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Recommended Citation

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A thesis submitted to The Graduate School at the University of Missouri – St. Louis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Political Science

November 2012

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Abstract

This paper explores the connection between NGOs and the growing international environmental regime. It questions the role these groups have played in building international law, arguing that they use soft power to overcome the interests of states in negotiations. After providing background on the idea of soft power, the paper uses three case studies to demonstrate the argument: the Rio Declaration, the Montreal Protocol, and the Kyoto Protocol. The findings from these studies challenge realism and support a constructivist analysis of international regime-building.

I. Introduction

Who is responsible for building international law? In some ways, this question lies at the core of modern international relations scholarship. While issues of war and peace are still at the center of much debate, few concepts encapsulate the shifting dynamics of this field more than the dawn of international regulations. Where individual states once set all of their own rules and had nearly complete autonomy over their national policies, international law is creating a new set of rules that sometimes supersede national policy. Such legal bodies are far from being complete, but their very existence points to the new dynamic that is emerging around the world.

One issue area that has seen a great deal of international law formation is that of the environment. Some international law addresses issues that have been significant for centuries – and example of this would be trade and border issues, which have been at the core of several armed conflicts. The environment is unique, though, because it has only recently emerged as an area of interest for activists and decision makers. The twentieth century saw the emergence of science pointing to the importance of environmental protection, and this has slowly increased in prominence. As activists saw the need to protect water sources, defend the ozone layer, and stop the spread of climate change, new movements arose to build international law to address these issues. Some movements were more successful than others, but their prominence and relative success points to the importance of analyzing them and understanding the way they are able to impact international law.

This paper will explore the changes that are taking place in international environmental law in greater detail, and try to answer one key question: how do NGOs

exert influence in a rapidly changing international political system? Environmental

politics represents a perfect venue for such a study. This issue area has emerged rapidly,

and as such, it presents one of the most interesting case studies on the emergence of

international law. Where issues like trade have been regulated by treaties for centuries,

the world's newfound interest in the environment means that there is very little historical

influence on these agreements. The environmental movement reached prominence in the

era of international law, and as such, it represents an ideal case study for the rise of

international law and the forces that help shape it.

In addition to a broad focus on the rise of international law on the environment,

this paper studies the role Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play in the

formation of such law, as well as their use of a theoretical concept known as soft power.

The emphasis on NGOs will point to the diminishing role of the state in the formation of

regimes. Where states were once the sole entity in creating such agreements, non-state

actors like NGOs have gained great deal of influence over such policies. They are not the

sole forces behind international law, but they are one of the primary actors. They have a

great deal of control over technical information and influence over civil society, which

they can use to shape the political climate for state negotiators and insure that their

interests are represented in international agreements.

Additionally, this paper will focus on the way NGO's use soft power to impact

these negotiations. Many international relations scholars believe that coercive "hard"

power is the primary vehicle of influence at the international level. While this is still a

factor in some issue areas, the rise of non-state entities like NGOs goes hand-in-hand

with the notion of soft power. Independent groups lack the ability to make substantial

military or economic threats, but have the ability to control information and rally people to their causes – concepts which go hand-in-hand with the idea of soft power. Soft power provides a theory on the tools outside groups could use to impact international law, and the actions of NGOs in the environmental area give it a real-world foundation. Their actions are a very strong demonstration of the viability of soft power and its importance in international regime formation.

This paper will begin by exploring the literature on this issue, giving an overview of the way NGO's have used soft power and their significance in this issue area. It will then work to further illustrate the connection between environmental NGOs and soft power before exploring the theoretical background of soft power. It will then provide a qualitative analysis of three case studies: the Rio Declaration, the Montreal Protocol, and the Kyoto Protocol. These three examples demonstrate the ways NGOs use soft power, and the ways that has influenced international environmental law. Finally, this paper will examine the changes that have taken place in the context of international relations theory. This section will challenge realism as the dominant framework in the field, and propose that constructivism be used as a more effective tool to analyze such issues.

II. Literature Review

This paper explores the unique but understudied connection between environmental activists and the growing international regime on environmental issues. The hard versus soft power aspect of this topic makes such a study particularly unique; while many have explored issues of power and the dynamics of international activism in the past, there has been little effort to connect the work of non-state actors in this area with theories of state power. That being said, though, the existing literature on environmental activism and the debate over hard and soft power provide a great deal of context for this study. Several authors have studied different cases in various regions, and this helps give some background on how the environmental movement has organized itself and how it hopes to see its goals become reality. Additionally, theorists have discussed concepts of hard and soft power, examining the ways both can be successfully exercised.

This section will begin by examining authors who have looked at the way NGOs have exercised influence through soft power. Then, it will look at the broader significance of NGOs in the world, paying attention to their accomplishments and their significance in international affairs. Finally, with their role and soft power-based ability established, it will take a more thorough look at how they operate. This will paint a picture of NGOs as technically-savvy groups that are able to take advantage of a shifting political system and exert influence in ways that were previously not possible.

Influence Through Soft Power

The foundation of this paper is largely built on the idea that NGOs can use soft power to influence international agreements. Before considering the broad significance of

NGOs or their technical operations, it is important to establish their ability to utilize soft power and assert themselves in non-coercive ways. Several authors have studied this and will point to the viability of NGOs as users of soft power.

One of the most widely-cited authors on the relationship between activists and environmental regulations is Paul Wapner. His work focuses heavily on the connection between cultural norms and political outcomes for environmental issues. This connection between civil society and legal regulations is particularly interesting here – while it does not directly address the issue of power, its emphasis on civil society echoes several themes that will arise in this paper.

Wapner (2002) examined this connection between cultural issues and the work of environmental activist groups. He acknowledges the ways in which NGOs are playing an increasingly prominent role in international politics, but also states that "NGOs are not simply political organizations, but they are also cultural agents that shape the way vast numbers of people understand themselves and the world around them." (Wapner 2002, 38). This notion of NGOs as cultural actors is a recurring theme for Wapner. He examines, for instance the way several rare animals like tigers and rhinos are protected under international law but are still threatened because of local customs. Many believe it is healthy to ingest parts of these animals, and NGO's are actively working to change that perception and alter such norms. He discusses a number of other case studies, and concludes by discussing the implications for these examples and the study of NGOs in politics. Wapner states that "the article describes NGO efforts to alter the actions of states and economic actors. It explains how such efforts have a broader cultural element to them

and thus argues for including them when assessing NGO cultural politics." (Wapner 2002, 58).

Wapner's article does not directly address the notion of soft power, but the use of cultural activism by NGOs points to some of the value soft power could have. The fact that non-state entities can impact environmental activities through completely non-coercive measures points to the value of such activism. This is limited to a few case studies, but the same patterns could be present when larger issues on the international stage are examined.

Wapner (2010) later built upon his analysis of NGOs in environmental politics. This article focuses heavily on the concept of global civil society, which he describes as "that slice of associational life which exists above the individual but below the state, but also across national boundaries" (Wapner 2010, 313). The notion of global civil society will become particularly important in section six of this paper, where the theoretical implications of this research will be discussed. While the dominant theoretical framework in international relations, realism, places heavy emphasis on hard power clashes between states, the notion of global civil society has a heavily constructivist undertone. Constructivists emphasize the belief that all political structures are built on social perceptions. The belief that policy outcomes can be changed by altering the views of global civil society fits neatly into a constructivist framework, and makes it likely that Wapner would be an advocate of such theories.

Wapner states that "while [Transnational Environmental Activist Groups] direct much effort toward state policies, their political activity does not stop there but extends into global civil society" (Wapner 2010, 315). He makes a point of calling out scholars

for focusing on state activity as the only avenue of legitimate political change, pointing out what he sees as a wide range of behaviors that can shape political outcomes. Additionally, he cites several changes in public attitude as evidence of the power shifting perception can hold. This includes changing attitudes on the protection of whales (which he points out were used for target practice by the US military in the 1960's) and the rapid rise of recycling programs in most municipalities.

Wapner's claims point to some of the potential benefits of soft power for non-state actors hoping to impact international affairs. While he emphasizes the use of civic power over the coercive authority of the state, the fact that such power even exists points to flaws in the realist perception of politics. The fact that such manipulation of ideas can result in dramatic changes at both the national and international level points to the need to re-examine the dominant theory of international relations. If Wapner's claims are true it could indicate that such theories have become outdated.

While Wapner studied role non-state actors play in areas outside state authority, others have organized the direct impact such groups have had in interactions with states and international organizations. This has typically come about when they participate in negotiations over international agreements. These agreements are always agreed to and enforced by states, but there have been several examples of outside groups both participating in the debates over them and taking part in negotiations. Michelle Betsill and Elisabeth Corell (2001) focused particularly on NGOs and the environmental movement. They argue that they "argue that NGOs influence international environmental negotiations when they intentionally transmit information to negotiators that alters both

the negotiating process and outcome from what would have occurred otherwise." (Betsill and Corell 2001, 66).

This transmission of information could be significant. Since NGOs have no way to directly exert power in these negotiations, they need other ways to influence the process; controlling information is one possible way. This paper discusses the three "faces" of power, and this control of information conforms to the second face of power. The second face deals with the control of agendas, and information relates to that. Well-informed actors are likely able to introduce new ideas that guides the course of such negotiations, which can impact agendas and ultimately shape their outcome. Additionally, control of information represents another avenue for exercising soft power. If NGOs are able to stockpile technical expertise and influence the outcome of negotiations, they are ultimately furthering their ability to impact international affairs in non-coercive ways.

Information is key to Betsill and Correll, but they also bring up methodological issues with the study of NGO influence in international environmental governance. They propose a new method for gathering data on NGO activity, and advocate that "multiple data types and sources as well as methodologies" be used when studying this issue (Betsill and Correll 2001, 81). This is one of the few sources that emphasizes the methodologies that are employed in this area, and their point is worth keeping in mind as more literature is studied.

Significance of NGO's

Wapner's work on global civil society and Betsill and Corell's emphasis on information established the fact that NGOs are capable of using soft power, and have in

several instances. This has been accomplished by influencing global civil society and controlling information – actions that will be reflected in the case studies later in this paper. In addition to their ability to use soft power, it is important to consider their overall significance in the world. They can utilize soft power, but can they do so in an impactful way? Several authors provide insight into that question.

One of the most widely-discussed issues relating to the environment is the need to stop deforestation. Many scientists and decision-makers are concentrated on limiting greenhouse gas emissions and preventing the continued trend of climate change, but many also see a need to preserve forests to ensure the earth has a natural ability to filter out carbon emissions and self-regulate its temperature. There is no single treaty dealing with deforestation, but Peter Dauvergne discussed the patchwork of regulations that exist in an entry in a book by David L. Levy and Peter J. Newell (2005). Dauvergne quickly indicates that while there is no specific treaty on the environment, there is what he refers to as an "international forests regime," which is has emerged due to the work of independent organizations and "particular provisions of international conventions directed toward other issues, such as biodiversity, desertification, climate change, and wetlands" (Dauvergne 2005, 172).

A particularly interesting aspect of this forests regime is the way Dauvergne identifies the Forest Stewardship Council as a powerful enforcer of norms and regulations related to deforestation. This organization, while lacking any formal enforcement power, studies forest issues and is able to certify lumber based on the management of the forest it originated from (Dauvergne 2005, 175). In addition, the International Tropical Timber Organization helps set standards for sustainable forest usage. The fact that such

organizations have appeared without any international regime to accompany them is interesting. While other areas have seen international agencies arise to go alongside treaties, these independent organizations have been able to work toward forest regulation with very little support from states. Such a system of independent regulation further calls the prominence of the state into question.

Dauvernge concludes that the international forest regime has shown some signs of progress, but concludes that the current framework for forest regulation is inadequate. He cites examples of successful forest management, but points to powerful business interests and corruption as major impediments to the current system of forest management. This raises one of the most important questions facing advocates of expanded international environmental regimes – such regimes generally contain ambitious goals and hold members to high standards, but are dependent on local authorities for full implementation. This is not difficult in most developed countries, where there are enough activists and interested parties to carry out agreements. In developing countries, though, corruption and lack of political will to fully implement agreements can be a serious issue. This presents a potential battleground for states and non-state actors. Where government officials may be stonewalling international agreements, NGOs, both nation and international, could be applying pressure for them to adhere to regimes and embrace more stringent regulations. Dauvergne's work is an interesting case study in this area, and identifies an important place where state and non-state actors can come into conflict.

Kal Raustiala (1997) further examined the connection between NGOs and international environmental law. This author deviates from some of the others that have

been discussed by arguing that the increased role of non-state actors in international law bolsters state sovereignty instead of limiting it. He states early in his paper that "NGO inclusion does not come at the expense of state centrality; rather it is to the advantage of states" (Raustiala 1997, 720). In light of the other literature that exists on this topic, Raustiala's claim is somewhat surprising. The debate over the significance of non-state involvement in the crafting of international law usually revolves around the erosion of state sovereignty and the traditional model of the state as the primary actor in international affairs.

Raustiala backs up his claim about NGOs strengthening state sovereignty by pointing to the way they are enabled by states and their limited role in the process. He argues, for instance, that "if NGOs challenge the state-centric system, why do states allow such wide access and participatory roles?" (Raustiala 1997, 725). He also points to their ability to closely study issues and provide decision-makers with knowledge about problems, as well as their ability to monitor compliance after an agreement has been reached.

Several authors discuss the role of NGOs as watchdogs after the passage of international agreements, but Raustiala is the only one to use this as an argument for the continued value of the state-centric model. While many see such power for outside groups undermining state power, he points to the fact that such power is enabled by states themselves. This paper will address many authors with a different interpretation of the role of non-state actors, but it is important to consider Raustiala's arguments as well. Could non-state actors be completely secondary to states, and ultimately serve to enhance the role they play in international negotiations?

In addition to studies dealing with the interactions between state and non-state actors on a broad level, several authors have examined specific case studies that demonstrate the way independent groups can impact environmental law within the confines of one state. While this does not occur at the international level, the rise of such regulations at a lower level could point to their viability and ultimate adoption at a higher level. A survey of some of these articles here will point to their role within the wider body of literature and indicate their importance in this discussion.

One such article was written by Joann Carmin and Adam Fagin (2010). Their goal was to study the growth of environmental advocacy organizations in areas that had been under the control of the USSR. This examination of groups in light of their recent history provides interesting context. Up until the late 20th century these areas were under strict control by the Soviet government, with any opposition government policy strictly prohibited. They document the way independent environmental activists did not exist, but were replaced with organizations like "Conservation brigades" (Carmin and Fagin 2010, 691-693). These groups fell under the indirect control of the state and were dedicated to issues like forest management and litter cleanup, rather than large-scale issues like climate change that their counterparts in other countries may focus on.

The authors note the sometimes slow pace of change in the nature of state power in these countries, noting that NGOs have had success and failure. They find lingering elements of the powerful state structure of the USSR, but also recognize the benefits of joining the European Union and networks across Europe. This could be empowering NGOs, and in turn "they may well be playing critical roles in pro-change networks and in the reconfiguration of state power" (Carmin and Fagan 2010, 700).

A 2010 article by Laura A. Henry about the situation faced by environmental

activists in Russia echoes much of what Carmin and Fagan had to say. Henry finds that

Russia is reluctant to enforce stringent environmental standards on its own, but groups

can network with groups outside the country to exert diplomatic pressure and force the

government's hand (Henry 2010, 774). For instance, she indicates that Russia may have

ratified the Kyoto Protocol in order to bolster its standing in the international community

(Henry 2010, 774). This could speak to the ability of NGOs to use such state desires to

coerce them into enacting favorable policies.

How They Operate

The previous sections have pointed to NGOs both as users of soft power and

significant players in international affairs. From deforestation efforts in Southeast Asia to

their work in Eastern Europe, they are important players that have created influence

across borders and work closely alongside states on issues of environmental governance.

Within this framework, it is important to address how they operate. They use soft power

and influence states, but how does this take place? Several authors have studied this and

will help shed light on that process.

NGOs have been the primary emphasis of the scholars discussed to this point.

While the notion of non-state actors could embody an endless number of groups, NGOs

are an easy category to identify and study. Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998)

deviated from that slightly by analyzing the role of transnational advocacy networks in

international politics. In the introduction, they explain that "networks are forms of

organization characterized by voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of

communication and exchange," and that "advocacy captures what is unique about these

transnational networks," explaining the norms and ideas that tend to drive activists (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 8-9). Their concept of an advocacy network will be explored in greater detail in subsequent sections of this paper.

After introducing the concept of transnational advocacy networks, they explore some of the history of such networks, then apply their analysis to three separate cases: human rights activists in Latin America, activists in the environmental movement, and those working to stop violence against women. Naturally, their work on the environmental movement is of particular interest here. They explain early on that environmental issues are unique in several respects, noting that activists struggle to give them a "human face" and that finding a consistent policy venue can be difficult (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 121). This observation fits with the concept that environmental issues are some of the most unique – while others have long histories and established venues, the relatively new debates surrounding it and the international nature of most issues gives it a distinct place in international politics.

In their section on environmental advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink discuss some of the ways the networks came about and the issues they have become invested in. They found there was rapid growth for advocacy groups in the United States in the latter half of the 1980's, and that some groups, such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, sought to operate at the international level, and even began to network heavily with each other. The authors discussed the fact that parallel meetings for NGOs took place "at all major UN environmental events since Stockholm [in 1972]," but that activists became "frustrated with the limitations of these arena" (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 130). This led to

more independent forms of networking for activists, as faster communication technology and cheaper air travel became available.

Keck and Sikkink offer two case studies on deforestation, which will be discussed in more detail later in this paper. Their work provides a strong history of non-state activity in environmental politics, and further distinguishes it from other areas of international activism. These distinctions play into the theme of environmental politics as a unique realm of the international system. While others have been established for decades, if not centuries, this is an area that is still developing. This makes it a strong test case for potential changes to the norm of sovereignty – if these changes are taking place, this would be the ideal place for them to manifest themselves. If non-state actors recognize changes taking place they could likely capitalize on them and exert their influence in ways that did not exist before.

Keck and Sikkink referenced the ways NGOs took advantage of new forms of communication to network with each other, and this would naturally include heavy utilization of the internet. While air travel and phone communication have done a great deal to make the world "smaller," few innovations have helped bring people and organizations together like the internet. Yangzi Sima (2011) addresses the internet's impact by examining the way environmental activist groups in China have utilized it to network and build their movement. This varies from the literature discussed so far – while others have mostly concentrated on international activism, this one focuses heavily on work within one country. The principles it discusses, though, can easily be applied to groups operating in one country or across borders. The internet is one of the most easily

utilized communication tools around, and its use is likely very similar from one group to another.

One of the main concepts Sima discusses is the rise of a "green public sphere" in China. She cites author Douglas Torgerson (1999) as describing it as "the combination of a green discourse and a communication forum constructed by the environmental movement – a public sphere that is potentially global, heterogeneous and challenging to the 'once comfortable framework of industrialist discourse'" (Sima 2011, 478). This notion of a green public sphere echoes Wapner's writing about the role of global civil society in public discourse. These both infer that there are areas outside the control of the state where independent actors can share information and shape outcomes in environmental politics. The state is still important in such a scenario, but this separate realm could speak to its diminishing role in such issues.

The notion of a green public sphere is an intriguing concept, but becomes especially interesting when discussed in a country like China, which has a dubious record on free speech and activism issues. Surprisingly, though, Sima cites information indicating that the Chinese government relaxed its stance on environmental NGO's because they help the state protect environmental interests without stretching state capacity too thin. She describes environmental NGOs in China as having a state of "semi-autonomy," wherein they can share information with decision makers through formal channels that are established by the government (Sima 2011, 482).

Sima indicates that there are many environmental activist groups in China, but she uses one of the largest, Global Village of Beijing, as her primary case study for analyzing the way activists utilize the internet in this situation. She finds that the internet is a

powerful tool for this group and others like it, stating that activists on the internet "tend to prioritise (sic) relationship-building, collaboration and resource-sharing in a relatively open and non-discriminatory environment" (Sima 2011, 487). She finds such presence on the internet to be extremely valuable to groups like Global Village of Beijing, enabling them to increase their public profile and "facilitate virtual and offline action" (Sima 2011, 491-492).

Sima's work echoes Keck and Sikkink's statement on NGOs utilizing new developments in communication to network across borders and work together to advocate for their causes. Regardless of its implications for the state sovereignty, it is an interesting development that changes the face of global activism. It is known that these non-state actors are becoming more prominent and working together, but what are the concrete results of their actions? Several authors have examined this, and it is important to consider. If this growth and networking has not yielded significant political change, then the emergence of non-state actors could prove to be a purely symbolic development. If they have played a major role in changing policy, though, it could point to importance of their role in international affairs.

Finally, Tanya Sobol (2006) examines the Ukranian government's construction of a canal in the Danube delta and the backlash that took place among activists. According to Sobol, this area is protected by several international agreements due to the adverse transboundary impacts it would create. She examines the role NGOs play in mediating such conflicts, arguing that they play a major role in enforcing international agreements. She goes so far as to suggest that NGOs should be given formal enforcement powers

under international agreements, albeit with provisions "to ensure accountability and legitimacy" (Sobol 2006, 125).

The literature presented in this section provides a strong summary of the research that exists in this field. National and international laws relating to the environment are changing quickly, and so too are the roles played by independent actors seeking a role in the process. This is reflected in the literature. From real-world examples like the changes taking place in the former communist states of Eastern Europe, to the theoretical concerns of authors like Wapner, there is a rapid evolution of ideas taking place.

The concept of soft power and its growing influence on international affairs helps place this literature in context. The rapid changes in international law and the increasingly prominent role played by non-state actors are largely without historical precedent, and the concept of soft power can provide a valid explanation as to why this is taking place. Such non-violent forms of power were present in all cases presented here, and the next section will explain some of the theories about why this is happening.

III. How Does Soft Power Relate to NGOs?

In international relations – where hard power and armed conflict were once the norm for interstate conflict resolution - the rise of a new form of "soft" power is significant and influential. Soft power not only makes for smoother, less coercive international dialogue, but opens the door for globalization to ease interaction between cultures and make the spread of ideas around the world easier than it has ever been.

The impact of soft power on the field of international relations is clear, but its impact on this issue area is not self-evident. Where states are now using soft power to aid their standing in diplomatic affairs, it is unclear how independent groups could use it to impact international law. These groups have historically stood outside the negotiations of major treaties. While they may have had opinions and rallied supporters, they had little ability to make a real impact on decision makers and ensure that their interests were represented. The phenomenon of globalization, though, has expanded the playing field for independent groups and dramatically changed the ways they can exercise influence. They can network across borders, share information, and orchestrate global activism that will be highly visible and make a strong impact on state representatives that will be negotiating new agreements.

Globalization has leveled the playing field for independent groups. It has made them into legitimate actors on the international stage and earned them a great deal of respect from international leaders. This is where soft power comes into play. Respect is important, but it is equally important to have a vehicle to turn that respect into tangible policy outcomes. Soft power does that by giving NGOs legitimacy and authority on the

international stage. While hard power, the traditional tool of states, is off limits to NGOs, soft power is a tool that can be easily utilized.

The leveling of the playing field and the rise of soft power largely parallels the rise of NGOs in international affairs. Akira Iriye (2000) studied the rise of international NGOs in the twentieth century and found that their number and influence increased dramatically over that time. He counted 135 active international NGOs in 1910, and noticed a nearly threefold increase by 1930, when he counted 375 (Iriye 2000, 425). Following that, the number of international NGOs grew "from 427 in 1940 to 755 by 1960, and further to 1,321 by 1960 and 2,296 by 1970, a fivefold increase over those thirty years" (Iriye 2000, 428). Furthermore, Joseph Nye (2004) states that "the number of NGOs [jumped] from 6,000 to approximately 26,000 during the 1990's alone" (Nye 2004).

The twentieth century saw the NGO community grow from a group of just over 100 organizations to one that encompassed several thousand. Jessica Matthews (1997) found that the emergence of NGOs had has a profound impact on the state of global affairs. She argues that "NGO's easy reach behind other states' borders forces governments to consider domestic public opinion in countries with which they are dealing, even on matters that governments have traditionally handled strictly between themselves. At the same time, cross-border NGO networks offer citizens groups unprecedented channels of influence" (Matthews 1997, 54). Such a change in NGO influence coincides perfectly with their emergence on the international stage. Where they were once a small and influential group of independent organizations, they now have the power to shift ideas and influence governments around the world.

The newfound influence of NGOs points to emergence of a new power paradigm in international politics. Where states were once the dominant actors in all aspects of international relations, the dramatic rise of NGOs and their ability to impact policy is indicative of a new power relationship. This paper is interested in examining that new power dynamic and answering one key question: how do NGOs exert influence in this new system? The answer is that they do it through their newfound ability to utilize soft power.

Soft power broadly refers to the ability of an actor to exert influence over international affairs through non-coercive means. This contrasts with hard power, which focuses more on coercive methods to bring about policy outcomes. For centuries, various forms of hard power – including military threats and economic embargoes – were some of the most prominent forms of hard power. NGOs obviously lack the ability to exert influence in these ways. While they may be able to exert economic authorities through boycotts and other economic activities, they do not come close to the hard power capacity of states. Soft power provides an alternative approach, though. Where coercive power is limited to states, non-coercive power is accessible to any actor with the means to engage activists and make their cause visible.

The expression of soft power by NGOs takes many different forms. It could be as simple as protests or as grand as "naming and shaming" businesses or governments for practices they find unacceptable. Joseph Nye (2004) describes NGOs as a global conscience, arguing that they "develop new norms by directly pressing governments and businesses to change policies, and indirectly by altering public perceptions of what governments and firms should do" (Nye 2004). Nye directly describes such activity as

soft power. By altering public perception and changing the world's dominant norms they are able to circumvent a system that has historically been dependent on coercive forms of power to bring about policy changes.

One tool for NGOs to utilize this non-coercive power is through the control of information. By conducting research and controlling large amounts of technical information, NGOs establish themselves as indispensible sources of data in international agreements. This paper will study the Montreal Protocol, where this phenomenon was very prevalent. A number of NGOs stockpiled information on ozone-depleting substances, and this information became a crucial element of the treaty negotiation. Even though the ultimate aims of NGOs largely ran contrary to the interests of states and businesses, their shrewd use of information guaranteed them a seat at the table.

In addition to their control of information, NGOs exert soft power by staging large protests in attempt to influence civil society. While public officials may be naturally reluctant to act favorably toward environmental activists, changing public opinions may force their hands. If the public adopts the ideas of these NGOs they could create problems for public officials who will have to face re-election. There is a certain amount of risk to this approach; a change in public opinion could be very beneficial to NGOs, but there is always the chance to a public opinion change does not take hold. Below, I examine the way NGOs gambled on changes to public ideas and had some success influencing the Kyoto Protocol.

Finally, NGOs have been very active after the enactment of environmental agreements. They have been deeply involved in the negotiation process, but have found that the oversight and enforcement period represents an opportunity for further

involvement. International law tends to lack "hard" enforcement mechanisms – while they lay out fairly stringent requirements, there is no way to ensure that states live up to their agreements. NGOs are able to independently track compliance and call out states that do not live up to their agreements. This "naming and shaming" can embarrass leaders and create pressure for them to live up to their agreements.

NGOs have accumulated a great deal of power through expertise, activism, and treaty enforcement, but it is important to note that some within civil society have lamented this. For instance, a 2009 blog entry from *The Economist* argues that, due to their generally positive perception within society, NGO's "underlying beliefs are not often challenged as hard as they should be" (Charlegmane, 2009). This lack of challenge contributes to what is known as a democratic deficit. This is worthy of attention, but fails to recognize that activist groups are grounded in civil society, and are responsive to people's concerns as a result. This paper does not agree with the arguments against the democratic standing of NGOs, but acknowledges the need to consider them.

The combination of information control, changes to civil society, and oversight is an expression of soft power, and enables NGOs to effectively counter state and economic interests. Where these factors likely dominated international negotiations before the emergence of soft power, they now have to contend with this type of power. That is not to say this always conflicts with traditional power arrangements – the section on the Montreal Protocol, for instance, will indicate that states, business, and NGOs can sometimes engage in partnerships. Most of the time, though, independent groups work to drive states away from their default courses of action. They are open to partnership, but show a great deal of reluctance to deviate from their core beliefs.

Environmental policy is an ideal venue in which to study this issue. The dawn of the environment as a significant international issue area coincides with both the emergence of soft power as a tool for international affairs and the rise of NGOs on the international stage. Where trade and other diplomatic affairs have been the subject of treaties and international negotiations for centuries, the movement to protect the environment is a phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century. This lack of historical precedent eliminates the possibility that influence by outside groups has its roots in a previous era. In short, if soft power is impacting international agreements, that impact will be apparent in environmental policy.

This section has demonstrated the fact that NGOs have become a major force at the international level. Their growth from a small band of activists in the early twentieth century to a major force in the latter portion of the century points to the significance they now have in the world. The changes in norms and technology that have enabled the rise of NGOs have also enabled the dawn of soft power as a tool to exert influence on the international stage. Where the world was once dominated by states influencing the world with coercive power, independent groups utilizing non-coercive power are now a major factor. Nye described this as a system where NGOs alter perception and pressure the world's most powerful political entities, and this paper plans to further demonstrate that. Where NGOs are impacting national agreements, soft power is the tool to bring that about. It will take many different forms, including technical expertise, coordinated political activity, and attempts to legitimize their role by taking up a formal presence of international agreements. This attempt to use non-coercive means to impact international agreements is a perfect embodiment of soft power.

IV. NGOs and Soft Power

A central concept in this paper is the idea of soft power. When discussing the potential for non-state actors to have a major impact on international affairs, it is impossible to overlook the role this could play. Non-state actors have traditionally been overlooked as players on the international affairs because they lacked any tangible way to exercise power – while they may have been able to make causes visible and lobby decision makers, they were largely excluded from the process of global governance. There is little doubt that changes are taking place in this area. Scholars debate how much non-state actors can impact international law, but it is obvious that their role is more prominent than it once was.

This section will explore the increasingly prominent role of NGOs in international law. In particular, it will consider the way they have been able to utilize soft power to influence international law. I analyze soft power, focusing on some of its most important details and the scholars who have brought the concept to prominence. I next apply the concept to cases where non-state actors, generally NGOs, have played a role in international law. I will identify the exercise of soft-power in these cases, paying special attention to the interaction between such groups and their state counterparts. These cases will indicate that non-state actors are both key actors in the enactment of international law and wise users of soft power. In section four of this paper, I apply such concepts to three of the most important international agreements on environmental issues.

NGOs are a major factor in this paper, and before applying them to the concept of soft power, it is important to consider their definition. While this paper studies groups that operate within the framework of national and international law, some have argued

that groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al Qaeda could be considered NGOs. These groups fit the literal definition of a non-governmental organization, and there is a reasonable argument that they should be counted along with their more mainstream counterparts. This paper does not take that approach, though. Since it focuses on groups shaping international law along with states, it excludes organizations that work outside the existing international political system and use violence. Such groups must work within the boundaries of the international political system; therefore, NGOs will be recognized as independent groups operating within the confines of the law.

With the definition of NGOs firmly established, it is important to begin the examination of them with a simple question: what is power? On the surface, it is a fairly intuitive concept. Upon further consideration, though, it becomes a much more abstract notion. Does it simply relate to one actor's ability to inflict violence upon another? Conversely, is it something more symbolic, with no tangible manifestation? Political science scholars have debated this topic for decades. It is a largely philosophical question, but has deep implications for real issues such as this one. By understanding power, it is possible to understand the motivations of actors and the ways they are able to impact outcomes.

One of the most widely-cited definitions of power comes from Robert A. Dahl. He stated that "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (Dahl, quoted. in Ailon 2006, 771). Dahl's concept is simple but captures the essence of power – the ability of one actor to coerce another into an outcome that they see as favorable. It does not infer that power is naturally a violent concept, but it also does not preclude its use. Such an all-encompassing definition fits most forms of

power exercise in the real world and is particularly helpful here.

Who are A and B in this case? There are a wide range of actors involved here, ranging from NGOs and states to the entities environmental regimes would impact, including business and private individuals. Since they are some of the most vocal and informed advocates of more robust environmental regimes, NGOs are naturally Dahl's "A." Identifying B is somewhat more complex, though. Since NGOs hope to ultimately impact the actions of private groups and insure that certain environmental aims are reached, there is an argument that these private groups would be B. This overlooks the crucial role of states in the process, though. While this paper contends that NGOs are the primary actors behind the environmental regime, states still have the formal power to enact and enforce such laws. Since NGOs work to persuade states into exercising their power to pass and ratify treaties, they will be "B."

The standing of NGO's and states as A and B makes it possible to insert them into Dahl's definition and summarize this paper's core argument: NGOs have power over states to the extent they can get states to do something they would not otherwise do. States, left to protect their own interests, would not be as interested in maintaining the environmental regime without active private interests pushing them to do so. Such pushing is made possible through soft power.

Joseph S. Nye, Jr. is the primary scholar behind soft power, which he defined as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion" (Nye, quoted. In Bohorquez, 2005). Such power fits with the way NGO power was defined above. While power has historically been a violent or coercive action, shifting social norms have made it possible for power to take on a more peaceful face. This not only

limits the spread of violent conflict, but makes it possible for non-state entities to participate in areas of international politics that were once strictly limited to states.

In a 2011 book, Nye discusses what he sees as the changing nature of power and its implications for world affairs, particularly security issues. His emphasis on security issues is generally not applicable to the main ideas of this paper, but his focus on soft power and its evolving nature is. Nye rebukes critics of soft power, citing real-world examples that demonstrate its legitimacy, including his contention that classical realists acknowledge some forms of soft power. For instance, he argues that Machiavelli, while arguing that it is better to be feared than be loved, recognized that "the prince is in greatest danger when he is hated" (Nye 2011, 82).

Nye also cites an example that is particularly relevant here. While it does not deal with environmental issues, it indicates the amount of power a non-state actor can have over a state. He argues that soft power can be exercised by a wide range of actors, including influential celebrities. Several celebrities were active supporters of international efforts to stop genocide in Darfur, and they were especially vocal before the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. China was one of the only major powers supporting Sudanese government in resisting international calls for peacekeeping operations, and many groups, led by celebrities, were pushing for pressure against the Chinese government. Their push was so strong that some were even lobbying for countries to boycott the games (Cooper 2007).

Director Steven Spielberg was involved with the Chinese government in presenting the games, and pressure was exerted on him to speak out against events in Darfur and lobby the government of China to support peacekeeping operations. Actress

Mia Farrow even stated that Spielberg would "go down in history as the Leni Riefenstahl of the Beijing Games" if he did not speak out (Cooper 2007). Spielberg ultimately sided with Farrow and sent a letter to Chinese President Hu Jintao asking that they become involved in resolving the conflict. In response, China sent a senior official, Zhai Jun, to Darfur, where he encouraged the government to accept United Nations policy and allow peacekeepers into the area.

Nye and other advocates of soft power would point to this as an example of the way non-state actors can use soft power to manipulate international affairs. While Steven Spielberg and Mia Farrow are entertainment figures, their ability to exert pressure on the Chinese government and lead to a tangible change in their policy toward Darfur points to the role of non-state actors in international affairs. There were no threats of violence or major pushes from other states – only a concerted effort by private individuals to change public opinion and change the activities of a state as a result. This speaks perfectly to Nye's definition of soft power and the framework described above for NGOs to approach altering the environmental regime.

In addition to emphasizing persuasion, as Dahl's definition of power does, Nye incorporates what are known as the "second" and "third" faces of power. The first face of power is the one Dahl described: the ability of one actor to persuade another actor into a course of action they would not have otherwise pursued. The second and third faces add more nuance to this definition. The second face (Bachrach and Baratz) concentrates on an actor's ability to frame and issue and set the agenda, while the third face (Lukes) deals with the ability to shape preferences (Nye 2011, 91). The difference faces of power are combined into two models of soft power application:

Model 1
Direct Effects
Resources → government elites → attraction → elite decision and outcomes

Model 2
Indirect Effects
Resources → publics → attract/repel → enabling or disabling environment → elite decision

Table 1. From Nye 2011, 95

Model one certainly has value for this study. Since government elites are the people ultimately making decisions and implementing new pieces of international law, any scenario that allows groups to alter their decision making and affect outcomes is worthy of discussion. This paper, however, is particularly interested in the scenarios that would take place under model two. NGOs sometimes control resources (such as information) and carry the attention of policy-making elites as a result, but their broadly inclusive and democratic nature speaks to their ability to alter public opinion and impact outcomes by changing the public opinion environment. NGOs fit under model one by participating in climate negotiations and working alongside states to provide information and make their wishes known in international conferences, but they are most likely to take their appeals to the public through grassroots campaigns.

Nye cites several examples to demonstrate these cases, and one of the most interesting deals with an issue of classic state sovereignty. In 2008 a territorial dispute took place between Russia and Georgia, which ultimately saw Russian troops invade Georgia. While Russian forces were much more powerful than their Georgian counterparts, Nye points out that "Russia carefully controlled its domestic media, but seemed ill prepared to press its case internationally" (Nye 2011, 99). He points out that

Georgia's President was a skilled diplomat that was able to get the world on his side, and in turn make the situation difficult for Russia from an international standpoint. His opponents had a strong hard power advantage in the form of a very powerful military, but the Georgian President was able to alter international opinion to counter it – an example that shows that soft power can not only rival hard power, but can in some cases trump it. If one state can use such tactics to oppose the invasion of another, more militarily powerful one, then it can be easily inferred that non-state actors like NGOs could utilize it in much the same way. If a situation arose that saw states torn over acting on a certain issue, large independent organizations could unleash highly visible, very vocal campaigns that would both generate domestic pressure on government elites and create an international situation that would virtually mandate action.

Nye's book deals largely with the way states can apply soft power in diplomatic areas, but he directly addressed the way NGOs can use soft power a 2004 article. Written in the thick of the United States' conflict in Iraq, Nye is quick to note the well-known prisoner abuse scandal that took place at the Abu Ghraib prison, and the way NGO's were able to use it as leverage against the government (Nye 2004). He proceeds to note that the number of NGOs has grown "from 6,000 to approximately 26,000 during the 1990's alone" (Nye 2004) and that media mentions of the term non-governmental organization have "increased 17-fold since 1992" (Nye 2004).

These observations from Nye provide critical background on the nature of NGOs in today's world. Where they were once relatively limited in scope, such rapid growth indicates that there is not only growing interest in such organizations, but a growing list of successful campaigns on their part. It is reasonable to reach this conclusion based on

such rapid growth, and evidence presented later in this section will demonstrate that.

Additionally, media mentions point to the growing acceptance such organizations are

receiving. It would be fair to question the prominence of NGOs if their publicity was

limited to the internet or "underground" circles of activists, but their emergence in

mainstream society indicates that they are both viable players in international politics and

likely enjoy a considerable amount of support from the general public.

After pointing out the growing prominence and acceptance of NGOs, Nye points

out both their use of soft power and some of the victories they've achieved in recent

decades. He indicates, for instance, that there was initially a great deal of opposition to

the Convention on Tobacco Control and the Landmines Treaty, but these eventually

became law due to the work of NGOs. The ratification of the Landmines Treaty is

particularly significant, as eliminating such a weapon could have posed a hard power

threat to the United States.

Nye closes by arguing that NGOs sometimes don't have universal appeal to

citizens, but are powerful no less. He states that "NGOs and network organizations have

resources and do not hesitate to use them" (Nye 2004). This ability to gather and use

resources to impact international affairs ties together all of Nye's arguments both about

soft power and the emergence of NGOs as major players in international politics. He

makes the case that soft power is a real concept and demonstrates its utility, then applies

it in a realistic way to these organizations. What he does is essential to the argument this

paper is making. He proves that it is theoretically possible for non-state entities to rival

the power of states, and points to examples where this took place. Below, this paper cites

more examples of that taking place then apply it directly to environmental politics.

In a 2006 article, Robert K. Christensen parallels some of Nye's work by examining the role NGOs could play in a world with weakening nation-states and stronger non-state forces. The current system is commonly referred to as the "Westphalian" state system – this dates back to the treaty of Westphalia in 1649, which is commonly seen as the birth of the modern-nation state. The nation-state system has largely gone unchallenged since then. While individual states have come and gone over the centuries since Westphalia, the notion of nation-states as the central actors in global affairs has been met with very little opposition. Could that be changing now? With the increasing role NGOs and other non-state actors are playing in international affairs, some argue that the nation-state is losing its predominant position and that the Westphalian system will soon be replaced by a new power relationship.

Christensen considers the implications of increased NGO activity on the Westphalian system, and focuses on a concept he refers to as "soft law." Much like soft power, soft law lacks hard enforcement mechanisms, but can still be used to alter outcomes and have a great deal of impact on what happens in the world. He notes that "Soft law is not binding upon states as hard treaties and international customary law are, but is significant because of its potential to become binding customary or hard international law" (Christensen 2006, 294). He cites examples of different forms of soft law formation, including the circulation of position papers by NGOs, formal NGO participation in international conferences and treaty negotiations, and participation in international campaigns (Christensen 2006, 294-295).

Soft law is a separate concept from soft power. Where soft power is a means to exert authority, soft power consists more of normative statements that could turn into

more tangible policy. Instead of a being viewed as a concept that is parallel to soft

power, soft law should be viewed as a step in the process of international law formation

that is open to NGOs. They can shape ideas and establish norms, which could ultimately

turn into "hard" international law. By establishing ideas in a non-binding fashion, NGOs

lay the foundation for future negotiations, and ultimately plant the seeds for new

international agreements.

Successful soft law manifests itself as hard law, and the effort to ban landmines is

an example of that. The Ottawa Treaty is the (hard law) agreement that ultimately

banned land mines, and a 1997 article in *The New York Times* examines the successful

enactment of that agreement and the independent actors who ultimately brought the issue

to the world's attention. It describes the emergence of the International Committee to

Ban Landmines (ICBL), which was started by a group of veterans who admitted their

own doubts about their ability to ban landmines (Bonner 1997). Slowly, though, they

were able to win supporters and bring the issue to the world's attention. They were able

to get the Canadian government on their side, which in turn began lobbying other

governments. They then "mounted an effective public relations campaign that *made it*

politically difficult to say no (emphasis added)" (Bonner 1997). This campaign included

"images of women and children maimed by land mines" and "pictures of Diana, Princess

of Wales, consoling land-mine victims in Angola and Bosnia" (Bonner 1997).

The notion of making it politically difficult to say no goes hand-in-hand with this

argument. States hold the ultimate power to enact "hard" law – while NGOs can

campaign and push actors, they have no authority to pass treaties and enforce laws upon

states and individuals. Their power rests with the ability to compel states to act.

Effective public relations campaigns – like the one waged by the ICBL – change public sentiments to the point that states have no choice but to act. This particular agreement even directly contradicted the hard power considerations of most countries. A 1997 *New York Times* op-ed by the editorial director of the military journal *NATO's Sixteen Nations* argued that "Land mines are a highly effective defensive weapon. They are light, easily transported and concealed, quickly laid and difficult to detect. Covered by gun fire, they can create a formidable obstacle" (Bonnart 1997). For the author, such strategic effectiveness would make it unwise to ban landmines. Most countries seek any strategic advantage possible on the battlefield, yet 160 countries are now a party to the treaty (United Nations Treaty Collection).

On the surface, states have little reason to voluntarily abandon a weapon that gives them a strategic advantage on the battlefield. There is always an incentive to not only deter military aggression from other states, but insure that in the case of conflict they have every advantage available to them. The information from Bonnart on the effectiveness of landmines indicates that they would, at the very least, keep an open mind toward their use. Due to changing norms, though, they have voluntarily given them up. This was because independent actors made it *politically difficult* for them to continue deploying such weapons. That is the essence of soft law and soft power – using resources within civil society to alter the environment in which states operate. By putting this level of pressure on leaders they force them to choose between their existing course of action and one that society has dictated they take – in holding to Dahl's definition, they make states do something they would not otherwise do.

This section has demonstrated the theoretical background on the existence of soft

power and demonstrated its existence in the real world. Nye's theories and the examples

he provides prove that soft power is a concept that should be taken seriously both by state

and non-state actors. The example of the Ottawa Treaty drives home the point that soft

law and soft power not only exist, but can easily and effectively be exercised by non-state

actors like NGOs. By making a certain course of action the only feasible option for

public officials they can override a state's hard power concerns and impact their decision

making as a result.

How do these concepts relate to environmental politics? The following section

will explore that in greater detail. It will examine three of the most important

international agreements in the environmental regime: the United Nations Conference on

the Human Environment, the Montreal Protocol, and the Kyoto Protocol. NGOs were

active participants in all three of these, and were able to use soft power to ensure their

success and change the way states approached environmental challenges.

V. NGOs and Environmental Politics

The previous section considered the existence of soft power and its application for NGOs. It demonstrated that the concept has strong theoretical background, and has been applied in real situations by both state and non-state actors. The example of the Ottawa Treaty on landmines demonstrated its applicability – while many theorists would look exclusively at the hard power considerations of a state during such negotiations, NGOs were able to define the debate on their terms and use soft power to change the strategic concerns of their state counterparts.

Describing the theoretical legitimacy of soft power and demonstrating its real-world applications sets this paper up to explore its core issue area, environmental politics. NGO's have been able to apply soft power on a broad scale, but have they been able to do so in this area? There have been a number of international agreements to set environmental standards, but to what extent have NGOs been driving such negotiations and enforcing the standards they produce? This section will examine three of the largest agreements in that area and work to answer that question. The Rio Declaration, Montreal Protocol, and Kyoto Protocol are three of the most significant pieces of the environmental regime, and this section will explore the way NGOs were involved in their negotiation and eventual enforcement. The information presented here will indicate that NGOs were essential at every point of the treaty process – from an issue's appearance on the agendas of negotiators, to the negotiation itself and eventual enforcement. Enforcement will become especially significant here – environmental issues have shown a greater propensity than most to incorporate independent groups like NGOs to assist with enforcement. This is sometimes to assist states with the difficult task of monitoring and

enforcement, but sometimes happens because independent groups remain more focused on the goals of a treaty than states do.

Rio Conference

One of the most widely-known international conferences related to environmental issues was the Earth Summit held in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. While it was not chronologically the first of these three cases (the Montreal Protocol was enacted five years earlier in 1987), it deserves first mention because it dealt with the environment as a whole, as opposed to specific issues. It is also significant because it was seen as a first step toward larger international agreements. Its goals in the area of climate change set the stage for the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol, and gatherings of its signatories on the anniversary of its signing could represent potential venues for future environmental negotiations.

A *New York Times* article from 1992, shortly after the conference's completion, described the Earth Summit as "a fractious 12 days of diplomatic free-for-all among 178 nations" (Stevens 1992). The conference and its resulting statement of principles were met with mixed results. Richard E. Benedick of the United States, who helped negotiate the ozone portion of the agreement, said "the history books will refer back to this day as a landmark in a process that will save the planet from deterioration" (quoted. In Stevens 1992). Many were critical of the non-committal stance taken by the United States however. They pushed for weaker standards on carbon emissions targets and did not ratify the portion of the agreement dealing with endangered species, which many attributed to election year politics (Stevens 1992).

There were some changes to international hard law as a result of the conference –

most notably, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Climate Change Convention *(BBC News,* 2012), which would eventually manifest itself as the Kyoto Protocol. Perhaps the most significant element of the negotiations in Rio, though, was a statement of global principles on development and the environment known as the Rio Declaration. Many would expect such a statement to be limited specifically to environmental issues, but this statement had a component that emphasized development as well. Included in its 27 principles are some of the following ideas (United Nations General..., 1992):

- ⚔ "Environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it" (Principle 4)

- ⚔ "States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem." (Principle 7)

- ⚔ "Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level" (Principle 10)

- ⚔ "Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible" (Principle 25)

Principles like these, obviously, have no binding impact on the states who sign on to them. They do help create an extensive body of international soft law on development and the environment, though, and section three demonstrated the major impact that could have on international regimes. Section three also demonstrated that there is a deep connection between NGOs, soft law, and the behavior of states. Were NGOs involved in the establishment of these principles? Additionally, have they continued to be involved in the Rio process after the conference's completion?

Those questions were answered in part by a 1998 article by Ann Marie Clark, Elisabeth J. Friedman Kathryn Hochstetler. Coming on the heels of the agreement in Rio, this article further addressed the role of NGOs in global governance processes, concentrating on the environment, human rights, and women's rights issues. They note the roles NGOs have played in major conferences relating to these issues, and point out some surprising statistics on the role these groups played in the Earth Summit. They compare it to one of the first international meetings related to the environment, the 1972 Stockholm Conference, and point out the dramatic increase in NGO involvement that took place. The authors note that "less than 300 NGOs attended the Stockholm Conference on the environment," while "1,400 NGOs registered with the Rio Conference, and 18,000 attended the parallel NGO forum" (Marie et al. 1998, 9).

This large group of NGO's is described as being highly disciplined, with some fulfilling a lobbyist-like role (Marie et al. 1998, 13). This lobbying was influential in the process leading up to Rio, but the authors describe a process in which states, unprepared for the role NGOs were beginning to play, frustrated NGOs by severely reducing the role they played in the final drafting of the treaty (Marie et al 1998, 17). Such efforts to shut out these groups speaks to the occasional conflict that takes place between states and NGOs. One of this paper's major themes is the shift in power that is taking place from state to non-state actors, and this effort to limit the influence on NGOs speaks to that.

In addition to the formal conference, the source above indicated that 18,000 NGOs attended the Global Forum, a parallel conference held at the same time. Peter Haas, Marc A. Levy, and Edward A. Parson wrote an article on what took Rio and described some of the accomplishments of NGOs at the Global Forum. As their parallel

to the Rio Declaration, these NGO's agreed to what is known as the "Earth Charter" (Haas et al 1992, 35). The Earth Charter is "grouped into five cluster issues: NGO cooperation and institution building, alternative economic issues, major environmental issues, major environmental issues, food production, and cross-sectorial issues" (Haas et al 1992, 35). This represents an independent establishment of soft law – while the Rio Declaration was a formal statement by states about the environment and development, this is a slightly more informal, but very important statement. Such efforts by NGOs point to their persistence in such cases – they are sometimes excluded from formal meetings and not afforded the same rights as state negotiators, but still effectively articulate their principles and impact debates such as this one.

The Earth Summit embodies some of the inherent conflict that exists between increasingly-powerful NGOs and their state counterparts. 1,400 NGOs registered with the conference, but the information presented above indicates that states became increasingly uncomfortable with that. Regardless, the principles presented in the Rio Declaration have the "fingerprints" of NGOs all over them. These statements in support of environmental protection and pro-development policies contradict the hard power considerations of states, yet made their way into international law. Additionally, the Earth Charter represents another example of soft law on the environment. Its principles are not legally binding on any governments, yet represent an attempt by NGOs to network with each other and establish universal principles that would impact future negotiations. Their attempt to network and establish firm principles points to the robust nature of NGOs and their staying power in environmental politics.

Montreal Protocol

Before the world's attempt to establish universal principles in Rio, one of the most notable successes of international environmental law took place when the world addressed a single issue. A number of reports had pointed out the possibility that the ozone layer – a layer of gasses in the upper atmosphere that protects the earth from harmful solar radiation – was being eaten away by the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's). These substances were a mainstay in several personal and individual products, ranging from aerosol sprays to essential materials in manufacturing. Such wide commercial use combined with known environmental issues set the stage for a clash between business interests and independent groups interested in environmental protection.

In a 2005 book edited by David L. Levy and Peter J. Newell, Robert Faulkner examined some of the history behind the CFC issue and the eventual passage of the Montreal Protocol. When evidence began to emerge on the dangers of CFC's and the growing hold in the ozone layer, Faulkner indicates that there was very little momentum from businesses toward any form of legal regulation. He states that "the chemical industry followed the tried and tested strategy of denial and resistance, fighting the growing demands for regulation at national and international level (sic)" (Levy and Newell 2005, 108). With NGOs firmly in support of stronger regulation on CFC's, this set up states as the third party who would make the ultimate decision on the issue. The introduction of business interests adds an interesting element to the Montreal discussion – while the other issues this paper has discussed have dealt almost exclusively with interactions between NGOs and states, business interests add a new factor to the equation. They are separate entities from NGOs, but their ability to sway states and

impact the ultimate outcome of negotiations is significant. If they were able to exercise

their interests and produce favorable outcomes it could speak further to the role

independent groups could play in shaping state interests and impacting their ultimate

decisions in international negotiations.

To this point, this paper has focused largely on the role NGOs have played during

the international negotiation process. Such participation is essential; there is a pattern of

such groups playing an increasingly important role when state leaders gather to discuss

new regulations, and that receive a great deal of attention. Beyond participation in the

treaty process, though, it is important to analyze the role NGOs play outside the

negotiation sessions. This could manifest itself in several different ways, but most

notably comes into play when they educate the public and/or decision makers, as well as

their involvement as independent enforcers of new agreements.

Such education and enforcement activities were key (and remain key) for activists

involved in issues related to the ozone. While other treaties have been discussed in a

relatively static environment, the Montreal process was changed rapidly by a series of

technological innovations. Faulkner noted above that CFC-reliant industries began

discussions with a preference to avoid new regulations, but a changed stance from

DuPont, one of the largest chemical producers in the world, helped change that. They

announced their support for CFC regulations, which Faulkner claims helped establish an

"emerging consensus between governments, industry and NGOs on the need for

international action" on ozone issues (Levy and Newell 2005, 108). The nature of such

regulations naturally saw a great deal of fluctuation in the years that followed, with some

groups wanting more immediate changes and others preferring a gradual phaseout of

CFC's. That is relatively minor, though, compared with the fact that a relative consensus came out of this discussion. It is especially important for NGOs, who typically have to take a more adversarial stance toward their counterparts on such issues. A collaborative environment such as this invites new tactics and creates the opportunity for a new role – one that is centered more on education of interested parties and enforcement after an agreement has been reached.

The fourth section of this paper discussed Dahl's definition of power, but also mentioned two other faces of power. The second face of power, which is attributed to Bachrach and Baratz, focused on the ability of actors to shape the agenda and exert power by altering the environment in which issues were discussed. For instance, a study by the American Meteorological Society found that "the activities of both industry and citizen's groups in research, publishing data, and lobbying governments influenced the international debate on the ozone layer" (Benedick 22). Furthermore, research presented to a 1997 UN symposium indicates that NGOs tend to be some of the most knowledgeable groups on environmental issues, which can lead to states relying on their expertise and working with them during the negotiation process (Breitmeier and Rittberger 1997, 9-10). Montreal is singled out for its reliance on alliances between states and technically-knowledgeable NGOs. They indicate that Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace were active supporters of CFC regulations, and that the United States formed a "tacit coalition" with those organizations while negotiating the Montreal Protocol (Breitmeier and Rittberger 1997, 10).

The formation of such coalitions fits in with the second face of power. By cooperating with the major powers involved in the eventual enactment and enforcement

of an agreement, they are able to shape the agenda in ways independent groups typically would not be able to. Additionally, they are able to touch on the third face of power. This face, pioneered by Steven Lukes, deals with an actor's ability to shape the preferences of another actor. If states and NGOs are in a coalition together it is reasonable to think they are shaping each others' preferences. This is especially true if one group is being relied upon for its technical expertise. The information presented above indicates that this was the case with the Montreal negotiations, which would mean that groups like Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace were able to influence state negotiators with the technical knowledge they presented.

In addition to the role these groups played leading up to the treaty's signing, it is important to analyze their role as third party enforcers after its ratification. States are notorious for being lenient on the enforcement of international agreements such as the Montreal Protocol, and with few strong enforcement mechanisms available at the international level, it can be difficult to police the parties and ensure that the original standards are met. A 1999 article by Alan E. Boyle examines that exact concept and indicates some of the enforcement mechanisms that are built into Montreal. He echoes some of the ideas of Nye by pointing out what he describes as "soft enforcement" mechanisms. In the case of the Montreal Protocol, he describes a process by which any compliance issue can be submitted to the Implementation Committee, who will then report to the Meeting of the Parties to decide on the need for further action (Boyle 1999, 910). Boyle sees such soft enforcement mechanisms creating a great deal of flexibility for interested parties, especially NGOs. He argues that such systems facilitate relatively easy resolution of compliance issues and guarantee "that all interests are adequately

represented," including those of NGO's (Boyle 1999, 912).

In addition to treaty mechanisms that were designed to give NGOs power as informal treaty enforcers, these groups were active participants in subsequent negotiations over CFC policy. There were several subsequent negotiations over treaty revisions, and NGOs were active participants there as well. Paul Wapner argues that "the real strength of NGOs was demonstrated in the follow-up meetings to Montreal where they pushed for more stringent measures" (Wapner 2002, 42). NGO's argued that the world should commit to "complete elimination of CFC emissions by the year 2000," which was adopted – a fact that Canada's UN Ambassador Stephen Lewis gives NGO's a great deal of credit for (Wapner 2002, 42).

Most international negotiations involving states and NGOs have a somewhat adversarial nature. States are entrenched in a certain position, while NGOs are actively lobbying officials and civil society in hopes of changing the nature of the discussion. Montreal was different, though. Changing technology and general agreement between states, businesses, and NGOs enabled all three to work toward a common goal. NGOs were able to serve as technical experts leading up to the negotiation process, and were subsequently given power as independent enforcers worked to see that the treaty was strengthened at subsequent rounds of negotiation. They played an essential role in driving the treaty process, and further cemented themselves as an indispensable force in environmental politics.

Kyoto Protocol

The negotiation process in Rio concluded with a new declaration of global principles related to the environment and a few new pieces of hard law to regulate areas

like biological diversity and climate change. Their climate change agreement, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), set the stage for the international community to engage in several subsequent rounds of negotiations over climate change regulations. This ultimately resulted in the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. Kyoto is one of the most controversial environmental agreements in existence – while many saw it as an important step toward the elimination of climate change, it has been subject to criticism by several countries, most notably for its failure to hold developing countries to high standards. The United States is notably absent from the treaty, and some developed countries like Canada have ratified the treaty but later decided to withdraw (Austen 2011).

In spite of its criticisms, though, the Kyoto Protocol is the most significant international agreement on climate change. It has set the stage for future negotiations, and is one of the world's first definitive statements on the need for international action to address greenhouse gas emissions. What role did NGOs play in this agreement? Their participation, or lack thereof, in such a significant agreement could point to how states view their standing on the international level. If their standing in Kyoto matches that of Rio and Montreal it would further demonstrate the prominence of such groups in environmental politics.

A 2002 article by Michele Betsill examined the Kyoto Protocol and the role NGOs played in its negotiations. Much like the situations in Rio and Montreal, there were a number of independent groups that were deeply involved in the process. She found that there were over 1,000 NGOs present, with Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and the World Wide Fund for Nature having the largest presence (Betsill 2002, 52). Such

a large presence is significant, but their level of organization is equally noteworthy. Betsill notes that that the Climate Action Network (CAN) was formed in 1989, and CAN served as the primary coordinator of NGO action in Kyoto (Betsill 2002, 53). CAN published a daily newsletter for NGOs participating in the Kyoto process and "spent a great deal of time providing technical information to decision makers" (Betsill 2002, 53-54). In addition to their activities within the formal negotiation procedures, these groups were actively trying to shape the opinions of observers through outside activity. Betsill notes that NGOs "organized demonstrations and protest activities to draw public and media attention to the negotiations and the issue of climate change" (Betsill 2002, 55).

The dual approach of NGOs in Kyoto is significant, as it demonstrates their flexibility in affecting negotiations. Much like they did in Montreal, NGOs accumulated a great deal of information that made them essential to those who would be making the ultimate decisions on the treaty. In addition, though, efforts to protest and draw attention to climate change can make the situation difficult for state representatives. It is reminiscent of the information presented in section three on the Ottawa Treaty – one source said that NGO activity made inaction politically difficult for states, and these groups were likely trying to imitate that outcome here. State officials could be unlikely to act on a given issue, but if NGOs are able to alter public perceptions, it could lead to dramatic changes. By creating political pressure and establishing new social norms, it becomes much easier to create leverage against decision makers and force their hand on these issues.

The information presented by Betsill indicates that, just like Rio and Montreal, NGOs were deeply involved in the negotiation process at Kyoto. Their presence is

significant, but it is also important to question what role that presence played on the treaty that ultimately emerged. Betsill examines that, and finds their influence strong in some ways, yet weak in others. She examines the ultimate outcomes of the treaty, and finds that many of the emissions targets that were ultimately agreed to fell far short of what NGOs wanted (Betsill 2002, 55-56). She questions the value of solely examining treaty outcomes, though, and stresses the need to examine other factors. For instance, the idea of implementing a carbon trading system emerged during Kyoto negotiations. Such systems have become popular in recent years, as they have potential to dramatically limit greenhouse gas emissions while creating a carbon market that could be lucrative for some businesses. Many environmentalists oppose an approach that would essentially give businesses a license to pollute, though, and they expressed that at Kyoto. NGOs described such a system as encouraging "hot air," and Betsill states that "many participants and observers to the negotiations note that without [Environmental NGOs], the issue of hot air would not have been raised" (Betsill 2002, 57).

NGOs had a great deal of influence on the treaty process itself. From their coordinated action under the CAN umbrella to their work to alter civil society and limit the presence of emissions trading in the final treaty, they had a noticeable impact on the negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol. What about their role after the treaty went into effect? Rio, as a mostly normative statement about priorities related to the environment, presented little opportunity for continued activism. Montreal saw NGOs emerge as independent treaty enforcers, though, and Kyoto presented the same situation.

A 2004 article by Steinar Andresen and Lars H. Gulbrandsen studied the impact NGO's had on the compliance mechanisms in the Kyoto Protocol, which would

ultimately impact the way they were able to operate as independent enforcers of the agreement. They found that NGOs were able to serve as "intellectual leaders" in the discussions over the compliance system (Andresen and Gulbrandsen 2004, 67). Additionally, they examine a number of goals NGOs had for the compliance regime, as well as their ability to see those goals implemented. Table 2 summarizes those goals and the way their success in attaining them.

NGO Goal Attainment on Salient Aspects of the Climate Compliance System

Feature of compliance regime	NGO goal attainment
Separation of enforcement and facilitative functions	High
Strong enforcement mechanism	High/medium
Legally binding consequences of non-compliance	Low/uncertain
NGO access to compliance proceedings	Medium
Transparent compliance proceedings	Medium

Table 2: NGO Goals and Results in Kyoto Compliance. Taken from Andresen and Gulbrandsen 2004, 68

As the table above demonstrates, the only notable failure of NGOs in the compliance system is that of legally binding consequences for non-compliance. They state that NGOs were strongly in favor of legally-binding consequences for non-compliance, but the decision on that was delayed until a later negotiating session, which they describe as "seemingly a major setback for the green movement" (Andresen and Gulbrandsen 2004, 63). That issue aside, though, table 2 demonstrates that NGOs were able to exert their influence in several elements of the compliance regime.

Kyoto demonstrates that NGOs are not all-powerful in international environmental negotiations. They have to contend with states and other powerful non-state actors, such as businesses and trade groups, who also wield a great deal of influence.

In spite of that, though, their fingerprints are all over the Kyoto Protocol. From their efforts to alter the public perception of the treaty to a stronger enforcement system, these groups were able to alter the final outcome of the treaty. Most significantly, this was accomplished through organized activity, high levels of technical expertise, and an emphasis on changing the landscape of civil society and creating pressure for states. They used crucial elements of soft power and effectively challenged groups who could utilize a great deal of hard power against them.

Rio, Montreal, and Kyoto all present a picture of NGOs deeply involved in the process of international law formation. Montreal demonstrated their capacity to help enforce agreements, while Rio demonstrated their power to advocate ideas and Kyoto demonstrated their ability to use civil society to impact specific policies. This opens to door to further research on the way NGOs impact specific steps in the policy process. While this paper demonstrates that they are active at several levels, the door is open for further research to specifically study each step of the process. This could demonstrate an emphasis on certain areas (such as agenda setting or problem definition), or an equal involvement throughout the process. Further research could use such analysis to identify their approaches and further clarify their strength in environmental negotiations.

The three cases presented in this section demonstrate that NGOs are an indispensable force in environmental negotiations at the international level. They show a consistent ability to use soft power and leave their mark on international regimes. In the cases of Rio and Kyoto, they used technical expertise and strong negotiation skills to work their ideas into the final treaty. In Montreal, they retained that technical expertise, but worked as partners with businesses and states to strengthen global regulations on

ozone-depleting substances. They are well-coordinated with a strong commitment to their principles, but also flexible in approach and well-versed in the soft power tactics available to them. This has manifest itself in a strong presence in these negotiations.

VI. Discussion

This paper has referenced numerous scholarly studies that point to major changes in the global power dynamic. First of all, soft power is changing the way power is exercised on the international level. Where hard power was once a primary tool of negotiation, less coercive tactics have become increasingly popular with non-state organizations. This has been true in areas outside the environment, where the Ottawa Treaty to ban landmines became an example of the way soft power can sometimes trump hard power. Where landmines represented a strong defense mechanism for states in armed conflict, independent organizations were able to shift social norms and create a political climate where states could not realistically hold on to such weapons. By altering civil society, they were able to trump the influence of hard power on decision makers.

This principle ultimately carried over to environmental politics. The Rio Declaration, Montreal Protocol, and Kyoto Protocol all pointed to the influence NGOs have over civil society and the ultimate actions of states. They came to the table with a great deal of negotiating authority, and were able to exert a surprising amount of influence over the agreements that emerged from these conferences. While none of these agreements had the same military implications as the Ottawa Treaty, the ability of independent organizations to override the concerns of states is significant. It points to their increasing standing on the international stage and their ability to impact civil society and force the establishment of new regimes.

The evidence presented in this paper points to the emergence of a new power dynamic in international politics. The state has long been regarded as the primary actors in the "anarchy" of international relations, but this assumption needs some revision.

There is no denying the importance of states, but it is now also important to consider the emergence of NGO's and other non-state actors.

Before exploring the emerging power dynamic, it is important to first explore the theoretical construct that has long dominated international relations scholarship: realism. Realism maintains that there is a relatively simple power dynamic dominating international politics. States are the primary politics actors, and according to the theory, they operate in a state of anarchy. With no central authority and no hard enforcement mechanism, they essentially write the rules as they go. Additionally, the states operating in this system are singularly interested in the protection of sovereignty. While secondary concerns may arise, the autonomy of the state is at the forefront of every issue of international significance. This concentration on sovereignty commonly boils down to the use of hard power, and makes it a significant piece of realist thinking. Hans Morgenthau, one of the dominant scholars of realist theory, states succinctly that "the main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power" (Morgenthau 1985, 17). Morgenthau continues to write off other theories by stating that "a realist theory of international politics, then, will guard against two popular fallacies: the concern with motives and the concern with ideological preferences" (Morgenthau 1985, 17).

Such realist thinking, for several reasons, contradicts much of what this paper has stated. First and foremost, their heavy emphasis on the role of the state does not agree with the argument being made here. While this paper holds that states are still a significant force in international politics – and still likely the *most* powerful – it contends that independent groups are quickly gaining influence on the international stage. Their

power is significant, as is their rapid growth. Where communication and cross-border interaction among activists may have been difficult in the 20th century, the dawn of the internet, mass-communication, and easy travel have made it possible for NGOs to react quickly to world events and react in ways that will impact the actions of national leaders. This has created an atmosphere where soft power has become a significant force. The Ottawa Treaty is an example of that – where realists would see states maintaining their ability to use landmines due to hard power concerns, the ability of NGOs to network, protest, and sway world leaders changed the political climate and forced states to act.

Morgenthau argues individual motives and ideological preferences are insignificant, but the information presented here directly contradicts that. Ottawa, Rio, Montreal, and Kyoto all demonstrate the fact that the preferences of independent organizations have the ability to impact that the actions of state actors. Hard power concerns and traditional diplomacy are still a factor, but the rise of soft power and independent organizations gives them a new force to contend with. Activists, driven by ideology and largely altruistic motives – the very thing Morgenthau criticized – have left a significant mark on all of these agreements.

The failure of realism to account for the influence of NGOs means that a new theoretical construct is needed to explain the power dynamic that is now emerging. Realism became such a powerful force in international relations because it was largely correct. Since the Westphalian state system emerged in 1648, the notion of power-driven states operating in a state of anarchy was fairly accurate. The changes in communication, travel, and ideas brought about through globalization have made that system a thing of the past. States still exist – and will for the foreseeable future – but are losing the power

they held for over four centuries.

A new theory of international relations is emerging that can explain the changing power dynamic: constructivism. Where realism sees the world being dominated by power-oriented states, constructivism sees such power relationships being much more flexible. Constructivists contend that all power relationships at the international level are socially constructed. That means that social perception could conceivably impact the way states and organizations interact at the international level. Alexander Wendt is one of the primary scholars advocating constructivist theories, and he provides a strong example of such principles. He argues that "without the cold war's mutual attribution of threat and hostility to define their identities, [the US and USSR] seem unsure of what their 'interests' should be" (Wendt 1992, 70).

Where realists would see the Cold War as a hard power-based standoff that emerged from each state's fears over its own security, constructivsts see social perceptions creating a state of fear that ultimately lead to a near-conflict. Such dynamics could theoretically exist with any issue of international significance. To this point, Wendt simply states that "it is collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions" (Wendt 1992, 70). This provides direct contrast with Morgenthau, who argued that factors like ideology and personal motives play no role in international affairs. To constructivists, such concepts manifest themselves at the international level and define power relationships.

In section three, this paper discussed the Ottawa Treaty, and cited a source that argued that activists made inaction on landmines "politically difficult." For realists, such a scenario would be impossible. Power and sovereignty would trump all other concerns

for national leaders, and a group of activists would not have any power to force the landmine issue onto the international agenda. Under a constructivist framework, though, it would be possible for such a scenario to take place. By altering civil society and changing the environment of state actors, they could construct a new power dynamic that would favor such causes. The same phenomenon has taken place in the environmental realm. Where states have demonstrated some reluctance to strengthen the environmental regime, Rio, Montreal, and Kyoto have all demonstrated the power of NGOs to put more rules in place and shape the dynamic of the debate.

There are issues in international relations that fall well outside the umbrella of this paper that realism is well-suited to address. Interstate conflicts, for interest, lend themselves to a framework that emphasizes power and a state's need to guarantee its own autonomy. This paper throws realism's ability to describe international regime building into serious question, though. Non-state actors are significant, and soft power is arguably more effective than hard power. States are responsive to the concerns of civil society, and this ultimately impacts the agreements that are enacted. This is indicative of a changing world, and points to the need for scholars to utilize new approaches to analyze such events.

Among these new approaches, constructivism is one of the most applicable. In addition, though, there are several other theories of international relations that would contribute to this discussion. For instance, neoliberalism predicts the rise of institutions like NGOs. It echoes a number of the state-centric tendencies of realism, but is more open to the idea that states could build alliances with independent groups in order to strengthen their position in the world. They would acknowledge the importance of NGOs

and agree with several of this paper's conclusions.

Neoliberalism provides a stronger explanation for these changes than realism, but does not address systemic changes as effectively as constructivism. It accurately acknowledges the role independent groups could play in the world, but still emphasizes the primacy of the state. An accurate theory of international relations will acknowledge the possibility that independent groups could ultimately become equal players in international negotiations. That outcome is not certain, but this paper indicates that it is a distinct possibility.

VII. Conclusion

This paper has covered a wide range of topics related to the nature of power, the international activity of NGOs, and the theoretical concerns tied to it. This has included a review of relevant literature and detailed analysis of scholars who have been involved in such studies. The analysis began by providing a broad overview of those who have studied these issues before. Paul Wapner gave an overview of some theories relating to NGOs and their operation in civil society, while other authors discussed both theoretic concepts and specific examples of NGOs operating within the international system. Section three demonstrated the connection between NGOs and soft power, while section four described the notion of soft power in more detail, focusing heavily on the work of Joseph Nye and the notable use of soft power by activists who wanted to end the use of landmines. Section five took the principles of section four and applied them to the environmental movement. It cited the Rio Declaration, Montreal Protocol, and Kyoto Protocol as examples of the role NGOs can play in international regime building. Section six then looked at the findings of section four in the context of international relations theory, finding that realism is an inadequate tool to explain the role NGOs have played in building the environmental regime. Constructivism was presented as a more realistic tool for such analysis.

Ultimately, this paper points to the fact that the world is changing in dramatic ways. Realism was once the best way to explain international politics because people lived in much different societies. Travel was limited, communication was slow, and cultures stayed relatively insulated. Today, though, globalization is revolutionizing the old system. People move across borders with ease, cell phones and the internet make

mass-communication very easy, and cultures mix more and more every day. This, naturally, has political implications. Activists, once limited to small acts of protest in their own countries, can operate across borders and organize protests with ease that was once unimaginable. This has given them a great deal of visibility, which has enabled them to shape public opinion. These changes in public opinion create a new political dynamic for state actors, which can often force action on certain issues.

The additional example of the Ottawa Treaty points to viability for NGOs outside the environmental area. Most issue areas will see continued NGO involvement like this in the near future. It is possible, though, that some will grow slower than others. Trade negotiations could present an example of this. While there are NGOs that are heavily interested in trade issues, states have been involved here for centuries, and it will be significantly more difficult for them to break into the established power structure and advocate their positions.

Applying these principles to other areas will shed more light on the changing dynamics of world politics, but will require future research. This paper indicated that NGOs are a significant force in environmental politics. They have been deeply involved in the passage and implementation of several agreements, and are one of the most visible groups of activists in the world. If this type of research were applied to other issue areas it may point to the NGOs as a significant player in all international issues. Such research could further bolster the case that independent groups are becoming increasingly significant in international politics.

This paper represents a first step toward a major statement about the changes that are taking place in international politics. It indicates that profound changes are taking the

place, and opens to the door to research that could further alter the dominant theories of international relations. As NGOs become increasingly powerful, states have to adapt and work alongside them in order to build international law. More research is needed to make this clear.

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