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978-0-521-68745-4 - The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy, 2nd Edition

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## **The Politics of the Environment**

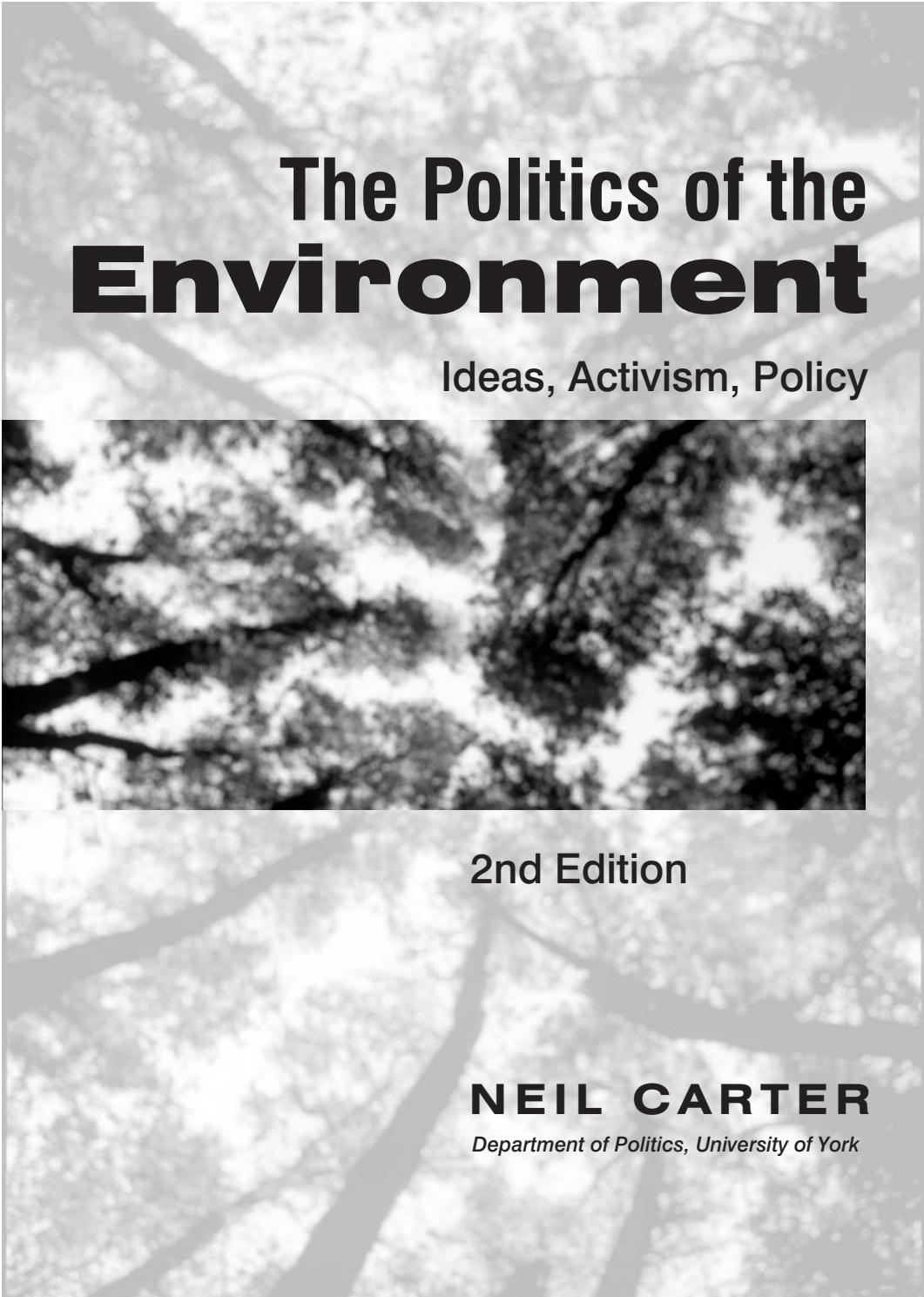
Ideas, Activism, Policy

2nd Edition

The continuous rise in the profile of the environment in politics reflects growing concern that we may be facing a large-scale ecological crisis. The new edition of this highly acclaimed textbook surveys the politics of the environment, providing a comprehensive and comparative introduction to its three components: ideas, activism and policy. Part I explores environmental philosophy and green political thought; Part II considers parties and environmental movements; and Part III analyses policy-making and environmental issues at international, national and local levels. This second edition has been thoroughly updated with new and revised discussions of many topics including the ecological state, ecological citizenship, ecological modernisation and the Greens in government and also includes an additional chapter on 'Globalisation, trade and the environment'. As well as considering a wide variety of examples from around the world, this textbook features a glossary, guides to further study, chapter summaries and critical questions throughout.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo  
  
Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK  
  
Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York  
  
[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521687454](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521687454)  
  
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Second edition © Neil Carter 2007

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First published 2001  
Second edition 2007

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-0-521-86802-0 hardback  
ISBN 978-0-521-68745-4 paperback

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*To Tom and Rosa*

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# Preface to the second edition

The writing of the first edition of this book took several years, so it was with some relief when I began to prepare this second edition that I found the basic structure of the book still seemed to work. I have added one chapter – effectively a second on international environmental politics – in which I analyse the relationship between globalisation, trade and the environment, with a specific focus on the World Trade Organisation, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the European Union (EU). The discussion of the EU also serves as an introduction to a supranational organisation that frequently reappears in the two following chapters. Otherwise, all the chapters have been thoroughly updated, with substantially new or revised discussions of many topics, including Bjørn Lomborg, the ecological state, ecological citizenship, the experience of green parties in government, party politicisation, environmental policy integration and the use of market-based instruments.

I would like to thank Elizabeth Bomberg, Meg Huby and Chris Rootes for reading various chapters. I also received excellent advice on various revisions from Andy Dobson, Katarina Eckerberg, Arthur Mol, John Parkinson and Wolfgang Rüdig. Thanks are owed again to my students for sharpening my thoughts and to John Haslam for encouraging me to write this second edition. I would like to thank Susan Baker, and Taylor and Francis, for permission to reproduce her ‘Ladder of Sustainable Development’ in Table 8.1.

Finally, thanks to Charlie, again, for her love and support, and to Tom, just for being my wee man.

# Acknowledgements

In writing a book that has been as long in gestation as this one, I have inevitably accrued many debts. Andy Dobson, Meg Huby, Andy Jordan, Sue Mendus and Chris Rootes have each read several chapters, and I know that the book is much better for their wise and helpful comments. Brian Doherty, Mat Paterson and Andrew Williams have each commented on a chapter. A wide range of people have helped in small but important ways, including Keith Alderman, Riley Dunlap, Katarina Eckerberg, Dave Humphreys, Janet Jenkins, Arthur Mol and Ben Seel. Many others, too numerous to mention, have contributed in a less formal manner. I should, however, like to make a special fond mention for Dick Richardson, with whom I shared many discussions about green politics and whose enthusiasm and good humour are greatly missed by his many friends. My colleagues at the University of York have provided a friendly, supportive and stimulating working environment. Several cohorts of students who have taken my courses in ‘Green Politics’ and ‘Environmental Policy’ have also helped me to develop my ideas. I am also grateful to Nuffield College, Oxford, where I spent Autumn 1997 as a Visitor. John Haslam has been a remarkably patient, supportive and encouraging editor throughout.

Finally, Charlie Burns has been an unfailing source of emotional and intellectual support throughout the often painful process of writing this book. She has read every chapter, usually several times, and offered excellent, constructive advice. I cannot thank her enough.

# Abbreviations

ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework	GJM	Global Justice Movement
APP	anti-party party	GMO	genetically modified organism
BSE	bovine spongiform encephalopathy	HCFC	hydrochlorofluorocarbons
CBA	cost-benefit analysis	HEP	hydroelectric power
CDU	Christian Democratic Union (Germany)	HFC	hydrofluorocarbons
CFC	chlorofluorocarbons	IMF	International Monetary Fund
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
COP	Conference of the Parties	IWC	International Whaling Commission
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (insecticide)	LA21	Local Agenda 21
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	LCV	League of Conservation Voters (USA)
EAP	Environmental Action Plan	LETS	local exchange trading system
EEA	European Environment Agency	LRTAP	long-range transboundary air pollution
EIA	environmental impact assessment	LULU	locally unwanted land use
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme	MBI	market-based instrument
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (USA)	ME	ministry of environment
EPI	environmental policy integration	MEA	multilateral environmental agreement
EU	European Union	MEP	Member of the European Parliament
EU-15	The 15 EU member states pre-2004	MP	Member of Parliament
EU-25	The 25 EU member states post-2004	NAAEC	North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation
FDP	Free Democratic Party (Germany)	NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
FoE	Friends of the Earth	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
GEF	Global Environment Facility		
GHG	greenhouse gas		

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Abbreviations

NFU	National Farmers' Union	UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
NGO	non-governmental organisation	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
NIMBY	not in my back yard	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
NSM	new social movement	WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
POS	political opportunity structure	WTO	World Trade Organisation
PPP	polluter pays principle	WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
PR	proportional representation		
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK)		
SPD	Social Democratic Party (Germany)		

# Glossary

- Anthropocentrism** A way of thinking that regards humans as the source of all value and is predominantly concerned with human interests.
- Biodiversity** The number, variety and variability of living organisms; sometimes refers to the total variety of life on Earth.
- Bioregionalism** An approach that believes that the ‘natural’ world (specifically, the local bioregion) should determine the political, economic and social life of communities.
- Climate change** Any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or to human activity.
- Conservationism** An approach to land management that emphasises the efficient conservation of natural resources so that they can later be developed for the benefit of society.
- Corporatism** A system in which major organised interests (traditionally, capital and labour) work closely together within the formal structures of government to formulate and implement public policies.
- Cost-benefit analysis** A study that compares the costs and benefits to society of providing a public good.
- Decentralisation** The expansion of local autonomy through the transfer of powers and responsibilities away from a national political and administrative body.
- Deep ecology** The pre-eminent radical ecocentric moral theory which has the primary aim of preserving nature from human interference.
- Ecocentrism** A mode of thought that regards humans as subject to ecological and systems laws and whose ethical, political and social prescriptions are concerned with both humans and non-humans.
- Ecological footprint** A measure of the amount of nature it takes to sustain a given population over the course of a year.



**Ecological modernisation** A policy strategy which aims to restructure capitalist political economy along more environmentally benign lines based on the assumption that economic growth and environmental protection can be reconciled.

**Ecologism** A distinctive green political ideology encompassing those perspectives that hold that a sustainable society requires radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world and our mode of economic, social and political life.

**Eco-tax** A tax levied on pollution or on the goods whose production generates pollution.

**Environmental impact assessment** A systematic non-technical evaluation, based on extensive consultation with affected interests, of the anticipated environmental impact of a proposed development such as a dam or road.

**Genetically modified organism** New organisms created by human manipulation of genetic information and material.

**Green consumerism** The use of environmental and ethical criteria in choosing whether or not to purchase a product or service.

**Holism** The view that wholes are more than just the sum of their parts, and that wholes cannot be defined merely as a collection of their basic constituents.

**Intrinsic value** The value which something has, independently of anyone finding it valuable.

**Issue attention cycle** The idea that there is a cycle in which issues attract public attention and move up and down the political agenda.

**Limits to growth** The belief that the planet imposes natural limits on economic and population growth.

**Market-based instrument** A policy instrument that internalises into the price of a good or product the external costs to the environment of producing and using it.

**Modern environmentalism** The emergence, from the late 1960s, of growing public concern about the state of the planet, new political ideas about the environment and a mass political movement.

**Moral extensionism** Ethical approaches which broaden the ‘moral community’ to include non-human entities such as animals, based on the possession of some critical property such as sentience.

**New politics** The view that since the late 1960s the rise of postmaterial values, a new middle class and new social movements has changed the political agenda and led to a realignment of established party systems.

**New social movement** A loose-knit organisation which seeks to influence public policy on an issue such as the environment, nuclear energy or peace, and which may use unconventional forms of political participation, including direct action, to achieve its aims.

**Ozone depletion** Depletion of ozone in the Earth’s upper atmosphere which leaves the surface of the Earth vulnerable to harmful ultraviolet radiation.

Glossary

- Party politicisation** A process whereby the environment ascends the political agenda to become electorally salient and the subject of party competition.
- Pioneer states** Those countries, mostly in Northern Europe, that have taken the lead in developing progressive environmental policies and setting high standards of environmental protection.
- Policy paradigm** A framework of ideas and standards that specifies the nature of a problem and the policy goals and instruments needed to address it.
- Political opportunity structure** The dimensions of the political environment that either encourage people to use collective action or discourage them from doing so, and which shape the development of movements and parties.
- Postmaterialism** The theory that, as material affluence spreads, ‘quality of life’ issues and concerns tend to replace material ones, fundamentally changing the political culture and values of industrialised countries.
- Precautionary principle** The principle states that the lack of scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.
- Preservationism** An approach based on an attitude of reverence towards nature, especially wilderness, that advocates the protection of a resource from any form of development.
- Regime** The principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures which form the basis of co-operation on a particular issue in international relations.
- Regulation** Any direct (‘command-and-control’) attempt by the government to influence the behaviour of businesses or citizens by setting environmental standards (e.g. for air quality) enforced via legislation.
- Renewable energy** Energy sources, such as wind, geothermal and hydroelectric, that never run out.
- Resource mobilisation** An approach to collective action which focuses on the way groups mobilise their resources – members, finances, symbols – in turning grievances into political issues.
- Risk assessment** An evaluation of the potential harm to human health and the environment from exposure to a particular hazard such as nitrates in drinking water.
- Sentience** The capacity to suffer or to experience enjoyment or happiness.
- Social justice** The principles that should govern the basic structure of a society, focusing on the distribution of rights, opportunities and resources among human beings.
- Survivalism** Approaches characterised by an overriding preoccupation with human survival, a sense of urgency about an impending ecological crisis and drastic, often authoritarian, solutions.

**Sustainable development** The ability of the present generation to meet its needs without undermining the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**Technocentric** A mode of thought which optimistically believes that society can solve all environmental problems, using technology and science, and achieve unlimited material growth.

**Traditional policy paradigm** An approach to the environment that treats each problem discretely, gives priority to economic growth and results in reactive, piecemeal and tactical policies and end-of-pipe solutions.