the end of periods of sustained economic expansion. They suggest that environmental groups arose at these times as more and more people turned to count the mounting cost of unbridled economic growth and sought to reassert non-material values. Correspondingly, Cotgrove and Duff (1981:105) suggest it is the reaction against the costs of materialism which lies at the heart of anti-industrial society attitudes. To the new environmentalists, commitment to economic growth is seen as the imperative that generates the negative aspects of industrialization. Therefore, the unprecedented rise in environmental concern towards the end of the 1980s may have been in part a reaction to the policies of Thatcherism. Obviously, with the question of pollution as it emerged in the 1980s, there were also concerns arising from the risk to human health, safety and even survival. But, by expressing concern about pollution, the destruction of nature and the depletion of resources, environmentalism, either explicitly or implicitly, challenged existing assumptions about progress which equates material prosperity with general wellbeing.

Other Conservative policy objectives also conflicted with the principles of those with post-material or ecology-orientated ideologies. These included the strengthening of the powers of central government, curbing the powers of trade unions and local government, and the active promotion of individualism and private enterprise. A sustained campaign against the trade unions was an obvious product of this philosophy, most evident in the defeat of the miners after a year-long strike between 1984 and 1985. During the 1970s the miners had been a great economic and political power, having played a part in the fall of Heath's Conservative government in 1974. However, by the 1990s, after the privatisation of their industry, and a programme of mine closures, they had virtually disappeared as a profession and totally disappeared as a political force. There were also more subtle attacks launched on some new middle-class professions that had been supportive of post-material and environmental

principles, particularly those associated with education and medicine, resulting in the loss of a great deal of their autonomy.

The years between 1983 and 1987 saw an ideological flowering of Thatcher's strategy, meaning people no longer thought of the government's policies as Conservative, but as 'Thatcherism'. Thus, by the end of the 1980s it was possible to speak of a Thatcher era. The changes in the socio-economic and political structures, and since 1979 effectively one-party rule, combined to make for what is generally accepted as a distinct phase in British politics (see for example Hutton 1995, Sampson 1991). Rhodes (1994) has suggested this phase witnessed a 'hollowing out' of the state through privatisation, the creation of quangos and the new philosophy of public sector management.

The economic change brought about during the 1980s had a considerable social impact. The Conservative government gave priority in economic matters to the macro objective of bringing inflation under control. Between 1979 and 1986 inflation duly fell from 13.4percent to 3.5percent. However, the low inflation rate was achieved at the cost of high unemployment, which rose to three and a quarter million by 1986. Many of the jobs that were lost between the early 1970s and the end of Thatcher's term in office in 1990, were full-time manufacturing posts. During this time Britain experienced a 36 percent decrease in manufacturing industries. These jobs were disproportionately replaced by temporary or part-time jobs in the service sector, which underwent a 42 percent increase (*Annual Abstract of Statistics 2005*). This trend has continued: in 1984 28 percent of men worked in manufacturing industries, compared with only 18 percent in 2004 (Cook and Martin 2005:5). As a result, the unity of the two big class groupings has declined, most notably in the case of the manual working class. As the number of manual workers has declined, they have become internally divided between those in permanent, full-time jobs and those on temporary and/or part-time work. Equally, the number of white collar workers has gone up, but, once again there are important internal divisions between those in secure permanent work and those on temporary contracts. Perhaps predictably, the

unemployed were disproportionately concentrated amongst groups with few or no formal educational qualifications, and those living in areas where the local economy was depressed. As traditional industries waned the economic foundations of the cities of the industrial revolution decayed, and this had profound consequences for their prosperity and financial stability. During the 1980s environmental groups began to address such urban problems by focusing on regeneration. In 1980 the first urban Wildlife Trust (currently the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country) was established in the West Midlands, swiftly followed by others in London. This marked a turning point for the Trusts which began to increase its focus on wildlife and people. Whilst continuing with their established environmental activities, other groups, such as the BTCV, also began to target much of their work in urban areas, undertaking a variety of projects aimed at training, work experience and education.

The Thatcher years also witnessed an increased inequality in income and wealth distributions. The 1970s had seen relatively little change in the distribution of disposable income among households. However, although household disposable income grew in real terms across the distribution as a whole over the 1980s, the decade was characterised by a large increase in inequality. Between 1981 and 1989 average (median) income rose by 27 percent when adjusted for inflation, whereas income at the ninetieth percentile rose by 38 percent and that at the tenth percentile rose by only 7 percent (see table 6.1). When the Conservatives left office in 1997, Britain had the widest earnings differential between those who earn the top and those earn the bottom 20 percent of wages, than any other nation in the developed countries in the western world (Benson and Payne 1997). Now, in the biggest cities, and especially in London, 'averages' mask massive inequalities in wealth, health and life chances (Moran 2001:47).

**Table 6.1: United Kingdom Distribution of Real Household Disposable Income  
1971 -2000**

	<b>£ Per Week</b>				
	<b>10th percentile</b>	<b>25th percentile</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>75th percentile</b>	<b>90th percentile</b>
<b>1971</b>	99.04	133.15	180.12	238.75	314.31
<b>1975</b>	115.48	147.37	197.75	259.65	333.48
<b>1980</b>	118.24	152.67	209.67	279.81	365.56
<b>1985</b>	123.83	155.76	217.97	305.54	402.64
<b>1990</b>	125.43	170.53	260.54	385.13	535.80
<b>1994/95</b>	133.55	177.89	261.46	382.54	528.91
<b>1999-00</b>	145.54	195.15	287.61	422.69	586.11

(Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies)

A number of the societal changes brought about during the 1980s are effectively summarised by Hutton's (1995) concept of the 30/30/40 society. He argues that it is no longer a simple distinction between rich and poor, or employed and unemployed, that forms the basis of social exclusion. Hutton suggests instead, that deregulation and casualisation of work has put people in Britain increasingly at risk. The disadvantaged make up the bottom 30percent of unemployed and economically inactive who are marginalized. They live with the risk that poverty could turn into an inability even to subsist, and that marginalization could become complete social and economic exclusion. The next 30percent are comprised from the 'newly insecure', being in a form of employment that is at risk. Legislation has reduced their employment protection. They are temporary, part-time, contract, agency workers and the self-employed who are taken on and laid off as demand for their labour changes. The advantaged 40percent are what are usually understood as full-time permanent or tenure jobs in the great organisations of the public and private sectors. Even here there are risks associated with such things as delayering, downsizing and contracting out. This is said to erode the advantaged by around 1percent per annum. These changing employment prospects are likely to have an impact on values. Those with careers in generally hierarchical structures must expect authority and subordination. Thus, individuals whose careers are confined to short-term contracts or

routine clerical work cannot realistically expect self-actualization in their daily lives in the way that young highly educated individuals could a generation earlier (Cotgrove and Duff 1981:106-7).

The Thatcher years also witnessed a reduction in effective political opposition which lasted until the early 1990s. Consequently, from the early part of the 1980s the environmental movement became established as the only real, and legitimate, environmental opposition. This enabled the environmental movement to becoming an increasingly vocal and important political force. The national environmental groups came of age, as media interest, green movement membership, polling data and voting figures all indicated a dramatic increase in the status of environmental concern (Wall 1999:36). This helped to usher in a 'greening' of British politics as the environment became seen as a legitimate, high profile and enduring issue. The evidence of this green wave sweeping Britain was most evident when a series of high profile threats surfaced, for instance, the North Sea Seal epidemic and Karina B incidents in 1988. These issues pushed the environment to the centre of the policy debate. Consequently, by the end of the Thatcher's term in office, environmental concern was widespread amongst the British population, and environmentalism was right at the top of the public, political, business and economic agendas.

### **Difficult Times for the Environmental Movement 1990-1997**

John Major succeeded Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in 1990, and gave the impression of being a more traditional style Conservative than Thatcher had been. The new government had a more consensual style of leadership, and appeared more willing to listen to interest groups and the environmental lobby. In concrete terms the Conservatives introduced the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This established English Nature to work on the conservation of wildlife and habitats, while Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Council for Wales were set up as the equivalent bodies in these countries. However, as quickly as it had risen in 1988, the environment was dropping down the political agenda in the early 1990s. The rise of such

issues as the poll tax, the Gulf War and crises in both the health service and the economy meant that by 1991 the environment was effectively off the front pages and out of favour with many politicians. This was evident in the fact that a number of newspapers let go of their specialist environmental correspondents, with coverage of environmental issues falling across all types of media (Rawcliffe 1998:67). While the Rio Earth Summit of 1992 was well attended by British politicians, it did little to rekindle interest in the environment at the national level. British environmental policy remained substantially unaffected as public interest fell and pressure groups began to lose support (Rudig 1993:1-8). By the 1992 general election the environment was effectively a non-issue and relegated to the back pages of both Conservative and Labour Party manifestos. The Green Party's share of the vote was a mere 1.2percent, causing much internal wrangling in the months that followed the election.

Downs (1972) had raised the possibility that public interest in environmentalism would be a passing phase. The concept of the 'issue attention cycle' proposes that its high prominence would be overtaken by fresher topics. The prospect of this seemed increasingly likely during the early to mid-1990s, as the environmental movement began to experience relatively hard times. There was very little growth in membership for most groups, and for some groups such as Greenpeace and FoE membership actually declined quite significantly, with the WWF alone losing 49,000 or over 20percent of its supporters between 1990 and 1994. However, despite their slackening growth rates the membership of environmental groups remained high, considerably higher than they had been a decade earlier. This lasting support indicated that the environmental movement was not simply a sunshine issue that only emerges when economic conditions permit such a luxury. Rather it had become a deeply rooted commitment on the part of a significant section of the public. Further proof of this emerged towards the end of the 1990s as direct actions and environmental protest activity increased noticeably, especially in relation to road building and globalisation.

By the mid-1990s the new environmental groups had been transformed from a tiny band of idealistic ecologists into large corporations. For example, in 1995 Greenpeace had an annual budget of \$150 million and over 1,000 staff in 43 offices world-wide (Jordan and Maloney 1997:23). As a result of their resources and standing environmental groups now had the ability to affect personal, commercial and even government decisions. For example, in February 1995, the British government had approved a proposal by Shell UK for deep sea disposal of the Brent Spar oil storage and loading buoy in the north Atlantic. There followed a high profile campaign by Greenpeace, that included occupation of the oil platform by its activists. After continued pressure Shell UK, one of the world's biggest multinationals, abandoned the proposal. In the wake of this deep sea disposal became politically unacceptable: just after coming to power the New Labour government announced the withdrawal of support for sea dumping, and in 1998 European governments met to debate a European wide ban on sea disposal (Bennie 1998:89).

### **A Possible New Consensus 1997-Onwards**

In the years between 1979 and 1987 the Conservative Party had moved emphatically to the right, and Labour had turned equally sharply to the left. As a result, the major parties had diverged markedly in terms of social, economic, foreign and defence policy. However, in the decade that followed their policies began to converge again, mainly due to shifts in Labour's policies engineered by party leaders Neil Kinnock, John Smith, and Tony Blair. The Labour Party leadership had become convinced that the party was no longer in step with the march of history, especially as the new right agenda was becoming recognised by all socialist parties, both in and out of power, throughout Europe. By the general election of 1997, a new right-of-centre, post-Thatcherite consensus appeared to have formed, that was in sharp contrast to the consensus of the immediate post war era. Broadly speaking the new consensus was neo-liberal rather than social democratic, and built around a vision of the state as enabler and regulator rather than direct provider of services.

Hence, there is clear evidence to suggest that Britain has undergone a political and economic revolution since environmentalism first emerged as a political force in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, this was not the revolution that the post-materialists and new environmentalists had envisaged: materialism and consumerism had continued and economic growth was still seen as the driving force of modern society. Since the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, the debate about sustainable development and sustainability had emerged and partly replaced some of the older ecologically orientated ideas about growth. Nevertheless, the late 1990s witnessed the establishment of the anti-globalization movement, which has given a new vigour to the ecology lobby.

The New Labour government elected to office under Tony Blair in May 1997 remained committed to the new neo-liberal, right-of-centre consensus, which has not changed under the premiership of Gordon Brown. It was Brown who instigated responsibility for placing control over money supply to an independent Bank of England. The New Labour government has been decidedly pro-market, pro-business and anti-inflationary, it seemed that if New Labour had a model when it came to power it was that of 'Old' Labour's arch enemy, Margaret Thatcher. With government and opposition policies converging in this way, differing views such as those held within the environmental movement can frequently be ignored or rejected. The government's plans for the environment continued to stress sustainable development. This strategy had the expressed aim of trying to ensure a better quality of life for all now and in the future. To achieve sustainable development four objectives were set out: first social progress that recognises the needs of everyone; second, maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment; third, prudent use of natural resources, and finally, effective protection of the environment. As a result of the global recession towards the end of the 00s, economic imperatives came to the forefront of public attention once again. But, environmental issues were not pushed totally from the agenda, with efforts to reduce global warming



becoming as a major issue on the international stage culminating in the Copenhagen summit on climate change in 2009.

### **Environmentalism and Four Decades of Change**

The changes that have affected Britain in recent decades have helped to shape the environmental movement, as it has adjusted in response to new challenges and opportunities. Of all the new social movements that came out of the late 1960s student movements, it is the environmental movement that has had the most enduring influence on British politics, and which has undergone the widest ranging institutionalisation in terms of the professionalization of its activities and the acceptance of its credibility amongst policy-makers (Rootes 1999:1). Environmentalism is clearly not a passing fad, but a deeply rooted commitment on the part of a large section of the public.

Throughout its history the environmental movement has not stood still; a number of different issues have been central to the movement. All through the 1960s population and pollution were the primary concerns. By the 1970s and throughout the 1980s nuclear power was regarded as the main hazard. This was overtaken in the 1990s by concerns relating to the physical environment and anti-roads protests. Presently global warming and bio-diversity are central to the movement. The goals of the movement have altered in response to changing perceptions about the degree of potential hazard, but also in reaction to changing social values. Perhaps as environmental causes have changed, so too has the profile of those who have worked to champion them.

An analysis of Britain's post-war history produces some evidence to support the post-materialism hypothesis. The rise of post-material values helps to explain the increasing salience of environmental issues since the late 1960s. However, West European levels of economic security have not continued to rise during the last two decades. Despite some economic growth, rising levels of income inequality have brought little or no increase in real income for most

of the population; the impact on economic security has been reinforced by cutbacks in the welfare state and high levels of unemployment, particularly among youth. Hence, Inglehart's (2008) most recent survey found that the two younger cohorts appear to be slightly less post-materialist than the next two cohorts. Inglehart (2008:137) has concluded that the shift towards post-materialist values is tapering off in West European countries.

The rise of post-materialism does not mean that materialistic issues and concerns will vanish. Conflicts about how to secure prosperity and sustainable economic development will always be important political issues (Inglehart 2008:142). Nevertheless, over the last 40 years sections of the environmental movement have continually questioned the whole ethic of economic growth (Byrne 1997:1). Environmentalists have argued that the pursuit of economic expansion, and the production of more and more material goods, has resulted in the depletion of finite resources, the introduction of potentially dangerous technology and pollution. An important motive for participation in Green parties, or environmental pressure groups, has been the notion that traditional left/right politics has little relevance to environmental issues. Parties of both persuasions have traditionally been committed to economic goals (Cotgrove 1982:90). But, as environmentalism has become an increasingly important issue, all politicians and political parties seem to require a green profile. This raises the question whether perceptions about the environment are still tied up with political ideologies. It is possible that environmentalism is no longer a sunshine issue that only attracts support when economic concerns are in abeyance.

While it is possible to find evidence for the emergence of post-material values, it is equally clear that materialistic values have not gone away. As environmental degradation and pollution have become increasingly significant global problems, the clash of these worldviews is likely to become an ever more important issue for citizens and politicians alike. Environmental catastrophes have potential consequences for everyone in society, not just those interested in conservation or ecology. Thus, the problem of deciding

whether to live in harmony with nature or opt for economic growth and the accumulation of wealth, is one that warrants further investigation.

The literature review has revealed a fairly consistent depiction of environmental activists: members of the environmental movement are likely to be highly educated, have professional jobs in non-productive sectors of the economy, and are disproportionately likely to support leftwing policies (Abramson and Inglehart 1986:1-2). This general profile is corroborated when it is compared with various theoretical accounts of participation and the history of the environmental movement. However, it is far from definitive, and there are still some gaps in our knowledge regarding possible differences between those involved in the conservation and ecology movements. This thesis aims to address some of these issues by conducting research into the leadership of an assortment of grass-roots environmental groups. The next section outlines the methodology used to carry out this survey, outlining how the sample was selected, how the key concepts were operationalized, and the methods used to analyse the results.

# **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## **Identifying a Sample and Contacting Suitable**

### **Respondents**

Research must be rigorous in order to produce valid conclusions. This means the research design must be fit for purpose, and carried out in such a way that it is capable of producing reliable results. Factors such as who participates in an investigation, how concepts are operationalized, and how data is gathered are important, because they will affect the reliability of research. It is equally important that anyone who examines a piece of research is able to evaluate the legitimacy of the methodology for themselves. As Gerring (2001:38) asserts there is a temptation 'just to get on with it' in social science research, but a 'blithely empirical approach to social science' only complicates matters when there is doubt about the cumulative nature of research after the use of idiosyncratic definitions and concepts. Thus, part of the process of producing valid research is to introduce transparency into the data gathering process. Therefore, as well as presenting the results of the survey, the following chapters will provide a justification of the research strategy, and give a detailed account of the research methods employed in the data gathering process.

### **Identifying the Target Population**

This investigation is concerned with environmental activism at the grassroots level. However, there is no single classification or test determining exactly who is, and who is not, environmentally active. This research will take environmental activism to mean movement-supporting activities that are promoted by environmental organisations (Tindall, Davies and Mauboules 2003:910). It is important to have a clear criterion for selecting who should be included in the research, because different populations will have different

characteristics. A population refers to the whole collection of items in a set, such as all the adults in Britain. The population that this investigation seeks to research are those people who operate as coordinators of environmental groups at the local level. Obviously, the way this population is defined will impact upon the results that research produces, and consequently its validity.

Having selected coordinators of local environmental groups as the focus of this investigation, it was important to determine which individuals to contact in order to produce as representative a sample of this population as possible. Therefore, environmental groups were assessed very carefully before being selected for inclusion in the investigation. It was decided that the target population should be coordinators of groups affiliated to national environmental organisations. It was relevant that the coordinators had engaged in environmental activism via involvement with national environmental organisations, because this meant that the primary goal of their participation was to promote environmental causes. Other groups may get involved with issues, and carry out actions, that are designed to have a positive environmental impact, but this may not be the sole aim. For instance, some not-in-my-back-yard (NIMBY) type campaigns may protect or improve the environment in some way, but participants may not be motivated to participate in order to promote environmental causes.

Nationally prominent groups were preferred because their objectives, preferred methods and ideologies are well known and established. This helped to reduce the possibility of producing invalid results due to a biased sample. Surveying activists allied to national environmental groups was also pertinent because these organisations occupy a central position within the movement. Dalton (1994:18) has argued that environmental groups provide a key to understanding the fundamental nature of contemporary environmentalism. He suggests that as environmentalism has developed they have helped to clarify the goals and identity of the movement, and defined what it means to be green (Dalton 1994:i). During the 1980s and 1990s, as the membership and income of environmental groups grew, they became

increasingly professional and well resourced organisations, which enabled them to mature rapidly as political actors. They now have the ability to mount sustained campaigns across a spectrum of environmental issues, and the power to affect personal, commercial and even government decisions. Their influence spans from individual consumer choices on the high-street, right the way through to the international policy arena. Rawcliffe (1998:6) argues that as the professionalization of the environmental lobby has increased, decision-makers have come to recognise that environmental groups both represent and help to form public opinion on environmental issues; their views have to be taken into account.

It is with significant justification that Scott (1996:86) has referred to groups such as the RSPB, the Wildlife Trust and the National Trust as “the real voice of nature conservation”. In the mid-1990s Dwyers and Hodge (1996:55) estimated that the combined expenditure of the leading conservation groups was double that of the government’s own statutory conservation agencies. They have also become significant land owners: collectively conservation groups own and manage over 1.3 million acres of land directly for conservation purposes (Rawcliffe 1998:3). In political terms environmental groups have never been more respectable. Even the more radical and anti-establishment groups formed in the 1970s, such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, have successfully developed into mass lobbies and authoritative sources of new research and thinking. This has enabled them to become an established part of the policy-making process both in Britain and on the wider international stage. This has made environmental groups a focal point for the study of environmentalism. By looking at who becomes active within these groups, it may be possible to gain an understanding of the wider environmental movement.

The selection of exactly which national groups to include was crucial because it is difficult to try to identify common characteristics for the movement as a whole from data referring to specific organisations, especially since contemporary environmentalism is composed of a variety of different

organisations. Johnson (1998:35-36) asserts that the number of environmental interest groups is truly staggering, and suggests it is difficult to find a policy issue area that has spawned a larger and more diverse set of interest organisations. From the literature review it seemed evident that the most important distinction is made between traditional 'light green' conservation groups, and the more radical 'dark green' ecology groups. Hence, the research attempted to survey coordinators drawn from both conservation and ecology groups, making it possible to discover whether the theoretical differences between them were as pronounced as previous depictions may suggest.

In the end six environmental groups were selected as being approximately representative of the environmental movement as a whole. These are listed in table 7.1 below, and are classified as either conservation or ecology in orientation.

Table 7.1: Environmental Groups Initially Contacted

<b><u>Conservation (Light Green)</u></b>	<b><u>Ecology (Dark Green)</u></b>
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers	Friends of the Earth UK
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Greenpeace UK
The Wildlife Trust	The Green Party

Activist members of these groups were included in the sample firstly because there is widespread agreement across the literature that these groups are at the forefront of environmental action in Britain. Secondly, these groups have established themselves as nationwide organisations, which are able to exert influence on a national and international level over a broad spectrum of environmental interests. Thirdly, they address a range of environmental problems, and have been able to take advantage of the interest in environmental issues to establish a mass membership base. Fourthly, these organisations all possess a permanent organisational structure, and well-established organisations are easier to classify and contact. Fifthly, the six

groups all have extensive networks of local groups throughout Britain, many work autonomously under the banner of the national organisations with the aim of preserving or improving the environment in their region. Finally, the groups get involved in nationally coordinated campaigns providing rank and file members with the opportunity to participate at the grassroots level.

### **Collecting Data via an Internet Based Questionnaire**

Having selected a potential sample it was important to determine a suitable method of identifying, contacting and gathering data from them. A review of available research methods revealed that an internet based questionnaire would be an effective method of delivering a questionnaire to present-day environmental activists. Since environmentalism has become a network linked via the internet. Empirically studies have demonstrated the prominent role the internet now plays within the environmental movement (Washbourne 2001, Pickerill 2003). Horton (2004:734-49) has suggested that the internet and e-mail have become so central to British environmentalism, both culturally and politically, that they have become impossible to ignore in attempts to understand the contemporary movement. Web-based surveys are particularly well suited to research amongst these types of internet-using groups, especially if the population is known, and e-mail addresses are available and up to date (Perrot 2004). The groups at the heart of this investigation satisfied these criteria.

Johnson (1999:46) has found that most environmental groups now use on-line computer networks to communicate with members and potential supporters. These are an important source of information for existing activists. However, their primary purpose is to communicate with, persuade and mobilise widespread and unknown others with varying levels of commitment (Horton 2004:738). Recognising that without an active membership their ability to campaign is limited, chequebook organisations such as FoE, Greenpeace and RSPB pursue a dual mobilisation strategy, whereby they seek to develop both a passive and active membership, mobilised via networks of local groups (Jordan and Clarence 2003:14-16). To facilitate those interested in grassroots



campaigning, most environmental organisations' websites provide the names and e-mail addresses of individuals with a coordinating role in affiliated local groups. As a result, there are readily available lists of active local groups and contact details for those with a coordinating role. Consequently there was a clearly defined population that could be directly contacted.

E-mails were sent to local environmental group coordinators who were members of the selected green organisations. The e-mails invited the coordinators to visit a website at which a questionnaire could be found and completed online. Using this method meant there were no constraints in terms of geographical coverage, which enabled large amounts of information to be gathered relatively quickly from anywhere in Britain. Perhaps the most compelling reason for choosing the internet as a means of gathering information is because some environmentalists regard other forms of research, especially postal surveys, as a waste of natural resources. It is therefore perhaps more appropriate to use an electronic method of data collection when investigating the contemporary environmental movement, as alternative methods may risk alienating the target population.

Traditionally one of the main drawbacks with online surveys is that access to the internet is still nowhere near universal. The Office of National Statistics reported that 51 percent of households in Britain had access to the internet in 2004 (*National Statistics* 2007), and that 58 percent of adults in Britain had used the internet in the first quarter of that year (*National Statistics* 2004a), hence, this could impact upon results. Bryman (2004:482) points out that internet users are a biased sample of the population, who tend to be better educated, wealthier, younger and not representative in ethnic terms. However, the information that is available about internet access refers to the population as a whole, not to these environmental activists. Due to their roles as local group coordinators access to the internet is a requirement, hence it was theoretically possible to contact every coordinator linked with the selected organizations.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Before gathering any data, it was imperative to ensure that the interests of those who participated in the research were safeguarded. Hornsby-Smith (1995:52-4) points out that the researcher must act responsibly given the specific circumstances of the research problem and field. Therefore, it is important to consider all the possible risks to respondents as a result of participating, and then remove them. Obviously if this research was unethical or presented a risk of physical, psychological or legal harm to respondents, or the wider community, it would not have been allowed to proceed.

Ethical considerations are important to this research, primarily due to the nature of the data collected. To develop a profile of environmental activists it was necessary to gather some private and personal information relating to their age, education, employment, political activity etc. Secondly, some activists choose to participate via unorthodox means, and occasionally this can result in illegal behaviour. For example, due to the way a legal action, such as a rally or demonstration, is conducted the police or courts may adjudge it to be a breach of the peace. Alternatively, by occupying a site designated for development protestors risk being arrested and charged with aggravated trespass. Obviously the vast majority within the environmental movement do not take part in any action that might be deemed illegal. However, it is more common when groups organise against something which is a matter of government policy or against corporations, when confrontations with the authorities are often endemic.

Thus, various guidelines have been consulted to determine the best safeguards to employ in order to protect respondents. (See for example: the guidelines of the British Sociological Association (2002), the Political Studies Association (2003) and the Social Research Association (2003)). With this research the most important measure was to obtain informed consent, this meant respondents knowingly agree to participate in research. Informed consent does not simply mean telling potential respondents about issues which the researcher regards as significant. It is more important to provide

information that subjects are likely to regard as material (The British Sociological Association 2002). As a result, both the e-mail and the website provided the following information:

- That participation in the project is entirely voluntary, and participants are entitled to withdraw consent at any time.
- The purpose of the study: what the research is for, and why it is being undertaken.
- My identity, and why I am undertaking the research.
- The degree of anonymity and confidentiality they are likely to have as a result of taking part in any section of the research process.
- Any possible harm or inconvenience they could undergo as a result of participating in the research.

An overt research style was used to avoid the risk of misrepresenting the nature of the research. This was important at a time of widespread anxiety amongst research participants about misuse of information and internet fraud. Using a web survey allowed respondents to provide information anonymously if that is what they preferred. To further protect the interests of respondents, all the information they supplied was treated as confidential. In spite of these safeguards, the number of people who participate in local environmental groups is relatively small, therefore under certain conditions the identities of people and places may be recognisable. Hence, when presenting the data potential identifiers of respondents have been removed (the British Sociological Association 2002). Additionally, in written accounts, findings have been generalised so that they do not refer to specific individuals or groups. This was unproblematic as information specific to individuals is not the goal of the research, instead it focuses on aggregate data representing the whole sample (Baker 1988:53). No activities have been exposed that respondents themselves wanted to keep secret. The groups that were surveyed act within public settings, the groups themselves often promoting their activities in the media and via the internet. The whole point of much of their activity is to let the relevant agencies, and wider society, know that they are there, and what they intend to do. The survey avoided gathering any data about the specifics

of potentially illegal aspects of activists' behaviour because this information had no significance to the research questions. Protestors were asked to opt into the research, no form of coercion was used and no pressure was placed upon people either to take part, or continue to participate, if they felt it was against their interests to do so.

Having determined who should be included in the target population, and a method of contacting and collecting data from them, it was important to be clear about exactly what we needed to know from them, and to persuade them to provide this information. The following chapter looks at the design of the questionnaire, paying particular attention to the questions that had to be asked in order to measure such concepts as environmental activism, pro-environmental beliefs and post-materialism. It will then outline the process of data collection and analysis.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **Operationalization and Measurement of the Central Concepts**

This section outlines the operationalization and measurement of the main concepts at the heart of this investigation. This was a very important consideration because validity depends upon an item measuring or describing what it is supposed to. There is also a description of the data gathering instrument, and the information that was collected. In addition, the research model had to motivate sufficient numbers of respondents to provide the information being sought; therefore there is an explanation of the techniques which were employed to try to increase the response rate.

### **Required Variables**

The main objective of this thesis was to produce a demographic and cognitive profile of local environmental group coordinators, and to compare conservationists with ecologists. The literature review helped to determine the type of data that was collected, as there are already a broad set of characteristics that are thought to relate to the profile of environmentalists. These suggest they are young, well educated with relatively high occupational status. There are also a set of propositions relating to the goals and ideology of environmentalists. These assert that they are left-wing in their political orientation, post-materialist in their value priorities and in favour of an alternative means of organising society. By comparing the result of this research with these variables, it is possible to reveal any significant disparities between grassroots activists and to establish a contemporary picture of environmentalist participation.

Thus, there is a prerequisite set of information that we must discover about participants. Primarily, it is important to establish their environmental

orientation: can they be regarded as conservationists or ecologists? It is also relevant to look at their ideological profile in terms of their political orientation, views about materialism and environmental attitudes. When defining and measuring these concepts it is important to attempt to achieve a high level of construct validity, so that these ideas can be effectively translated from the realm of theory into actual measures of scale.

### **Conservationists, Ecologists and Mixed Types**

At the start of the data gathering process, all of those contacted by e-mail were identified as environmentalist by virtue of being coordinators of grassroots environmental groups. It was essential to have a systematic method for determining whether respondents could be classified as members of either the conservation movement or the ecology movement. Although they were coordinators of a group, this did not mean that they confined their participation solely to this group. It is possible that those who manage a local conservation group are also very involved in ecology campaigning. Therefore, respondents were asked to indicate if they were involved with any of the ten environmental groups cited by National Statistics as the most widely supported in Britain (listed in table 8.1). Respondents also had the option to name up to three additional groups with which they have an affiliation. These organisations are categorised as either conservation or ecology groups as shown in the table 8.1. Participants in the research were classified as either conservationists or ecologists depending on their relationship with these groups.

Hence, when respondents only have contact with conservation groups they were categorised as conservationist; alternatively if they are associated solely with ecology groups they were classified as ecologists. However, if respondents are in contact with both types of group then their level of involvement with these groups is taken into account. Each level of involvement has been assigned a value: group coordinator three, activist two and supporter one. These scores are totalled for each type of group, and respondents are assigned to a category according to the highest total. If, for example, a respondent is a supporter of Friends of the Earth and

Greenpeace, then that gives a score of two for ecology. If they are also a coordinator for the National Trust and an activist for the RSPB, this carried a value of five for conservation. Therefore, they were classified as a conservationist. When the scores were tied respondents were described as 'mixed' types.

Table 8.1: British Environmental Groups with Widespread National Support

Conservation groups	
Civic Trust	Friends of the Earth
CPRE	Greenpeace
National Trusts	The Green Party
Ramblers Association	Earth First!*
RSPB	-
Wildlife Trusts	-
Woodland Trust	-

\*has been added to this list

(Source: Social Trends 2005)

### **Measuring Participants' Level of Environmental Activism**

The investigation adopted a broad definition of participation as "taking part in the process of formulation, passage, and implementation of public policies" (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992:16). It was interested in actions taken by citizens that are aimed at influencing decisions about the environment, which are in the most part, ultimately taken by public representatives and officials. Thus, participation was defined as a form of action designed to support activities that are promoted by environmental organisations. The various activities that are taken to fall within this definition are listed in table 8.2. The convention adopted within much political research is to define 'activism' as having participated in at least three different actions within the last year.

Table 8.2: Possible Activities to Support an Environmental Cause or Issue

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**Orthodox Low-Cost Participation**

- 1) Made a donation
- 2) Bought products that contributed financially to an environmental group
- 3) Signed a petition
- 4) Boycotted certain products
- 5) Wore or displayed a campaign badge or poster

**Orthodox High-Cost Participation**

- 6) Contacted a politician or government official
- 7) Wrote to a newspaper or other branch of the media
- 8) Attended a public meeting
- 9) Took a petition round and asked people to sign it
- 10) Did voluntary work

**Unorthodox Participation**

- a) Took part in a lawful public demonstration
  - b) Took part in a sit-in or street demonstration
  - c) Used force against property or equipment
- 

It is important to take into account the fact that participation is composed of a variety of activities. These range from relatively low cost actions, such as wearing a campaign badge or signing a petition, to high cost actions like taking part in demonstrations and blacking traffic. These differ greatly in terms of the time and effort they need and the resources required to perform them. Hence, respondents were asked about their participation in a variety of campaigning activities. Milbrath (1965:16-21) had envisaged participation as cumulative with those who engage in one political action taking part in others as well. However, Parry, Moyser and Day (1992:17) raise the possibility that different actions attract different types of people, with some individuals being prepared to take part in disruptive activities, whilst other are psychologically unprepared for them. Participation can also be subdivided into orthodox or unorthodox styles of campaigning.



Examining how many actions an individual has participated in provides a good measure of activism in general, but it does not reveal the whole story. It seems obvious that someone who does voluntary work on a frequent basis can be considered more active than someone who does so only rarely. Therefore, participants were also asked to indicate how often they had taken part in the activities listed in table 8.1. A variety of closed-ended options were provided, which have been assigned the following values: not at all 0, rarely 1, occasionally 2, and frequently 3. This means that the more activities a respondent participated in, and the more often they undertook them, the higher their activism score.

Thus, someone who participated in five actions rarely would receive an activism score of five, and would not be described as so active as an individual who undertook five actions frequently, who would receive an activism score of fifteen. Using this criteria activism has been placed on a continuum ranging from low level activism through to frequent activism, as outlined in table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Assessment of the level of Participation Undertaken by Activists

<b>Activism score</b>	<b>Incidence of activism</b>
3 – 5	Low Level Activism
6 – 13	Moderate Activism
14 – 20	Regular Activism
21 - 30	Frequent Activism

### **Quantifying Unorthodox Activism**

Since the 1970s many environmental groups and their supporters have not limited their efforts to conventional participation. Either as the result of necessity, or preference, many groups have engaged in various kinds of protest behaviour to supplement or even replace conventional participation. Certain sections of the environmental movement have adopted high profile

direct action campaigns as a preferred means of operating. The questionnaire attempted to discover whether grass-roots activists engage of in this form of campaigning by asking them whether they have taken part in an assortment of unconventional forms of participation. Initially, participants were asked whether they had participated in any of the unorthodox forms of activism listed in table 8.2, labelled a) to c).

It seems obvious that groups, and individuals who use a high percentage unorthodox tactics, such as direct action and protests, can be regarded as more radical than those who do not. Thus, by asking respondents about their involvement in unorthodox campaigns, it is possible to determine whether certain groups of activists are conventional, radical or some mix of both, in their style of participation. For instance, we would expect to discover that ecologists are more likely to use NVDA than are conservationists.

It is also useful to distinguish between the variety of tactics included in the classification 'unorthodox activism'. Unconventional participation can be broken down into sub-categories depending upon how confrontational or radical it is deemed to be, as outlined in table 8.4 below.

Table 8.4: Categorization of Unorthodox Activism

Type of Participation: <b>a) Legal and non-violent</b> E.g. marches and demonstrations <b>b) Illegal and non-violent</b> E.g. sit-ins or street demonstrations <b>c) Illegal and violent</b> E.g. destruction of equipment / 'monkey wrenching'
--

Each of the unorthodox participation questions refers to one of these categories of activism. From respondents' answers it was possible to place their activism on a continuum ranging from the sorts of orthodox tactics linked with traditional pressure groups, through to the more radical campaigns and mobilizations more commonly associated with social movements.

## **Political Orientation**

Respondents were asked whether they were members of any of the major political parties. They were then asked to indicate on a scale of 1 - 5, where 1 means very unlikely, and 5 means very likely, how likely it would be for them to vote for each of the main political parties. Previous research has suggested that environmental activists are left wing in their political orientations. As a result, we would expect to find that they are likely to express support for parties traditionally associated with the left rather than those of the right. Political identification is also usually taken to be a useful predictor of post-materialism.

The research also examined respondents' attitudes towards civic responsibility and democracy. The social movement perspective indicates that the ecology movement represents a conscious attempt at cultural innovation. Accordingly, rather than trying to bring about change through the political system and political action, ecologists are thought to favour the creation of new life-styles which challenge traditional values (Scott 1990:16-17). This ideological stance means that the merit of formal representative democracy is often questioned, because it does not provide sufficient opportunity for mass involvement. This makes it an unsatisfactory, and incomplete, solution to the problems of popular participation in the political decision-making process. Scott (1990:16-28) notes that within the ideology of new social movements, such as the ecology movement, there is a distrust of representative democracy. He asserts that this is the result of power being weighted in favour of the representatives who enjoy extensive autonomy, and away from those they represent. Thus, it has been suggested that the British environmental movement, especially its more radical sections, exemplifies some of the challenges facing the political systems of advanced industrialised societies (Cotgrove 1982:97). A decline in support for electoral participation, especially when accompanied by a growth of direct action, is significant because support for political institutions and respect for law and order are vital for the legitimacy of the political system.

Questions one to five below tapped into respondents' views concerning the democratic process by asking them to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1) People should be allowed to organise public meetings to protest against the government.
- 2) Political parties that wish to overthrow democracy should not be allowed to stand in general elections.
- 3) All things considered, most elections are just a big waste of time and money.
- 4) Elections don't matter, because it's big international companies that have real power not elected governments.
- 5) I would seriously be neglecting my duty as a citizen if I didn't vote.

### **Post-materialism**

Inglehart (1971, 1990) has hypothesised that an intergenerational value shift has been taking place in post-industrialised societies since the end of the Second World War. Due to this shift in values some individuals reject materialism, and embrace a new mood that has been termed post-materialism. Inglehart (1990:3) asserts that the main consequence of post-materialism is a "...de-emphasis of economic growth as the dominant goal of society, and the decline of economic criteria as the standard of rational behaviour". Accordingly, Inglehart (1971:997) operationalized materialism as an emphasis on such things as economic and physical security, and post-materialism as an emphasis on a sense of belonging and esteem, and on intellectual and aesthetic satisfaction. The vast majority of studies measure this by asking respondents to say which of the following objectives they consider to be the most desirable, and which is the second most desirable, for their country:

- a) Maintaining order in the nation
- b) Giving people more say in government decisions
- c) Fighting rising prices
- d) Protecting freedom of speech

Respondents who choose options a. (Maintaining order in the nation) and c. (Fighting rising prices) as the most desirable two preferences are classified as materialists. Those who select options b. (Giving people more say in government decisions) and d. (Protecting freedom of speech) as the most attractive two preferences are classified as post-materialists. A combination of these answers results in respondents being considered 'mixed' types.

Some researchers have questioned the validity of this four-item battery, suggesting that it does not identify those who possess post-material values. Finger and Sciarini (1991:102-3), for example, have suggested that Inglehart's conceptualisation of post-materialism is less relevant now than it was when he developed it in the early 1970s. Asking respondents about the need to fight price rises, for instance, may now be a poor measure of economic insecurity. While inflation is not good for most people's sense of confidence, it has been relatively low in Britain by post-war standards for over a decade, and in any case, people are usually much more concerned about unemployment. It is also possible that the item 'maintaining order in the nation' is more a measure of authoritarian conformity than concern for physical security. This is a significant distinction given environmental activists' supposed ambivalence towards authority (Cotgrove 1982:95).

As a result, the four-item battery may identify the majority of activists as pure post-materialist, without truly tapping their feelings about economic security. Hence Inglehart (1990) has also devised a twelve-item battery. This involves respondents to answering the question that made up the four item battery, and they are also asked to answer the following two questions, by choosing from the following lists:

If you had to choose among these four aims, which would be your first choice? And which would be your second choice?

- e) Maintaining a high level of economic growth
- f) Making sure the country has strong defence forces

- g) Seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities
- h) Trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful

Which option would you say is the most important? And which would be the next most important?

- i) A stable economy
- j) Progress towards a less impersonal and more humane society
- k) Progress towards a society in which ideas count more than money
- l) The fight against crime

Results from the four item battery are combined with the questions above, and a value assigned depending on how many of items b), d), g), j), and k) are chosen as either first or second priority in their groups. Hence post-material values score on an index ranging from 0 – 5, with 0 signifying respondents favour materialistic goals, and 5 indicating that they are highly post-materialistic in their value priorities. This research made use of both the four and twelve item batteries when examining the cognitive profile of environmental activists. It was then possible to compare their views relating to economic security with their environmental attitudes and behaviour.

### **Willingness to Sacrifice Economic Imperatives for Environmental Protection**

It has been hypothesised that an individual's willingness to sacrifice economic imperatives for environmental protection, is perhaps the key to determining how devoted an environmentalist that person really is. For instance, Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:193-4) have suggested that it should be possible to discover an individual's support for environmental causes from their opinion about the trade-offs between environmental quality and other widely valued ends such as low taxes, economic growth or free enterprise. This concept is supported by evidence from Oreg and Katz-Gerro (2006:473-5) who discovered that an individual's expressed willingness to accept such sacrifices

were significantly and positively associated with pro-environmental behaviour. Whilst the suggestion that pro-environmental behaviour is linked to an individual willingness to give up economic rewards to obtain environmental gains, it does not contradict the post-materialism hypothesis. It does, however, raise the possibility that deriving a cognitive profile of environmentalists requires more than finding post-material values. Hence, the research focused on a wider series of personal-level values that were correlated with the relative ordering of economic concerns, focussing in particular on an individual's willingness to make personal sacrifices such as time, and forgo economic advantages.

This concept is purely a measure of willingness to sacrifice economic benefits, meaning that respondents were faced with a straight choice between environmental protection and other widely valued objectives such as high levels of employment. It does not examine beliefs regarding the relative value of the present economic system versus that of a green economy based upon reduced scale units, which may lead to higher levels of employment or improved standards of living. The questionnaire probed an individual's willingness to forgo economic imperatives by asking to what extent they agreed with the propositions that more should be done to protect the environment even if it resulted in the following economic sacrifices:

- i. Tax increases
- ii. Job losses
- iii. Price rises
- iv. Reduced living standards

In each case, people were asked to indicate their position on a likert scale that ranged from 'very willing' at one extreme through to 'very unwilling' at the other extreme. Each of these variables were analysed in turn to provide valuable information on attitudes towards the environment. It was also possible to get an overall view of attitudes as regards willingness to sacrifice by combining these variables. The original variable 'very willing' was given a value of one, 'willing' was given a value of two through to 'very unwilling'

which was ascribed a five. For the new variable, which represents overall willingness, the new values represent the total values from the four variables added together. Consequently, this variable will have a minimum value of four – some one who is very willing to sacrifice in all four areas in which they were questioned, and a maximum of twenty – someone who is very unwilling to make sacrifices for environmental protection. Thus, the lower an individual's score, the greater the willingness to accept sacrifices in order to protect the environment. A score of twelve is the mid-point of the range, and marks the position where participants are on the whole neutral concerning the issue of economic loss. This would equate to an average response of 'neither willing / unwilling' across the range of questions. This can be recoded into three variables where a score of 10 and below will be taken as an overall willingness to sacrifice. A score between 11 and 13 will be considered neutral, with scores of 14 and above being regarded as overall unwillingness to sacrifice economic imperatives for environmental protection.

### **Environmental Attitudes**

The literature review has indicated that the number of people expressing pro-environmental attitudes began to increase from the late 1960s onwards. It has been hypothesized that this was the result of a new environmental mind-set. A number of studies have supported this idea by suggesting that a change took place in some people's way of thinking. Certain groups of citizens were believed to have become disenchanted with the dominant social paradigm, which emphasized unlimited economic growth, scientific progress and human control over nature. Instead, some within society supported a New Environmental Paradigm (NEP), which emphasized environmental protection, limiting economic expansion and living in harmony with nature amongst other issues.

Whilst it is assumed conservationists are still content with the established order, there is a suggestion that this way of thinking is particularly prevalent within the ecology movement. Dunlap and Van Liere (1980) developed a measure to capture the concept of the New Environmental Paradigm. This



has been widely tested by empirical research, and is generally regarded as a valid measure. This study used a simplified version of this scale to highlight environmental attitudes. Agreement or disagreement with the statements listed below constituted acceptance or rejection of the NEP. The possible scale ranges from zero – a negative response to all the propositions associated with the NEP, to eight – a positive acceptance of all the assertions associated with the NEP. Respondents with a score of five or more, were looked upon as having this alternative environmental mind-set.

- 1) Overall, modern science does more harm than good.
- 2) Modern science will solve our environmental problems with little change to our way of life.
- 3) Almost everything we do in modern life harms the environment.
- 4) In order to protect the environment Britain needs economic growth.
- 5) If things continue the way they are we will face an environmental crisis that cannot be prevented.
- 6) We worry too much about the environment today and not enough about people's jobs.
- 7) Economic growth should take priority over environmental protection.
- 8) Environmental catastrophe can only be avoided by radical change to the values of industrialised societies.

### **Online Surveys: Increasing the Response Rate**

There is growing evidence that online surveys typically generate lower response rates than other types of surveys, such as postal questionnaires (Bryman 2004:484). Oppenheim (1992:104-5) has suggested that there are a number of techniques a researcher can employ to increase the response rate of questionnaires. Several of these were incorporated into the research model. Firstly, respondents were given advanced warning of my intentions to potential respondents, and inviting participation. This was done via e-mail, which Horton (2004:738-9) suggests is the preferred mode of communication for environmental activists. Secondly, was an explanation of what the research was designed to achieve, and why respondents had been chosen for

inclusion in the research. Thirdly, it was valuable to gaining the sponsorship of several key figures in the environmental movement. Finally, respondents were assured of confidentiality, potential respondents were invited to contact me if they would like to discuss the research further.

However, it is still asking a lot of respondents to fill in a questionnaire when doing so produces no benefit for them. As a result, it is important to make the process as undemanding and straightforward as possible. The advantage of an online questionnaire is that it can utilize a variety of colours and fonts to make the layout easier to understand and more engaging to look at. By specifying possible answers internet forms can be made quicker to complete, respondents then only have to click on key words, which also makes it more obvious what type of information is required. Using closed ended questions, where respondents choose from a predetermined list of answers, is generally acceptable when all possible responses are known, because there should be no loss of data. This technique also has the additional benefit of making the questionnaire less complicated to post code. However, it does not provide respondents with the opportunity to answer in his or her own words. As a result, room was provided on the questionnaire for respondents to type in text relating to several key variables. This was valuable because participants could include things that had not previously been considered, it could also generate some useful qualitative data, and give a degree of ownership to the respondents.

Perhaps the most important consideration when designing the questionnaire was to keep it as brief as possible. As Denscombe (1998:96) reveals: "it is worth remembering that there is, perhaps, no more effective deterrent to answering a questionnaire than its sheer size". Questions should only be included if the information will be used in the final analysis. This helps to prevent participants' time and effort being wasted by providing details that are not necessary. Therefore, each question presented to respondents had to relate directly to one of the concepts under investigation (Hornsby-Smith

1995:98). Hence, it was important to consider exactly what information was required, and how these concepts could be accurately measured.

### **Designing the Questionnaire**

Although online surveys are different in certain ways, they require the same rigorous considerations that go into the design of conventional surveys that are conducted by postal questionnaire or by personal or telephone interviews (Bryman 2004:484). It is important that the data gathering instrument is designed in such a way that it is capable of being replicated and providing the information that is required. In order to achieve this, safeguards have to be introduced to avoid some of the pitfalls of questionnaire design. In particular, great care was taken with the language used to try and strike the right balance between simplicity and precision. Above all ambiguity must be avoided, as it is important that researchers and respondents have the same frame of reference. Hence, questions must be worded so that respondents understand them and they must have the same meaning to each respondent (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1992:253). To aid this, the initial stages of the research involved unstructured interviews and conversations with key informants. This revealed some of the issues that were important to campaigners, and allowed a familiarization with the vocabulary activists use to talk about their perspectives (Gilbert 1995:39-40). Sharing a vocabulary with activists reduces the chance of ambiguity and misunderstanding that could compromise the research (Smith 1975:23). Without knowing such subtleties, questions could have been phrased in a way that appeared to a researcher quite reasonable, but which respondents found incoherent or even insulting. Therefore, it was important to introduce clarity and precision by avoiding words or phrases that could be misinterpreted. Assumptions could not be made about respondents' knowledge. As a result the use of jargon, abbreviations and acronyms was avoided except where these were appropriate. The most important task was to avoid using loaded words or leading questions that would elicit a response prompted only by the phrasing.

The questions fell into three categories: firstly, attribute or classification questions. These were purely factual, asking about the respondent's age, gender, occupation, education etc. Secondly, behaviour questions that referred to what respondents had done, are doing and may do in the future. Thirdly, attitudinal questions enquiring about what respondents think or feel about certain things. While it is reasonable to expect people to be able to answer the first two types of questions fairly accurately, it is important to be aware of the limitations of memory. A respondent's recall of minor life events is notoriously bad. Therefore, questions had to be specific about events and the time frame had to be kept to a minimum to avoid relying on memory too heavily. Hence, most questions only enquired about the previous 12 months, and provided a list of alternatives as an aid to memory. However, with attitude questions there is always the possibility of bias being introduced. In particular, was tricky to ask activists to recall the reasons that led to their participation in the environmental movement. Scholzman, Verba and Brady (1995:9-10) warn that retrospective reconstructions of motivations should be treated with caution. They suggest some people cannot identify the factors that influenced them, so they generate plausible responses about what they believe they thought at the time. Moser and Kalton (1992:58) claim it is unsafe to assume respondents will admit ignorance, asserting that research demonstrates most respondents will answer questions even if they are ill-informed, or likely to express opinions on matters they have given little thought to or which they barely understand. However, it is unlikely activists would take part in high cost forms of participation without giving some serious thought to why they were doing so, but care had to be taken with the responses that were elicited.

The questionnaire began with non-threatening questions relating to environmentalism and environmental groups in general (see Appendix). Because these topics are significant to the activists it was hoped this would engage their interest (Newell 1995:108). Questions were asked relating to such issues as why they had decided to take part in environmental groups, or what they hoped to achieve by their actions. Section 3 of the questionnaire entitled 'about you' consisted mainly of classification questions probing

respondents' age, sex, education and occupation. Because these questions referred to highly sensitive and personal aspects of people's lives, they can be very off-putting (Oppenheim 1992:109). Bell (1993:81-2) suggests that the response rate to these questions can be improved by placing them towards the end of the questionnaire, in the hope that respondents would be committed to answering it, having already devoted their time and effort. Also, by asking respondents to indicate a category, rather than provide specific information, for example with age: 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, makes participants less troubled when providing an answer.

### **The Pilot**

Before the online questionnaire could be used to survey any respondents, it had to be tested. The pilot had two main objectives: firstly to look at the wording, in order to make sure that the questions and the instructions for completing them were clear, and secondly, to look at the formatting. The website had to be able to engage and maintain the interest of respondents, whilst at the same time being easy to follow. In this respect web surveys have an important advantage over conventional surveys, because they can use a wide variety of styles for closed question answers, graphical schemes to embellishing their appearance. Thus, they present the opportunity to use a number of stylistic formats that make them easier to complete and more attractive to potential respondents. However, because online surveys must be completed via a computer terminal there are a number of issues to consider that do not apply to conventional questionnaires. Amongst the most important is the download time from the internet. One of the rules of good website design is that anyone is able to access the content within a few seconds of entering the URL. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that the first time internet users visit a site, most will leave it if a download is not substantially complete within eight seconds. It is worth taking into account the fact that that respondents may be using a dial-up connection via a modem, which is relatively slow compared to the broadband service provided by most academic institutions. Websites must also be easy to navigate around; the

layout must be well spaced and presented. Respondents will be looking at a computer screen; hence the questions must be immediately comprehensible in this format.

The pilot was split into two stages, and initially a group of ten volunteers was asked to fill in the questionnaire live online. The time they took to complete it was very important. The objective was that the questionnaire could be completed within ten to fifteen minutes. It would be unreasonable to expect respondents to dedicate more time than this and even with this length of time there was the danger that participants may become bored and stop. A recommended development was to split the questionnaire into three sections; respondents could then submit their answers at the end of each segment. This meant that if they chose not to continue with the questionnaire in full at least some data would be obtained. This also had the important advantage of reducing the amount of time taken to submit answers to the database. The volunteers were also asked a series of questions relating to the questionnaire's readability and layout, and a series of revisions were made based upon their answers. The second stage of the pilot necessitated drawing a small sample from the survey's main population (Newell 1995:109). The aim was to discover the appropriateness of the wording and terms used. This process indicated that several improvements could be made to enhance the quality of the data it produced, as well as the response rate. A valuable addition to the original questionnaire was a section asking respondents to provide their e-mail address if they were willing to take a further part in the research. Once the pilot stage had been successfully completed, it was possible to start gathering data. This was a pivotal stage of the research, as it was impossible to ensure that the target population would participate in the desired way.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **Data Collection and Analysis Procedure**

The following chapter outlines the data gathering process, giving details of the method used to contact participants, and the response rate. In order to make the statement of results more straightforward this section will also provide information relating to the methods used to store and analyse the data produced by the questionnaire survey, summarizing levels of measurement and tests of association. I have attempted to explain, and justify, the analysis undertaken in some depth so that it is possible for anyone interested in this survey to evaluate the worth of the findings in relation to their own research.

#### **Data Gathering**

There are no formal barriers to investigating campaigning environmental groups. Because groups often wish to draw attention to their aims and attract supporters, they generally operate in an overt manner. This is certainly true of the groups selected for inclusion in this research. Due to their practice of supplying contact details for local group coordinators they are relatively easy to find and make contact with. However, the way that access is gained is still a vital phase in the research process. Not only is it a precondition for research to be conducted, the way it is done influences the reliability and validity of the data the research subsequently produces (Moysier and Kalton 1992:148-52). If the researcher cannot gain the acceptance and trust of research participants they may be unwilling to disclose information. The research can therefore be compromised as bias can be introduced. There is some evidence to suggest that environmental campaigners are reluctant to take part in research. For example Wall (1999:8) reveals that many ecologists are "sceptical of academics endeavours, condemning their dense laboured texts, and attempts by outsiders to repackage or analyse their ideas and actions". Papadakis (1997:81-7) has highlighted the way some members of the environmental movement reacted to being the subjects of Touraine's research, temporarily withdrawing from the project, and even creating an elaborate hoax to indicate

their unity against the researchers. Therefore, it is important to try and establish the credibility of the research with potential respondents. A researcher must consider the potential participant by putting him or herself in the respondent's position by considering why these people should take part in the research. In the majority of cases, it will be either as a favour to help the researcher, or as a chance to put their own views across. Taking this into account there are a number of techniques that were incorporated into the research design to try to increase the response rate.

The way in which a survey is introduced is likely to have a significant effect on the probability of the respondent deciding to participate (Pole and Lampard 2004:114). Amongst online communities there has been a growing antipathy to unsolicited e-mails, and invitations to take part in research can be viewed as just another nuisance e-mail. Horton (2004:740) observes that local activists sometimes bemoan the volume of e-mails deluging their 'in-boxes'. This can create a sense of 'information-overload' which means messages can be overlooked. To try and overcome this problem, Bryman (2004:470-84) suggests respondents should be contacted before they are presented with the questionnaire. This is regarded as basic 'netiquette', which may help to boost the response rate. Furthermore, Bell (2002:129) suggests that establishing personal contact is the best way to gain cooperation. For these reasons, each local group coordinator selected for the survey was sent a personalized introductory e-mail. It was mailed to one addressee at a time, rather than as a 'block-sender', and used the recipient's name in the greeting in an attempt to give it the personal touch. The e-mail also included information about my identity, the purpose of the research, and contact details in case additional information was required (Newell 1995:105). The website also contained certain information outlining contact details, the purpose of the research, and details of what will be done with the information provided. It was hoped that this would reassure respondents that this was bona fide research, and that the information provided would not be used for any other purpose.



Table 9.1: Number of E-Mails Sent Out in the First Wave of the Survey

<b>Environmental groups</b>	<b>Number of coordinators e-mailed</b>	<b>Number of local groups contacted</b>
BTCV	455	142
Friends of the Earth	228	164
Greenpeace	64	64
RSPB	164	60
The Green Party	165	82
The Wildlife Trusts	48	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>580</b>

During the first phase of data gathering it became apparent that organisations such as the BTCV and the Green Party commonly have a variety of people involved with the coordination of a group, such as treasurers or individual campaign managers for example. With groups such as FoE or Greenpeace it was more usual to have one central group leader in the smaller regional groups, with more people involved in large cities such as Leeds or Manchester. After assessing the various possibilities, it was determined that contacting all the individuals with a coordinating role was the best means of approaching a group. The rationale for this decision was that they would all be activists of the type central to the research, and also this would increase the number of potential respondents. A total of 1,092 personalised e-mails were sent out to local group coordinators, who were linked with 580 separate groups. The specifics of the number despatched to each group is listed in Table 9.1 above. The e-mails included a link to a website that contained the questionnaire, after two weeks reminder e-mails were sent to all of the local coordinators. At the end of the data gathering period 380 questionnaires had been completed giving a response rate of 34.79 percent.

## **Data Analysis**

After a six week period the research produced a sample of 380 completed questionnaires. The quantitative data collected via the survey was entered into SPSS version 17. The data set is made up of three main elements, firstly, cases – each case represents one unit of data collected, in this instance one questionnaire. Secondly, questions – the survey was made up of fifty individual questions. Finally, Variables – these are single elements of the data set whose properties vary depending on the responses to a given question. When Individuals did not answer particular questions missing values were used in the data set in order to make sense of the data that had been collected. There are two reasons for build in missing values, firstly, when the nature of the value has no significance for the analysis that is being carried out. For example, if an individual indicated that they do not work. When we come to see how many activists work in a particular sector we may want to omit those who do not work. To do this, the value would need to be counted as 'missing'. Secondly, where a value has not been selected for a variable, i.e., where a respondent has not answered the part of a question to which that particular variable applies. In this case there will be no data that can be entered for analysis, and so that variable is attributed as 'missing' for that particular case. By defining missing values for each variable, it is possible to take into account all of these non-responses as well as the responses that have been given. The use of missing values allows for a more representative reporting of data. For example, if 95 people respond to a question by saying that they supported the Labour Party. However, let us also say that only 190 people actually responded to this question. For whatever reason, 190 people did not answer the question. In this case it would be misleading if you were to present information that 50 percent of the 380 sample supported Labour. It would be far more accurate to say that 50% of respondents said they supported the Labour Party. Otherwise you will be guilty of assuming identical behaviour for the 190 non-respondents. Therefore, unless otherwise stated, all of the information preselected in the thesis will refer to valid percentages. Ten percent of the answers (38 questionnaires) were selected at random to be tested for reliability. In total 2090 separate questions were re-checked, with

5 mistakes found, an error rate of 0.24 percent. This is within the range reported as acceptable by The Data Archive in *Good Practice in Data Documentation* (2002).

### **Levels of measurement**

Each individual variable within the data set had to be assigned a level of measurement. Choosing the type of measurement is important as it establishes what kind of analysis can be performed on that variable, whilst retaining meaning and validity. Researchers distinguish between three main types of measurement level: nominal, ordinal and scale, each of these is discussed below.

### **Nominal variables**

Where a set of objects can be classified into categories that are exhaustive (the categories include all cases of that type) and mutually exclusive (each case can only belong to one category) and each category is represented by a different value, a nominal level of measurement is obtained. Nominal variables are often referred to as categorical. They are the simplest and most basic type of data. Nominal variables are those variables for which the value labels have no logical order. An example of this is sex; a person can choose one and only one of these. In comparing each respondent we can only say that their responses are either the same or different. The coding is entirely arbitrary – it would not make any difference if they were switched around. Many of the variables in the study are at a nominal level of measurement due to the inherent nature of the variables. For instance, variables dealing with gender, profession, education and so on cannot be manipulated in any way in an attempt to transform them.

### **Ordinal variables**

If the values in a distribution are not only classifiable, but also exhibit some kind of relation where one value can be said to be higher or greater than another value, then they are said to have reached an ordinal level of measurement. Ordinal variables differ from nominal variables in that there is a

logical order to the value labels, and it is possible to say that the response categories indicate 'more' or 'less' of something. Take the following example:

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

*'Almost everything we do in modern life harms the environment'*

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neither disagree nor agree	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

The statistical test for such data is based on the recognition that there is a noticeable order to the values. We cannot say, however, that someone who has answered 'strongly agree' has an agreement level twice that of a person who has responded 'agree'. The distinction between ordinal and nominal data is easy to establish. If we can rearrange the order of the values without this having any discernable effect on the meaning of the data, then it is nominal data. To mix up the values for the question above that asks for people's views about modern life harming the environment, however, would result in the data being nonsensical. There are a number of examples in the survey where this higher level of measurement is used, allowing for a more sophisticated and meaningful analysis of the data.

**Scale Variables**

Scale measurement is regarded as a suitable categorisation for two types of data - that which is recognised as being interval and the similar, but slightly different, ratio data. Interval variables are ones where the distance between value 4 and value 5 is identical to the distance between value 3 and value 4, and the difference between each level is constant then it is said that we have reached an interval level of measurement. Thus, interval data is that data where it is possible to discern a consistent difference between pairs of points.

In addition to saying that one is greater than the other, we can say by how many units it is greater. With Ratio variables the level of data allows you to say that any value for a variable can be measured directly against another value for the same variable, i.e., one value may be twice the score of another value. To have a ratio variable like this, it must be possible for the variable to have an absolute zero value.

The distinction between ordinal and interval variables is sometimes confusing, and is the subject of some debate. Some researchers will treat the data obtained from Likert scaled questions as interval data, assuming that the scale is of equal measures. However, it is noteworthy that one respondent's interpretation of the difference between 'agree' and 'strongly agree' might be very different to another persons. Similarly, it can be argued that the difference between agree and strongly agree is different to the difference between agree and neither agree nor disagree. In this case, it could be argued that the variable should be treated as ordinal rather than interval. As we move from one level of measurement to another there is a progression from the most basic unit of measurement (nominal) through to more complex variables (interval/ratio). Interval/ratio variables usually allow for a wider variety of statistical tests and procedures than nominal or ordinal. Due to the nature of the data that was collected, many of the questions within the survey are scaled enquiring about such things as level of support for a political party. However, assuming that the scale in such questions is of equal measures is not particularly good practice, and will be avoided in this investigation.

### **Crosstabulation**

When exploring the relationship between two variables I have followed the convention of utilizing crosstabulation in order to look at the way in which variables relate to each other. In this way I hope to test theories that might confirm or deny the existence of causal relationships between variables. It is possible to say that there is a relationship between two variables when the distribution of values for one variable is associated with the distribution by another variable. For example, a relationship that is frequently quoted is that

between youth and environmental concern. In this instance, it is claimed that pro-environmental view and values are not random distributed across age ranges, but are related to age; younger individuals are more likely to hold pro-environmental views. Crosstabulation is one of the simplest and most frequently used ways of demonstrating the presence or absence of such relationships.

If a crosstabulation table suggests a weak relationship, there is unconvincing and inconclusive evidence for arguing that the two variables are related in the population as a whole. If a pronounced relationship is suggested, there is much stronger evidence. The crosstabulation can suggest that two variables are related, but it cannot produce a result that tells us whether this is statistically significant in the wider population. In order to be able to say with real confidence that such a relationship does exist it is necessary to conduct a chi-square test of the distribution of cases within the crosstabulation matrix.

### **The Chi-Square Test**

If the two variables were unrelated we would expect the frequency count in each cell to be distributed evenly in roughly the same fashion. The Chi-Square test works by comparing the actual distribution of the cases within the matrix with the expected distribution of cases across the categories that would result from the non-existence of any relationship between the two variables concerned. The starting point for a chi-square test is the statement of a null hypothesis of no relationship between two variables. If there is a difference between the actual and expected counts then we can reject the null hypothesis. If, however, the null hypothesis is confirmed then the proposition that there is a relationship must be rejected.

We can see the value of the Chi-square test by looking at the example of the relationship between a person's sex and their participation in environmental group. Initial feelings may suggest that men are more active than women are. But do these observed differences in our sample point to the same genuine pattern in the population at large, or are they the result of some quirk of

sampling? How do we know that it isn't an idiosyncratic sample? What the chi square test does is assess the observed relationship by asking what we would expect to find if there were no relationship between respondents' sex and activism across all categories of the dependent variable. Having calculated these expected values, the chi square test then calculates the difference between the expected and observed values in each cell of the crosstabulation table. The chi square test entails a comparison of actual frequencies with those that would be expected to occur on the basis of chance alone, i.e., the greater the difference between the observed and expected frequency, the larger the ensuing chi-square will be. This is why the chi-square test is sometimes criticised for being a weak test - because the size of the chi-square value calculated is also affected by the sample size. Unfortunately, the degrees of freedom does not counter this either.

The size of the critical value is determined by the type of confidence interval that is to be attached to the result of the test. A confidence interval of 0.05 implies that there is a 1 in 20 chance that the null hypothesis will be erroneously rejected. Significance at the 0.001 level says that the possibility of this happening is a maximum of 1 in a thousand. Generally, it is regarded as good practice in the social sciences to work to a percent confidence interval. Thus we should be looking for a reading up to a maximum of .050. Anything beyond this means that we cannot be 95% confident that there is a relationship between the two variables.

The chi-square is a good test of association for nominal variables. However, to go any further than this in examining the relationship between variables, then we need to have a level of measurement that is superior to nominal data. We will need data that is at least an ordinal level, a significant amount of data within the survey falls into this category.

## **The Correlation Coefficient**

Whilst the chi-square test can tell us whether a statistically significant relationship exists between two variables, measures of correlation indicate both the strength and direction of the relationship between a pair of variables. Correlation coefficients are calculated to provide a measure of the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. A correlation coefficient can have a value that ranges from  $-1$  to signify a perfect negative relationship, through  $0$  signifying an unpatterned relationship, to  $+1$  indicating a perfect positive relationship.

The closer the value of a correlation coefficient is either to  $-1$  or  $+1$ , the stronger the relationship between the two variables concerned. The presence or absence of a minus sign in front of the correlation coefficient merely indicates whether the relationship is positive or negative, i.e., whether the variables vary together (positive) or in a different direction (negative).

With the correlation coefficient the general consensus is that:

- $0.19$  and below is very low
- $0.20 - 0.39$  is low
- $0.40 - 0.69$  is modest
- $0.70 - 0.89$  is high
- $0.90 - 1$  is very high

A correlation coefficient of  $-0.5$  tells you that as the value of the independent variable increases by one unit the value of the dependent variable will decrease by a corresponding half a unit. Where both variables are at least of an ordinal level of measurement this type of analysis makes sense. However, with data that is only at the nominal level such analysis is inappropriate. It is not possible for us to talk of variables such as gender and ethnicity changing in this manner. We cannot change the gender of our respondents by  $0.5$  and see what happens. For this reason correlation will be restricted to ordinal and scale variables - those that exhibit a clear relation between their values and value labels.



The type of correlation coefficient used will also depend on the level of measurement of the variables concerned. Where the variables concerned are both scale then I will use Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's  $r$ ). Where the variables under investigation are both ordinal (or where one of the variables is ordinal and other is scale), I will be using a measure of Rank Correlation, specifically Spearman's  $\rho$ .

## **Regression**

Regression is a very powerful tool for summarising the nature of the relationship between scale variables and for making predictions of the likely values of the dependent variable. Whereas correlation considers the symmetrical association between two variables, regression adds the notion of causal direction. One of the variables is the dependent variable – the one that is expected to change – and the other is the independent variable – that which is expected to explain or cause the change in the dependent variable.

The idea of regression is to summarise the relationship that exists between two variables by producing a line that most closely fits the data in a scatterplot. This line is called the line of best fit. Only one line will minimise the deviations of all the dots in a scatterplot from the line. Regression allows the precise line of best fit to be determined. When a regression line is drawn on a scatterplot, this represents a summary of the relationship that exists between the two variables. Hence, once we know the line of best fit, it is possible make predictions about the likely values of the dependent variable, for particular values of the independent variable, this means we can stop at any point on the line and read off the corresponding values. Looking at the gradient of the slope of the regression line can identify the nature of the impact that the independent variable will have upon the dependent variable. The steeper the slope, the greater the change in the value of the dependent variable, resulting from a change in the independent variable. However, regression can only be employed in relation to scale variables, as survey only collected a small amount of this data, it is of lesser significant in relation to this data set than the other methods of analysis.

The following chapter presents the preliminary results of the survey, looking at the profile of activists overall and assess how this profile compares with other research. The thesis will then go on to compare the profiles of conservationists and ecologists, noting any significant variations.

# **CHAPTER TEN**

## **Statement of Results**

The following chapter surveys the findings from an Internet based questionnaire survey of 380 local environmental group coordinators. All of the coordinators participated in groups affiliated to nationally prominent organizations. The initial statement of results is a basic analysis of their socio-demographic and cognitive profile. The thesis will then look at their participation in terms of the extent and range of actions they undertake in order to support environmental causes. Unless otherwise stated, all of the information presented in this chapter refers to valid percentages.

## **A Socio-demographic Profile of Environmental Group Coordinators**

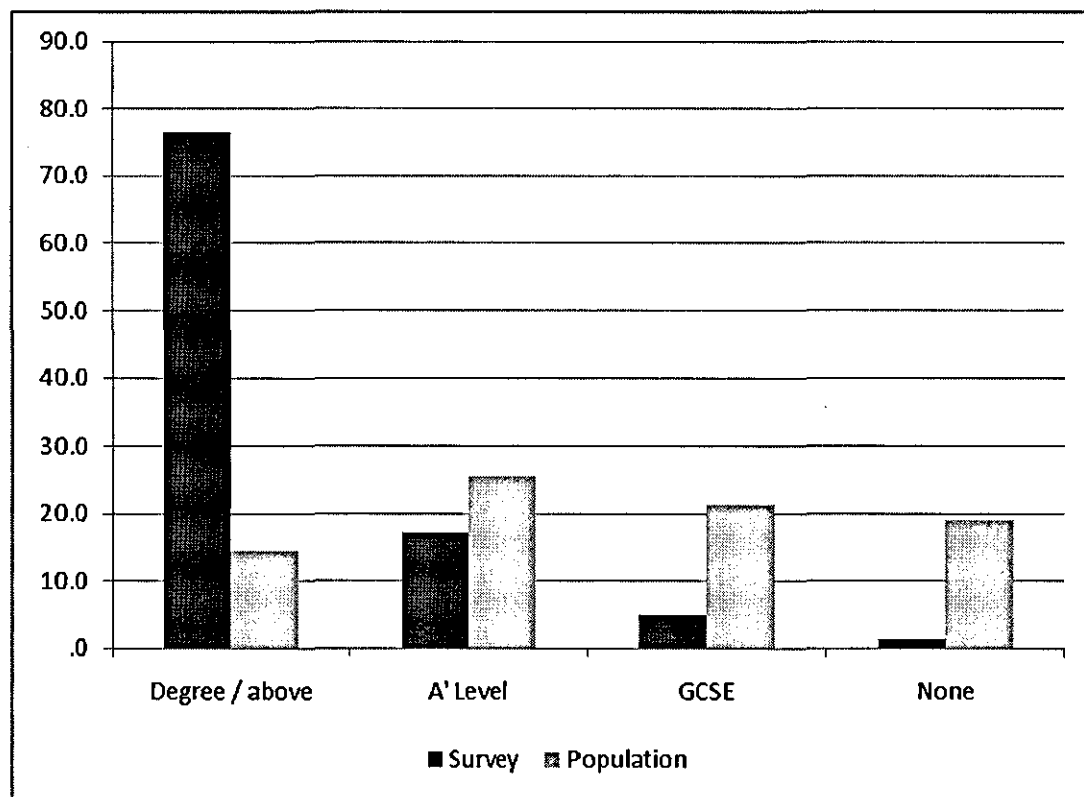
### **Education**

The sample as a whole is very heavily skewed towards those with educational qualifications. Most of the previous research into the environmental movement had suggested that this is an established correlation. However, with over 90 percent of the respondents having taken part in post-compulsory education, this is nonetheless a noteworthy finding. In total 76.5 percent of the respondents reported that they had been educated to at least degree level, and a further 17.2 percent said that they have 'A' levels.

Hence, it seems that possession of higher educational qualifications is prevalent amongst environmental group coordinators. This supports Ingram, Colnic and Mann's (1995:123) conclusion that people who join environmental groups differ most strongly from the public as a whole in the level of higher education they receive. This appears especially well founded if we consider

the educational statistics for the British population as a whole. The 2002 British Labour Force Survey revealed that 14.5 percent of the population had a degree or equivalent, and that less than half had higher education qualifications. These are much lower percentages than the coordinators reported: whilst just 1.4 percent of the activists said they had no formal educational qualifications, almost one in five Briton's of working age are without qualifications.

**Figure 10.1: Highest Educational Qualification**



(Source: Labour Force Survey 2002)

### Normal Weekly Schedule

When asked what best described what they do in a normal week, the vast majority of respondents, 59.9 percent, asserted that they were working full-time. This is perhaps not surprising, but would obviously limit the amount of discretionary time that they have available for participation in environmental campaigning. However, other sections of the sample reported a greater potential biographical availability. Approximately one in ten of the sample (10.2 percent) was retired, with another 14.6 percent stating that they were

self-employed. Only around four percent of the sample was made up of students at either college or university, however, this is perhaps the result of the phase of life the coordinators are at (as can be seen from their age distribution, which are shown in table 10.3).

**Table 10.1: What Respondents do 'in an Average Week'**

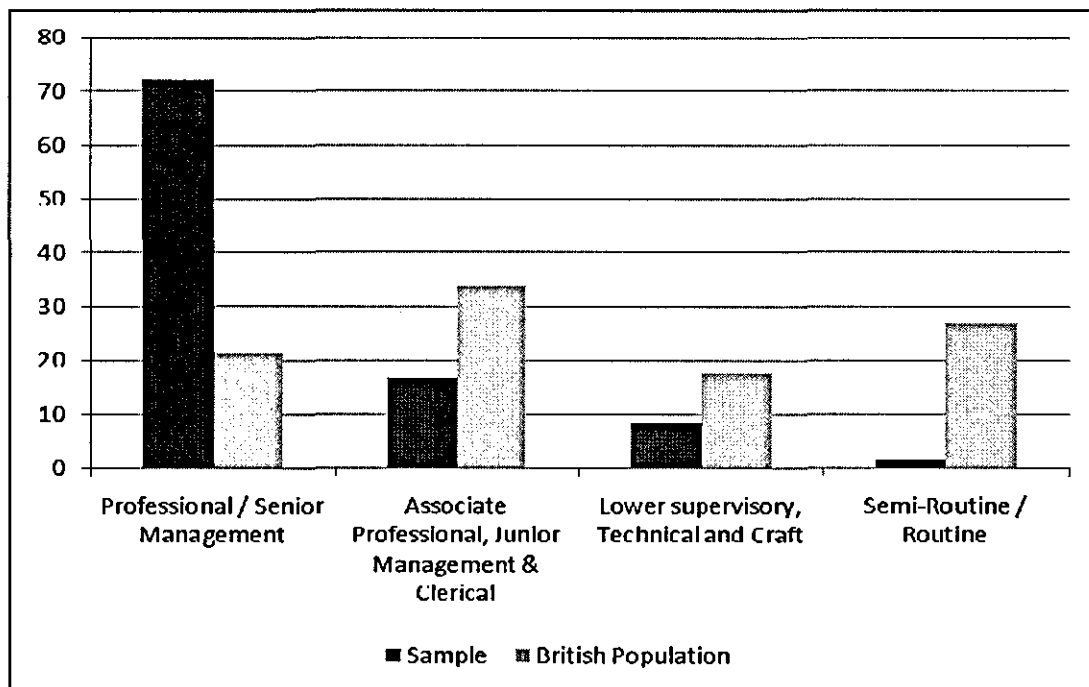
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
<b>Education College</b>	2	.6
<b>Education University</b>	12	3.3
<b>Government training</b>	1	.3
<b>Part-time work</b>	12	3.3
<b>Full-time work</b>	217	59.9
<b>Self employed</b>	53	14.6
<b>Unemployed</b>	12	3.3
<b>Disabled</b>	3	.8
<b>Carer</b>	13	3.6
<b>Retired</b>	37	10.2

### **Occupation**

An examination of the occupational profile of the sample revealed that over half describe the sort of work they do (or if they were not currently working, what they did in their last job) as a traditional (11 percent) or modern (43.2 percent) professional occupation, such as education, medicine and welfare. The next largest groupings described themselves as either senior managers (18.8 percent), clerical (8.9 percent) or technical (8.6 percent) workers. Only a small proportion of the sample (1.5 percent) described their employment as linked with semi-routine occupations, with no one describing their occupation as routine.

A notable finding was that a mere 18.2 percent of the sample declared themselves to be employed in the private sector. Of the balance, 57.6 percent said they were employed in the public sector, the remainder were also within the non-market sectors of the economy: students, unemployed or retired etc. This is a marked variance from the labour market in Britain generally, where public sector employment as a proportion of total employment was 20.4 percent in June 2005 (National Statistics 2009).

Figure 10.2 Four Category Occupational Classification of Sample Compared with that of the Working Age Population of Britain



(Source Labour Force Survey 2001)

The findings of the survey are similar to those discovered over two decades earlier by Cotgrove (1982:20) whose investigation into environmental group members found that more than two thirds were employed outside market sector occupations. A possible explanation for this has been offered by Eckersley (1989), who has asserted that those who work in the non-productive sectors of the economy are less inhibited from taking a critical stance regarding the productive processes of industrialised society, of the kind promoted by the environmental movement. This is because they will be less directly affected as a consequence of altering patterns of production.

### Gender

The survey suggests that approximately equal numbers of males and females act as coordinators of local environmental groups. These percentages are in accordance with the British population generally, where males and females are fairly equal in numbers up to the age of around 70 years old (National Statistics 2008). This finding contradicts McEnvoy's (1972) suggestion that

because males tend to be more likely to be politically active, and more involved in community issues, they also tend to be more concerned about environmental problems. However, Tindall, Davies and Mauboules (2003:910) have found that unlike some spheres of political life, women tend to be well represented in environmental organisations. They suggest that women belong to as many, if not more, formal and informal groups as do men. The survey also supports the findings of Jordan and Maloney (2006:126) and Merchant (1992), who have shown that women tend to be very active within the environmental movement.

Table 10.2: Gender Balance

	Frequency	Valid Percent
<b>Male</b>	181	50.4
<b>Female</b>	178	49.6

### **Age**

Much of the existing research has shown that it is primarily the young who are interested in environmental matters. For instance, Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:189) noted that the bulk of empirical evidence clearly suggests the young are the group most concerned about the environment. Parry, Moyser and Day (1992:214) also reported that amongst all the age groups, those between 18 and 29 were the strongest supporters of green ideas. However, the survey data suggests that this concern and support for the environment does not necessarily translate into becoming an environmental group coordinator. Only 14.5 percent of respondents were under 28 years old, however, this perhaps reflects the additional resources that are required to become a group coordinator (such as education and experience), which younger activists may not have acquired at this stage of their lives. While the over 65 category was not particularly well represented, in general the age distribution is relatively even. Over half of the respondents (56.2 percent) are between 28 and 51. In mid-2008 the average age of the British population was 39 years, people of working age (16 to 64 for males and 16 to 59 for females) represents 62 percent of the total population. The population

pyramid also shows the 'bulge' of the 'baby boomers' born in the 1960s moving into the older age categories (National Statistics 2008).

Data from the survey indicates that on the whole, female group coordinators tend to be younger than their male counterparts. The trend is for female activists to outnumber males in the younger age categories, with over half of all female participants being under forty. The age distribution of the sample is perhaps surprising given that in Britain at all ages over 30 women outnumber men. The difference in numbers between the sexes increases throughout the 30s and early 40s age groups then remains quite steady throughout the mid-40s to mid-50s age groups. This was a result of generations born in the 1950s being smaller than those born in the 1960s; however, the ratio at these age groups remained fairly consistent between 1.00 and 1.02 women to men (National Statistics 2007b). It would be inappropriate to read too much into the findings of the survey in relation to this data because the numbers in some of the subsets are quite low.

**Table 10.3: Age Distribution of Environmental Activists by Gender**

<b>Age</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Under 18</b>	Frequency	0	1	1
	% within Gender	.0%	.6%	.3%
<b>18 - 27</b>	Frequency	21	30	51
	% within Gender	11.7%	16.9%	14.2%
<b>28 - 39</b>	Frequency	41	61	102
	% within Gender	22.8%	34.3%	28.5%
<b>40 - 51</b>	Frequency	54	45	99
	% within Gender	30.0%	25.3%	27.7%
<b>52 - 64</b>	Frequency	49	35	84
	% within Gender	27.2%	19.7%	23.5%
<b>65 and over</b>	Frequency	15	6	21
	% within Gender	8.3%	3.4%	5.9%

### **Geographical Location**

It has been hypothesised that urban residents are more likely to be environmentally concerned than rural residents (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980:184-5). There seem to be two possible explanations for this finding: the first suggests that it is the result of urban residents being exposed to generally



higher levels of pollution, and other forms of environmental deterioration than rural residents. This rationalization supposes that place of residence is an indicator of objective physical conditions, and that being exposed to poor environmental conditions results in environmental concern. There is some empirical basis for this assertion: Inglehart (1995:57-61) has found that mass support for environmental protection tends to be greatest in countries with relatively severe environmental problems. Thus, support for environmental protection reflects objective circumstances: the more severely polluted, the greater public concern.

An alternative explanation for greater environmental concern amongst urbanites argues that rural residents are more likely than urban residents to have a utilitarian orientation towards the natural environment. This assertion rests on the assumption that rural residents are more likely to depend upon occupations related to farming or extractive industries for their livelihood. Due to the heavy dependency on the use of the natural environment by rural residents, it is assumed they will be less concerned with environmental protection than is the case for urban residents. It is debateable just how closely either of these theories fit with life in modern Britain. Nevertheless, it seems those who live in urban areas are more active in the groups under investigation than those in rural regions. The survey revealed that 66.2 percent of the sample lived in towns as opposed to 33.8 percent living in countryside areas. The largest groupings are those living in urban (27.7 percent) and suburban (30.5 percent) areas. Less than one in ten described the area where they live as either a village or a rural setting. However, it is worth taking into consideration that more people live in urban areas than rural, and that many local environmental groups are based in towns and cities.

## **A Cognitive Profile of Environmental Group Coordinators**

### **Concern for the Environment**

A variety of environmental problems seem to have prompted the coordinators to have become involved with grass-roots campaigning. But, global concerns appear to be the most important issue when it comes to inspiring them to take action, with 57 percent citing this reason. This is perhaps not surprising given the increasingly global nature of environmental problems relating to issues such as global warming, deforestation and biodiversity. The global character of their concerns may also help to explain why the activists have chosen to become involved with national environmental groups. When addressing such problems Seyd and Whiteley (1992:28) suggest that joining single-issue pressure groups and social movements is seen by many as an effective way of achieving desired goals. More traditional methods of exerting influence, such as joining political parties, is viewed as less effective because these are mainly concerned with power or forming governments. However, many in the green movement also want to influence other bodies such as business or international organisations. Environmental groups owe their success in part to the fact that they do not merely aim to influence government: they also direct their attention at other centres of power such as international associations, the EU and private corporations. Even so, 28 percent of the sample revealed that local issues had been what initially motivated them to become active. This perhaps reflects the increasing focus on urban conservation.

From the replies that respondents gave to questions about contemporary society and values, it appears there is a significant amount of anxiety within this section of the green movement about future global environmental prospects. A remarkable 80.9 percent of the sample agreed with the assertion that environmental catastrophe can only be avoided by a radical change to the values of industrialized society. Perhaps even more alarmingly, 91.9 percent said they believed that if things continue as they are, we will face an

environmental crisis that cannot be prevented. In light of these views it is probably predictable that over half (58.2 percent) of the sample asserted that they believe almost everything we do in modern life harms the environment, with less than a quarter (23.3 percent) disagreeing. Hence, it appears there was widespread concern amongst the majority of the activists about future prospects for the environment.

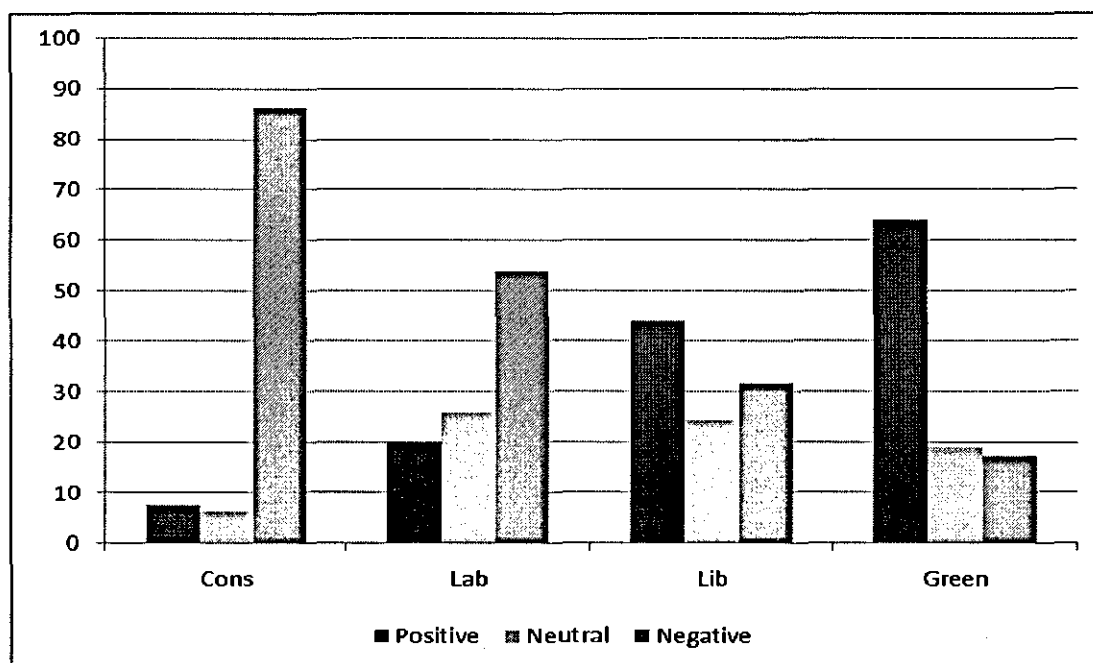
### **Political Beliefs**

The survey tapped into respondents' political identification by looking at their voting intentions. Participants were asked to indicate on a scale from one to five, where one meant very unlikely and five meant very likely, how likely it would be for them to vote for each of the main political parties. For the purposes of this research, those who rated their probability of voting for a party as one or two were adjudged to have a negative reaction to that party, those who gave a score of four or five have been described as having a positive reaction to the party, while those who gave a rating of three have been considered neutrals.

For many of the first activists in the new green movement of the 1970s, the influence of the left had been important in shaping their commitment to equality and struggles over nuclear power (Barry and Doherty 2001:588). Thus, environmentalists have traditionally been considered relatively left-wing in their political orientations. Therefore, it is not altogether surprising that the Conservative Party did not achieve a particularly positive ranking in this analysis: merely one in twenty of the sample said they were very likely to vote Tory. Three quarters of respondents rated their probability of voting Conservative as very unlikely, and 86.1 percent gave the party a negative rating. Although the Labour Party received a slightly more favourable response, only 6.8 percent suggested that they were very likely to vote Labour, with just one in five giving the party an overall positive rating. Amongst the major political parties, the Liberal Democrats received the highest approval rating with 43.9 percent giving the party a positive

evaluation, and 31.7 percent negative. Hence, if the parties are positioned on a traditional left-right spectrum, the environmentalists appear only a little closer to the left in their political orientation than to the right.

**Figure 10.3: Political Party Approval Rating**



Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:185) have proposed that environmental campaigning has typically been split along left/right partisan lines because those on the left have been more receptive to pro-environmental action, being less convinced about the efficacy of the market and the overriding goal of economic growth. However, the recent actions and performance of the Labour government may have altered the environmentalists' perceptions of the party. Over the last decade the New Labour government has been decidedly pro-market, pro-business and anti-inflationary in its policy decisions. There has also been the emergence of something of a right-of-centre consensus between the parties, which could have made it more difficult for environmentalists to differentiate between them. Hence, it is debateable whether contemporary environmentalists' allegiances no longer strictly parallel the ideological dichotomies of left and right, or whether environmentalists have remained somewhat left-wing, but the mainstream parties profiles have changed in such a way that they no longer identify with them.

Cotgrove and Duff (1981:105) suggest that a significant proportion of environmentalists have always rejected the left/right dimension in politics entirely as irrelevant to their political objectives, as the major parties are all committed to economic growth and the dominance of material goals. While Inglehart and Catterberg (2002:4) have argued that post-materialist cohorts have less incentive to identify with a specific political party because the traditional parties were established in an era dominated by social class conflict and economic issues, and tend to be polarized along these lines. However, in recent times, a new axis of polarization has emerged based on cultural and quality of life issues. The established parties have found it difficult to reposition themselves in relation to this axis. This means that the parties do not adequately reflect the most taxing contemporary issues, and as a result, those born in the post war era have relatively little motivation to identify with the established political parties.

The suggestion that environmental activists don't feel aligned with the established parties is further endorsed by the Greens emerging as the party with the most overall support. In total 44.6 percent of the sample said that they were very likely to vote Green, and 64.1 percent gave the party a positive evaluation. These are high percentages when we consider that at the 1997 General Election only 15 percent of people described themselves as 'very strong' supporters of any party (Clark *et al* 2004:6). As Green Party activists were part of the target population, a level of support for the Greens above national average opinion poll ratings was expected. However, this endorsement of the Green Party extends beyond its own membership, to an array of grass-roots activists, and group members. Less than a fifth of the sample gave the Green Party a negative rating, with fewer than one in ten claiming to be very unlikely to vote Green. Whilst they do not appear particularly supportive of the mainstream parties, this seems to indicate that many of the environmentalists are willing to vote in elections, and that they are to some extent supportive of the political process.

However, it looks as if that group coordinators are not particularly supportive of the democratic process as it is currently arranged, since 61 percent gave it a negative rating. Overall, only one in five respondents expressed satisfaction with the way that democracy works in Britain, with a mere 2.8 percent saying they were very satisfied. When we consider these statistics, it is important to take into account that British citizens in general have been showing increased alienation from the political system since the 1970s (Marsh 1977). Thus, it is not something which is specific to environmentalists. However, the low level of approval expressed by activists lends some weight to the idea that environmentalists favour a fundamental change to the political system. Indeed, green politics has been described as new politics, because it does not fit into the framework of conventional parliamentary politics.

### **Post-Materialism**

Inglehart (1971, 1990) has hypothesised that an intergenerational value shift has been taking place in post-industrialised societies since the end of the Second World War. Due to this shift in values some individuals reject materialism, and embrace a new mood that has been termed post-materialism. Inglehart (1990:4-11) has suggested this change is associated with a hierarchy of needs, with individuals being more concerned with immediate needs and threats than remote issues. Since Post-War generations have been able to take relative economic well-being and physical security for granted, their comparative priority has diminished. As a result, some individuals are pursuing goals unrelated to the imperatives of economic security. Their new goals are belonging, self-expression and improving the aesthetic quality of life (Inglehart 1971:991-994). These goals are associated with types of social transformation that many environmental groups have been advocating since the late 1960s. Such groups have supported the concept of a 'sustainable society' in which consumption of material goods by those in industrialised countries is reduced, because they believe that human needs are not best satisfied by continual economic growth (Dobson 1990:14-16).

Previous research has found that post-materialism is significantly and positively related to environmental concern (Oreg and Katz-Gerro 2006:474-5). Post-material values are also deemed to be the single strongest predictor of membership of environmental groups and green parties (Dalton 1994: 66-7). Inglehart (1995:68) has reported that less than half of one percent of all materialists said they were active members of environmental groups, as compared with three and a half percent of post-materialists, a ratio of seven to one. The results of this survey also indicate that post-materialistic values are especially prevalent amongst environmental activists. To begin with, the investigation probed the activists' values by utilizing Inglehart's four-item battery of questions. This required respondents to give priority to either material and physical security or self-expression and quality of life. The four item battery classified almost two thirds of the sample as post-materialists, a third as mixed-types, and less than one percent (just three cases) emerged as materialists.

**Table 10.4: Post-Materialism Four Item Battery**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
<b>Post-Materialist</b>	232	66.1
<b>Materialist</b>	3	.9
<b>Mixed</b>	116	33.0

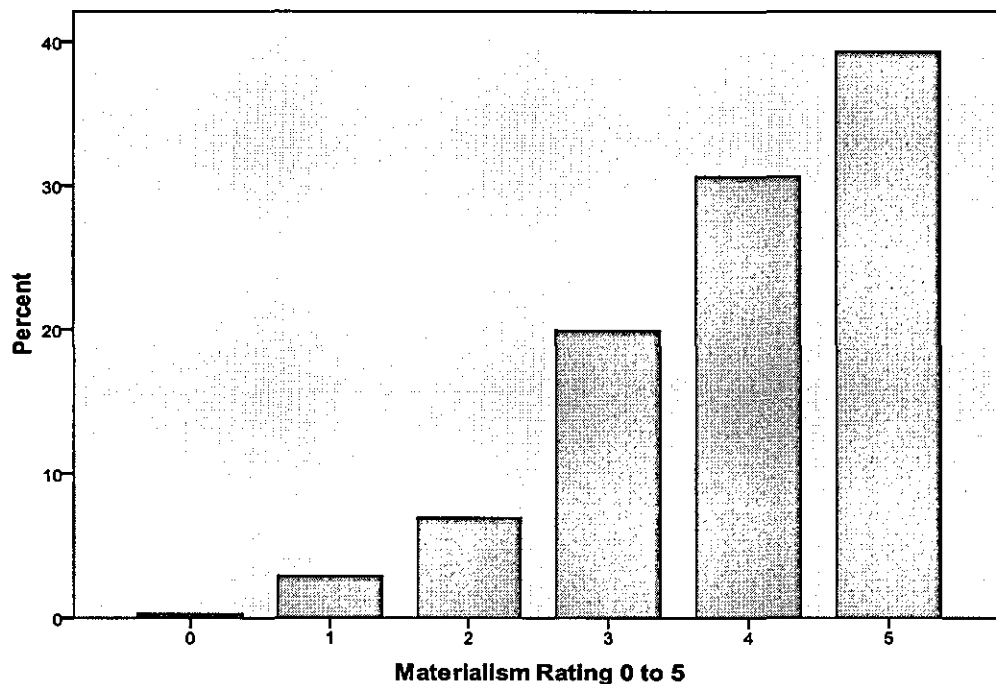
The research has also probed respondents' value priorities using Inglehart's twelve item battery of questions. With the twelve item battery individuals can potentially select five post-material options. These are: protecting freedom of speech; giving people more say in important government decisions; a less impersonal, more humane society; giving people more say about their jobs and their communities; a society in which ideas count more than money. None of the five post-materialist items has any direct reference to environmental concern. However, Inglehart (1995:64) has reported that amongst those who gave high priority to all five post-materialist goals, fully 65 percent rank high on support for environmental protection.

The survey revealed that by far the largest division of the sample could be considered to have post-materialist value priorities. Nine out of ten

participants selected three or more post-materialist options, whilst four out of ten chose all five. Thus, measured using either the four-item or twelve-item batteries, the entire sample is revealed to have a high concentration of people with post-material values.

The data above relates solely to frequencies, however when we examine the twelve item battery it is also instructive to look at statistical measures that reflect a typical value for this variable, referred to as measures of central tendency. These are commonly known as ‘the three M’s’ – the mean, median and mode. With certain distributions, the values can tend to cluster around a central value, meaning that a principal part of the analysis of the data is to look at the typical value for the various variables in question. The typical value, however, depends on what sort of data the variable we are interested in may be. The choice of which statistical test to use often depends upon the level of measurement of the data.

Figure 10.4: Post-Materialism Twelve Item Battery





The mode is the most basic measure of central tendency, and simply refers to the value of the category within which most of the cases in the data set fall. Thus is it simply the most common value that occurs and is very easy to identify. The mode is frequently used with nominal variables where the only way to pick out the most typical response is to choose the most common response. From the figure 10.4 it is clear that the mode in this instance is five. The most obvious weakness with using the mode as a measure of commonality is that that there could quite easily be more than one mode within a distribution. Where this is the case it is not possible to say which one is the most typical.

The median is the point in the distribution that divides the number of cases into two equal parts – the middle-most value. To find the median value you simply need to arrange the data in order from one extreme to the other and take the middle value. The median is the most useful measure of central tendency for ordinal variables where there is a logical order of progression through the values that have been assigned. Given that this is the case the median can be used for comparative purposes. The median for the twelve item battery in this survey is four indicating that the distribution for this sample is towards the higher end of the post-materialism indicator.

The mean is probably the best known measure of central tendency, and is the statistic that most researchers talk about when they refer to the 'average.' The mean value is calculated by adding all the individual values together and dividing this number by the total of such values. This measure only really makes sense when applied to scale variables. In this instance it is 3.96, indicating once again, that on the whole the coordinators are drawn from those with post-materialist sympathies.

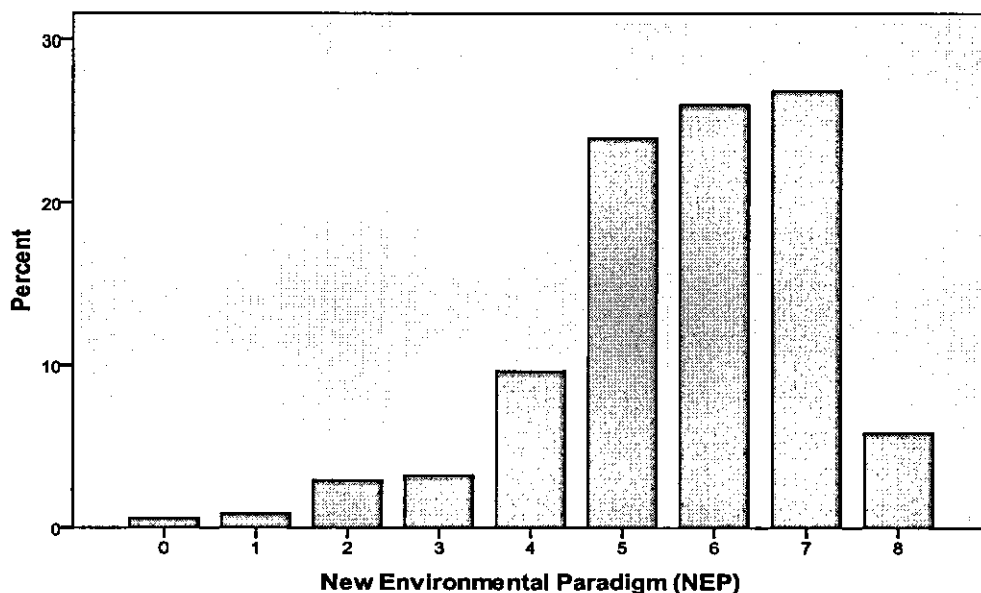
The connection between post-materialism and environmental concern means that a rise in post-material values may go some way towards explaining a greater magnitude of environmental activism. The World Value Surveys show that post-material value priorities have increased across almost all societies

for which there is comparable data. Britain underwent a net shift of +13 percent towards post-materialist values in the years between 1970 and 1994. Even so materialists continued to outnumber post-materialists by a ratio of 1.5:1. More recent research by Inglehart (2008:136) shows that the shift towards post-material values continued until 2006, by which time post-materialists were slightly more numerous than materialists. Hence, the very low number of materialists in the sample is something quite exceptional. Therefore, the research suggests that post-material value priorities can be considered an important trait of grass-roots environmental activists. This conclusion also reinforces Cotgrove and Duff's (1981) earlier finding that environmentalists are much more post-materialistic than the general public.

### **New Environmental Paradigm**

From what is currently known about environmentalists, we may expect to find that many are disenchanted with the dominant social paradigm that emphasises economic growth and humanity's ability to manage nature, embracing instead an alternative world view sometimes referred to as the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP). This variable taps into respondent's views concerning such topics as economic expansion, science and their expectations about future prospects for the environment and society. Respondents were asked a series of eight questions, the more of these they answered supporting the NEP then the higher their NEP score. Potential responses ranged from 0 – not support for the NEP model, through to a possible 8 – complete agreement. Respondents with a score of five or more have been classified as having this alternative environmental mind-set. Utilizing this method classified 82.7 percent of the coordinators as having a preference for the NEP.

Figure 10.5: New Environmental Paradigm Score



From the data in figure 10.5 above we can see that the majority of group coordinators are grouped towards the higher end of the scale, with scores of six and seven combined accounting for 52.9 percent of respondents. The mean across the whole range of scores was 5.66 percent, signifying the high endorsement level of the NEP. Looking at the central tendency within this data can be informative; however, such a single summarising measure can sometimes give a false impression about the data. Looking at the most typical value alone may hide some important features of the data in relation to its distribution. A much fuller summary of the data set necessitates measuring the extent of this dispersion to inform us how much our mean value really is a typical measure of the data. As well as identifying a value that occurs in the 'centre' of the data set, it can be instructive to obtain information on the spread of values of the data. Generally, a small spread of results in a data set is usually seen to be a good thing as it indicates that the values for the variable are behaving similarly, and thus the measure of central tendency is a representative measure of typicality.

**Table 10.5: New Environmental Paradigm Statistics**

Mean	5.66
Median	6.00
Mode	7
Standard Deviation	1.486
Range	8
Minimum	0
Maximum	8

The simplest way to summarise the distribution of values in a data set is to subtract the minimum value in the data set from the maximum value in the data set to find out the range. This is the most basic indicator of the size of the distribution of values. In this instance all possible NEP score occurred, meaning that the range was 8. The usefulness of the range as an indicator of dispersion is limited by the fact that the minimum and maximum values may be atypical of the majority of values contained within the data set. This may therefore provide a false impression of the real nature of the distribution of values across all of the cases. The most widely used measure of dispersion is the standard deviation. This expresses the level of dispersion in terms the average deviation of the value of each case away from the mean value across all cases, and therefore is only applicable to scale variables. The standard deviation provides an indication of the extent to which the values for all of the cases in the distribution differ from the mean value for the same distribution.

When the distribution of values for a variable is normal, then it is possible to say that 68.26% of all observations will lie within one standard deviation above or below the mean, and that 95.46% of all observations will occur within two standard deviations of the mean. Some caution should be exercised in recognition that many distributions will not be normal, thus calling into question the interpretation of the standard deviation. The larger the number of cases in the data set which have a raw score which is significantly higher or lower than the mean value, the larger the variation in the values across the distribution, and the larger the score for the standard deviation. Researchers will most usually look for a low standard deviation to affirm a representative mean. The standard deviation for the NEP statistics is under 1.5, this

reasonably low standard deviation tells us that there is a relatively high cluster of cases around the mean value.

## **The Extent and Diversity of Environmental Participation**

The following section reviews the range, and extent, of activism that local environmental group coordinators undertake that is aimed at protecting the environment or improving its condition (Schlosberg and Bomberg 2008:187). It will firstly review conventional methods of activism, and then look at a variety of unconventional acts.

### **Orthodox Methods of Activism**

The following section concentrates on the orthodox forms of political activism. Such activities are deemed part of the conventional political process (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002), and most traditional cause groups would contemplate utilizing these as a method of campaigning. Table 10.6 shows range of actions undertaken by the sample put side by side of with the UK population in general (numbers have rounded to the nearest whole number to facilitate comparison). Some of the actions listed in table 10.6 such as making a donation, signing petitions and wearing badges, are all relatively low-cost activities in terms of the time and effort required to perform them. A significant number of citizens also engage in these actions in order to support various causes. Taking part in high-cost forms of participation such as contacting officials or attending a meeting is comparatively less common. However, we should expect to find that the sample participate more frequently in a range of actions than the population as a whole, since they have been specifically selected because they are activists.

The vast majority of respondents (92.8 percent) said that they had made a donation to support an environmental cause and almost 78.6 percent of respondents asserted that they had done this either frequently or occasionally. Green consumerism appears to be an important consideration for environmental activists. Over 90 percent of respondents said that they had either bought, or boycotted, products on environmental grounds. Only 2.1

percent of the sample asserted that they had neither purchased nor rejected products for environmental reasons in the previous twelve months. Using evidence from the World / European Value Surveys, Inglehart and Catterberg (2002:301-10) found that consumer boycotts are a reasonably widespread practice, with 17 percent of respondents reporting that they had participated in at least one. In Britain the practice of 'ethical consumerism' seems even more widespread, the citizen audit reported that 28 percent of citizens had either boycotted or bought particular products for ethical reasons in a 12 month period (Pattie and Seyd 2003:446-7). This, however, is still far below the level described by the sample.

**Table 10.6: Actions Undertaken in a 12 Month Period: Group Coordinators Contrasted with the UK Population (Numbers Rounded)**

	Percent in Previous 12 Months	
	Survey	UK Population
<b>Low Cost Activism</b>		
1) Made a donation	93	56
2) Purchased products	94	26
3) Signed a Petition	87	38
4) Boycotted products a product	92	28
5) Worn a badge or displayed a poster	75	20
<b>High Cost Activism</b>		
6) Contacted a politician or government official	81	12
7) Written to a news paper or the media	63	8
8) Attended a public meeting	87	5
9) Taken a petition around for people to sign	45	-
10) Undertaken voluntary work	94	-

(Source: Citizen Audit Wave 1 face-to-face survey)

A slightly smaller percentage of the sample suggested that they had taken part in the five high-cost actions listed in table 10.6. The most popular form of high-cost activism was participating in voluntary work, with 94 percent of respondents stating that they had done so, and two thirds saying they had done this frequently. Almost nine out of ten said they had also attended a public meeting on the subject of environmental protection. Hence, all participants in the research can be considered much more active than the British population as a whole.

The Citizen Audit found that on average the British population had taken part in three acts of civic activism in a 12 month period, with 78 percent of citizens having engaged in at least one (Pattie and Seyd 2003:447). The average (mean) number of environmental movement supporting activities undertaken by the group coordinators was 8.02, with a standard deviation below two. The range was seven; meaning minimum amount of actions undertaken by any of the coordinators was three.

**Table 10.7: Participation Statistics - Number of Orthodox Activities Undertaken in the Last 12 Months**

Mean	8.02
Median	8.00
Mode	10
Std. Deviation	1.829
Range	7
Minimum	3
Maximum	10

Looking at how many actions an individual has participated in provides a reasonable measure of activism generally, but it does not reveal the whole picture. Obviously, someone who does voluntary work on a frequent basis can be considered more active than someone who does so only rarely. Therefore, participants were also asked how often they engaged in various actions in order to promote environmental causes. Using this information their activism has been placed on a continuum ranging from low level activism through to frequent activism. Having done this only a small section of the whole sample appears to be made up of those labelled low level activists. Three quarters of all respondents were classified as regularly or frequently active.

**Table 10.8: Coordinators Overall Level of Orthodox Participation**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Low Level	3	.8
Moderate	83	22.9
Regular	137	37.8
Frequent	139	38.4

## **Unorthodox Methods of Activism**

Whilst unorthodox participation is not unique to environmentalism, the movement has become associated with NVDA and high profile protests. The last four decades have witnessed a growing segment of the movement adding to, or even replacing, conventional politics with less conventional methods. Data from the survey seems to confirm this tendency, with 55.4 percent of participants saying that they had taken part in at least one unconventional action in order to support environmental causes during the 12 month period. Over half (52.1 percent) said that they had taken part in a lawful public demonstration. The Citizen Audit found that just four percent of citizens had taken part in a lawful demonstration in a 12 month period (Pattie and Seyd 2003:446-7). While research by Inglehart and Catterberg (2002:17-8) found that only 13 percent of British citizens said that they had ever taken part in a demonstration.

As we might expect, far fewer activists reported participating in potentially illegal actions, with just 7.8 percent saying they had used force against property or equipment. However, once again, the activists appear much more prone to take part in radical activism than do citizens in general, with three out of ten saying they had participated in a sit-in or street demonstration in the last twelve months. This compares with just one percent of the general population in the same period, and just two percent of Britons suggesting they had ever occupied a building (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002:310-15).

**Table 10.9: Unorthodox Actions Undertaken in the Last 12 Months to Support Environmental Causes**

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>
<b>Taken part in a lawful public demonstration</b>	47.9	20.1	24.6	7.7
<b>Participated in a sit-in or street demonstration</b>	70.8	13.9	12.1	3.2
<b>Used force against property or equipment</b>	92.2	1.9	4.6	1.3



## **Summary of Findings Relating to the Determinants of Environmental Activism**

From this review of socio-demographic variables it seems that grass-roots environmental group coordinators share many key characteristics with other categories of environmentalists. Hence, the survey supports the findings of previous investigations which have connected environmental concern with higher academic achievement and occupational status, and employment in non-productive sectors of the economy. However, it is important to note that Parry, Moyser and Day (1992), amongst others, have linked occupational status and educational attainment with higher levels of participation generally. Thus, while these variables are significantly and positively linked to environmental activism, and are therefore central to developing an activist profile, they are not sufficient alone to distinguish environmentalists from other populations. It is noteworthy, though, that women and men are equally well represented within local environmental groups and that activism is reasonably well dispersed amongst the age cohorts. These results mean that the variables of age and gender are not particularly helpful in this instance when trying to establish a socio-demographic profile of local environmental group coordinators.

It appears that socio-demographic factors alone cannot explain the social base of environmental activism. Thus, it is indispensable to consider cognitive determinants of support for environmental protection. The role of personal values in influencing pro-environmental behaviour has gained increasing attention (Karp 1996:111), but such variables need to be examined in addition to demographic variables. It is envisaged that the most effective analyses of the social bases of environmental concern will be those that consider both its socio-demographic and cognitive determinants. The most significant explanations for involvement with the environmental movement focus on post-materialism, and acceptance of the New Environmental Paradigm. The majority of the sample can be classified as post-materialists, holding views that are associated with a shift away from an overwhelming emphasis on

material well being towards greater emphasis on the quality of life issues. The majority also score highly on the NEP index. Hence, it seems that a discernable environmental mind-set exists, and that this influences a substantial majority of the participants when they interpret events in the world around them, relating to a variety of issues ranging from the consequences of economic growth to political participation.

Having presented the basic findings of the research, the next section will begin to look at this information in more detail, by evaluating whether conservationists and ecologists have separate, and distinct, socio-demographic and cognitive profiles.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

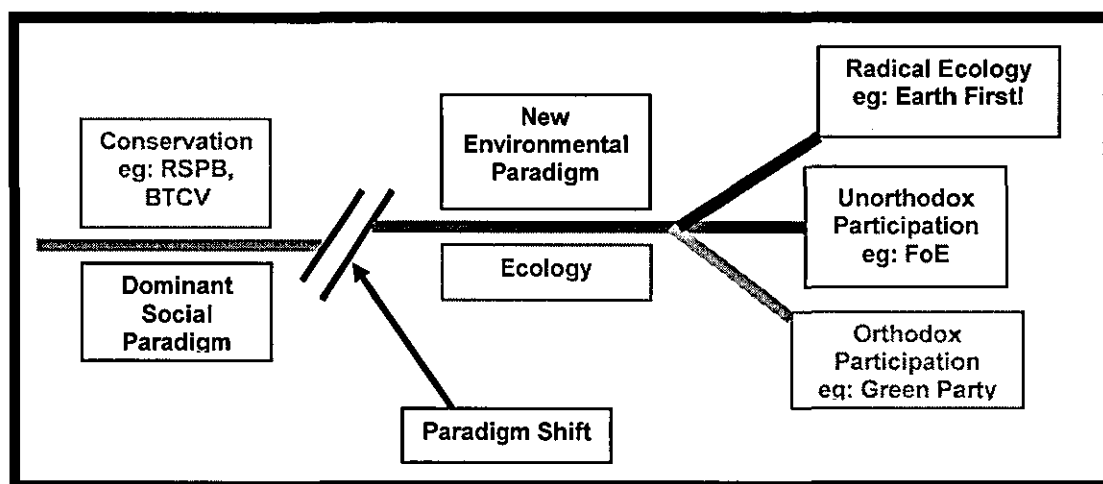
### **Comparison of the Profile of Conservationists and Ecologists**

When we look at the characteristics of separate environmental groups, it seems that the movement can be described as split between 'old' and 'new' groups, or conservationists and ecologists, or even traditional and radical environmentalism. Even within these categories it is possible to detect variations that would imply that there are different environmental movements. Authors such as Bosso (1995:102) have claimed that the sharp ideological and tactical cleavages within environmentalism mean it may be counter productive to treat all those with environmental sympathies in the same way. Jordan and Maloney (1997:27) have observed that "environmentalism might be a collection of incompatibilities" and that the tendency to aggregate disparate political forces into an environmental category may actually be misleading. Cotgrove (1982:5) likewise suggests that even within the 'new environmentalism' there are significant divisions. Barry and Doherty (2001:588) have also questioned whether it is accurate to speak of a 'green movement' as distinct from 'green movements'. They note that it is common to refer to the green movement as a social movement, like feminism or the peace movement. However, while sections of the green movement operate like social movement organisations, others operate like conventional cause groups, and the Green Party has ambitions to be part of the government. All of this raises the question whether environmentalism consists of disparate parts. If this is the case, can all environmental activists be regarded as part of one group, or is it more appropriate to consider participation within each subdivision of environmentalism separately?

It is possible that there are many different types of environmentalism, with concern for the environment meaning protecting birds to one individual, cleaning up a local environmental problem to another and restructuring life-

style to encourage a sustainable society for a third (Dalton 1994:55). However, this investigation has suggests that the most important distinction to be made within environmentalism centres upon the differences between the conservation and the ecology movements. If this is correct, then it may be possible to detect some dissimilarity between the two sets of activists. Therefore, this chapter will compare the socio-demographic profiles, cognitive profiles and methods of activism used by the coordinators in the conservation and ecology movements. It will attempt to establish how closely the two groups correspond with each other, and how closely they fit with their theoretical profiles.

**Figure 11.1: Potential Subdivisions within the Environmental Movement**



Hence, the respondents have been subdivided into conservation and ecology subsets. This distinction was made depending upon activist's principle means of participation in the environmental movement. Essentially, they have been characterised as conservationists if their customary style of activism was based around conservation organisations, and ecologists if their regular method of participation was based around ecology groups. The remainder are classified as 'mixed types', although they were active within the environmental movement, they did not demonstrate a distinct preference in their choice of group alignment, therefore they have been removed from this part of the analysis. When this was completed, 52.1 percent of the sample (188 cases)

were categorised as conservationists, and 47.9 percent of the sample (173 cases) were categorised as ecologists.

## **A Socio-demographic Profile of those Active within the Conservation and Ecology Movements**

To begin with, we will start to explore the relationship between the variables by using crosstabulation, this will enable us to look at the way in which variables relate to each other. This makes it possible to begin to test theories that might confirm or deny the existence of causal relationships between variables. It is possible to say that there is a relationship between two variables when the distribution of values for one variable is associated with the distribution by another variable. In this instance, we want to evaluate whether various socio-demographic characteristics are related to conservation or ecology movement support, rather than being randomly distributed between the two. Crosstabulation is one of the most straightforward and commonly used ways of showing the presence or absence of such relationships.

**Table 11.1: Educational Attainment / Conservationist and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		<b>Conservationists</b>	<b>Ecologists</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Degree</b>	Frequency	135	130	265
	% within Educational Attainment	50.9%	49.1%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	76.7%	77.4%	77.0%
<b>No Degree</b>	Frequency	41	38	79
	% within Educational Attainment	51.9%	48.1%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	23.3%	22.6%	23.0%

In table 11.1 respondents have been sub-divided into degree holders and those who have not had a formal university education. I have followed the common convention in statistics of placing the dependent variable, the

variable whose change we are observing, in the row of the table and the independent the variable, that which is expected to explain the change, in the column. The most significant information is in the row labelled % within Conservationists and Ecologists. This is where we can see if there are any apparent differences between conservationists and ecologists in terms of education. In this instance, a similar pattern has emerged for both, over three quarters of each subset holding a degree. Since an individual's level of education appears to be a key determinant in the prospect of them becoming active in support of environmental causes, it is perhaps not surprising that both the conservation and ecology subsets are academically accomplished. From this initial examination of the relationship between environmental group support and education it appears neither group is appreciably more likely to have a university education.

A similar picture emerges when we look at occupation. The job categories that the subsets are most frequently employed in are quite similar. Almost half of all the ecologists and four out of ten conservationists said that their present, or last job, could be classified as a modern professional occupation. Around one in ten of those in each subset thought of themselves as working in a traditional professional occupation, and a further 29.2 percent of conservationists and 23.9 percent of ecologists classed themselves as either senior or middle managers. Hence, the majority of both groups can be considered to have higher occupational status jobs.

While more than half of the respondents in both the conservation and ecology subsets derive their income from non-market occupations, there are some appreciable differences here. From table 11.2 we can see that in total 61.4 percent of conservationists said that they worked in the public sector, compared with 53.8 percent of ecologists. The data seems to indicate that, comparatively speaking, fewer conservationists work in the private sector, just 12.9 percent, as compared with 23.1 percent of ecologists. However, the crosstabulation table only suggests a weak relationship. Therefore, there is unpersuasive and inconclusive evidence for arguing that the two variables are

related in the population as a whole. The crosstabulation seems to suggest that the two variables maybe related, but the results do not indicate whether this is statistically significant in the wider population of local group coordinators. Since both of these variables are nominal in nature, we need to conduct a chi-square test of the distribution of cases within the crosstabulation matrix in order to say with any confidence that a relationship does in fact exist.

**Table 11.2: Employment Sector / Conservationist and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		<b>Conservationists</b>	<b>Ecologists</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Private</b>	Count	22	37	59
	Expected Count	30.5	28.5	59.0
	% Within Employment Sector	37.3%	62.7%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	12.9%	23.1%	17.8%
<b>Public</b>	Count	105	86	191
	Expected Count	98.7	92.3	191.0
	% Within Employment Sector	55.0%	45.0%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	61.4%	53.8%	57.7%
<b>Other</b>	Count	44	37	81
	Expected Count	41.8	39.2	81.0
	% Within Employment Sector	54.3%	45.7%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	25.7%	23.1%	24.5%

The starting point for the chi-square test is the statement of a null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the variables of movement support and employment sector. If the null hypothesis is confirmed then the proposition that there is a relationship must be rejected. The most important thing to note from the table 11.3 is the top line; this tells us that the calculated chi-square is 5.950, while the Aysmp. Sig. Figure indicates the degrees of freedom. This tells us how many times a chi-square of 5.950 would happen if there were no

relationship between employment sector and conservation or ecology group support. The lower the Aysmp. Sig. Figure, the more confidence we can have in asserting the existence of a statistically significant relationship. In the social sciences it is standard practice to work to a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus we should be looking for a reading up to a maximum of .050. Anything beyond this even .051 as in this instance means that we cannot be 95 percent confident that there is a relationship between the two variables. Therefore, in this instance it is not possible to conclude that there is a relationship between these two variables.

**Table 11.3: Chi-Square Test Employment Sector / Conservationist and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	5.950 <sup>a</sup>	2	.051
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	5.989	2	.050
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	3.259	1	.071
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	331		
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 28.52.			

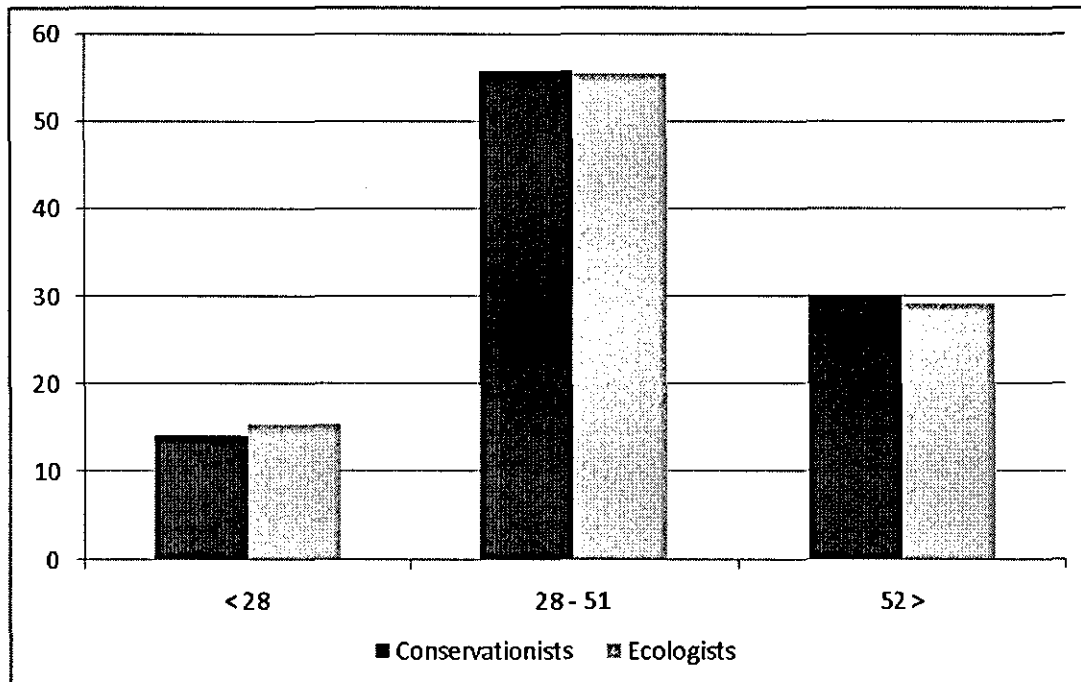
When we look at what conservationists and ecologists do in a normal week, there are few discernable difference between the two subsets starts to emerge. More than 50 percent of both groups work full-time. Slightly more ecologists are self-employed: 17.9 percent contrasted with 10.9 percent of conservationists. Unemployment rates for both groups are very low, at approximately three percent. When we consider the types of job the activists reported doing, and the fact that so few are out of work, it seems the majority of participants have a relatively high degree of economic security. Of those not currently employed six percent of ecologist, and 2.3 percent of conservationist, are in full-time education. Most of the respondents who are not working are in non-market related sectors, with the amount of individuals classifying themselves as either in education, permanently sick / claiming disability benefit, a carer or retired, is approximately equal for both grouping (22.1 percent for ecologists, and 23.3 percent for conservationists).



Just as with the sample as a whole, both subgroups have reasonably similar numbers of male and female members. Female activists compose 52.1 percent of ecology group members, and 47.7 percent of conservation group members, while men make up 47.9 percent and 52.3 percent respectively. Because there is only a small variation in the percentages involved it is impossible to draw any real conclusions from these results. However, it is important to note that approximately equal numbers of men and women are active in the environmental movement.

The age distribution of the subgroups is fairly uniform, with neither type of organisations being the preserve of the especially youthful. Over half of all respondents are in the 28 to 51 age range (55.7 percent of conservationists, and 55.4 percent of ecologists). Perhaps significantly, only around six percent of either subgroup is over 65, meaning that the majority of respondents were socialised during the post-war era.

**Figure 11.2: Age Distribution of Conservationists and Ecologists**



From this brief review of it seems clear that in terms of socio-demographic variables there are no significant differences between conservationists and ecologists. Perhaps this was to be expected because they share what are

widely regarded to be the characteristics most likely to promote activism generally.

### **A Cognitive Profile of those Active within the Conservation and Ecology Movements**

In order to identify environmentalism as a single movement we have to justify amalgamating a diverse set of groups and their supporters together. This entails demonstrating that there are fundamental values common to all of them. However, as different environmental groups have diverse ideologies and goals it seems reasonable to suggest that their supporters will also have dissimilar attitudes and beliefs. After all, an individual is only liable to join and participate in a group if its aims, beliefs and methods correspond with their own preferences. For instance, groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace are both known to challenge the established political order in their goals and methods (Dalton 1994:60), while the RSPB is content to work within the established system. As a result, we would expect to find that those who are active within conservation or ecology groups would have a profile that matches that of their group, or groups, of choice. Hence, we would expect to find that someone who participates in a group that is known for rejecting the ideology of market capitalism would also agree with this principle. In the next section we will examine views of the coordinators in relation to certain social, political and economic concerns.

Some cognitive theories that have attempted to explain the rise of environmentalism concern culture-level values to be important, suggesting that a change has taken place in many people's way of thinking. Other theories have focused on personal-level attitudes, equating pro-environmental behaviour with such things as an individual willingness to give up economic rewards to obtain environmental benefits. We will consider the influence of each of these possibilities in turn by looking at post-materialism, the NEP and the activists' readiness sacrifice economic imperatives. The

thesis will then seek to relate these variables to membership and the conservation and ecology movements.

### Post-Materialism

Replies to the questionnaire marked the sample as a whole as being overwhelmingly post-materialist. Thus, it was no surprise to find a high level of post-material value preferences amongst both the conservationists and ecologists. Inglehart's four-item battery revealed that no ecology activists, and only three conservationists, could be classified as pure materialists. With so few cases it is not possible to draw any valid conclusions except to say that there is an obvious absence of materialist sentiments amongst the coordinators. These figures seem more enlightening if we consider that Inglehart (2008:136) reported that in 2006, post-materialists were only a little more numerous than Materialist in Western Europe. It is apparent that post-materialism is a key characteristic for most environmental activists. But what is perhaps even more important is a lack of materialistic values.

**Table 11.4: Materialists and Mixed Types Combined / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		Conservationists	Ecologists	Total
<b>Post-Materialist</b>	Count	96	126	222
	Expected Count	114.0	108.0	222.0
	% within Materialists and Mixed types combined	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	55.8%	77.3%	66.3%
<b>Other</b>	Count	76	37	113
	Expected Count	58.0	55.0	113.0
	% within Materialists and Mixed types combined	67.3%	32.7%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and Ecologists	44.2%	22.7%	33.7%

In order to analyse the data from the four-item battery in a more meaningful way, respondents had to be categorized as either post-materialist or 'others'. This 'none' pure post-materialist grouping was formed by combing the categories of materialists with mixed types. Doing this made it is possible to see an interesting tendency within the data. The survey classified significantly more ecologists as post-materialists than conservationists, with 55.8 percent of conservation group coordinators emerging as pure post-materialists, compared with 77.3 percent of ecologists. At first sight a twenty percent divergence seems quite significant, but to get a more accurate picture we need to conduct a chi-square test.

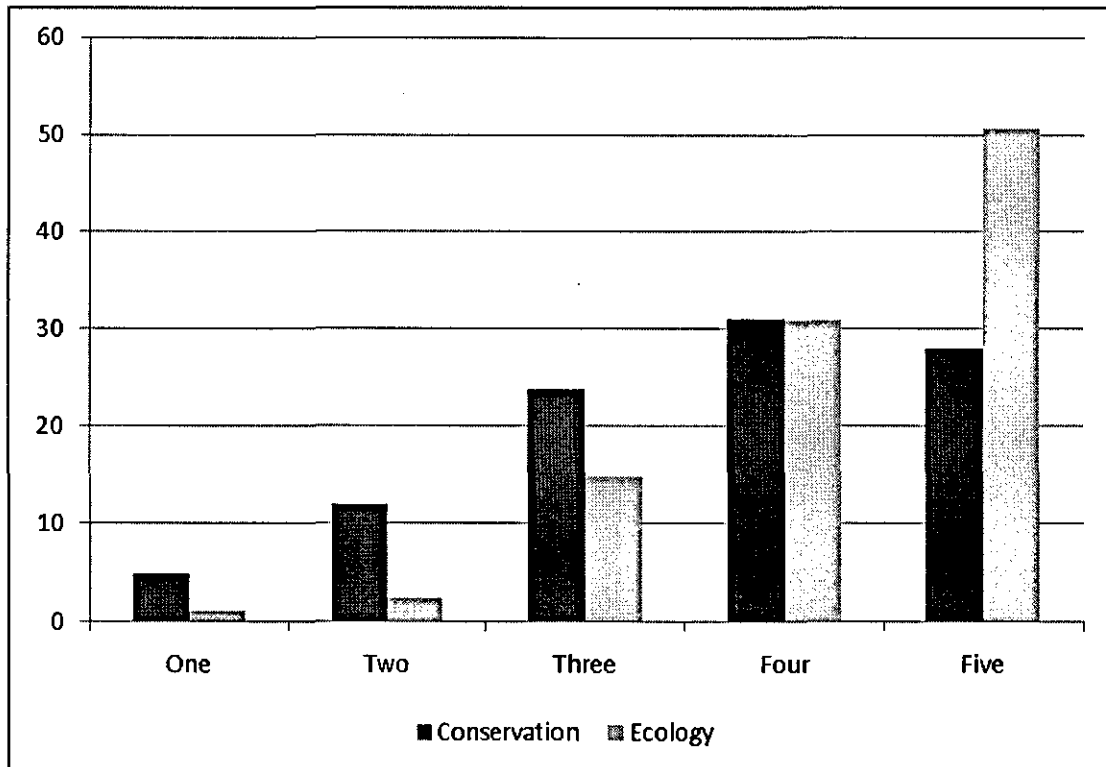
Table 11.5: Chi-Square Test Materialists and Mixed Types Combined / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	17.285 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000		
<b>Continuity Correction<sup>b</sup></b>	16.337	1	.000		
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	17.566	1	.000		
<b>Fisher's Exact Test</b>				.000	.000
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	17.233	1	.000		
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	335				
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 54.98.					
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table					

From table 11.5 we can see that the calculated chi-square for this crosstabulation is 17.285 and that such a chi-square could only result from a sampling error of less than one in a thousand. This is signified by the .000 at the top right of the table. What table 11.5 tells us is that where there are four degrees of freedom, a chi-square of 17.285 would happen in less than one time in a thousand samples if there were no relationship between post-materialism and environmental group activism. Given the results of this chi-square test, we can conclude that such a relationship does exist. The lower the Aysmp. Sig. Figure, the more confident we can be in asserting the existence of a statistically significant relationship – one that exists in the population, not just in this sample. However, it would be a mistake to claim that a lower figure, i.e., towards .000 is an indication of a stronger relationship

than a figure i.e., towards 0.50. The lower the Aysmp. Sig. Figure, the more likely that it is that a statistically significant relationship exists. The strength of such a relationship requires another type of statistical test; we need to have a level of measurement that is superior to nominal data.

**Figure 11.3: The 12 Item Battery Results for Conservationists and Ecologists**



The data produced by the twelve-item battery is also instructive, a combined total of 81.5 percent of the ecology faction selected either four or five post-material options, with half selecting all five as their preferences. Fewer than four percent choose two or less post-material options, and less than one in a hundred selected only one. Amongst the conservation section of the sample, 28 percent chose all five post-material options, which is still a significant number. Well over half (59 percent) selected four or more of the items from the twelve-item battery, with just under a fifth (17.3 percent) selecting two or less. Therefore, once again the ecologists emerge as the most post-materialistic overall. This is underlined by the fact that the mean score for the

ecologists was 4.27 (with a mode of 5); while for the conservationists it was 3.64 (with a mode of 4).

Thus, in cognitive terms at least, there seem to be some discernable differences between group coordinators within the two movements. However, because so many within the sample share these values we need to be careful about reading too much into this. That large numbers of the activists have post-material value preferences should perhaps be expected. Dalton (1994:67) had reported that post-material values emerge as the strongest single predictor of potential membership of ecology groups or nature conservation groups. He discovered that nearly half (46 percent) of post-materialists said they would potentially join an ecology group, while less than a sixth (13 percent) of materialists expressed interest in possible membership. Hence, it may be most precise to suggest that the members of both sets are likely to be post-materialists, with ecologists very likely to be post-materialists.

### **The New Environmental Paradigm**

It has been suggested that the defining characteristic of a social movement is its advocacy of a new social paradigm which contrasts with the dominant goal structure of western industrial societies (Dalton and Kuechler 1990:10-11). In the case of the environmental movement this has been referred to as the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP). Cotgrove (1982:5) has suggested that within the new environmentalism a consensus exists that a fundamental social change is needed if society is to survive. Lowe and Goyder (1982:26) have suggested that environmentalists in general are noticeably more opposed than the overall population to the institutions of industrial society, including lack of confidence in science and technology and a rejection of values underlying the market economy, whilst Cotgrove and Duff (1981:99) claim that those they have labelled 'utopian environmentalists' want a different kind of society from other members of their society. It is these different social ideals that may explain both their high level of post-materialism and their

membership of environmental groups. The goal of utopian environmentalists is to achieve a society in which post-material values and institutions can be made real: this is their future utopia. This means it is not present needs that generate their values, but their utopia; not their present social conditions, but what they would like as their social existence.

Environmentalism is also associated with the emergence of a new class. At the level of ideology the majority of this class is said to reject the ideology of market capitalism. They are also ambivalent towards authority and are less committed to existing participative structures, and lack commitment to material and economic goals (Cotgrove 1982:95), suggesting they may support a different social paradigm.

**Table 11.6: NEP 3 Categories / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		<b>Conservationists</b>	<b>Ecologists</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Rejection</b>	Count	26	0	26
	Expected Count	13.2	12.8	26.0
	% within NEP separated into 3 categories	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and ecologists	15.7%	.0%	8.0%
<b>Neutral</b>	Count	24	9	33
	Expected Count	16.8	16.2	33.0
	% within NEP separated into 3 categories	72.7%	27.3%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and ecologists	14.5%	5.6%	10.1%
<b>Acceptance</b>	Count	116	151	267
	Expected Count	136.0	131.0	267.0
	% within NEP separated into 3 categories	43.4%	56.6%	100.0%
	% within Conservationists and ecologists	69.9%	94.4%	81.9%

Data from the survey suggests that support for the New Environmental Paradigm is widespread within the environmental movement at the grass-roots level. While, acceptance of the NEP was significantly higher amongst the ecologists at 94.9 percent, a notable 69.9 percent of conservationists also advocated this model. With just 15.7 percent of coordinators in the conservation sub-set and none of the ecologists reject the NEP. If we look at the chi-square for this crosstabulation (see table 11.7) we can see that this is a statistically significant relationship.

**Table 11.7: Chi-Square Tests NEP 3 Categories / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	37.308 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	47.609	2	.000
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	37.184	1	.000
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	326		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.76.

It is important to pay attention to the statement at the bottom of table 11.7 which states how many cells have an expected count of less than 5. In this case no cells have an expected count of less than 5. This means that the chi-square test is a valid measure in this instance. The Chi-square test is not reliable when the expected frequencies are small. With only two categories the number of cases should be at least 5 before this test can be applied. With three or more categories chi-squared should not be used when an expected frequency is smaller than 1 or when more than 20 percent of the expected frequencies are smaller than 5. Hence, it seems that there is an association between NEP and participation in ecology groups. As with post-materialism, it is not possible to draw any truly definitive inferences because the majority of conservationists also subscribe to the NEP. However, it is possible to say that support the NEP is most prevalent amongst ecologists.

Having looked at both post-materialism and the NEP and found that they are both connected with environmental participation, this raises the possibility that these variables may also be related to each other in some way. As these variables have a level of measurement that is superior to the nominal data we



have been working with, it is possible to use a more sophisticated statistical test. While the chi-square test can let us know whether a statistically significant relationship exists between two variables, measures of correlation indicate both the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables.

**Table 11.8: Post-Materialist / NEP Correlation**

		<b>New Environmental Paradigm</b>	<b>Materialism rating 0 - 5</b>
<b>New Environmental Paradigm</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	342	328
<b>Materialism rating 0 - 5</b>	Correlation Coefficient	.368**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	328	346

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen from this table, the correlation coefficient of .368 indicates that the relationship between the two variables is a weak positive one. This means that as the values for the variable concerned with post-materialism (i.e. how many post-materialist item were selected from the 12 item battery ranging from 0 to 5) increase that the values for the variable concerned with NEP (i.e. how many responses were chosen in accordance with the NEP ranging from 0 to 8) also increases. Thus the correlation coefficient tells us that the higher a respondents post-materialism score the more likely they are to support the NEP. The closer the value of a correlation coefficient is to -1 or +1, the stronger the relationship between two variables. A correlation coefficient of .369 is considered low, and therefore does not suggest a particularly strong relationship.

### **Willingness to Sacrifice for Environmental Protection**

Cotgrove and Duff (1981) conducted a notable empirical studies inspired by the work of Inglehart. They analysed the social ideals and preferences articulated by environmental activists, and found evidence of wide spread post-materialist values. They discovered that more than any other social

category, environmentalist stress the need for limiting economic growth, prefer non-hierarchical participatory models of administration and support the egalitarian-collectivistic distribution of rewards. As a result, they concluded that it is possible to ascertain an individual's support for environmental causes from an array of values associated with post-materialism. Overall the most important factor seems to be a willingness to sacrifice economic imperatives for environmental protection. On the whole the results from this survey concur with this idea.

When asked if they were willing to pay higher taxes for greater economic protection, the ecologists emerged as the most willing, with 74.4 percent saying they would be 'very willing' and overall 95.8 percent expressed a willingness to pay higher taxes for environmental causes. Taken as a whole 83.6 percent of conservationists were willing, with 39 percent suggesting they would be 'very willing'. Hence, generally speaking, the majority of environmental activists appear ready to forgo economic imperatives for greater environmental protection. This tendency continues if we examine the percentages of those saying they would be willing to incur job losses to protect the environment, but at reduced levels, although this may be partly a reflection of green views relating to the economy. Ecologists, in particular, favour a different kind of economic system, wanting to see the development of strong local economies. A system of small communities that are as self-sufficient as possible, with people living and working locally would probably be more labour intensive and increase employment. However, given a straight choice between environmental protection and job losses the ecologists were the most willing to make this sacrifice with two thirds (63.1 percent) saying they would be willing, although only about a fifth were very willing (20.2 percent). A quarter of the ecologists were neutral on this issue and 11.9 percent opposed this idea. The conservationists group had a largest percentage opposed to this particular sacrifice, with three out of ten (29.4 percent) saying they would be unwilling. However, 40.7 percent - the largest proportion - were willing, with 29.9 percent remaining neutral. Overall job losses seem to be the economic sacrifice which many from all sections of the

environmental movement had most difficulty accepting. Hence, there seems to be a trend throughout the whole of the environmentalism, rather than one that is specific to any single faction. These findings correspond with results produce by Cotgrove (1982), who had previously asked a cross-section of environmental group members (including members of FoE, the Conservation Society and the WWF), about their views relating to the relative importance of economic and environmental imperatives. They expressed very strong support for raising taxes for pollution control and a preference for environmental protection over job protection. Thus, there seems to have been a lasting willingness throughout the movement to make sacrifices for greater environment protection.

There is some debate about how willing members of the general population are to make similar sacrifices. Some studies have shown that about 20 percent of the British public say they are willing to pay more tax to protect the Environment (Dalton 1994:59). Cotgrove (1982:64) reported that the majority of people (64 Percent) favoured rising taxes to control pollution, and only 19 percent opposed such a move. Some are sceptical of such findings, and point out that such questions are unlikely to evoke negative opinions. They ask, who *would* oppose clean air, clean water or a better environment? Dalton (1994:71) points out that it is easy to voice such views in public opinion surveys, when real economic costs are hypothetical. Thus, difficulties arise when protecting the environment actually comes into conflict with other valued goals. Surveys have also shown that people approve of environmental protection in principle, but are reluctant to pay the costs (Inglehart 1995:59). Hence, it seems that one of the main differences between environmentalists and other publics is a readiness to incur economic costs. The activists who participated in this investigation have all shown their willingness to pay certain costs by participating in local groups. This can be considered a very high-cost activity, certainly in terms of time and effort. The activists were asked to rate their willingness to sacrifice four economic imperatives (higher tax, higher prices, job losses and reduced living standards) for greater environmental

protection. The answers to these questions have been combined to give an overall indication of respondents' willingness to sacrifice.

**Table 11.9: Four Sacrifice for Environmental Protection Questions Combined / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		Conservationists	Ecologists	Total
Overall Willing	Count	119	148	267
	% within four sacrifice questions combined	44.6%	55.4%	100.0%
	% within conservationists and ecologists	67.6%	88.6%	77.8%
Overall Neutral	Count	40	19	59
	% within four sacrifice questions combined	67.8%	32.2%	100.0%
	% within conservationists and ecologists	22.7%	11.4%	17.2%
Overall Unwilling	Count	17	0	17
	% within four sacrifice questions combined	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within conservationists and ecologists	9.7%	.0%	5.0%

**Table 11.10: Chi-Square Tests Four Sacrifice Questions Combined / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	27.407 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	34.128	2	.000
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	27.081	1	.000
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	343		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.28.

Overall none of the ecology group coordinators asserted that they would be unwilling to incur economic sacrifices for the sake of environmental protection, with almost nine out of ten emerging as on the whole willing to make this sacrifice. A somewhat lower percentage of conservation group coordinators were willing to forgo economic benefits for the environment, with nearly one in ten being overall unwilling to sacrifice. Hence, there seems to be statistically significant difference between conservation and ecology group coordinators in

terms of their willingness to make economic sacrifices for environmental protection. Nevertheless, although the ecology grouping had the highest willingness to sacrifice overall, there are clear indications of a high level of readiness to concede economic imperatives amongst both groupings.

The respondents had been asked whether they thought economic growth should take priority over environmental protection. In total 95.8 percent of ecologists rejected this assertion, as did 85.8 percent of conservationists. When a correlation coefficient is calculated to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables of willingness to sacrifice and views relating to economic growth, they have a moderate negative one.

**Table 11.11: Overall Willingness to Sacrifice / Belief about Economic Growth Correlation**

		<b>Economic growth should take priority over environmental protection</b>	<b>Four willingness to sacrifice variables combined</b>
<b>Economic growth should take priority over environmental protection</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.409**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	362	359
<b>Four willingness to sacrifice variables combined</b>	Correlation Coefficient	-.409**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	359	360

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A correlation coefficient of -.409 indicates that as willingness to make sacrifices for environmental protection decreases, respondents agreement with the statement that economic growth should take priority over environmental protection increases. Although this correlation coefficient is modest, it indicates a level of consistency within the views of the sample.

## **The Extent and Diversity of Activism within the Conservation and Ecology Movements**

Having found that the socio-demographic profiles of local environmental group coordinators are fairly consistent, and that their cognitive profiles are fairly similar, the research will examine the way in which they participate. In order to do this it will look at a variety of different forms of campaigning and evaluate whether the sub-groups have a distinctive style of campaigning, or whether certain actions attract one group to a greater extent than another. The research will firstly focus on overall levels of participation, and then look at the use of unorthodox methods.

### **Green Consumerism**

Many of the large national environmental groups are dependant upon financial assistance from their members and supporters for at least some portion of their income. This type of contribution is perhaps even more vital amongst local groups. Thus, it is significant that 94.8 percent of ecologists said that they had made a donation to support an environmental cause in the last 12 months, with 83.7 percent saying they had done so occasionally or frequently. Amongst the conservations grouping 90.3 percent had made a donation, with 74.2 percent doing so either occasionally or frequently.

There are also other ways in which citizens can exert their financial influence to help further environmental protection. In 1988 MORI categorised 19 percent of its British poll respondents as 'green consumers' on the basis of their claim to have 'selected one product over another because of its environmentally friendly packaging, formulation or advertising'. By 1996 this figure had risen to 36 percent, and although this showed a continued decline from a peak of 50 percent in 1990, it reveals the interest in green consumerism nationally (Worcester 1997:166). There also seems to be a strong interest in green consumerism amongst the activists, since 92.9 percent of the conservationist, and 93.5 percent of the ecologists reported that in the previous twelve month

period they had purchased a product that contributed financially to an environmental group.

Green consumerism can also be considered to entail boycotting certain products on environmental grounds. In this instance, 86.9 percent of conservationists and 96.5 percent of ecologists said that they had participated in a deliberate boycott. This suggests that green consumerism is an important consideration throughout the movement, with the sub-sets being collectively highly involved in this type of financially orientated commitment. It is interesting to note that the ecologists had emerged as the group most willing to make economic sacrifices to promote environmental causes, and they are also the group who report engaging in green consumerism most frequently.

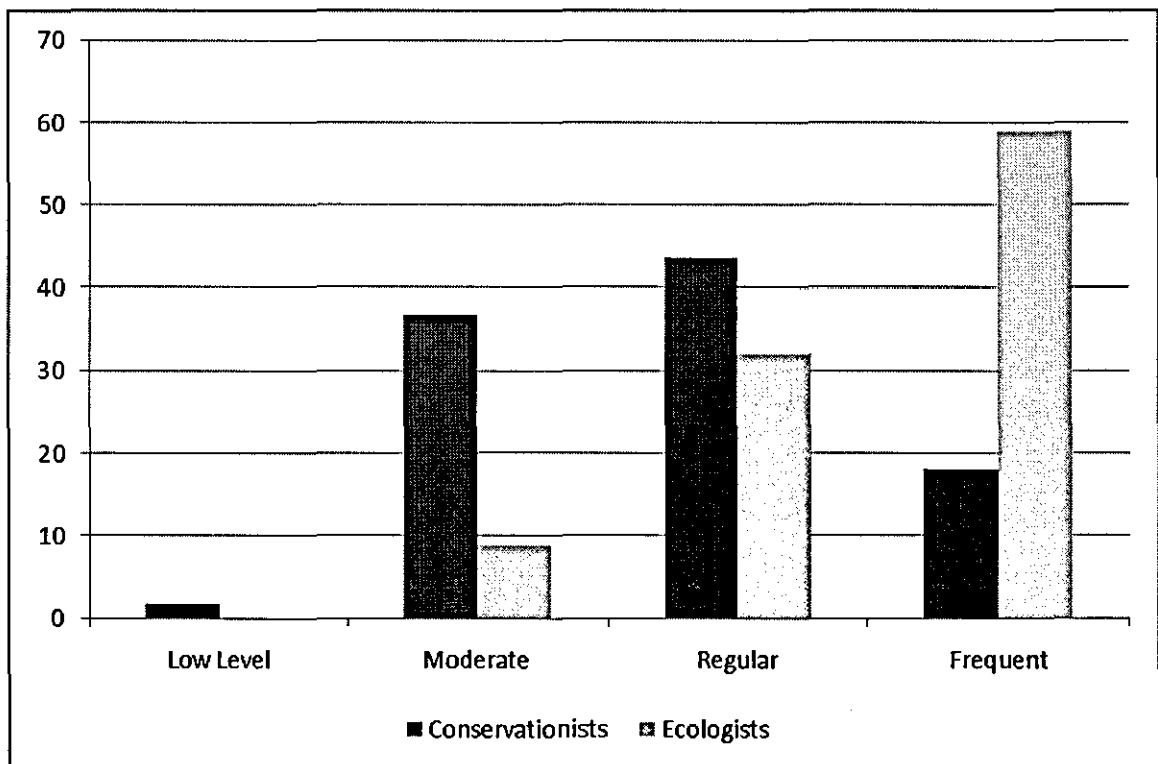
### **Collective Action**

The majority of both groups have involved themselves in two of the more high-cost types of group-based activism: attending public meetings and participating in voluntary work. Eight out of ten conservationists, and nearly 94.2 percent of the ecologists, said that they had attended a public meeting in the previous twelve months to support an environmental cause. During the same period, 95.7 percent of conservationists had undertaken voluntary work designed to improve environmental conditions, with 71.8 percent saying they had done so frequently. While a slightly smaller percentage of ecologists (90.8 percent) had participated in voluntary work, the data reveals that there is undoubtedly a willingness to participate in high-cost activism amongst both groupings.

If we examine how many of the ten forms of conventional activism conservationists and ecologists carried out in the twelve month period prior to participating in the research, there are a few key differences to note. In all, 93.1 percent of the ecologists can be considered 'highly active' by virtue of having participated in seven or more forms of orthodox campaigning. In contrast, 65.8 percent of conservationists were classified as highly active. From this it seems that the ecologists are most likely to be 'highly' active. The chi-square test for this crosstabulation was 40.180, with an Asymp. Sig.

Figure of .000, with this confidence interval it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship here. In order to develop a more precise measure of respondents' activism, they were also asked to indicate how often they took part in the individual actions. Using this data respondents' activism was placed on a scale ranging from just a few actions having been undertaken infrequently, through to frequent activism across the array of campaigning activities. This revealed that in general ecologists' cumulative level of activism is higher than that of conservationists. With 58.9 percent of ecologists being classified as frequently active compared with 18.1 percent of conservationists.

**Figure 11.4: Frequency of Participation**



While almost two-thirds of the conservationists (61.6 percent) are regularly or frequently active, over ninety percent of ecologists fall within these categories. However, it is important to remember that both groups are composed of environmental activists, which is a key feature connecting this population, only 1.7 percent of conservationists, and no ecologists, were categorized as low level activists.



## **Unorthodox activism and Protest Potential**

The investigation explored the use of protest and unconventional methods by conservationists and ecologists and analysed the protest potential of both groups. The available evidence suggests that we would expect to find that ecologists are more inclined to use unorthodox activism than conservationists. Unconventional participation has been the hallmark of ecology organisations such as Greenpeace (Jordan and Maloney 1997:61). Dalton and Kuechler (1990:5) have observed that social movements, such as ecology, illustrate a style of unconventional political action that is based on direct action, which contrasts with the traditional pattern of interest intermediation. However, Byrne (1997:130) has suggested that ecology employs a greater range of tactics, both conventional and unconventional, than conservation. Hoad (1998:209) also notes that direct action tends to differentiate the more conservative elements of the environmental movement from those with a more radical persuasion. Conservation groups, on the other hand, are not traditionally thought of as part of the social movement aspect of environmentalism. As a result, it is believed that they view their role as more narrowly defined than do ecologists, and consequently do not challenge the system (Barry and Doherty (2001:591).

The results of the present survey revealed that three quarters of the ecologists have participated in unorthodox campaigning. This supports the notion that local ecology groups often combine conventional tactics such as lobbying and contacting, with less conventional tactics such as demonstrating and leafleting. The survey also reveals that four out of ten conservationists have taken part in unorthodox activism, indicating that it is not a tactic exclusively deployed by ecologists. This was not totally unexpected; Beder (1991:3) has observed that even light green activists are by their actions being confrontational. To choose even a relatively conventional campaign strategy such as signing a petition demonstrates a lack of faith in society's decision-making structures. In addition, unconventional politics and protest actions are something which have entered into the repertoire of actions which many citizens would consider, providing an important outlet for those who feel that

their views are not adequately represented by mainstream politics (Evans 2003:97-8). For instance, approximately one in eight of the British population have participated in a demonstration, and one in fifty has occupied a building (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002:17-8).

**Table 11.12: Unorthodox Campaigning / Conservationists and Ecologists Crosstabulation**

		Conservationists	Ecologists	Total
<b>Have Participated in Unorthodox Campaigning</b>	Count	71	128	199
	% within have participated in unorthodox campaigning	35.7%	64.3%	100.0%
	% within conservationists and ecologists	38.0%	74.0%	55.3%
<b>Have Not Participated in Unorthodox Campaigning</b>	Count	116	45	161
	% within have participated in unorthodox campaigning	72.0%	28.0%	100.0%
	% within conservationists and ecologists	62.0%	26.0%	44.7%

**Table 11.13: Chi-square Unorthodox Campaigning**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	47.164a	1	.000
<b>Linear-by-Linear Association</b>	47.033	1	.000
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	360		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 77.37.

It has been demonstrated that post-materialists are more likely to engage in unconventional political action than materialists (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002:6). Thus, the respondents' value priorities may help to account for their relatively high levels of unorthodox activism. The shift from materialist to post-materialist values has been substantiated by a number of mass opinion surveys in various Western countries (Lowe and Goyder 1982:26). Inglehart (1995) has suggested that compared to materialists, post-materialists may be more inclined to act to achieve political goals through a variety of means. From survey data Inglehart found that post-materialists are two to four times

more prone to engage in unorthodox political action, than are materialists. As far as democracy is concerned they place less emphasis on formal democracy such as voting, and more on issue-specific types of public participation. We also would predict that post-materialists are less concerned about the consequences of using NVDA, because they are not as concerned about economic loss as materialists are. The figures show that on average the conservationists seem more likely than the British public to take part in unconventional activism.

Since those who use a high proportion of direct action can be regarded as more radical than those who do not, then the survey supports earlier findings suggesting ecologists are the most radical element within the environmental movement. If the different types of unconventional participation are divided into subcategories depending upon just how confrontational or radical they are, it is also the ecologists who most frequently take part in the most radical types of campaigns. In percentage terms, ecologists are twice as likely to take part in lawful public demonstrations (70.3 percent of ecologists have, compared with 34.2 percent of conservationists) and almost five times as likely as conservationists to take part in potentially illegal sit-ins or street demonstration (49.4 percent of ecologists said they had, as opposed to 10.4 percent of conservationists). Participation in illegal and potentially violent actions such as 'monkey wrenching', was low for both groups with six percent of conservationists saying they had done so, once again more ecologists, 9.9 percent, had engaged in this type of action. Hence, it appears ecology group activists are more inclined to use unconventional methods.

For a variety of reasons, some respondents may be willing to do more in support of environmental causes than they have had the opportunity to do. For example, some may not have been in the movement long enough to participate in some forms of action. Alternatively, the groups they are in may not sanction methods that respondents themselves are willing to use. Many grass-roots ecology groups, such as those affiliated to FoE, are largely autonomous, only being connected to the campaigning networks coordinated

by FoE centrally. It is within these types of local groups that ecologists are most likely to use direct action (Byrne 1997:137). Conservation groups, on the other hand, rarely use members for campaigning. The activism of local groups administered by the RSPB for instance, is restricted to reserve management, fundraising and educational activities. Hence, one reason conservationists may not have taken part in unorthodox campaigns is that they have not had the opportunity (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:6-9). This means that simply looking at respondents' past actions may not give a true reflection of their preferred level of activism. As a result, respondents have also been asked about their willingness to participate. Thus, the questionnaire asked whether they would consider carrying out a variety of activities to support environmental causes. In this way, we can distinguish between those who are prepared to engage in varied, and perhaps radical activities, and those who are psychologically unprepared for them.

Table 11.14: Percentage of Conservationists and Ecologists who would Never Consider Participating in Various Forms of Unorthodox Campaigning

	CONSERVATIONISTS	ECOLOGISTS
<b>Legal and non-violent:</b> would never attend a public demonstration	12.5	5.9
<b>Illegal and non-violent:</b> would never take part in a sit-in / street demonstration	17.3	7.6
<b>Illegal and violent:</b> would never use force against property or equipment	49.5	53.3
<b>Illegal and highly violent:</b> would never use force against political opponents	51.1	76.9

Only a relatively small percentage of conservationists and ecologists totally rule out the possibility of using legal methods of unconventional activism, or illegal methods if they are non-violent. Generally speaking ecologists seem the most inclined to use these methods, with 60.4 percent saying that they would definitely take part in a lawful public demonstration in the future, compared with 28.3 percent of conservationists. This is perhaps to be expected given the previous degree of unorthodox activism described by the respective groups. However, only about half of the conservationists completely reject the possibility of using violence against political opponents, while more than three quarters of ecologists reject the most radical of all forms

of activism. Thus, on the whole conservationists seem more willing to utilise illegal and potentially violent forms of activism than ecologists.

On the face of it this seems like a contradiction. However, it is important to remember that rather than trying to bring about change through the political system and political action, many within the ecology movement are more concerned with cultural innovation, the creation of new life-styles and the challenge they present to traditional values (Scott 1990:16-17). A recurrent theme within this agenda is the rejection of such things as violence, hierarchy, sexism and racism in all aspects of their lives. Thus, these differences perhaps reflect the fact that sections of the ecology are more likely to be principled pacifists, than are those within the conservation movement.

### **Summary Conclusion**

The survey found that conservationists and ecologists have a very similar socio-demographic profile. This confirms the findings of other studies that have shown that, as with conservation groups, it is the middle class who are the main participants in ecology bodies (Jordan and Maloney 1997:66). Lowe and Goyder (1983:11) surveyed members of the Conservation Society and FoE and reported that the two groups drew the majority of their support from the middle class. Compared with the general public, they tended to have higher incomes and much higher levels of education, with the majority of members having a degree.

However, differences between the characteristics of conservation and ecology group coordinators do emerge when we look at their cognitive profiles. Variables such as post-materialism, NEP and their willingness to make economic sacrifices all point to some notable differences. The survey data suggests that the ecology movement is a relatively cohesive grouping in terms of beliefs. The views of the conservation group members have demonstrate a lower level of consistency, but there is still a clear pattern. In previous decades the movement was perhaps more divided in terms of its core beliefs. During the 1970s and 1980s, for instance, some of the views that the ecologists supported appeared quite radical in comparison to

conservationists'. However, their views have become increasingly acceptable as the years have past, now there is a widespread consensus within the movement that such matters as biodiversity and global warming represent a genuine global problem. Agreement is practically universal that it is in everyone's interests to address such issues. By expressing concern about the destruction of nature, pollution, the loss of amenities and the depletion of resources, the conservationists are also challenging assumptions about progress that equate material prosperity with general wellbeing.

It is when we look at the coordinators actual participation that probably the most significant differences emerge. In total 93.1 percent of the ecology group activists could be labelled highly active by virtue of having taken part in seven or more of the ten forms of conventional campaigning enquired about. This compared with 65.8 percent of conservationists, while this is still a high percentage; it is nevertheless a notable disparity. This difference is more pronounced when we look at unconventional activism, with 74 percent of ecologists, and 38 percent of conservationists having utilized this type of campaigning strategy. Hence, the survey seems to suggest that ecologists are more active in both conventional and unconventional forms of participation. This means there is some evidence to suggest that, amongst grass-roots activist at least, conservationists and ecologists may be separate populations.

## **CHAPTER TWELVE**

### **Conclusion**

The environmental movement is very broad in scope, encapsulating a wide range of topics including preservation, restoration, or improvement of the natural environment. Many British citizens express support for some aspect of the movement, and over six million people are members of environmental organizations. However, it is important to be aware that there are fundamental differences between public support for environmental protection, membership of environmental organizations and participation in environmental groups.

This investigation focused upon those who had become personally active in support of environmental causes. All those who participated in the research has acted as coordinators of local environmental groups that were linked to national environmental organizations. One of the main objectives of the thesis was to discover the socio-demographic and cognitive profiles of the activists, and to look at their methods of participation. In terms of socio-demographic characteristics respondents were generally consistent with Verba, Schlozman and Brady's (1995:468) notion of representational distortion in their work on civic voluntarism. The majority of coordinators were highly educated and had professional or high status type occupations. Also, most were involved in sections of the economy unrelated to the market sector. A significant body of empirical research has suggested that public support for environmentalism stems from the emergence of post-material values. An examination of the coordinators cognitive profiles revealed that they were overwhelmingly post-materialistic in their value orientations, and willing to make economic sacrifices in order to support environmental causes. Hence, surveying this distinctive sub-section of activists produced comparable results with other research into the environmental movement.

The thesis also considered the possibility that those who participate in the conservation movement and the ecology movement have separate concerns,

objectives and methods. As a result, there are effectively main sub-sets within the environmental movement. While the conservationists and ecologists socio-demographic profiles were very similar, there were some notable differences in their cognitive profiles, and the styles of participation which they use to support environmental causes. While both groups were on the whole post-materialistic, subscribed to the New Environmental Paradigm and were willing to make sacrifices for environmental protection. The ecology sub-group conformed to this pattern much more closely than did the conservationists; as a result, in terms of these variables there was a statistically significant difference between the two groupings. It is when we look at the coordinators actual participation that probably the most significant differences between the two surface. Overall 93.1 percent of the ecology group activists could be labelled highly active by virtue of having taken part in seven or more of the ten forms of conventional campaigning. This compared with 65.8 percent of conservationists, while this is still a fairly impressive amount, it is nevertheless a notable disparity. The difference are more pronounced when we look at unconventional activism, with 74 percent of ecologists, and 38 percent of conservationists having been involved this type of campaigning activity. Hence, the survey has produced evidence to suggest that ecologists are more active in both conventional and unconventional forms of participation. This means that, amongst grass-roots activists at least, conservationists and ecologists could be thought of as separate populations.

If this is correct then combining two dissimilar sub-groups into one environmental whole maybe misleading. However, a review of the literature indicates that the movement has also become closer in terms of its core issues and campaigning strategies. This means that in some respects it is possible to refer to environmentalism as a movement. It certainly seems to be the case that those who are active in support of environmental causes have many key characteristics in common. Although it is possible to detect differences between conservationists and ecologists, this does not necessarily mean activists are pulling in different directions in terms of their core aims. It seems reasonable to expect that different groups and their members will hold



(widely) different worldviews, but Dalton (1994:46) points out that the interests of conservationists and ecologists overlap. At the present time, the sciences of ecology and environmental science provide the basis of unity for most serious environmentalists. As more information has become available in various scientific fields, issues such as biodiversity have emerged as a common concern. To fully understand the nature of the contemporary movement it is important to be aware of the relationship between the groups and their supporters. These relationships give environmentalism its coherence, and mean it is possible to speak of the movement as a single body. While Britain has a large number of environmental groups that have a diverse set of goals and tactics, at the national level the movement is increasingly typified by the structural dominance of a few mass membership organisations (Rawcliffe 1998:23). A few large national groups such as FoE, Greenpeace, the RSPB and the Wildlife Trust account for the majority of members and supporters of the movement.

Since environmentalists as individuals have a diverse range of concerns, many join more than one group. This research found evidence to suggest that environmental groups frequently have overlapping memberships. Additionally, many people who are members of smaller regional groups are also members of the larger national organisations. Consequently, at both the national and local levels there are extensive networks of relations, both formal and informal, across the environmental spectrum. On a formal level groups cooperate via direct funding, campaigning alliances and information exchanging. For example, FoE has often collaborated with the WWF, Greenpeace, Climate Action Network, Wildlife Link and the RSPB. It is also increasingly common for groups to share their membership lists. This may be another reason for the general overlap in membership. National groups are usually willing to cooperate with each other because in practice their goals and beliefs are frequently not as far apart as it would appear. Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, for instance, have very similar agendas both running international anti-whaling and 'save the rainforest' campaigns.

At a more informal level, co-operation exists due to individual friendships and regular contact between members of the national movement. Rawcliffe (1998:24) suggests that most of the senior cadre of groups have connections across the spectrum of the movement. In addition, as the groups have matured many environmental group staff members have switched between different organisations during their careers. This means people from all over the movement are known to each other. These contacts are often maintained and cultivated, as they can be an important resource. Interviewed in 2000, Tony Juniper, Policy and Campaigns Director of FoE revealed that on an informal level specialists from one group often work with specialists from other groups. There are no formal arrangements involved but there are a lot of instances of interaction (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:11).

In practice most environmental groups combine some mix of conservation and ecology. Many of the environmental groups founded in the 1970s drew on elements of the traditional conservation agenda. Lowe and Goyder (1983:22) suggest:

the new environmental groups of today express some of the same values as those which underpin Victorian environmentalism including concern at the impact on people and the environment of urban and industrial growth and opposition to the values of individualism and laissez-faire inherent in economic liberalism.

Contemporary groups such as the WWF have much the same standpoint and way of working as those of the older conservation groups. While some of the newer groups were originally radical and anti-establishment, as they have aged they have moved to a more reformist and less confrontational style of campaigning. At the same time, the established conservation agenda has been changing since the 1970s to encompass a broader environmental critique. For example, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the RSPB expanded its interests into habitat conservation and began taking a more positive stance towards government policy, taking on complex policy issues within its ever expanding portfolio. Thus, it has shifted away from an emphasis on individual

threatened species, towards the conservation of populations as a whole. Consequently, it has taken an active interest in the wider environment at the national and international level. In 1992, the RSPB was instrumental in setting up Birdlife International, through which it has evolved from a bird protection organisation into one ever more concerned with global environmental change (Rootes, Seel and Adams 2000:4). Groups as diverse as the CPRE and Greenpeace have grown increasingly aligned in common causes such as opposing nuclear power. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the CPRE was present as a main objector at the Sizewell nuclear inquiry. Accordingly, modern environmental groups may have more similarities than differences.

The survey data suggests that in relation to certain key ideological orientations, and styles of campaigning, the activists often seem more closely linked to either conservation or ecology groups. Therefore, when examining some issue such as the use of NVDA, it is more appropriate to consider them in relation to one of the two paradigms. Nevertheless, Rawcliffe (1998:26) asserts that despite their diversity in approaches "it is clear that each of the national environmental groups today sees itself as part of a larger environmental movement which shares similar values and, ... pursues broadly constant aims and objectives". Robinson (1992:41) also suggests "despite conceptual problems, one can consider environmentalism as being a coalition of groups with a single, intrinsic ideological link... However, it would be misleading to see the environmental movement as merely an amalgamation of environmental pressure groups".

The data from this survey suggests that the ecology movement is a relatively cohesive grouping. Perhaps surprisingly the views of the conservation group members frequently demonstrate a lower level of consistency than do those provided by the ecologists. However, there is an unmistakable pattern of attitudes and beliefs within the movement that are of consequence for the majority of conservationists, ecologists. In spite of some differences in terms of their attitudes and beliefs, it seems it is still possible to view environmentalism as a single movement. In previous decades the movement encompassed a variety of widely differing beliefs. During the 1970s and

1980s, for instance, some of the views that the ecologists supported appeared quite radical in comparison to conservationists'. However, their views have become increasingly acceptable as the years have past, now there is a widespread consensus within the movement that such matters as biodiversity and global warming represent a genuine global problem. Agreement is practically universal that it is in everyone's interests to address such issues.

In many key respects environmentalism can be regarded as one movement as it is principally made up of groups and individuals who are concerned with protecting some aspect of the environment. As Scott (1990:6) observes, a social movement is a collective actor constituted by individuals who understand themselves to have common interests and, for at least some significant part of their social existence, a common identity. Thus, it seems possible to consider all environmental activists as part of one group as they share common objectives.

Hence, in many key regards activists and the groups they support seem to be more closely united now than they were during the 1970s. There seem to be central values within environmentalism, that enable us to talk of a single environmental movement rather than a series of separate movements, each pursuing discrete objectives such as the conservation moment or the amenity movement for example. This is encouraging for the future of environmentalism, because radically different environmental movements could result in the groups pulling in different directions, and as a result achieving very little. However, groups with common interests can help build a consensus regarding methods of progression to common social goals.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Synopsis of Environmental Groups**

### **British Trust for Conservation Volunteers**

The charity was set up in 1959, and has a history of environmental conservation volunteering throughout the UK and around the world.

The BTCV is a charity, which relies heavily on voluntary donations. It seeks support from corporate partners, the Government, local authorities, government agencies such as English Nature and individual donors.

#### **Vision, Mission & Values:**

**Vision:** A better environment where people are valued, included and involved

**Mission:** To create a more sustainable future by inspiring people and improving places

**Values:** BTCV's values are integral to all our work. They have been developed through four decades of a 'hands-on' approach to conservation activities.

During this time we have adapted to meet the changing needs of communities, we care about people, the communities in which they live and the quality of their environment

**Key values:** Sustained environmental improvement: A healthy environment and improved biodiversity is at the heart of all BTCV's activities.

**Inclusiveness, accessibility and choice:** BTCV is sensitive to people's needs, their environmental awareness, personal values and beliefs, and is striving to be accessible to all

**Appropriate support:** BTCV understands that individuals and local communities require different types of support

**Individual and community empowerment:** BTCV inspires people to fulfil their potential

## **Friends of the Earth**

FoE say they want a healthy planet and a good life for everyone on it.

They want to achieve this by persuading the government and the economy to give people a fair deal.

Friends of the Earth seeks to influence the government to make changes to policies in favour of people and planet.

### **Vision, Mission & Values:**

- Focus on the solution  
We look for better alternatives to what's already out there
- Back it up with facts  
We base everything on credible research
- Get lots of people involved  
We make it easy for you to act.
- Use our network  
We have access to over 70 Friends of the Earth international groups and over 200 local groups in the UK
- Over 90% of income comes from individuals. The rest comes from events, grants and trading

## **Green Party**

The Green Party of England and Wales is a political movement promoting social and environmental justice through campaigns, direct action and the electoral process.

After the local and London elections in 2008, the Green Party of England and Wales had more than 100 parish councillors, 125 Principal Authority councillors, two members of the London Assembly and two Members of the European Parliament.

In 2010 in Scotland, the Scottish Greens have two Members of the Scottish Parliament and since 2007 there has been one Green MLA in Northern Ireland.

### **Vision, Mission & Values:**

Life on Earth is under immense pressure. It is human activity, more than anything else, which is threatening the well-being of the environment on which we depend. Conventional politics has failed us because its values are fundamentally flawed.

The Green Party say they are not just another political party. Green politics is a new and radical kind of politics guided by these core principles:

- Humankind depends on the diversity of the natural world for its existence. We do not believe that other species are expendable.
- The Earth's physical resources are finite. We threaten our future if we try to live beyond those means, so we must build a sustainable society that guarantees our long-term future.
- Every person, in this and future generations, should be entitled to basic material security as of right.
- Our actions should take account of the well-being of other nations, other species, and future generations. We should not pursue our well-being to the detriment of theirs.
- A healthy society is based on voluntary co-operation between empowered individuals in a democratic society, free from discrimination

whether based on race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social origin or any other prejudice.

They emphasise democratic participation and accountability by ensuring that decisions are taken at the closest practical level to those affected by them. Looking for non-violent solutions to conflict situations, which take into account the interests of minorities and future generations in order to achieve lasting settlements.

They suggest that the success of a society cannot be measured by narrow economic indicators, but should take account of factors affecting the quality of life for all people: personal freedom, social equity, health, happiness and human fulfilment.

The Greens believe that electoral politics is not the only way to achieve change in society, and will use a variety of methods to help effect change, providing those methods do not conflict with their other core principles.



## **Greenpeace**

Greenpeace say that it stands for positive change through action. That it defends the natural world and promotes peace.

Seeking to investigate, expose and confront environmental abuse by governments and corporations around the world.

Championing environmentally responsible and socially just solutions, including scientific and technical innovation.

### **Vision, Mission & Values:**

Our goal is to ensure the ability of the earth to nurture life in all its diversity.

We organise public campaigns:

- for preventing climate change by ending our addiction to polluting fuels and promoting clean, renewable and efficient energy
- for the protection of oceans and ancient forests
- for the elimination of toxic chemicals
- against the release of genetically modified organisms into nature
- for nuclear disarmament and an end to nuclear contamination.

Greenpeace does not solicit or accept funding from governments, corporations or political parties. Greenpeace neither seeks nor accepts donations which could compromise our independence, aims, objectives or integrity. Greenpeace relies on the voluntary donations of individual supporters, and on grant-support from foundations.

## **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**

The RSPB suggests its work is driven by a passionate belief that we all have a responsibility to protect birds and the environment. Bird populations reflect the health of the planet on which our future depends.

### **Vision, Mission & Values:**

The need for an effective bird conservation organisation has never been greater. Climate change, agricultural intensification, expansion of urban areas and transport infrastructure, and over-exploitation of our seas all pose major threats to birds.

### **RSPB has:**

- Over a million members, including over 170,000 youth members.
- A staff of over 1,300 people and over 13,000 volunteers.
- Resources available for charitable purposes in 2007 was £78.6 million.
- 200 nature reserves covering 130,000 hectares home to 80% of our rarest or most threatened bird species.
- A UK headquarters, three national offices and nine regional offices.
- A local network of 175 local groups and more than 110 youth groups.
- At least 9 volunteers for every paid member of staff

## **Wildlife Trusts**

There are 47 local Wildlife Trusts across the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. They say they are working for an environment rich in wildlife for everyone.

With 791,000 members, the Wildlife Trusts is the largest UK voluntary organisation dedicated to conserving the full range of the UK's habitats and species, whether they be in the countryside, in cities or at sea. 150,000 of their members belong to the junior branch, Wildlife Watch.

The Wildlife Trusts manage 2,256 nature reserves covering more than 90,000 hectares. They assert that: we stand up for wildlife; we inspire people about the natural world and we foster sustainable living.

All 47 Wildlife Trusts are members of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT) which also operates separate Grants Unit administering major funds on behalf of the Big Lottery Fund and the Landfill Communities Fund.

### **Vision, Mission & Values**

The vision of The Wildlife Trusts is:

- “an environment rich in wildlife for everyone”

The mission of The Wildlife Trusts is to:

- “rebuild biodiversity and engage people with their environment”

The objectives of the wildlife trust are:

- To stand up for wildlife and the environment
- To create and enhance wildlife havens
- To inspire people about the natural world
- To foster sustainable living

## APPENDIX B

### Results Tables

<b>Are Respondents Conservationists, Ecologists or Mixed Types</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Conservation	188	49.5	49.5	49.5
	Ecology	173	45.5	45.5	95.0
	Mixed	19	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	380	100.0	100.0	

<b>Length of Time Active within the Environmental Movement</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	11	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Between 1 & 2 years	32	8.4	8.4	11.3
	Between 3 & 5 years	71	18.7	18.7	30.1
	Between 6 & 10 years	62	16.3	16.4	46.4
	More than 10 years	203	53.4	53.6	100.0
	Total	379	99.7	100.0	
Missing	9	1	.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Issue that First Inspired Environmental Action</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Global	213	56.1	57.0	57.0
	National	54	14.2	14.4	71.4
	Local	105	27.6	28.1	99.5
	5	2	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	9	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Made a Donation to Support an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	27	7.1	7.2	7.2
	Rarely	53	13.9	14.1	21.3
	Occasionally	143	37.6	38.1	59.5
	Frequently	152	40.0	40.5	100.0
	Total	375	98.7	100.0	
Missing	9	5	1.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Bought Products to Support an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	24	6.3	6.5	6.5
	Rarely	65	17.1	17.6	24.1
	Occasionally	189	49.7	51.1	75.1
	Frequently	92	24.2	24.9	100.0
	Total	370	97.4	100.0	
Missing	9	10	2.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Signed a Petition to Support an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	48	12.6	12.9	12.9
	Rarely	72	18.9	19.4	32.3
	Occasionally	144	37.9	38.7	71.0
	Frequently	108	28.4	29.0	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	9	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Boycotted Products on Environmental Grounds in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	31	8.2	8.4	8.4
	Rarely	34	8.9	9.2	17.5
	Occasionally	95	25.0	25.6	43.1
	Frequently	211	55.5	56.9	100.0
	Total	371	97.6	100.0	
Missing	9	9	2.4		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Worn a Badge or Displayed a Poster in Support of an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	95	25.0	25.5	25.5
	Rarely	52	13.7	14.0	39.5
	Occasionally	106	27.9	28.5	68.0
	Frequently	119	31.3	32.0	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	9	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Contacted a Politician or Government Official about an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	70	18.4	18.7	18.7
	Rarely	66	17.4	17.6	36.3
	Occasionally	136	35.8	36.3	72.5
	Frequently	103	27.1	27.5	100.0
	Total	375	98.7	100.0	
Missing	9	5	1.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Written to a News Paper or the Media to Support an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	137	36.1	36.9	36.9
	Rarely	81	21.3	21.8	58.8
	Occasionally	101	26.6	27.2	86.0
	Frequently	52	13.7	14.0	100.0
	Total	371	97.6	100.0	
Missing	9	9	2.4		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Attended a Public Meeting in support of an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	47	12.4	12.6	12.6
	Rarely	69	18.2	18.4	31.0
	Occasionally	147	38.7	39.3	70.3
	Frequently	111	29.2	29.7	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	9	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Taken Petition Around for People to Sign in Support of an Environmental Cause in the Previous 12</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	204	53.7	55.0	55.0
	Rarely	68	17.9	18.3	73.3
	Occasionally	68	17.9	18.3	91.6
	Frequently	31	8.2	8.4	100.0
	Total	371	97.6	100.0	
Missing	9	9	2.4		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Undertaken Voluntary Work in the Previous 12 Months to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	24	6.3	6.3	6.3
	Rarely	34	8.9	9.0	15.3
	Occasionally	68	17.9	17.9	33.2
	Frequently	253	66.6	66.8	100.0
	Total	379	99.7	100.0	
Missing	9	1	.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Taken Part in a Lawful Public Demonstration to Support an Environmental Cause During the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	179	47.1	47.9	47.9
	Rarely	75	19.7	20.1	67.9
	Occasionally	92	24.2	24.6	92.5
	Frequently	28	7.4	7.5	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	9	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Taken Part in a Sit-In or Street Demonstration to Support an Environmental cause During the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	264	69.5	70.8	70.8
	Rarely	52	13.7	13.9	84.7
	Occasionally	45	11.8	12.1	96.8
	Frequently	12	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	373	98.2	100.0	
Missing	9	7	1.8		
Total		380	100.0		



<b>Used Force Against Property or Equipment to Support an Environmental Cause During the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	344	90.5	92.2	92.2
	Rarely	7	1.8	1.9	94.1
	Occasionally	17	4.5	4.6	98.7
	Frequently	5	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	373	98.2	100.0	
Missing	9	7	1.8		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>How Many Orthodox Activities were Undertaken During the Previous 12 Months to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	8	2.1	2.1	2.1
	4	9	2.4	2.4	4.5
	5	25	6.6	6.6	11.1
	6	35	9.2	9.2	20.3
	7	55	14.5	14.5	34.8
	8	71	18.7	18.7	53.6
	9	68	17.9	17.9	71.5
	10	108	28.4	28.5	100.0
	Total	379	99.7	100.0	
Missing	99	1	.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Have Taken Part in Unorthodox Campaigning to Support an Environmental Cause During the Previous 12 Months</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	210	55.3	55.4	55.4
	No	169	44.5	44.6	100.0
	Total	379	99.7	100.0	
Missing	9	1	.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Would Take Part in a Lawful Public Demonstration to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	34	8.9	9.1	9.1
	Might	74	19.5	19.9	29.0
	Probably	102	26.8	27.4	56.5
	Definitely	162	42.6	43.5	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	9	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Would Take Part in a Sit-In or Street Demonstration to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	45	11.8	12.0	12.0
	Might	106	27.9	28.3	40.4
	Probably	86	22.6	23.0	63.4
	Definitely	137	36.1	36.6	100.0
	Total	374	98.4	100.0	
Missing	9	6	1.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Would Use Force Against Property or Equipment to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	189	49.7	50.8	50.8
	Might	55	14.5	14.8	65.6
	Probably	16	4.2	4.3	69.9
	Definitely	112	29.5	30.1	100.0
	Total	372	97.9	100.0	
Missing	9	8	2.1		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Would Use Force Against Political Opponents to Support an Environmental Cause</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	233	61.3	63.3	63.3
	Might	19	5.0	5.2	68.5
	Probably	4	1.1	1.1	69.6
	Definitely	112	29.5	30.4	100.0
	Total	368	96.8	100.0	
Missing	9	12	3.2		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Willing to Pay Higher Taxes to Protect the Environment</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very willing	204	53.7	56.2	56.2
	Willing	120	31.6	33.1	89.3
	Neither willing / unwilling	27	7.1	7.4	96.7
	Unwilling	9	2.4	2.5	99.2
	Very unwilling	3	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	363	95.5	100.0	
Missing	9	17	4.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Willing to Incur Job Losses to Protect the Environment</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very willing	50	13.2	13.8	13.8
	Willing	138	36.3	38.0	51.8
	Neither willing / unwilling	102	26.8	28.1	79.9
	Unwilling	64	16.8	17.6	97.5
	Very unwilling	9	2.4	2.5	100.0
	Total	363	95.5	100.0	
Missing	9	17	4.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Willing to Pay Higher Prices to Protect the Environment</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very willing	135	35.5	37.2	37.2
	Willing	185	48.7	51.0	88.2
	Neither willing / unwilling	30	7.9	8.3	96.4
	Unwilling	11	2.9	3.0	99.4
	Very unwilling	2	.5	.6	100.0
	Total	363	95.5	100.0	
Missing	9	17	4.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Willing to Accept Cut in Living Standards to Protect the Environment</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very willing	92	24.2	25.6	25.6
	Willing	108	28.4	30.0	55.6
	Neither willing / unwilling	76	20.0	21.1	76.7
	Unwilling	59	15.5	16.4	93.1
	Very unwilling	25	6.6	6.9	100.0
	Total	360	94.7	100.0	
Missing	9	20	5.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Overall Modern Science does More Harm than Good</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	17	4.5	4.7	4.7
	Agree	48	12.6	13.3	18.1
	Neither agree / disagree	134	35.3	37.2	55.3
	Disagree	124	32.6	34.4	89.7
	Disagree Strongly	37	9.7	10.3	100.0
	Total	360	94.7	100.0	
Missing	9	20	5.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Modern Science will Solve Our Environmental Problems with Little Change to Our Way of Life</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	8	2.1	2.2	2.2
	Agree	21	5.5	5.8	8.1
	Neither agree / disagree	54	14.2	15.0	23.1
	Disagree	176	46.3	49.0	72.1
	Disagree Strongly	100	26.3	27.9	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Almost Everything We do in Modern Life Harms the Environment</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	48	12.6	13.3	13.3
	Agree	162	42.6	44.9	58.2
	Neither agree / disagree	67	17.6	18.6	76.7
	Disagree	78	20.5	21.6	98.3
	Disagree Strongly	6	1.6	1.7	100.0
	Total	361	95.0	100.0	
Missing	9	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>To Protect the Environment Britain Needs Economic Growth</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	8	2.1	2.3	2.3
	Agree	44	11.6	12.5	14.8
	Neither agree / disagree	89	23.4	25.3	40.1
	Disagree	127	33.4	36.1	76.1
	Disagree Strongly	83	21.8	24.2	100.0
	Total	352	92.6	100.0	
Missing	9	29	7.4		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>If Things Continue as they are we will Face Environmental Crisis that Cannot be Prevented</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	206	54.2	57.4	57.4
	Agree	124	32.6	34.5	91.9
	Neither agree / disagree	19	5.0	5.3	97.2
	Disagree	8	2.1	2.2	99.4
	Disagree Strongly	2	.5	.6	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	20	5.3		
	System	1	.3		
	Total	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>We Worry too Much about the Environment and Not Enough about Peoples Jobs</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	3	.8	.8	.8
	Agree	2	.5	.6	1.4
	Neither agree / disagree	28	7.4	7.8	9.2
	Disagree	148	38.9	41.2	50.4
	Disagree Strongly	178	46.8	49.6	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Economic Growth Should Take Priority Over Environmental Protection</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	5	1.3	1.4	1.4
	Agree	2	.5	.6	1.9
	Neither agree / disagree	25	6.6	6.9	8.8
	Disagree	115	30.3	31.8	40.6
	Disagree Strongly	215	56.6	59.4	100.0
	Total	362	95.3	100.0	
Missing	9	18	4.7		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Environmental Catastrophe Can Only Be Avoided By Radical Change of Values of Industrialised Societies</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	187	49.2	51.8	51.8
	Agree	105	27.6	29.1	80.9
	Neither agree / disagree	38	10.0	10.5	91.4
	Disagree	23	6.1	6.4	97.8
	Disagree Strongly	8	2.1	2.2	100.0
	Total	361	95.0	100.0	
Missing	9	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>People Should be Allowed to Protest Against The Government</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	240	63.2	67.0	67.0
	Agree	104	27.4	29.1	96.1
	Neither agree / disagree	12	3.2	3.4	99.4
	Disagree	2	.5	.6	100.0
	Total	358	94.2	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
	System	1	.3		
	Total	22	5.8		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Political Parties that Wish to Overthrow Democracy Should Not be Allowed to Stand for Election</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	79	20.8	22.2	22.2
	Agree	75	19.7	21.1	43.3
	Neither agree / disagree	64	16.8	18.0	61.2
	Disagree	106	27.9	29.8	91.0
	Disagree Strongly	32	8.4	9.0	100.0
	Total	356	93.7	100.0	
Missing	9	24	6.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Elections are a Big Waste of Time and Money</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	18	4.7	5.0	5.0
	Agree	64	16.8	17.8	22.8
	Neither agree / disagree	71	18.7	19.8	42.6
	Disagree	140	36.8	39.0	81.6
	Disagree Strongly	66	17.4	18.4	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Elections Don't Matter Because Big International Companies Have Real Power Not Governments</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	27	7.1	7.5	7.5
	Agree	81	21.3	22.5	30.0
	Neither agree / disagree	80	21.1	22.2	52.2
	Disagree	132	34.7	36.7	88.9
	Disagree Strongly	40	10.5	11.1	100.0
	Total	360	94.7	100.0	
Missing	9	20	5.3		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Would be Neglecting Duty as a Citizen If I Did Not Vote</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	173	45.5	48.2	48.2
	Agree	124	32.6	34.5	82.7
	Neither agree / disagree	25	6.6	7.0	89.7
	Disagree	27	7.1	7.5	97.2
	Disagree Strongly	10	2.6	2.8	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		



<b>Post-Materialist, Materialist or Mixed Types</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Post materialist	232	61.1	66.1	66.1
	materialist	3	.8	.9	67.0
	Mixed	116	30.5	33.0	100.0
	Total	351	92.4	100.0	
Missing	9	29	7.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Materialism Rating 0 to 5</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	1	.3	.3	.3
	1	10	2.6	2.9	3.2
	2	24	6.3	6.9	10.1
	3	69	18.2	19.9	30.1
	4	106	27.9	30.6	60.7
	5	136	35.8	39.3	100.0
	Total	346	91.1	100.0	
Missing	9	34	8.9		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Satisfied or Dissatisfied with the Way that Democracy Works in Britain</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Satisfied	10	2.6	2.8	2.8
	Satisfied	59	15.5	16.5	19.3
	Neither Satisfied / Dissatisfied	70	18.4	19.6	38.9
	Dissatisfied	154	40.5	43.1	82.1
	Very Dissatisfied	64	16.8	17.9	100.0
	Total	357	93.9	100.0	
Missing	9	23	6.1		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Likelihood of Voting for the Conservative Party</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	220	57.9	76.4	76.4
	2	28	7.4	9.7	86.1
	3	18	4.7	6.3	92.4
	4	11	2.9	3.8	96.2
	5	11	2.9	3.8	100.0
	Total	288	75.8	100.0	
Missing	9	92	24.2		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Likelihood of Voting for the Green Party</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	27	7.1	9.1	9.1
	2	24	6.3	8.1	17.1
	3	56	14.7	18.8	35.9
	4	58	15.3	19.5	55.4
	5	133	35.0	44.6	100.0
	Total	298	78.4	100.0	
Missing	9	82	21.6		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Likelihood of Voting for the Labour Party</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	110	28.9	37.5	37.5
	2	48	12.6	16.4	53.9
	3	76	20.0	25.9	79.9
	4	39	10.3	13.3	93.2
	5	20	5.3	6.8	100.0
	Total	293	77.1	100.0	
Missing	9	87	22.9		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Likelihood of Voting for the Liberal Democrat Party</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	50	13.2	17.4	17.4
	2	41	10.8	14.3	31.7
	3	70	18.4	24.4	56.1
	4	73	19.2	25.4	81.5
	5	53	13.9	18.5	100.0
	Total	287	75.5	100.0	
Missing	9	93	24.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Gender</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	181	47.6	50.4	50.4
	Female	178	46.8	49.6	100.0
	Total	359	94.5	100.0	
Missing	9	21	5.5		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Age</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<18	1	.3	.3	.3
	18 - 27	52	13.7	14.4	14.7
	28 - 39	103	27.1	28.5	43.2
	40 - 51	99	26.1	27.4	70.6
	52 - 64	84	22.1	23.3	93.9
	65>	22	5.8	6.1	100.0
	Total	361	95.0	100.0	
Missing	9	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Highest Educational Qualification</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Degree / above	276	72.6	76.5	76.5
	A' Level	62	16.3	17.2	93.6
	GCSE	18	4.7	5.0	98.6
	None	5	1.3	1.4	100.0
	Total	361	95.0	100.0	
Missing	9	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Where Respondents Live</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	City centre	29	7.6	8.0	8.0
	Urban	100	26.3	27.7	35.7
	Suburban	110	28.9	30.5	66.2
	Rural residential	56	14.7	15.5	81.7
	Village	31	8.2	8.6	90.3
	Rural	35	9.2	9.7	100.0
	Total	361	95.0	100.0	
Missing	9	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Region</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	North East	11	2.9	3.0	3.0	
	North West	25	6.6	6.9	10.0	
	Yorkshire and Humberside	28	7.4	7.8	17.7	
	East Midlands	23	6.1	6.4	24.1	
	West Midlands	17	4.5	4.7	28.8	
	South West	57	15.0	15.8	44.6	
	East	27	7.1	7.5	52.1	
	London	59	15.5	16.3	68.4	
	South East	81	21.3	22.4	90.9	
	Wales	15	3.9	4.2	95.0	
	Scotland	15	3.9	4.2	99.2	
	Northern Ireland	3	.8	.8	100.0	
	Total		361	95.0	100.0	
	Missing	99	19	5.0		
Total		380	100.0			

<b>What Respondents do in a Normal Week</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Education College	2	.5	.6	.6
	Education University	12	3.2	3.3	3.9
	Government training	1	.3	.3	4.1
	Part-time work	12	3.2	3.3	7.5
	Full-time work	217	57.1	59.9	67.4
	Self employed	53	13.9	14.6	82.0
	Unemployed	12	3.2	3.3	85.4
	Disabled	3	.8	.8	86.2
	Carer	13	3.4	3.6	89.8
	Retired	37	9.7	10.2	100.0
	Total		362	95.3	100.0
Missing	99	18	4.7		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Employment Sector</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Private	63	16.6	18.2	18.2
	Public	200	52.6	57.6	75.8
	Other	84	22.1	24.2	100.0
	Total	347	91.3	100.0	
Missing	9	33	8.7		
Total		380	100.0		

<b>Occupation</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Modern Professional	145	38.2	43.2	43.2
	Clerical	30	7.9	8.9	52.1
	Senior Manager	63	16.6	18.8	70.8
	Technical	29	7.6	8.6	79.5
	Semi-routine	5	1.3	1.5	81.0
	Middle Manager	27	7.1	8.0	89.0
	Traditional Professional	37	9.7	11.0	100.0
	Total	336	88.4	100.0	
Missing	9	44	11.6		
Total		380	100.0		

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