POLITICO-ENVIRONMENTAL RELATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

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ABSTRACT

Environmental issues have been on the international agenda for so long. However, International Relations (IR) theory acknowledged the environmental problem belatedly. When dealing with it, IR theory generally saw this problem as an annex to its central concerns. So, the environment as a research subject is considered either an issue of conflict or of cooperation from the perspectives of realism and liberal institutionalism respectively. By questioning this sort of consideration as a starting point, this article discusses the international environmental problem within the context of complexity and multiplicity of structural contradictions and overlapping and opposing interests of actors. The first section reveals the impasses of mainstream IR theory. The second section explores different aspects of the internationalisation of the environment through a critical reassessment of state-centric understandings and problem-solving strategies. The interactions between national and international domains are also argued by employing normative environmental regulations. The last section examines the effects of corporations, states, international institutions and NGOs as main actors on the internationalisation of the environment. This examination needs to take into consideration actor-structure relations. In other words, instead of separating politics from economics, and actors from capitalist structures

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at the domestic and international levels as does mainstream IR theory, this article analyses the roles of actors within the framework of interrelationships between the national and international spheres on the one hand and between economic and political structures on the other.

Keywords: Realism, Institutionalism, Environmental Regimes, State-Capital Relations.

ÖZ

Çevre konuları uzun zamandır uluslararası diplomasinin gündeminde olmasına karşın, Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) teorisi çevreyle çok geç ilgilenmiştir. Genellikle de bu ilgi, çevreyi, Uİ disiplinin öbür konularına bir eklenti olarak eklemenin ötesine gidememiştir. Böyle olunca uluslararası ilişkilerde yaygın olarak çevre, ya realizmin perspektifinden çatışma ya da kurumsalcılığın perspektifinden işbirliği potansiyeli olan bir konu olarak ele alınır. Bu yazı, realizm ve kurumsalcılık parantezine sıkışmış Uİ teorisinin, çevre konusunun araştırılması bakımından yetersiz olduğu saptamasından yola çıkıyor. Yazı, uluslararası alanda çevre konusunu, yapısal çelişkilerin karmaşık bütünlüğüyle çok boyutluluğu ve örtüşen ve çatışan aktör çıkarları bağlamında tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Yazının birinci bölümünde, çevreye yönelik kompleks ve çelişkili ilişkiler ekseninde ana akım Uİ teorisinin açmazları vurgulanır. İkinci bölümde, çevre konularının uluslararasılaşmasının türlü yönleri, devlet-merkezli anlayışların ve sorun-çözme stratejilerinin eleştirel bir yeniden değerlendirilmesiyle birlikte araştırılmaktadır. Ulusal ve uluslararası alanlar arasındaki etkileşim de, normatif çevre düzenlemeleri bakımından tartışılmaktadır. Üçüncü bölümde ise şirketler, devletler, uluslararası kurumlar ve NGO'lar olarak temel aktörlerin, çevrenin uluslararasılaşması sürecindeki etkileri incelenir. Bu inceleme aktörlerin yapılarla olan ilişkilerini göz önünde tutmayı gerektir. Bir başka deyişle, ulusal ve uluslararası düzeylerde, siyaseti ekonomiden ve aktörleri kapitalist yapılardan ayıran hatalı bir Uİ yaklaşımı yerine; yazıda, aktörlerin rolleri, bir yandan ulusal ve uluslararası alanlar arasındaki ve öte yandan ekonomik ve siyasal yapılar arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiler çerçevesinde çözümlenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Realizm, kurumsalcılık, çevre rejimleri, devlet-sermaye ilişkileri.

INTRODUCTION

International relations (IR) theory has attempted to internalise environmental issues but its belated response has adopted the conventional abstractions of a framework posited by mostly neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism in which the environment is seen as just one more area in the international arena of conflict or cooperation issues (Williams, 1996: 42-3; Hovden, 1999: 50). Indeed, the recent reconciliation of these two main branches of IR theory with environmental issues has barely examined the interactions between social formations and the ecosystem that have direct or mediated consequences upon international negotiations. Instead, neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism have posed questions from the perspectives of conflicting or cooperating actors, such as international institutions and organisations, states, and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). In this context, despite being distinct from each other in that 'they deploy different concepts and conceptual systems, and ask different questions and select different facts' (Halliday, 1987: 216), they seem to share the same understanding of the environment.

This article takes the analyses of both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism into critical account, rather than adopting one or another. Although the two mainstream schools of thought depict different aspects of IR, both of them fail to consider the underlying characteristics of international environmental politics. The article focuses on what is less stressed, if not left out, in orthodox IR theory: One of the lines of the argument investigates the differentiated interactions between social formation and environment as reflected in international environmental negotiations and agreements. The other strand of the discussion seeks to explore the ways in which international environmental regimes affect and are influenced by the complex economic–political relations taking place at the domestic and international levels. It thus analyses the dialectical relationships between the international domain of environmental protection and social formation–environment relations on the one hand, and between that domain and state–capital relations on the other.

1. THE FAILURE OF ORTHODOX IR THEORY

The leading studies of neorealism (Waltz, 1979; Gilpin, 1981) assert that the nature of international relations is conflict of interests because of the competition for power between sovereign states striving to maximise their national interests and security. The neorealists of IR theory highlight the

condition of interstate rivalry and insecurity, depicted as a Hobbesian anarchy, such that order might be maintained through a balance of power in world politics (Gill, 1993: 5-6). The chief question for them, then, as Vogler (1996: 6) puts it, is 'how to provide some form of order and governance in an "anarchic" system composed of sovereign states'. A neorealist account conceives of states as the main actors of the international arena, since there is no equivalent domestic authority above the state, and all other actors of the international system are essentially creatures of states, and have to work through states. From this perspective, the international system is seen as a global system of states (McGrew, 1992a: 18). The nation state is also the determinant of the world economy because it not only maintains territorial integrity but also provides economic security (Tooze, 1992: 234-35).

Given the assumption of the anarchical character of the international system, there is an emphasis in neorealism upon unwillingness to cooperate even if states share common interests. This is because a state in a joint arrangement is always concerned that its partner may achieve relatively greater gains (Grieco, 1988: 487). For neorealists, outcomes in international politics are not generated by cooperative actions, but by 'the distribution of power capabilities in the system' (Paterson, 1996: 63). Because each state tends to pursue its own national interests, a hegemonic power is required to achieve the common ends of states. Further, even institutionalised patterns of cooperation are established through a hegemonic power. From the viewpoint of the neorealist paradigm, it can be argued that the growth of mechanisms of collaboration has rendered the cost of deviant behaviour (e.g., trade protectionism) much greater. However, the increasing domain of cooperation and collaboration under the new circumstances of internationalisation cannot be regarded as diminishing the power of sovereign self-interested actors. It is suggested that 'the transformation of world politics, far from eroding the influence of the state, has greatly extended it, and that this has gone alongside an extension of its role in the domestic economy and society' (Smith, 1992: 261).

Whilst the neorealist approach underlines the inherently conflictual structure of international relations, the foremost writers of neoliberal institutionalism (Keohane, 1984; Young, 1989; Krasner, 1983) emphasise that those relations are essentially tending towards cooperation. Although hegemony may foster cooperation, it is not a necessary condition for it; what is important for cooperation is the emergence of shared interests that leads to the creation of international regimes (Keohane, 1984: 65-84). Neoliberal institutionalists suggest that 'even if the realists are correct in believing that anarchy constrains the willingness of states to cooperate, states nevertheless can work together and can do so especially with the assistance of international institutions' (Grieco, 1988:

486). The world-wide free market system, financial relations, and the issues of telecommunications, health and environmental protection around which expectations converge, generate interdependence and interconnection that create overlapping interests in cooperation. As opposed to the neorealist concern about relative gains from cooperation, institutionalists argue that a state is essentially interested in its own absolute gains made from cooperation, and it does not care about the gains of other states as long as it maximises its own.

For neoliberal institutionalism, states are not the only major actors, although they still remain important in world politics. The international system is a complex, multi-actor system comprising international institutions and organisations, intergovernmental bodies, pressure and lobbying groups, NGOs, multinational associations and multinational corporations, as well as states. It stresses the importance of international institutions in agenda setting, international policy making and monitoring procedures, and presents them, not as the epiphenomenal creations of states but rather as independent forces existing in their own right, exemplifying common interests and accommodating cooperation (see Haas, Keohane and Levy, 1993). In contrast to neorealism, order in world politics is achieved, not through a hegemonic power or the balance of power, but through intergovernmental regimes of governance based upon commonly accepted values, norms and rules.[2]

These two prevailing approaches have, by and large, dominated academic efforts to incorporate environmental issues into IR theory. From within the legacy of IR orthodoxy, environmental issues have all the ingredients that are conducive to cooperation or/and promote intense conflict in the international arena (Rosenau, 1993: 89-90). As pertaining to an understanding of international environmental politics, the conflict paradigm cites various types of conflict stemming from scarcity of resources and strategic minerals, population growth, environmental refugees, decline in food production, pollution, climate change and so on (see Mandel 1988: 11-13; Homer-Dixon, 1991: 104-13). Environmental changes either cause or 'contribute to conflicts as diverse as war, terrorism, or diplomatic and trade disputes' because of the fact that they '"ratchet

[2] The two wings of orthodox IR theory have been criticised by Marxism-inspired critical approaches. Unlike institutionalism, the Marxist approach starts from an assumption that international politics is based upon conflicts and contradictions. Unlike realism, however, the Marxist approach conceives of international relations as a product of contradictions among national/international capitals, and among states mediated with class relations. Marxist scholars argue that the international capitalist order is embodied by the international exploitative structure of production and exchange whilst realists assert that the world order is a system of states based upon power and security issues as opposed to institutionalists' claims that that order is maintained by webs of interdependence emanating from the shared interests of various actors. For various interpretations of international politics from a Marxist-oriented approach, see, among others, Bobbio, 1987: 197-212; Cox, 1981; Gill, 1993; Halliday, 1994; Keeley, 1990; Smith, 1994.

up" the level of stress within national and international society, thus increas[e] the likelihood of many different kinds of conflict and imped[e] the development of cooperative solutions' (Homer-Dixon, 1991: 77-8).

The strategies of this approach in responding to international environmental issues are based on states as key players. They are the source, reason and consequences of environmental policies in the sense of being in charge of the formation and implementation of principles, norms, regulations and policies. The risks of conflict can be reduced insofar as power relations among states remain balanced, which needs the presence of a hegemon. Strong leadership by a hegemonic power, usually with the USA in mind (see Barney, 1983; Benedick, 1998: 6 and 316; Porter and Brown, 1996: 172), is of vital importance for achieving successful environmental protection at the international level. The view of hegemonic leadership is also in accordance with the earlier authoritarian conservationist ideas of William Ophuls. Following Hobbes' (1968) premise of 'all against all', and Hardin's (1968) premise of 'the tragedy of the commons', Ophuls suggests a 'planetary Leviathan' on the grounds that 'environmental problems cannot be solved by cooperation between individual sovereign states in a world of scarcity, and the rationale for world government with major coercive powers is overwhelmingly raising the most fundamental of all political questions' (Ophuls, 1973: 228).

In a similar vein, but rather than a comprehensive world government which might take some time to create, it is suggested that a global constitutional framework can resolve increasing environmental conflicts among states in the shorter term. A directly elected 'World Environment Council' and an 'International Court of the Environment' would develop this framework based on principles which would apply to all nations and all peoples (Low and Gleeson, 1998: 190-93). Similarly, according to Daniel Esty (1993: 34), 'with no single organization possessing a broad or strong enough mandate to coordinate environmental efforts, the response to the planet's ecological problems will remain unfocused, ineffective, and insufficient'. For him, the conflicts arising from the battle lines between trade and environmental policymakers indicate the need for the creation of an 'International Environmental Organisation' to protect the environment the way the GATT has guarded free trade principles. An International Environmental Organisation 'might develop a broader body of international environmental law and a cohesive set of rules, norms, methodologies and procedures for countries to follow in carrying out a shared commitment to the protection of the planet' (Esty, 1993: 36). A similar proposal for a 'World Environment Organisation' as the institutional and legal counterpart to the World Trade Organisation was put forward by the then

Director-General, Renato Ruggiero at one of the WTO's symposiums on trade and the environment (Ruggiero, 1999).

The recognition of 'common vulnerability to environmental degradation' led to an appreciation of cooperation at international conferences and, in turn, to a shift of academic emphasis away from the neorealist approach of power relations towards the analysis of the new condition of 'complex interdependence' (Vogler, 1996: 5). In institutionalist IR theory, the extension of the idea that 'we are all in the same boat' with shared environmental interests and a common predicament, is 'problem-solving strategies' embodied in international cooperation. For those who draw on interdependence perspectives, the nature of international environmental issues affecting many countries because of their transboundary characteristic and thus raising difficulties for unilateral management, as in the issues of ozone layer depletion and global warming, requires international cooperation for their solution (Conca and Lipschutz, 1993: 6). In most cases, environmental changes are interdependence issues, 'in the sense that confronting them, much less resolving them, can occur only if states pool their resources and cooperatively address their shared dilemmas' (Rosenau, 1993: 75). Institutionalists call upon all states developed and underdeveloped to establish sustained international cooperation in order to solve global environmental problems such as climate change.

For institutionalists, with the evolution of environmental problem-solving through international institutions and organisations, we have witnessed a striking amount of successful environmental cooperation 'in terms of statements or commitments (the signing of international treaties), in terms of deeds (policy-making and investments) and in terms of outputs (environmental quality)' (Haas, 1990: 348). Since the early 1970s there have been many different forms of international environmental protection varying from mandatory or voluntary codes to conventions, treaties, protocols, binding or nonbinding resolutions, and to information exchange schemes and cross-border notification systems (Gladwin, 1987: 24-5). The existence of international regimes of environmental protection is seen as a challenge to the Hobbesian depiction of the international domain. This is not simply because the development of environmental regimes has been accomplished without any hegemonic guidance or control by any single state assuming a leadership role, but also because international regimes 'establish rules and norms that have consequences for the behaviour of states, even though such norms and rules are not commands supported by the threat of force as they would have to be in a Hobbesian world' (Weale, 1992: 190).

From this follows the distinction between government as an institutional entity and governance denoting the processes of governing (McGrew, 1992b: 323). In the absence of a world government, international relations cannot be

formulated as a state of anarchy but rather as, in Rosenau's terms, 'governance without government'. Governance 'embraces governmental institutions, but it also subsumes informal, non-governmental mechanisms whereby those persons and organizations within its purview move ahead, satisfy their needs, and fulfill their wants' (Rosenau, 1992: 4). In the international mechanisms of governance, states still remain substantial actors in terms of the formation and operation of environmental regimes, but the actual process of regime formation embraces several other types of actors (Young, 1990: 343-44; Eckerberg and Joas: 2004: 406-7). Non-state actors (non-governmental organisations-NGOs) are represented on national delegations and allowed to participate formally or informally in the operations of international institutions, as was the case with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) process. This approach stresses the important roles of institutions and non-state actors, but still relies on state-based international relations as, in Keohane, Haas and Levy's (1993: 24) words, international institutions 'do not supersede or overshadow states' but 'create networks over, around and within states'.

Taking as a point of departure the emphasis on non-state actors in the institutionalist approach, but criticising this approach for state-centrism, Paul Wapner sees NGOs as actors of global environmental governance. For Wapner (1996: 3-6), apart from the realm of government and the international state system, there is a domain of 'global civil society' for organising and carrying out environmental efforts. Global civil society consists of NGOs which organise themselves or at least project their energies across national boundaries. Activities of NGOs constitute a form of 'world civic politics' which signifies that 'states do not hold a monopoly over the instruments that govern human affairs but rather that nonstate forms of governance exist and can be used to effect widespread change' (Wapner, 1996: 7). Despite being critical about views that consider the role of NGOs only to the degree that they affect state policies and interstate cooperation, his perspective nonetheless shares with these views the idea that 'states must be pushed or cornered into caring about the earth. An important way to move the world toward ecological balance then, is to create globalist constraints on states. This will stem states' parochial and anti-ecological tendencies. Transnational environmental groups create such constraints by making international interdependencies work in the service of global environmental well-being' (Wapner, 1996; 148); in other words, the exertion of influence and pressure by NGOs on states and the interstate system (also see Wapner, 1997; 80-1). By the same token, Hilary French (2000: 163-76) who supports the idea of global environmental governance, suggests that NGOs play the main role within this form of governance by forcing states and international organisations to establish rules and institutions to tackle global environmental degradation, and by taking part in implementation and monitoring.

Ronnie Lipschutz has a similar conception of global environmental governance embodied by the practices of actors of global civil society which include the networks of NGOs, environmental groups, indigenous people and associations. Global civil society is 'a realm of actors who increasingly engage in transnational politics that is often, but not always, characterised by a high degree of autonomy from the states in which they are based. This does not mean that global civil society is *independent* of the state system; but neither is it wholly the creation or subject of that system' (emphasis in original, Lipschutz, 1996: 77). That is to say that global civil society and the state system are mutually constitutive. Global governance emerges in the process of negotiations between global civil society and states. For Lipschutz, the global and the local become linked through the efforts of actors in global civil society to engage in governance activities. Lipschutz sees the linkage between the global and the local in extensive connections of local groups to organisations in other parts of the world. The basis of connection is the globally shared system of beliefs, environmental concerns and symbols, and the transfer of knowledge from one distinct social entity, group or institution to another. Global environmental networks make connections with local activists struggling against environmental destruction even in very remote parts of the world.

Through connections, networks and coalitions, actors of global environmental governance, it is argued, become increasingly influential in the environmental politics of both the local and the global (Biermann and Pattberg, 2012: 6-7). However, the relationship between the local and the global cannot be confined to the linkages among locally/globally acting environmental groups. Put differently, what is missing in Lipschutz's and Wapner's works are the relationships between the economic and the political functioning at various levels, among other actors, such as states, multinational corporations, international organisations, and the relationships between these actors and environmental groups. This failure to take into account these complex relationships gives rise to over-emphasising NGOs' influence on local or international environmental protection while overlooking the role of the state–capital relationship in environmental regime formation/implementation (see below), and of local struggles against the patterns of this relationship (see Çoban, 2004a).

This brief exposition of what is emphasised in IR orthodoxy makes it clear that the environment is seen as an arena within which either environmental debates are instruments for pursuing 'non-environmental' aims (Conca, 1993: 312) –e.g., power conflicts, 'national interests', cooperation– or these 'non-environmental' debates gather momentum through 'environmental' considerations. In either case it is not the environment for its own sake which is

taken into consideration but something else. Such a presentation overlooks the symbiotic human–nature relationship and its consequences for the international domain. Without an understanding of this relationship it becomes usual to offer merely palliative international solutions based on 'problem-solving strategies'. In recent years a growing awareness of this problematical fabric has given way to criticism of mainstream IR theory from an environmental point of view (see Laferrière and Stoet, 1999; Hovden, 1999; Paterson, 1996; Brand and Görg, 2001; Saurin, 1996; Williams, 1996).

The emphasis of orthodox IR theory on interstate relations is also problematic for analysing the relationship between domestic and international domains on the one hand, and that between politics and economics on the other. Dominant strands of IR theory have been criticised for keeping separate the domestic from the international, and the political from the economic (see Cox, 1981; Gilpin, 1987; Halliday, 1987; Rupert, 1993: 83-4). The alternatives to conventional IR theory, offered by scholars of what is called 'international political economy' (Gilpin, 1987; Murphy and Tooze, 1991: 4), focus on the goal of incorporating the twin distinctions.

The view premised on the assumption of the separation of politics from economics at the national and international levels portrays a set of relations between states as if they were natural, universal and non-historical. It depicts interstate relations over the environment as if they were isolated from capitalist class relations, the requirements of capital accumulation, and the pressures from domestic/international capital and environmentalist struggles. Centring on actors without taking into account the structures, avoids the question of the 'agency–structure relationship'. The state-centric approach of conventional IR theory focuses on actors (states and non-state actors) but it provides no context within which the significance of actors' roles can be articulated with capitalist structures. As Halliday (1987: 217) notes, '[t]he argument is not about whether we are or are not "state-centric", but what we mean by the state'. We will below deal with the state and other actors within the capitalist structure of world politics in relation to international environmental issues and protection. Before examining this, the environment should be put in its place in the international arena by elucidating the complexity and multiplicity of contradictions pertaining to international environmental issues.

2. INTERNATIONALISING THE ENVIRONMENT

It is not our intention here to give an exhaustive account of the reasons why the environment has been internationalised. The reasons include the realisation of the extent and impacts of ecological degradation and its cross-boundary character (Pickering and Owen, 1997), the increasing public awareness

of ecological issues, the role of environmental movements and NGOs, the effect of developments in scientific research (Parson, 1993: 45-6; Wiman, 1991; Haas, 1990: 354-58), the influence of international organisations (Haas, Keohane and Levy, 1993) and the formation of international bureaucracies (Sklair, 1994: 212; Williams, 1993: 16). All these explanations for the internationalisation of the environment may have their own theoretical value and we resort to and discuss them whenever appropriate in the text. Having clarified the ways in which mainstream IR theory has incorporated international environmental issues within its analysis, there are two main tasks at this point. The first concerns the question of validity, based on the argument as to whether these issues manifest only conflict or merely cooperation patterns, or both. This aspect is connected with the apparent reasons for the internationalisation of the environment. Related to this, the second is the question of adequacy, based on the premise that, if there is something left out by IR orthodoxy, it should be encompassed by the theory. This latter aspect helps to understand the internationalisation of the environment and the demands and actions of the actors within a broader context of economic, political and social structural components.

Conflict, Cooperation and State-Centrism

Obviously, there are some patterns of environmental conflict which result in the internationalisation of the environment. Among these are access to resources by states as sovereign units, the rights to pollute, the problems of environmental preservation, the problems of responsibility (Sachs, 1993: 13-14), and the distribution and redistribution of resources and sinks (Rosenau, 1993: 82-3). For example, access to minerals and fish stocks was one of the factors in the Falkland/Maldives conflict between Britain and Argentina. Similarly, one reason for the conflict in the Persian Gulf was to maintain the conditions for further exploitation of scarce oil resources (Elliott, 1998: 221). Access to and the use of freshwater resources are linked with potential international conflict among countries that rely on water from the same river. Water was an important factor in the war of 1965 between India and Pakistan. The water of shared rivers is a significant issue in regional disputes, for instance, between Chile and Bolivia, between Jordan, Israel and Syria, and between Turkey, Iraq and Syria (Middleton, O'Keefe and Moyo, 1993: 141-42; Porter and Brown, 1996: 157). However, it does not necessarily mean that environmental issues tend to cause 'hot' conflicts. Redistribution of pollutants on and under land and in the atmosphere can lead to conflict in multilateral negotiations as in the case of attempts to abate ozone depleting substances and CO_2 emissions resulting in global warming and climate change (Chasek, Downie, Brown, 2006: 106-127). Regarding the climate convention, the USA has always been reluctant to cooperate in taking binding targets and substantial action on global warming.

Considering its geological location and financial resources for coping with changes in climate, the USA is unlikely to be affected as severely by the potential impacts of climate change as the small island states that, understandably, wanted the toughest limits on CO_2 emissions (Paterson, 1996: 71; Sachs, 1993: 14).

Environmental issues can also foster conflict between developed and underdeveloped countries. International environmental negotiations and outcomes provide evidence of high-level discord in this context since each country obviously tries to maximise its own share in the utilisation of the 'resource' and the 'sink'. The confrontation between developed and underdeveloped countries testifies to the negative implications of the 'global' cooperative approach to ecological crisis as a manifestation of the demands and interests of powerful and privileged countries, rather than genuine environmental protection. From the Stockholm Conference to the Rio+20 Conference and onwards, the main concern of developed countries revolved around the problems of resource exploitation, pollution and retaining the Western standard of living, expressed in President Bush's words at UNCED that 'the American way of life is not up for negotiation'. The North focuses on the technical feasibility of proposals for control or amelioration, which has little to do with restructuring the present world order. On the other hand, underdeveloped countries see the environment as a device to maintain their economic growth. The latter countries criticise the Western world for being motivated by the slowdown in economic growth and resource consumption in the industrialising world (see Falk, 1993; Hildyard, 1993; Lohmann, 1993; Shiva, 1993; Williams, 1993). Relationships between the rich and poor countries in terms of the environment are part of a broader structure as the product of the dialectic determined by capital accumulation issues, such as access to and exploitation of natural resources, climate change abatement strategies, the donor/recipient roles, debt relief, activities of multinational corporations, control of trade and investments, and so on.

In these examples, conflict has something to do with the importance of the environment for the social formation, as resources (e.g., petroleum, water) and sinks (e.g., absorption of CO_2 emissions), and little to do with vague 'national interests'. The assumption that gives primacy to 'national interests' whether in terms of hegemonic power relations in neorealist theory or in terms of wealth maximisation in neoliberal accounts, neglects the normative dimension of ecopolitics including debates about environment and development (Vogler, 1996: 12-13), and also ignores the struggles over the environment involving a multiplicity of actors. George Bush, then President of the United States, made it clear how capital interests become 'national' or 'state' interests, saying at UNCED that 'in biodiversity it is important to protect our rights, our business

rights'. As we have already seen, neoliberalism and neorealism remain state-centric. In other words, environmental concerns are theoretically and practically subordinated to the predetermined 'interests of the state' (Saurin, 1996: 77). Neorealism, preoccupied by 'national interests', is incapable of encompassing the importance of environmental interdependence set forth by its counterpart. On the other hand, institutionalism, wrapped up in 'shared national interests', has the potential to overlook the consequences of the historically specific relationship between social formation and nature on international interdependence issues. Furthermore, confining discussion to inter-state relations based on 'national interests', overshadows comprehensive understanding of the causes of and appropriate solutions to environmental problems. In the absence of questions embracing the complexity of the causes of environmental concerns, a state-centric account serves to avoid consideration of the multiplicity of contradictions, and in turn to emphasise only inter-state 'solutions'.

The internationalisation of the environment is as much related to cooperation issues as conflict patterns. Water issues, even in the Middle East where freshwater supplies are scarce, underpin cooperation efforts, as in the 1994 Treaty of Peace signed by Jordan and Israel that establishes a framework for cooperation on water resources (Committee on Sustainable Water Supplies for the Middle East, 1999: 12). Despite the substantial differences between developed and underdeveloped countries in terms of definitions and causes of the problem and policy priorities, it would be misleading to suggest that the relationships between the two cannot engender cooperation in the least (Elliott, 1998: 170). Recognition of the different and historically structured social formation–environment relations would be a humble starting point for establishing strong cooperative patterns in the longer term. In terms of climate change politics it is argued that we need a 'differentiation regime' that takes into consideration the historical and current differences between countries in their CO_2 emissions, and in turn includes concepts like fairness, equity and justice in the international environmental domain (Rowlands 1997; Roberts and Parks, 2007: 213-239). There is little doubt that the international domain ignores the social formation–environment relationship and stresses 'an equality of responsibility both in causing environmental degradation and in facing the consequences of that global degradation' (Saurin, 1996: 82; Tokar, 2010: 13-32). For example, the UNCED agreements did not formulate the tremendous impacts of the developed world on the environment and relative capacities of developed and underdeveloped countries to cope with that degradation. Similarly, the record of the Rio Summit as well as climate change regime in terms of developed countries' commitments is poor. Nonetheless, a little step was taken at UNCED towards noticing the differences in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration which has addressed 'common but differentiated responsibilities'.

The fact that this kind of principle cannot be easily translated into norms, regulations and mandatory commitments is related to the economic dimensions of environmental issues.

Problem-Solving Strategies

The notion of interdependence as supposedly the basis for cooperation usually operates at international negotiation tables to reproduce and deepen the discrepancies between societies in terms of their relations with the environment. As long as the notion is not conceived as shared conditions for survival implying that the ways in which developed countries interact with nature are at odds with underdeveloped nations' survival, it provides the greatest polluter and appropriator with new forms of pollution, exploitation and mastery of nature. To put it differently, the prevailing logic of interdependence produces 'policy-oriented problem-solving' strategies that ignore the underlying process of production and accumulation as a factor of environmental degradation. Once the environment is thought of as resources and sinks that serve the needs of all humankind without regard to different levels of its use, it follows that the management of increasing interdependence through 'problem-solving' techniques is a primary concern (Pirages, 1983: 251). This rhetoric of problem-solving is itself problematic in three respects. First, it 'takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organised, as the given framework of action' (Cox, 1981: 128). In doing so, it pays little attention to structural change but reflects 'a marked tendency towards *re-structuring* (in the sense of reproducing), rather than restructuring (in the sense of fundamentally altering), the modern, sovereign, capitalist features of the current world order' (Conca, 1993: 310).

Related to this, the second problem with this rhetoric stems from the moderation of the problem and solution endemic to problem-solving strategies. International organisations establish a need for themselves in the process of defining an international environmental problem and formulating its remedy at the international level. The deforestation problem and the function of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) may provide us with an example for theorising moderation. In our theorisation of moderation we draw upon the work of Thompson (1988) on uncertainty (see also Dryzek, 1987: 31) and its uses. There are experts all over the world estimating the problem of fuelwood consumption levels (one of the causes of deforestation) but their estimations have a range from the lowest (X) to the highest (Xn), all with claims of scientific certainty. When the FAO gets into policy areas it tries to aggregate those certainties but it finds no common core of agreement. When the available data are contradictory and irreconcilable, each policy actor feels as if s/he was free to

choose what s/he would like the fact to be, by arbitrarily declaring some of that data to be anomalous.

In policy-making processes, the problem may not be defined in accordance with the actual physical degradation when data or estimations are contradictory. Instead, the problem is described by adopting a position somewhere between optimistic and pessimistic certainties because, in turn, this position makes the FAO function rationally. If fuelwood consumption lies within the X range that may be assumed as the level of sustainability at which forests are supposed to be reproduced, there would, in this specific area, be no need for the FAO to offer a solution to an international problem. If it is a sustainable level, what can the FAO say about it? By the same token, if the estimate of the FAO shows that fuelwood consumption lies within the highest range (Xn), explanations and interventions by the FAO lose their rational basis since its projects are unlikely to make any significant difference at the already highest rate of consumption. How can the FAO justify itself in the best and worst scenarios except by crassly indicating the plain reality known to everyone? Thus, what is rational for international organisations like the FAO is to 'define the problem to fit the solutions they can supply' (Thompson, 1988: 137), that is, somewhere between X and Xn. When that is the case, problem-solving strategies of international organisations do not help to find appropriate solutions, which first of all require that the actual problem be described.

Third, the problem-solving strategy bolsters an exaggerated faith in both 'global managerialism' (Hawkins, 1993: 227; Swyngedouw, 2013: 10-13) and market-based solutions to environmental degradation. This is a part of the 'ecological modernisation' discourse (see Hajer, 1995; Simonis, 1989; Weale, 1992: 66-92) that regards the environment as an external problem to be solved by a set of technical, administrative and legal resolutions and international agreements promoting market-based mechanisms. Relying on applications of technological innovations (for resource productivity), organisational measures and monetary instruments in managerial fashion (e.g., Weizsäcker, Lovins and Lovins, 1998) neglects questions about economic growth, the consumerist way of life and the connection between environmental degradation and processes of capital accumulation, thereby missing the link between causes and effects of the problem, and between means and ends of the solution. After the diplomatic blessing of managerialism and trade liberalisation for sustainable development at UNCED (see Hildyard, 1993: 32-4; Sachs, 1993: 11; Menotti, 1998: 354), the Kyoto Climate Conference in December 1997 elaborated the commercialisation of cures such as 'emissions trading' and 'joint implementation'. Such was the revitalisation (albeit differently) of the old nineteenth-century businessman's motto 'where there's muck, there's brass' (Hobsbawm, 1994: 261) –that is,

pollution means money. With artistic prescience, Ben Elton pointed in his (1990) play, *Gasping*, to a new way to make money by selling fresh air as a privatised alternative to polluted urban fug.

The Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change reconsidered the interdependence of nations in terms of the sink function of the Earth absorbing CO_2 emissions, and found the solution in 'trading pollution' via mechanisms of 'emissions trading' and 'joint implementation' (see Grubb, 1999; French, 1998: 235-37; Kronick, 1999: 105; Newell, 1998: 154-57; European Commission, 2015). This market approach continues in the post-Kyoto climate regime. Given the fact that 'economic behaviour' in capitalism disregards the environment so long as there is no cost burden, these mechanisms might have a positive characteristic in internalising the external through commodification of the atmosphere. Nonetheless, this 'economic rationale' is still neglectful of the causes of environmental harm, since it is only interested in the problem of how the effects can be included in the economy. Overall, these mechanisms may have little impact on emission reduction because they do not change the fact that growth is still dependent on fossil fuels, but instead result in the relatively lesser polluter allowing another country to utilise its quota in order to continue to pollute.

Regulation Flows in a Capitalist World

Having noted the problems of the dominant understanding of interdependence, we can return to the main strand of the argument. Behind cooperation lies a multiplicity of contradictions as in conflict patterns. Despite the recognition of cross-boundary problems, the international efforts of the 1970s towards environmental protection focused on the domestic control of pollution. During the 1980s, the focus of activity would be the international community, leading to the regimes of international political cooperation for the environment. Coping with environmental problems on an international scale has become an important component of international politico-economic structures because environmental standards which diverge from one country to another may be perceived to have significant cost implications for particular industries. From the neo-liberal point of view, the integration of economies needs to create and maintain the conditions for competition. As environmental interventions, including taxes and standards, may increase the cost of the product, environmental costs ought to be equalised among trading parties. For example, having adopted the 1983 Large Combustion Plant Ordinance, German industry wanted to make sure that it was not at a cost disadvantage in comparison with its competitors in other European countries. This led to similar pollution control equipment being installed in the EU (Weale, 1992: 204). Separate national environmental control actions might also cause some inconvenience for

international capital, as in the case of diverse national policies established to restrict pesticides. For the international agrochemical industry it meant that it had to register its products separately in dozens of different countries and be exposed to a certain cost. US food companies especially called into question the planned internal pesticide control action of the EC and saw it as a disguised form of trade protection. As Paarlberg (1993: 313-14) has noted, 'largely in response to such private industry concerns, the "international harmonization" of control actions soon emerged as an agenda item within several important international institutions'.

The other side of competitiveness is to turn a disadvantage into an advantage (see Vlachou, 2004: 934-37). Once companies comply with legislative constraints at home, they want to use their compliance as a competitive advantage. To this end, they generate pressures on their governments to propose international legislation similar to that in force at home. 'By imposing legislation for recycling scrapped vehicles, the German government initiated a change of policy. However, since this early legislation fostered novel technological responses, the German automotive industry has since sought to extend this perceived national advantage to a European Commission level, to develop a national advantage' (Vaughan and Mickle, 1993: 86). In a general sense, the European Union's environmental policy has appeared to impose harmonised minimum standards without which different regulations of the member states could threaten the four freedoms of movement in goods, services, capital and people. Thus, 'harmonisation' has been nourished by the set of contradictions among member states' industries reluctant towards regulation but keen on reciprocity, among the opposing demands of industries and environmentalists (see below), and between the costs of environmental regulation and the costs of failure to establish environmental regulation.

Advanced clean-up technologies in developed countries which have relatively stringent environmental regulations yield demands for offshore market expansion that requires the creation of export conditions for environmental technology through stricter international environmental regulation (Jänicke and Jacob, 2004). As Harvey (1996: 382) puts it, for these countries, 'struggling to remain competitive, the imposition of strong environmental regulations demanding high-tech solutions promised not only a competitive advantage to their own industries but also a strong export market for the more environmentally friendly technology they had developed'. Given the tendency towards maturation of the domestic market, the environmental industry tried to generate demand for its technologies and services abroad in order to maintain its growth. This was preceded by a drive in the international domain, to export the environmental laws and administrative characteristics of developed countries to

underdeveloped countries that, for the most part, had inferior environmental standards.[3] Foreign direct investments in pollution control can flow toward the areas where environmental institutions are created, environmental regulations are established and enforced, and the financial ability to pay for anti-pollution measures is adequate. Thus, there has been a process of regulation flows from a national to the international level and then to other national levels. The degree to which the clean-up industry earns its revenue from markets abroad attests to this aspect of the internationalisation of the environment. Some would see this blooming environmental industry as a part of 'green imperialism' (Pratt and Montgomery, 1997).

A little more space is needed to describe regulation flows from the international domain to the national domain. By regulation, we mean 'the whole realm of legislation, governance, and control' in the European sense of the word as Majone (1990: 1) distinguishes it from the American usage that only 'refers to sustained and focused control exercised by a public agency'. In this broader sense, 'regulations do more than regulate –they help generate political concern, they set normative standards, they communicate intensity of preferences, and they legitimate financial transfers (such as the international fund established at Montreal to promote compliance with regulations designed to protect the ozone layer)' (Levy, Keohane and Haas, 1993: 404). International principles, norms and regimes provide signatories with a reference framework from within which national regulations for further protection can be implemented. For instance, only twenty-six of those countries present at the 1972 Stockholm Conference had national environmental agencies. Within ten years, 144 countries had established such administrative bodies (Gladwin, 1987: 8). Undoubtedly, various developments would have stimulated this progress but no one would deny the influence of the international climate. Its influence on the form of environmental regulation flow is clearly seen in the cases of the ozone treaty and the climate regime, especially the Kyoto Protocol, which require national regulation for implementation.

Nonetheless, international regulations are, for the most part, based on the 'poison-pollution approach' (see Fisher-Kowalski and Haberl, 1993: 433-36; Fisher-Kowalski, Haberl and Payer, 1994: 339-42.). That is, in regard to global

[3] It should be clear that the push from the environmental industry is only one of the incentives for international environmental regulation. The efforts to establish internationally uniform ambient environmental standards can be traced to the mid-1970s, i.e., before the development of clean-up technology and the environmental industry. However, it surely contributed to this process not only by supplying technology and equipment meeting the requirements of standards, but also by lobbying governments and international organisations to make standards rigorous. Another point that needs clarifying is that it would be wrong to confine the advancement of environmental regulation in underdeveloped countries to merely international imposition. Of particular importance in this context are growing environmental awareness and struggles in these countries, as in developed countries.

warming, the problem as defined in this approach is the rate of CO_2 emissions and the solution proposed by international regulation is to reduce this rate. This approach rarely incorporates a relational understanding of society–nature relationships. If did, level of per capita emissions and of historically cumulative emissions would be key variables among others such as patterns of production and consumption, irrational ways of using the environment for capital accumulation and dependency on fossil fuels for growth. Then regulations would reduce the use of fossil fuels and focus attention on the capitalist way of life and unsustainable development. As applied to the prevention of ozone layer depletion, even under the regulations of the supposedly successful the Montreal Protocol and the new revisions, the poison-pollution approach will only ensure that 'another ten billion tons of CFC's will be emitted into the atmosphere –an amount equal to half of all production historically' (Litfin, 1993: 109-10). Moreover, internationally uniform ambient environmental standards based on the poison-pollution approach take no account of the capacity of local ecosystems. Yet the capacity of the ecosystem is of significance in terms of showing local environmental differences –e.g., 'discharges of salt are important on the Rhine, but might be unimportant on the coast' (Vaughan and Mickle, 1993: 76). It is also significant in considering where, by whom and to what degree the ecosystem is overused –e.g., who is responsible for the pollution on the Rhine or for global warming and climate change. Because of this restricted perspective arising from the poison-pollution approach and related to problem-solving strategies, the effectiveness of international regulations is very limited.

The internationalisation of the environment does not usually lead to tougher regulations and higher standards because of the contradictions among capital groups. Take the example of the clean-up industry: its interests producing a push towards international regulation clash with the interests of the polluting industries of developed and underdeveloped countries that engender resistance to regime formation due to the fact that they are likely to be negatively affected by requirements for environmentally sound production. Similarly, previous multilateral environmental actions of some countries may give rise to difficulties in reaching further and wider environmental cooperation owing to barriers erected by the conflicting interests of capital groups. In the 1970s and early 1980s the Toronto Group (the US, Canada, Finland, Norway and Sweden) enacted bans on non-essential aerosol *uses* of CFCs whereas in 1980 the EC adopted an aerosol *production* cap (Elliott, 1998: 55). Obviously, these two types of measures required different obligations from the industry. These earlier cooperative efforts of each group of countries worked as impediments to further obligations in Vienna where the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted. Each group insisted that the convention should not establish any firmer targets and controls than those to which negotiating parties of the

groups had already committed. If the convention had established targets on use instead of on production, it would have brought additional requirements for the EC industry, and vice versa. In the end, the Vienna Convention could not specify any firm targets or controls.

The possibility of a decline in market and investment share due to stringent regulations maintained by particular nation states is used by states and business groups as a powerful political weapon for derailing efforts to implement environmentally friendly policies (Tietenberg, 1991: 191). Consider GATT/WTO rules as cases in point. GATT/WTO rules, 'by strengthening the liberalisation of trade under the notions of non-discrimination and mutual treatment' yield pressures for environmental standards 'to be watered down or cut back altogether' (Hirst and Thompson, 1996: 138). In response to Mexico's complaint about the American trade embargo that banned imports of tuna fish from Mexico on the grounds that the fishing practices of their fleets violated US protection standards for the exhaustible natural resource, a GATT dispute panel found the embargo to be GATT inconsistent (Vogel, 1998: 4-5; also see Pritchard, 2005).

3. ACTORS WITHIN CAPITALIST RELATIONS

The relationships among the agents, namely corporations, international organisations, states and NGOs, deserve further attention and discussion in depth. It is to this that we must turn now. To start with, we must clarify the positions of the agents vis-à-vis international institutions. Following Levy and Egan's (1998: 338) distinction between enabling and regulatory international institutions, two aspects of the relationship among corporations, states and international organisations can be distinguished. First is the enabling facet which provides the infrastructure of the world trade, finance and investment regime with a trend towards liberalisation. Second is the regulatory facet that internationally standardises national labour and environmental policies. Obviously enough, international capital is highly influential and supportive regarding the enabling function of international institutions, while it is usually reluctant, if not opposed, to the improvement of labour and environmental rights and regulations. It is supportive of international institutions that adopt measures favourable to mobile capital in its operations in trade, finance and investment, whereas it is in favour of leaving labour and environmental regulations to the nation state level, especially regulations that might erect barriers to the flow of capital. The former contributes to the development of the international domain while the latter buttresses the nation state structures rather than undermining them as claimed by globalisation theory. States having a mediated relationship with capital would favour the double role of international institutions as long as the integrity of the state is not disturbed.

In order to avoid facing economic disadvantages stemming from internationally imposed mandatory environmental regulations, industrial groups would prefer differentiated policies on the part of nation states, which makes it easy to play one country off against another. It is also easier for an average company to make a difference for its own interest in a national policy making process in comparison with its effects at the global level. In contrast to the position of capital, NGOs and environmental movements put pressure on international institutions to establish internationally uniform environmental regulations that, by definition, tend to establish environmentally sound obligations on the state and the industry while they are supportive of the national level in respect to the enabling function because international institutions tend to liberalise trade and investment that in many cases work against environmental protection. For instance, business (see The International Chamber of Commerce, 1999; The Transatlantic Business Dialogue, 1999) was happy with the WTO Seattle talks on 30 November–3 December 1999 that focused on further liberalisation in trade and services while environmental groups (see The NGO Statement, 1999; The Center for International Environmental Law and Greenpeace International, 1999) protested against the talks and demanded a radical changeover of the WTO towards an organisation promoting environmental protection around the world.

The Strength of Corporations

The fact that industrial groups exert relatively more influence on environmental policies at the national level than they do at the international level does not mean that the process of establishing international environmental regulations revolves around its own logic, independently of pressures from capital. On the contrary, in most cases there has been a direct link between business and international organisations. Paarlberg (1993: 319-27) shows the close institutional association of the FAO with the agrochemical industry, parallel with the link between industry interests and governmental support in obstructing international measures against pesticide use. In some cases of international negotiations –e.g., in the negotiations on the Ozone Layer protection (see Parson, 1993: 37) and on Antarctic minerals (see Porter and Brown, 1996: 62)– industry representatives served officially on national delegations. Among these examples, the UNCED process provides us with the best example. The millionaire businessman Maurice Strong, who worked as the head of the executive committee for Ontario Hydro, half of whose products consist of nuclear energy systems, was the Secretary General of the UNCED in Rio. He had held the same post at the Stockholm Conference in 1972, and then became the first Executive Director of the UN Environment Program and a member of the World Commission on Environment and Development,

otherwise known as the Brundtland Commission. At UNCED the personal adviser to the Secretary General was industrialist Stephan Schmidheiny. He had invested in the asbestos industry and served on the board of directors of Asea Brown Boveri, manufacturers of nuclear reactors, and that of Nestlé whose marketing of infant formula had been a major target for environmental activists for years. At Strong's specific request in 1990 he initiated a group of 48 corporate leaders to establish the Business Council for Sustainable Development[4] (BCSD) that coordinated multinational corporations' activities in Rio (Elliot, 1998: 127; Greer and Bruno, 1996: 28-9; Levy and Egan, 1998: 342). In addition to 'personal advice' from businessmen, Chatterjee and Finger (1994: 117-18) suggest that almost one-fifth of the total outlay (US$ 16.9 million) of the Summit secretariat was funded by the corporations. It was not the first time that corporations sponsored UN conferences, but the scale was certainly unprecedented. Of course, funding an international conference could not have mattered in itself, but overall it became a part of the problematic indicating that UNCED bore the imprints of corporate interests.

Apart from the personal link, industry–international organisation relations appear in institutional lobbying activities. The lobbying model was strengthened in the UNCED process so that all groups from NGOs to industry representatives could, theoretically, organise themselves to influence the formation of the outcomes. However, in practice, as expected, lobbying groups for the industrial and business sector made the most of it since this model is meant to be used best by the strongest, most powerful and financially most potent agents. Corporate lobbying groups managed to block the discussion on the environmental impact of multinational corporations that was to take place in the meetings of the UN's own Centre for Transnational Corporations (UNCTC). The UNCTC's proposals for 'greater accountability, a 10-year goal for harmonising company-level environmental accounting and reporting procedures, and environmental pricing' (Grubb et al., 1993: 38), were not even circulated to UNCED delegates. Just a few months before the Earth Summit, the UNCTC lost its status and was then essentially dismantled and quietly closed down (Hildyard, 1993: 28; Greer and Bruno, 1996: 24). Working as a lobbying group the BCSD was so successful that 'the only mention of corporations in Agenda 21 was to promote their role in sustainable development. No mention was made of corporations' role in the pollution of the planet, nor was there any kind of guidance or regulation to ensure that they are more responsible in the future' (Chatterjee and Finger, 1994: 116).

[4] For the perspective of the BCSD on development and the environment, see Schmidheiny, with the Business Council for Sustainable Development, 1992. In late 1994 BCSD became the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) after merging with another business network, the World Industry Council for the Environment.

In order to avoid facing mandatory regulations, corporations lobbied for a voluntary code of conduct for multinational companies' activities. Chapter 30 of Agenda 21 points up the importance of free market mechanisms, voluntary initiatives and self-regulation, i.e., the same principles suggested by the BCSD in opposition to internationally imposed regulations and command-and-control regimes (see Schmidheiny, 1992: 20-1). In the cases of ozone layer depletion, climate change and agricultural biotechnology, corporations usually remained reactive and obstructive actors towards emerging environmental regulations. When an economic opportunity became visible those that were keen to use it abandoned anti-regulatory and self-regulatory strategies (Falkner, 2008: 49-187).

Thomas (1993: 20) notes the limits of the idea of self-regulation of business: 'how far it can go before it affects a company's competitive position in the domestic or global economy'. Furthermore, the environmental records of corporations advocating self-regulation have not been encouraging (Espach, 2005; Karliner, 1997; Lepkowski, 1987; Rowell, 1996; Tokar, 1997). The idea of self-regulation tries to convince those concerned about the record of corporate activities of the effectiveness and efficiency of a voluntary code of conduct. Thereby, it is likely not only to produce a false image of 'good corporate behaviour' towards the environment –called 'greenwash' (see Greer and Bruno, 1996; Edward, 1999; Tokar, 1997)– in response to increased public awareness but also to obstruct the ways in which command-and-control regimes are to be put into force.

One of the reasons behind self-regulation is, then, to remove the proposal to regulate the activities of corporations from international environmental documents by consenting to a 'soft concession' in the face of relatively more stringent challenges. In a nutshell, when there is no business opportunity provided by the internationalisation of the environment, and when it is unlikely to manage to turn constraints into opportunities, corporations bring pressure to bear on international institutions either to resist establishing a binding international regime governing the issue, or to water down international norms, or to leave the formation of environmental rules and policies to the nation state level.

Corporation and State Alliances

Corporations have strong support from governments in their attempts to realise their demands in the international domain by influencing governments' negotiating positions internationally and domestically. A supposition of a possible increase in costs, let's say because of the measures to abate CO_2 emissions, prompts the industry to exert pressure on the state at the domestic level. And similar pressures are translated into the international arena through

the state as the main determinant of international decision-making mechanisms. Due to the symbiotic relationship between the state and capital, their stances at UNCED showed similarities. Opposition to efforts to monitor multinational corporations at UNCED came also from governments that saw a threat to the interests of their industries. The divergent standpoints of states in the negotiations on the Climate Convention were noticeable. France and Germany have been relatively supportive of CO_2 emission controls, not least because the former relies heavily on nuclear power for electricity and seeks to gain export markets for its nuclear technology, and the latter has reduced emissions and been in the forefront of pollution prevention and renewable energy technologies. The UK reversed its stance from being against to being in favour of controls after the early 1990s when it eliminated its dependence on coal by closing most of the coal pits and turning to natural gas (Levy and Egan, 1998: 348). However, the US has never been happy with international emission control proposals. It was mainly because the US government's negotiating position, as Hildyard (1993: 29) suggests, had 'consistently reflected the close ties between the Bush administration and corporate interests: [that] the guidelines issued to US delegates negotiating the Climate Convention faithfully reflected the position of the oil industry'.

The pressure exerted by the oil, coal, utility and automobile companies is a factor of the US government's domestic and international policy on climate change (Monbiot, 2007: 38-39; Gelbspan, 2004: 39-58). These industries blocked even the modest national policy measures the Clinton administration needed to strengthen the US position in the climate change regime –measures such as a fuel tax proposal (Levy and Egan, 1998: 344) and a bill establishing relatively stringent 'corporate average fuel economy' standards to reduce US CO_2 emissions (Porter and Brown, 1996: 61). Apart from the symbiotically mediated economy–politics relationship, financial contributions from corporations to politicians help produce appropriate political outcomes. Similar to the funding association between the UNCED secretariat and corporations, there is a donor–recipient relationship between industrial groups and politicians in the US, as in European countries (see Rowell, 1996: 78-81; Gelbspan, 2004: 44-45). It is clear that 'campaign donations certainly give corporate donors unparalleled access to public officials, access which is used to influence and shape public policy' (Retallack, 1999: 11-7). Because of this correlation between corporate donors and politicians, it is hardly surprising that Congress and the White House have opposed any significant US commitments in the international arena to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. On the road to COP21 taking place in Paris, December 2015, the Obama administration once again stated the US position as being against legally binding commitments.

Industries' influence on the negotiating positions of the state is so clear that their changing interests are likely to prompt the government to play important entrepreneurial leadership roles. Consider the US role in the negotiations on the protection of the ozone layer as a matter in point. The major US producer of CFC, DuPont, was in search of possible CFC substitutes in the mid-1980s. Having allocated $5 million for research into substitute chemicals in 1986 ($10 million in 1987 and $30 million in 1988), it announced in March of the same year that substitutes could be available in five years if market conditions warranted the development effort, so to speak, the advancement of international enforcement on alternative chemicals to CFCs. In August, the company reversed its opposition and endorsed international controls on the level of CFC production causing a split between the formerly united front including DuPont and European producers claiming that CFC controls were unjustified due to dubious stratospheric science.[5] That seemed to have influenced the negotiating position of the US to change dramatically. In November 1986, the United States, always the leading party in opposing a tight phase-out in ozone negotiations, took the lead in ozone diplomacy for the first time with an official announcement of an immediate freeze in CFC consumption, followed by phased reductions to essentially zero (see Parson, 1993: 41).

The Dual Role of NGOs

With regard to NGO relationships with corporations, international organisations and states, we set the discussion within two diverging features of environmental groups, that is, the double life of the environmental movement as actors of opposition and actors of collaboration. Some environmental movements may display the two facets at the same time and others may enjoy the former or the latter in different times and conjunctures. During the 1970s and early 1980s the German environmental movement, for instance, put up strong resistance to environmental degradation and also to the political establishment. Since the mid-1980s, however, although it has to some extent maintained its opposition, it has also integrated into the political system which was earlier claimed by the movement itself to be part of the problem.

The double life is fostered by the ontological formation of the environmental movement that necessitates its functioning in the two ways. Raising an issue presents a dissident characteristic –i.e., protesting against ecological harm, opposing governmental policies, criticising polluting industrial

[5] DuPont agreed to stop producing CFCs but was in search of their replacement with other hazardous substances contributing to the problem of climate change. It investigated two related chemical substitutes for CFCs, hydroclorofluorocarbons and hydrofluorocarbons. The former is one to six per cent as ozone depleting as CFC 11, and the latter causes no ozone depletion, but both are greenhouse gases.

practises, and the like. But, at the same time, it also presents a constitutive challenge. It demands different policies from the government, corporations and international organisations, suggests alternatives, shows a desire to collaborate with governmental and intergovernmental agencies, wants to be part of the discussion and of the process of creating and implementing the policy. Given the constitutive challenge, it is rather likely that its opposition is articulated into the establishment.

Environmental movements have been substantial centres of opposition in many countries against operations causing environmental degradation by corporations and states. According to James O'Connor, environmental movements produce potential threats to capital accumulation 'when they demand better health care, protest the ruination of soils, and defend urban neighborhoods in ways that increase capital costs or reduce capital flexibility' (O'Connor, 1998: 242). In other words, just as labour exploitation engendered a labour movement that turned itself into a 'social barrier' to capital, nature exploitation paves the way for environmental movements that may also constitute a 'social barrier' to capital (O'Connor, 1996: 211). Indeed, consider their protests against nuclear power and armaments, the ivory trade and rainforest destruction, and their role in stopping the slaughter of whales and dolphins and in organising resistance to genetically modified crops in many countries. Their struggles over health, environmental protection, the use of space, and so on occur outside the state and also within and against the state, since they try to protect the environment from the excesses of capitalist production and from state policies which allow a further appropriation of nature. On the one hand, in so far as the environmental movement provokes state actions to restore conditions of capital accumulation, it is favourable to capital. On the other hand, however, the environmental movement is potentially anti-capitalist in the sense that the necessity of environmental policies and public intervention to restore those conditions makes capital's own excesses and private ownership seem irrational.

Their actions and activities also stimulate public awareness of environmental issues by provoking discussions on the effects of environmental deterioration, human–nature relations and development–environment relations. Public concern for the environment produces pressures on governments to form or improve environmental policies, and has effects on the international environmental agenda. It is true that '[r]arely has a nation taken the lead in preserving the global environment without substantial pressure from social movements and other non-state actors, whether from within or without' (Litfin, 1993: 101). They level criticisms against governmental policies and failures in international negotiations through direct actions, publications and media

attention. Together with their activities, increasing support from a public who conceive environmental NGOs 'as defenders of values that governments and corporations are all too willing to compromise' (Princen, 1994: 35), helps make their critical voices heard. Their dissident voices and proposals might have effects, although still limited, on the development of environmental policies and regimes.

NGOs' impact on environmental regime formation can occur in different forms and to varying degrees. Porter and Brown (1996: 54-6) provide examples of the five ways NGOs affect governments and international regimes. These are as follows: contribution to the environmental agenda by raising a new issue or redefining an old one; putting pressures on their own and other governments to accept a more advanced position towards an issue; submission of proposals in discussions, negotiations and conferences; lobbying international negotiators and governments; monitoring the implementation of conventions; and reporting to international organisations and parties. They can also provide expert knowledge fostered by their ties with the scientific, land-based and indigenous communities. This process of influencing international institutions has a positive feedback for environmental movements too. While they contribute to the internationalisation of the issue, international regimes (when established) formally strengthen their participation in the debate at the international level and in monitoring and implementation at the national level by requiring governments to nurture and lead an active citizenship.

Nonetheless, the very process of their participation is likely to mitigate their opposition (see the examples in Betsill and Corell, 2008). First, being a part of an official practice of environmental protection needs expertise and professionals who help an environmental organisation prepare proposals and suggestions with 'scientific grounding' and 'persuasive power'. It is known that substantive knowledge on the policy topic concerned is an important factor in determining the extent of the NGOs' political influence (Arts, 1998: 258-59). However, the growing importance of expertise in NGOs proud of their democratic internal procedures and demanding participatory democracy from the political system, leads to bureaucratisation, professionalisation and the loss of members' control over internal decision-making (see Jamison, 1996: 230-40; Diani and Donati, 1999: 17-24). Should their internal mechanisms show a resemblance to what they have criticised, their opposition to the establishment would be reduced to technical details.

Secondly, competition among environmental groups over involvement in national and international meetings, discussions and negotiations might erode their 'radicalism'. There are many environmental organisations and grassroots movements, but some of them are invited or allowed to participate in those

processes (see Yearley, 1996: 90-1). It is almost certain that 'radicalism' is one of the factors, which is off-putting and keeps organisations out of doors (Elliott, 1998: 140). The 'extreme' positions of some groups 'may make government and business leaders more likely to negotiate with "moderate" mainstream environmental groups' (Kamieniecki, Coleman and Vos, 1995: 324-25). For instance, although there were thousands of them in Rio –and hundred of thousands of them all over the world, 10,000 registered NGOs in Bangladesh alone (French, 1996: 252)– only about 1,400 NGOs were accredited to UNCED. Arts (1998: 28) has remarked that the UNCED process created its own consultative mechanisms with mainstream NGOs through the Centre for Our Common Future while for the most part excluding existing NGO networks of grassroots organisations.

The third point concerns the problems of the direct relationship and mediation between NGOs and the state, as in the example of NGOs' representatives on their national delegations. At first glance, that kind of link can be seen as an opportunity for NGOs to accomplish their constitutive role in and further contribution to the formation of a regime and policy. One can claim that attendance of NGOs' representatives side by side with business and government representatives in national delegations provides for democratisation of negotiations by sharing rights and responsibilities for the environment, to borrow Smillie and Helmich's (1999) terms, a 'stakeholder partnership'. However, it does not seem that simple. Despite the fact that in Rio there were fifteen governments that allowed mainstream NGOs to join their delegations (usually as observers and rarely able to make suggestions), they could not make any significant differences in the final wording of the UNCED documents (Chatterjee and Finger, 1994: 97; Finger, 1994: 208-9; Porter and Brown, 1996: 58-9; Thomas, 1993: 4). In fact, at the first Preparatory Meeting of UNCED it was officially ruled that NGOs would have no formal negotiation role in the UNCED process, indicating the intergovernmental nature of UN negotiations once more but differently from the past, officially militating against the NGOs' chances of obtaining such a role (Arts, 1998: 29). Even if they had a negotiation role, the NGOs' relationship with the state and the interstate system, by comparison with state–capital relations, is not of the same kind, considering the power of capital to influence the state and international organisations.

The question then arises as to what extent and with what effectiveness the NGOs can, while retaining a significantly critical position, shape state policies and negotiating positions. More importantly, whilst capital coexists with the state in a symbiotic relationship, NGOs are by definition supposed to be outside the state, namely, *non-governmental* organisations. When they become part of the governmental realm, they turn into extensions of the state apparatuses of policy-

making. The second question arises as to what degree they can, when they are 'inside', remain committed to producing thoroughgoing alternatives rather than technical and managerial retouching.

It is not surprising then why some (Cameron and Mackenzie, 1996; Doherty, 1994) deem that UNCED was a success for environmental NGOs whereas others (Finger, 1994; Middleton, O'Keefe and Moyo, 1993) believe the opposite. The reason for this dual assessment lies in the double life of the environmental movement. On the one hand, environmental NGOs as environmentally defensive and politically opposing actors try to raise their dissident voices, reveal the deficiencies and focus public attention on the failures in the negotiations. On the other hand, they seek to play a constitutive role as collaborating actors within and outside the official conference proceedings (such as the Global Forum) by making proposals from the inside or outside, sitting in negotiations rooms, lobbying negotiators, and so on. Some might have been happy with the performance of environmental NGOs becoming 'partners' in international decision-making and implementation processes whereas others were not, on the grounds that, rather than being 'real partners', they were fed into and colonised by a process about which they had been critical. Overall, however vigorously and rigorously they criticise the prevailing rationale of states and international organisations, their attempts to mark their stamp on negotiations ends with dissatisfaction, mostly because what is left for them is to function as instruments in the process of articulating the opposition to the establishment. Accommodating this is their second character, a desire to collaborate.

International environmental negotiations welcome the voices of environmental NGOs to become part of the process. However, the welcome appears to be rather rhetorical, since it does not create appropriate channels of effective participation for them, and most of them do not have the economic, political or financial power to make any serious impact. As a result, they are co-opted into the mainstream debate to give 'democratic-legitimate grounding' to the outcomes. While industry and business produce substantial influence on the UNCED conventions (see Chatterjee and Finger, 1994: 105-11) or climate negotiations (see Schreuder, 2009) the NGO effect is limited to airing critical new ideas that hardly ever turn up in the final documents (see Tokar, 2010). If this interpretation is accurate, what follows, and may vindicate that account, is that the relationship between capital and international organisations has from Stockholm to Rio and onwards developed from one of distance from each other to one of becoming allies in the formation of international environmental regimes.

4. CONCLUSION

Our investigation in this article has hopefully shown that the formation of international environmental regimes arises on a foundation in which the complexity of the issue, the multiplicity of contradictions and the overlapping and opposing interests of actors are embedded. We have clarified the multiple levels of environmental conflict and cooperation and point to the problematical formation of the international arena of environmental protection. It is clear that it has scarcely been possible to easily reach a consensus of all parties on, or an appropriate solution to, any internationally conflictual environmental issues. That is not to say, however, that the international domain is worthless altogether for cooperative efforts associated with environmental protection; i.e., it cannot completely be written off for the reasons which have already been discussed above. Environmental issues can lead to both conflict and cooperation as a twin pattern; we say this not because these two aspects are counter-posed by the two wings of mainstream IR theory but because these are both aspects of the complexity and multiplicity of contradictions embedded in national and international politico-economic structures. Similarly, international environmental and economic institutions do not always or necessarily contradict each other; as we have seen, they are complementary in the case of prevailing managerial environmental measures and the commercialisation of environmental cures. The relations of NGOs with the state, the inter-state system and multinational corporations also present both antagonism and cooperation as they oscillate between opposition and collaboration.

As well as regime formation, the outcomes are determined by the relationship between international organisations and the specific configuration of the economic and the political at national and international levels. The main determinant of this relationship is capital. This does not necessarily mean that international institutions have become mere epiphenomena of capital but it emphasises capital's role and influence, considering its power and instruments to shape state policies at home, and considering its position in the international domain to impact on the trajectory of international institutions as well. The relationships between the state and capital and between international organisations and industrial groups have become closer at the international level. Capital is not only using its own potential but also mobilising state agencies to frame international environmental issues.

As one of the other main actors, NGOs' impact on international environmental decision-making processes is minimal. The limitation of the NGO impact stems not only from the lack of appropriate participation channels for environmental organisations and groups, but also from their dual life as opposition and collaboration. As a corollary, despite the fact that international

environmental politics is of significance regarding its contribution to the development of environmental protection, its effect on national policies and its potential to fortify the environmental movement, its capability to establish institutions appropriate to the acuteness of environmental issues is rather restricted. Given the fact that the international level has not been effective enough in producing solutions to the ecological problems of our time, the local, regional and national levels appear to be of vital importance for protecting the environment. However, an elaborate examination of environmental battles at these levels should also be expected to show the multiplicity of contradictions lodged in politico-economic relations with the environment under capitalism.

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