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Fragmentation or Evolution? Understanding Change within the New Zealand Environmental Movement

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The contemporary New Zealand environmental movement emerged in the 1960s to challenge large-scale development projects, represented by the 'Save Manapouri' campaign. The movement grew in the 1970s and 1980s before subsequently declining in scale, reflecting partial success with the institutionalisation of environmental issues. Concurrent with declining levels of activism and institutionalisation has been growth in the number and range of community-based environmental groups. This article draws on interviews conducted with activists and officials to develop an understanding of the relationship between these trends. The aim is to (1) outline the factors that have shaped the character of the New Zealand environmental movement, and (2) determine how the movement has evolved in relation to external pressures. The findings suggest that although the environmental movement is less visible than in earlier periods, it retains an important position, with latent potential for future mobilisation.

Introduction

Environmental concerns have increasingly entered the mainstream of politics in the last four decades, with the emergence of the modern environmental movement. Awareness of environmental issues has been reflected in the growth in the institutionalisation of environmental policy-making within domestic state institutions (see Meyer et al, 1997). Institutionalisation of environmental management presents challenges to the continued viability and legitimacy of the environmental movement; although the claims that animate it have not been resolved, increased participation can

lead to a loss of support for activities outside formal institutional structures. This move away from direct action has been captured in research pointing to increases in the level of 'chequebook activism' and declining participation (see van der Heijden, 1999). The increased institutionalisation of environmental concerns therefore leads to questions regarding the character and indeed purpose of the environmental movement more broadly.

The trend towards professionalisation and the pressure placed on the environmental movement is nowhere more apparent than in New Zealand. The emergence and consolidation of an active Green Party since the early 1990s[1] coupled with increasing institutional adoption of environmental concerns has reduced opportunities for claim-making actions targeting the state (see Buhrs, 2003). The result has been that large environmental movement organisations that flourished in the 1970s and 1980s have declined significantly in scale and level of activity (see O'Brien, 2012). This decline has paralleled increased institutional access by remaining groups and a rise in non-political, local community restoration groups. These developments lead to the question of whether the environmental movement is heading towards greater fragmentation and decline or seeing the emergence of a new form of environmentalism more suited to the current reality.

This article examines the origins of the New Zealand environmental movement, asking how it has evolved to reach its current situation and what the future may hold. The aims of the article are: (1) to outline the factors that have shaped the character of the New Zealand environmental movement, and (2) to determine how the movement has evolved in relation to these external pressures. The article begins by briefly reviewing the literature on social movement forms and the impact of external influences. The analysis uses organisational sociology and social movement studies

approaches to draw out the significance of increasing institutionalisation and the effects on the wider field. The second section outlines the methodology used in the article, which relies primarily on a series of semi-structured interviews with environmental activists (current and former) and government officials. The third section provides a brief history of the New Zealand environmental movement, focusing on milestones and changes in composition over time. Changes in the political context on the actions of the movement are also considered. Finally, the article considers the pressures of institutionalisation on the environmental movement that have encouraged professionalisation and whether the rise of local community restoration projects represents grounds for future reinvigoration of the movement.

A Framework of Environmental Movement Evolution

Environmental movements first emerged in the 1960s in response to growing concern over the state of the environment and pressures on natural ecosystems. As with other forms of social movement, environmental movements are not monolithic, but are shaped by the context within which they operate. Rootes (2007a: 610) argues that 'an environmental movement may be defined as a loose, noninstitutionalised network of informal interactions that may include, as well as individuals and groups who have no organisational affiliation, organisations of varying degrees of formality, that are engaged in collective action motivated by shared identity of concern about environmental issues.' This definition identifies the essence of the environmental movement as something that is fluid and subject to change over time, in response to the external environment. Implicit in the definition is the fact that in operating at different scales and on different issues, environmental movements are subject to fragmentation and possibly internal competition. In a study of environmental groups

operating in London, Saunders (2007) found distinctions between sub-groups (conservationists, reformists, and radicals) within the broader movement and that there was limited interaction between them. Although groups within the broader movement are concerned to protect the environment their identities, and methods are shaped by their members, leading in turn to differentiation.[2]

The contentious and changing nature of environmental issues means that the environmental movement tends to develop as impermanent groupings of organisations and individuals. In a key article describing the characteristics of the 'new' social movements (which encompassed the environmental movement), Offe (1985: 829) argued that they are 'highly informal, ad hoc, discontinuous, context-sensitive, and egalitarian…there are at best rudimentary membership roles, programs, platforms, representatives, officials, staffs and membership dues.' Fluidity is an essential feature of these movements, as they must adapt to changes in the external environment in order to retain their effectiveness. Social movement evolution is an inevitable outcome of the application of time and pressure. Success will lead to greater access and potentially a new institutional settlement, whereas failure will lead to exclusion and potential decline. Regardless of the outcome, the movement will change as demands and compositions alter. Although there is not a teleological path along which all social movements travel, it is possible to identify some key trajectories. Kriesi (cited in Tarrow 2011: 212-13) has identified four possible directions that are useful in assessing movement evolution: commercialisation, involution,[3] radicalisation, and institutionalisation. Each of these tendencies results from a reaction to the environment within which the movement operates, as members make decisions about the direction that will maximize their chances of success.

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Of interest in this article are the processes of institutionalisation, radicalisation, and involution (Tarrow, 2011).[4] The growth in concern around environmental issues internationally has allowed environmental movement organisations to gain increasing access to state agencies. This has however also resulted in increasing pressure to establish formalized institutional structures in order to be seen as suitable and credible partners. Pressures of isomorphism in this sense have definite impacts on the character of movement organisations.[5] The need to maintain organisational structures to facilitate participation has required an increasing drive towards professionalisation, particularly building and maintaining funding bases (van der Heijden, 1999). Progressing in this direction brings costs, as the organisation moves away from its core base, potentially challenging its legitimacy in the eyes of its supporters. As Gale (1986) has noted, the consolidation of a social movement is invariably matched by the rise of a countermovement. The nature of environmental concerns and the challenge they present to economic development in turn means that the countermovement is by its very nature likely to be able to exert greater influence over the policies of the state, possibly making institutionalisation a self-defeating strategy over the longer-term.

There has also been a noted shift towards radicalisation in some sectors of the environmental movement, as activists within the movement react against the strictures imposed by institutionalisation and strike out on new paths. Examining radicalisation in this context, Taylor (2008: 27) argues that ‘Radical environmentalism most commonly brings to mind the actions of those who break laws in dramatic displays of ‘direct action’ in defense of nature…The most decisive perception animating radical environmentalism…is that the earth and all life is sacred and worthy of passionate defense.’ These groups adopt methods of direct action that move beyond attempts by

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more moderate grassroots organisations and established NGOs to encourage change through negotiation and engagement. Operating on the margins of what is legally permitted can place these groups at 'loggerheads' with the state and can lead to challenges that potentially impact the wider movement. Recent allegations of state intervention, through paid informants, have impacted the operation of radical environmental groups within the New Zealand environmental movement, leading to a more cautious approach generally when engaging with the state (see O'Brien, 2013a).

Finally, the character of environmental challenges also means that there has been a shift in some quarters towards involution. This can be seen in the growth of groups within the movement that have moved away from confrontation and/or engagement with the state to focus more explicitly on addressing environmental issues. The emergence of non-political environmental groups raises questions regarding the continued utility of current understandings of the environmental movement. Examining the future of the social movement form more broadly, Tilly and Wood (2008, 152-53) have noted these pressures arguing that:

> We still have no guarantee that the social movement as it has prevailed for two centuries will continue forever. We must take seriously the possibility that the twenty-first century will destroy social movements as vehicles of popular claim making because conditions for their survival has dissolved or because new forms of claim making have supplanted them.

While these new groups can share members and work together, the overarching drive is individual (or focused on small groups of acquaintances) and often focused on the remediation of specific spaces. The implications of this shift for environmental action are yet to be determined, whether they act as incubators for future activists or represent the beginning of a move away from politicized environmental action remains to be seen.

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Another factor influencing environmental movements and shaping the trajectories are changes in the approach of the state to environmental issues. This has been illustrated by the emergence of environmental agencies across the globe, following the emergence of global meetings to address environmental concerns (Meyer et al, 1997). The priorities and effectiveness of these agencies varies significantly, with the form of political system determining much of the focus and direction in particular cases (Poloni-Staudinger, 2008). The proliferation of environmental agencies represents an institutionalisation of environmental issues, as they are increasingly dealt with through formal channels. However, institutionalisation remains dependent on the priorities and capacity of the state, as Mol (2009) identifies in the case of Russia where a process of deinstitutionalisation followed the break-up of the Soviet Union. The process of institutionalisation has led to the environment being treated as an increasingly technocratic and depoliticized issue (Buhrs, 2003; Todt, 1999). In this context, the lack of clear cut problems and solutions works against simple framing mechanisms, limiting opportunities to generate support by challenging the state. The result is that the movement is forced to evolve and adapt to survive and maintain its role.

The pressures governing the relationship between the state and the social movement are clearly on display in the operation of environmental movement. Fluidity has characterized the development of the environmental movement, but there has also been a marked shift towards professionalisation and incorporation (see van der Heijden, 1999). Changes in the field have involved the growth of complementary government agencies (Meyer et al, 1997) and competing movement organisations (Gale, 1986; see also Bob, 2012), each exerting pressures on its development. Dalton et al (2003: 743-4) capture the challenges social movement organisations face in

deciding on tactics, arguing that '[t]he desire for influence places environmental groups in the dilemma of other challenging movements: to protest the political status quo or work within conventional channels to implement new policies.' Dealing with the competing pressures of opposition and inclusion presents a significant challenge for the environmental movement. Differing views regarding the costs and benefits associated with collaboration or opposition can lead to factionalism and fragmentation within the movement. Although factionalism can allow the movement to satisfy potentially competing, the effectiveness of a divided voice is likely to be restricted (Balser, 1997).

The character of the environmental movement is therefore shaped by the political context. Within this context, local environmental action plays an important role in maintaining contention around environmental issues. Illustrating this point, Rootes (2007b: 722) notes 'Local campaigns are the most persistent and ubiquitous forms of environmental contention. National and transnational mobilisations come and go and the attention they receive from mass media ebbs and flows, but local campaigns are persistently recurrent.' The distinction between levels within the environmental movement is important, as they serve different and complementary purposes. The move towards depoliticisation of environmental issues and growth of awareness has seen the emergence of local ecological restoration and conservation groups (Fisher et al, 2012), characterized here as involution. These groups are perceived as acceptable as they undertake practical actions and do not challenge the status quo (McClymont and O'Hare, 2008).[6] Pellizzoni (2011) argues that although expertise is presented by policymakers as depoliticized, it is embedded within existing power structures, thereby containing the possibility of mobilisation through discourse and the production of credible forms of counter-expertise. This is important in this

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setting, as community environmental groups exist on the periphery of the environmental movement, but they possess the potential to change the direction of their activities and mobilize around issues of concern.

Shifts in the treatment of environmental issues by state and non-state actors have implications regarding the evolution of environmental movements more broadly. Increasingly technocratic and depoliticized approaches to environmental issues will arguably lead to institutionalisation and involution within the movement. The difference in approach can be traced to scale. National organisations that have the resources will seek to focus their efforts and develop the capacity necessary to produce and disseminate expert advice. As a result of this institutionalisation of key movement organisations, members that are excluded will likely form smaller groups, such as the community restoration groups (involution), adopt more radical approaches or leave the movement altogether. The issue that remains is the impact of this divergence on the environmental movement as a whole. The article examines the New Zealand environmental movement to determine how these trends have shaped its character and the implications for the future.

Method

The research in this article draws on seventeen interviews conducted with current and former members of the New Zealand environmental movement and government officials. Requests for interview were sent to a range of individuals via a senior member of the movement, to encourage response. The interviewees represented a cross-section with experience in both government and the environmental movement, several having worked in both settings. All interviews took place in person or via phone/Skype between November 2010 and April 2011 and lasted an average of 50

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minutes. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to pursue points of interest and let the interview subjects expand on issues they perceive to be significant. All interviews were consulted in the preparation of this article and the material cited is representative.

These interviews form the core of the article, providing detail on changes in the character of the environmental movement dating back to the 1970s, as well as allowing for interviewees' personal interpretations and experiences of changes that have taken place. The topics covered in the interviews include: state-NGO relations, environmental legislation, counter-movement organisations, public awareness of environmental issues, media coverage, methods adopted, and character of the environmental movement. The article now turns to the history of the New Zealand environmental movement before considering how it has developed and what this means for its future.

Brief History of the New Zealand Environmental Movement

The New Zealand environmental movement in its contemporary form first emerged in the 1960s with protests over the construction of a hydroelectric dam on Lake Manapouri. Although the government gave undertakings in 1959 that it would consult on the project, an agreement was signed in 1960 giving exclusive rights to a private firm to undertake the development (Mark et al, 2001: 7). Details of the agreement were not available to the public until 1970, with the 'secret and suspect government motives' (Mills, 2009: 684) leading to the formation of the 'Save Manapouri' campaign. This was a significant moment in the development of the New Zealand environmental movement, as Wright (1980: 106) noted:

> In one sense the long drawn out nature of the Manapouri controversy was also an advantage to the environmental groups…It demonstrated the necessity for concerted rather than piecemeal action; it showed the power of publicity; it indicated the need for detailed, well researched proposals and above all it demonstrated the need to gain the ear and sympathy of the Government. It was to provide a blueprint for many future controversies.

Although the dam was constructed, the level of opposition led eventually to a resolution 'in 1981 when legislation revoking the original lake-raising clauses was replaced with a commitment to lake management' aimed at balancing ecological stability and energy output (Mark et al, 2001: 15).

Building on this initial success, the environmental movement shifted its focus in the 1970s to the protection of native forests. In contrast with the 'Save Manapouri' campaign, actions against native forest logging relied much more on direct action and disruption. Central to the campaign was the Native Forest Action Council (NFAC), a group formed to publicize and prevent the logging of native forests. This group adopted a dual approach of 'perching in trees to be felled. Combined with a well orchestrated publicity campaign' to generate public support for the cause[7] (Wright, 1980: 106). Although the campaign was unsuccessful in preventing the felling of native forests it saw the emergence of an active environmental movement in New Zealand. The Native Forest Action Council continued to campaign against logging and represented a more activist approach than that pursued by more conventional conservation organisations, such as the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.[8]

Growth of the movement during this period also resulted from the exclusionary approach of the state to external participation. Downes (2000: 475)

argues that the absence of institutional channels for expressing concerns led to a turn to disruptive methods that sought to get issues of concern on to the political agenda. A former environmental activist reflecting on the character of the movement in the 1970s and 80s argued that it was characterized by 'interaction with the government… driven by a strong national organisation that was fighting the government on a very black and white issue' (Interview, 12 December 2010). It was also noted that during this period, working with the government was 'almost like the kiss of death' for an environmental group (Interview, 9 December 2010). The result of this exclusion and independence was that the movement was organized around a small number of large national groups with large active memberships.

Although support for the environmental movement in New Zealand remained strong during the 1990s, changes in the external environment presented new challenges. The first factor that influenced the movement was the introduction of the *Resource Management Act* (RMA) 1991. This framework legislation introduced rights and responsibilities for government agencies at all levels and placed greater responsibilities on local government. The legislation also set down rights regarding participation and consultation, but these were shaped by the technocratic nature of the RMA (Jackson and Dixon, 2007). The approach of this legislation demonstrated a change in the nature of the relationship between the movement and the state from one of exclusion to a more ambiguous situation (Downes, 2000). As noted by interviewees, it has become more difficult for the movement to stake out clear positions in opposition to the state, as member organisations are increasingly being included and the issues have become more complex (Interviews, 9 and 12 December 2010).

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The change in the character of the Native Forest Action Council provides a useful illustration of the way in which the movement has evolved. As noted above, the NFAC was formed as a protest organisation, using direct action to prevent the logging of native forests. Following a degree of success in challenging the state (including the disbanding of the Forestry Council) the organisation was renamed the Maruia Society and the objectives were broadened to encompass a wider range of environmental issues[9] (Interview, 14 December 2010). In this new guise the organisation worked more closely with the state in the formulation of environmental policy, including the RMA. The organisation went through a final change at the turn of the century; becoming Ecologic and emerging as a think tank (Interview, 14 December 2010). Change in the composition and focus of the organisation led to internal tensions, as some members wanted to retain a direct action approach. These disagreements led to a number of members leaving or being forced out, moving into related areas, such as social justice, or withdrawing from the movement altogether (Interview, 12 December 2010).

Following a period of relative strength during the 1990s, the environmental movement struggled to maintain its significance and visibility. This resulted in a decline in the support base of the major organisations and led to a change in strategy among them.[10] Discussing this issue, a former member (Interview, 12 December 2010) argued that ‘its become very hard for environmental groups to survive as a major national group. Forest and Bird are struggling economically; Greenpeace and WWF have survived by picking sexy topics and sticking to those and leaving everything else alone.’ Meanwhile, other significant environmental organisations such as Ecologic and the Environmental Defence Society (EDS) increasingly adopted roles as independent experts, providing advice to local NGOs, contributing to policy

development, and taking legal action on environmental issues (Interview, 27 January 2011). The constraints placed on the operation of national environmental groups have been exacerbated by government actions to further depoliticize environmental issues. This direction is represented by the decision to refuse Greenpeace charitable tax-free status on the basis that it is a campaigning organisation (New Zealand Energy and Environment Business Week, 2011).

In conjunction with the decline of the national movement organisations there has been significant growth in the number of small scale local groups. The nature of these groups is qualitatively different and focused much more on individual and local aims. Discussing the shift a former member of the environmental movement (Interview, 9 December 2010) noted:

> think about guerrilla gardening, or you know, the local food thing, that is organics and vegans, its full of brand new young people, vibrant, doing things. That is where they are, they are not back in, well, yes they are in environmentalism a bit, a few sort of doing conservation, but there is this new thing. I don't know if this new thing chooses to engage with government or even can be bothered…You are more likely to go and talk to your local council, especially in the New Zealand dynamics where local council actually has quite a lot of autonomy to manage its local environment.

This pattern of localisation of the environmental movement represents a shift from the large campaign based actions of the 1960s-1980s and may point to a new form of future movement.[11] Discussing the possible effect of this fragmentation and localisation it was noted that it is unclear what the 'the social effect of suddenly being

quite deeply involved in relatively unpleasant, expensive, and difficult bureaucratic processes' will be on those involved (Interview, 12 December 2010). This point is reinforced by Haenfler et al (2012: 13) who argue that 'When *political* movements wane, entering abeyance, LMs [Lifestyle Movements] endure, and when political activists drop out (temporarily or permanently) they may continue taking action in their daily lives.' The fragmentation that has been observed within the movement may therefore signal a period of abeyance, with regeneration and rediscovery occurring over the longer-term.[12]

Moving Forward with Confidence or Fragmenting to Insignificance?

An examination of the New Zealand environmental movement indicates that there has been a change in the nature and scale of activities from a peak in the 1970s and 80s to a period of relative quiet during the 1990s and the first decade of the new millennium. The large environmental groups that emerged during the peak period are now struggling to maintain membership and relevance in the eyes of the wider population. Changes in government approaches to managing environmental issues and relations with organisations within the movement have also complicated the confrontational relationship that had characterized the earlier period (Downes, 2000). Although the relationship has become more complex since the election of a right of centre National government focused more on exploiting natural resources (see O'Brien, 2012; O'Brien, 2013c; Interview, 1 April 2011), the pattern of fragmentation can be seen to continue.

Turning again to the trajectories of social movements identified by Tarrow (2011), it is clear that the movement has been pushed in all three directions: institutionalisation, radicalisation and involution. Increased opportunities to work with

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the state have led some groups to adopt a more professionalized structure and approach. This is seen with the evolution of the NFAC into Ecologic, but also with the emergence of the EDS as an active participant in policy development. It was also noted by a senior member in the movement that the heads of the main environmental groups meet biannually with the Prime Minister and also meet to discuss issues and plan amongst themselves (Interview, 27 January 2011). Paralleling the professionalisation of the large groups, there has also been an emergence of a small number of radical groups over the period, such as Native Forest Action in the late 1990s and Save Happy Valley in the 2000s. Both groups adopted more radical means to pursue their claims, particularly the use of occupation camps to block the extraction of native timber and coal respectively (O'Brien, 2012).[13]

Although the movement has seen professionalisation and radicalisation to different degrees, the growth of local community restoration groups is perhaps the dominant trend in terms of scale. This is characterized as a form of involution, as these new groups turn away from engagement in the more political and contentious aspects and features of the movement's past. Central to these new groups is the 'do-it-yourself' ethic that they embody. Rather than joining a large existing organisation and playing a limited role in a larger campaign, these individuals and groups are seeking to directly address a perceived problem at the local level. The barriers to entry are also much lower, as groups can be set up with a small number of people in a setting that is familiar. The link between the proliferation of groups and the relative ease with which they can be established was noted by interviewees (Interviews, 9 and 12 December 2012).

The implications for the environmental movement of these different trajectories are difficult to discern. Professionalisation has brought access while the

more radical methods adopted by some groups have ensured that key issues are highlighted. The broader trend towards involution (fragmentation) presents both challenges and opportunities. Interest in environmental issues embodied by these groups provides the potential for future mobilisation given the right conditions. This was demonstrated by the 50000 people who marched through the centre of Auckland on 1 May 2010, to protest against government plans to selectively open national parks for mining (New Zealand Press Association, 2010). Although the protest was led by established environmental organisations (Greenpeace and Forest and Bird), it drew on wider public support and led to a change in the proposed policy (Rudzitis and Bird, 2011). The small and intimate character of these groups also potentially closes opportunities for wider cooperation and collaboration, through the formation of exclusive identities (Saunders, 2008). Examining student activist networks in the UK, Crossley and Ibrahim (2012) find that alongside more inclusive groups there are activist groups that are based on pre-existing bonds of friendship, precluding the inclusion of outsiders. Although community based environmental groups vary significantly, their generally smaller size and more informal character provides opportunities for independence and, by extension, isolation.

Moving from the characteristics of individual groups to the wider environmental movement, questions are raised regarding the longer-term impacts, specifically evolution versus fragmentation. The proliferation of community based groups may present a challenge to the cohesion of the movement, particularly if they do not form connections with other groups and develop bonds of trust that can be called on to support more general causes. Contrasting this development, this form of group may in fact represent a new channel into a movement that had become stale as the larger organisations became increasingly professional and the radical groups

require too high a level of commitment for many potential participants. As noted above, engagement in local issues may lead to frustration and 'open the door' to greater involvement in activism in the right conditions (Interview, 9 December 2010). In this way, community restoration groups and other local gatherings can be seen as a latent resource for the movement that can be developed in the future in response to particular challenges.[14] O'Brien (2012) notes that significant protest actions in New Zealand in recent times tended to be based around campaigns and fluctuated depending on the issue at hand. Although community groups may be relatively isolated and focused, their internal networks and bonds may allow them to act as nodes and link them to them to other similar groups in times of heightened contention. The widespread use of social media may increase the likelihood by facilitating collective action if not leading to lasting connections (see Turner, 2013; Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2010; and Vasi, 2006)

Conclusion

The contemporary New Zealand environmental movement has been an active participant on the national scene since it first emerged in the 1960s. During this time it has undergone significant changes, from substantial protests and occupations in the 1970s and 80s to a more collaborative and participatory stance since the early 1990s, as access to the state opened up. Increased access and normalisation resulted in a fragmentation of the movement, with large and long-standing groups becoming increasingly professionalized, while breakaway groups formed to pursue more radical methods. Alongside these divergent trends there has also been a significant degree of involution, particularly with the emergence of community restoration groups that

operate on a local scale and adopt a more explicit focus on issues of local concern and limit their involvement in the politics of the environment.

Emergence of community groups has been the focus of this article, particularly whether they represent a new form of environmentalism and fragmentation of the wider movement. These groups tend to be smaller and more fluid, preventing the forming of lasting trust networks that extend beyond the immediate group. In this manner, they may be seen as presenting a challenge to the cohesion of the environmental movement. Despite this, the growth of community restoration groups can lead to a stronger feeling of purpose, as they pursue tangible achievable goals and potentially present lower barriers to entry into the movement. The change was reflected on by a former member of the environmental movement (Interview, 9 December 2010) who had established her own restoration group, 'I think we are going to see a much wider range of groups than we used to, because in the past all the local action was run by the branches of the big organizations and it's not like that anymore and I don't think that will come back.' This degree of ownership represents a latent force that can be mobilized by the wider environmental movement if conditions are right. An examination of protest actions in New Zealand has showed a campaign based approach, potentially allowing opposition to coalesce through the gathering of smaller groups.

The result is that the character of the environmental movement has changed, with a more diverse ecosystem of active groups. Within this broader context the movement is more able to simultaneously pursue competing and at times conflicting aims and strategies. Large professionalized NGOs work closely with the state to influence and feed into policy developments, while more radical groups adopt strategies of direct action that seek to raise awareness and block environmentally

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harmful practices. Groups adopting these different approaches do not necessarily approve of each other (as was expressed in interviews), but their co-existence can lead to synergies within the wider movement and collaboration at times of common cause (such as in the campaign in opposition to GM technologies (see O'Brien 2012)). Meanwhile, as noted above smaller community groups are encouraging the socialisation of new participants and exposing them to the challenges involved in environmental action. The movement has fragmented over time and seen the emergence of new group forms, however this has resulted in a stronger base from which common goals can be pursued.

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[1] For an analysis of the emergence and consolidation of the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand and its vote base see Carroll et al, 2009 and O'Brien, 2013b.

[2] On the barriers imposed by collective identity within social movements see Saunders, 2008.

[3] Involution involves a shift away from active involvement in politics to a focus on social incentives and the interests of the represented constituency (Tarrow, 2011: 213).

[4] Commercialisation is not considered, as it relates to the 'transformation of a movement into a service organization or profit-making enterprise', (Tarrow, 2011: 212) which is argued to be unlikely in the case of environmental movement actors.

[5] Isomorphism is identified as response to the external environment lead organisations to adopt increasingly similar methods (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983)

[6] Although these groups may not challenge the status-quo, Fisher et al (2012: 28) note that 'concern for the environment remains the primary focus for many civic groups, [but] issues related to ecological restoration and environmental protection have become embedded within larger, quality-of-life concerns for numerous organisations and informal groups representing a wide variety of sectors, scales, geographies and notions of sustainability.'

[7] A logging worker was quoted afterwards saying: 'When this bloke first climbed up into the tree I thought he was a nutter. In view of what has happened since I wish I'd have cut the b….. tree down with him in it.' Quoted in Wright, 1980: 106.

[8] The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society was founded in 1913 (Star, 2002).

[9] A group calling itself Native Forest Action emerged in the late 1990s and occupied a native forest on the West Coast of the South Island, drawing criticism from the founder of NFAC (Salmon, 1998).

[10] It was also noted that the control of the Greenpeace brand resulted in resistance from local branches who sought to develop context specific campaigns (Interview, 9 December 2010).

[11] Although the environmental movement has staged protests in the contemporary period, the level has been lower than historically (see O'Brien, 2012).

[12] Defining this concept of abeyance Bagguely (2002: 171) notes that 'abeyance of a social movement really aims to convey a state of hibernation with a liability to further mobilization in the future'.

[13] Both groups were also allegedly infiltrated by paid informants, linked to the state-owned enterprises that they were challenging (see O'Brien, 2013a).

[14] Examining networks of opposition to GM, Tucker (2012) found that different groups adopted complementary strategies during a period of heightened contention, thereby maximising the impact of the wider movement.

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