Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

> We cannot say with certainty how much longer mankind [sic] can postpone initiating deliberate control of his growth before he will have lost the chance for control. We suspect on the basis of present knowledge of the physical constraints of the planet that the growth phase cannot continue for another one hundred years. Again, because of the delays in the system, if the global society waits until those constraints are unmistakably apparent, it will have waited too long.
>
> —*The Limits to Growth* 1972

> The concept of sustainable development does imply limits—not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities. But technology and social organization can be both managed and improved to make way for a new era of economic growth.
>
> —*Our Common Future* 1987

FEW TRULY GLOBAL concerns have held the potential to transform substantially the nature of global politics and society. Contenders might include the fear of nuclear annihilation or advances in technology and telecommunications. The former arguably has transformed the nature of conflict between the major powers, while the latter have made possible exponential increases in economic transactions across vast distances, enhanced the spread of culture, and enabled vast changes in the patterns of interaction between a wide range of actors on the global stage.

Looking back thirty years, one might have predicted that the concern over the state of the global environment could similarly transform global politics. Responses to such concerns have called for a whole new notion of planetary rather than national security and thrown into question the assumption of competing interests of states or the ability of such units, or the sovereign state system they comprise, to manage global problems. Furthermore, a growing awareness of environmental problems and ecological in-

terdependencies has led many to question the wisdom of conducting global economic relations as if they were independent from the ecological systems that sustain life on the planet.

The early ideas that informed international attempts to manage the Earth's resources supported such transformations. The philosophical statement of planetary concern commissioned for the first global environmental conference—the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972—included calls for a "loyalty to the Earth" that recognized planetary interdependence of all life, the adoption of global (as opposed to national) responses to environmental problems, and massive changes in over-consumptive lifestyles of the wealthy. *Only One Earth*, as it was called, also criticized existing international institutions for lacking a sense of planetary community and commitment (Ward and Dubos 1972). High-profile studies such as *The Limits to Growth* took an even tougher stand against overconsumption and warned that growth in population and production could not continue on course without leading to the collapse of social and economic systems (Meadows et al. 1972). No one expected revolutionary changes to occur overnight, but an assumption continues to prevail that as the international community pays more attention to environmental problems, we will move gradually toward a more ecological understanding of our world and humankind's place in it. At the least, our responses to environmental problems themselves will lead us in an ecological direction.

This book examines whether indeed that is the case. It does so by detailing how international concern for the global environment moved from these initial formulations to the current concern with "sustainable development," and what form of international governance "sustainable development" entails. This evolution of environmental governance takes on added significance when one considers that environmental issues finally reached the mainstream of international relations in the early 1990s only when they took this form.

Whether or not sustainable development constitutes a truly transformative idea, international lawyers and political scientists note that the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro institutionalized ideas associated with this new conception of environmental governance. Some call it a "paradigm shift" to a new international law of sustainable development from previous formulations of both an international law of the environment and of development.[1] Others argue that the Earth Summit "succeeded in formulating an umbrella regime in the field of sustainable development" that will continue to shape specific responses to environmental problems well into the future (Sjöstedt et al. 1994:5). These institutionalized ideas arguably

embody the most significant shift in environmental governance over the last thirty years. Not only did they bring environmentalism into the mainstream of international governance, but they did so by reformulating environmental concerns in the context of a liberal international economic order. In that way, sustainable development does mark the institutionalization of environmental concern, but not as originally envisaged.

Instead, the compatibility of environmental concern, economic growth, the basic tenets of a market economy, and a liberal international order is now conventional wisdom among many policy makers, diplomats, and a large number of nongovernmental organizations throughout the world. It is easy to forget that this formulation of the environmental problematique differs substantially from those dominant when the first concerted efforts at wide-scale global responses to environmental problems began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. From the perspective of those earlier efforts, focused on the negative environmental consequences of unregulated industrial development and suspicious of economic growth, the shift in environmental governance is a remarkable and a largely unforeseen departure. Why, then, when the international community finally took environmentalism seriously, was it only considered in the context of an economic program that not only encouraged growth, but actually demanded it? Why did international environmental governance evolve into what I will call the compromise of "liberal environmentalism?"

These questions are too often overlooked in academic and policy work overwhelmingly focused on the quest to design better institutions to manage the Earth's resources or respond to immediate and pressing problems.[2] This omission also points to a serious gap in the literature on international institutions more generally. Dominant strands of the rational institutionalist "regime" literature, for example, generally ignore the question of which values cooperative outcomes promote, because they focus primarily on the functional requirements of cooperation or on institutional design and effectiveness.[3] Such studies neglect to address the prior question of why some norms get selected over others, thereby defining international problems and guiding appropriate behavior in particular ways. Even studies that take a more overtly sociological approach have so far failed to adequately address this question. Whereas they provide mounting evidence that international norms and institutions may not only regulate behavior, but can also define state identities and interests,[4] few studies address the prior question of which norms get promoted or prevail over others in the first place.

This shortcoming is particularly evident in the literature on environmental institutions.[5] While research on the creation, design, and effective-

ness of international institutions addresses crucially important questions, such studies generally lack a critical examination of what kind of governing norms institutions embody or why those norms came to dominate global environmental governance. Rather, an assumption often pervades the mainstream academic literature that any cooperation on environmental problems means progress toward a more ecological international order. A critical examination of the evolution of environmental norms shows that assumption to be overly simplistic, even faulty. Overcoming such lacunae in the literature deserves greater attention from scholars interested in the kind of international order that institutions actually promote.

In response, this study orients itself more toward what Robert Cox calls "critical theory." An exercise in critical theory need not invoke complex methodological or epistemological challenges to how scholars ought to go about understanding the world, a wholesale rejection of explanatory theory, or a radical interpretivism associated with some forms of postpositivist analysis. Rather, it simply poses the question differently than those involved in research on the important tasks listed above. As Cox puts it, "Critical theory stands back from the existing order of things to ask how that order came into being, how it may be changing, and how that change may be influenced or channeled. . . . Its aim is the understanding of structural change" (Cox 1992:3). In this spirit, I set out to answer two questions about international environmental governance: How did the current form of international environmental governance evolve since the first major international environmental conference in 1972? And, why did it evolve into liberal environmentalism while other alternatives fell by the wayside?

THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

In the first half of the book, I detail the main empirical argument that norms of environmental protection have gradually converged with liberal economic norms in international environmental governance since 1972. The institutionalization of "sustainable development" at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or Earth Summit) legitimated this convergence toward what I label liberal environmentalism.[6] This normative compromise predicates environmental protection on the promotion and maintenance of a liberal economic order. It also enabled

environmental concerns to find such a prominent place on the international agenda.

Chapters 2 and 3 should not be read, however, as yet another exposition of what "sustainable development" means. Numerous works devoted to that topic only serve to highlight the ultimately elusive quest for a definitional consensus. The widely quoted definition in the Brundtland Commission report—"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"—identifies a compromise between competing values including growth, conservation, and inter- and intra- generational equity.[7] As such, it is open to a myriad of interpretations. By the Earth Summit in 1992, various authors had found as many as forty definitions of the concept, and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which articulated the global political consensus on sustainable development thinking, does not even attempt a consensus definition.[8] As noted by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the concept "is viewed quite differently by industrialists, economists, planners and environmental and ecological scientists . . ."[9]

Instead of unpacking the concept itself, I examine the international political and economic norms invoked in the name of sustainable development and trace their evolution. The focus on norms turns attention to the content of international governance. I define governance broadly as the methods or means of realizing shared values, interests, and goals that may or may not derive from a formal centralized political authority.[10]

At the basis of global governance are international norms, which define and regulate appropriate state (and other key actors') behavior, and assign rights and responsibilities regarding the issue in question. This definition corresponds to the constitutive, regulative, and deontic function of norms.[11] Norms constitute identities and meanings by defining who may act, in what context they may act, and what their actions mean in that particular context. They regulate by pre/proscribing how actors should behave in defined contexts (Cancian, 1975:5–7; Dessler 1989:456). Finally, norms serve a deontic function when they express values that create rights and responsibilities and thereby empower actors by providing reasons or justifications for particular actions (Onuf 1997; Ruggie 1998:21). All norms perform these functions simultaneously, but to varying degrees. In other words, international norms define, regulate, and empower legitimate state (and other key actors') behavior. While identifying institutionalized norms does not cover all aspects of governance, norms are at the heart of all governance structures.

When "sustainable development" appears as a goal in international environmental agreements, policy positions of multilateral agencies, or pro-

nouncements of intergovernmental and even many nongovernmental fora, it evokes an identifiable set of norms that underlies recent attempts at international environmental governance. I detail the evolution of international environmental norms through three key points of norm articulation: the 1972 Stockholm conference, the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development report, and the 1992 UNCED in Rio de Janeiro. I pay particular attention to how ideas developed that influenced the formulation of environmental governance through those episodes, who carried those ideas, and what form they took when they became institutionalized. Each event serves as a marker for what is actually an ongoing process of normative evolution.

Following an examination of each event, I describe the set of norms—or *norm-complex*—that represents the basis of environmental governance at that time. A norm-complex denotes a set of norms that governs relations of authority and the values promoted that define and regulate activities in a particular issue area. A norm-complex need not be stated explicitly, but can be inferred from specific norms. For example, John Ruggie (1998:62–84) identifies a norm-complex of "embedded liberalism" in the post-World War II era—where the liberal economic order is predicated on domestic intervention—based on specific norms constructed to govern international trade and finance as embodied in the Bretton Woods institutions. Similarly, liberal environmentalism can be inferred from the specific norms legitimated through the Earth Summit conference process and related agreements and activities. Like Ruggie, my purpose in articulating a norm-complex is to reveal the underlying pattern of values and goals that guide international behavior. Once identified, a norm-complex can be used to assess the significance of changes, which are best analyzed in relation to underlying *collective* purposes embodied in norms.[12] Threats to the norm-complex stem from alternative norms that undermine the collective purposes that define it. For example, a string of environmental agreements or programs that endorsed unilateral trade measures to protect the environment or denounced economic growth would constitute a serious challenge to liberal environmentalism.

Chapters 2 and 3 argue that the norm-complex governing global environmental practices evolved through stages that roughly correspond to the three events listed above. The norm-complex articulated at Stockholm in 1972 did contain both environment and development norms, but primarily emphasized the environmental protection side of the equation, as did the practices of international institutions, transnational activities, and international cooperative efforts following the conference. The Brundtland Commission report attempted a synthesis of environment and development

agendas and reflected a Keynesian-like compromise. In it, liberal interdependence that generated growth would be tempered by managed interventions to cushion and facilitate adjustment in the South and direct development on a path less likely to harm the environment. Rather than call this norm-complex one of sustainable development, I label it "managed sustainable growth." I do so to contrast it with the currently dominant norm-complex of "liberal environmentalism" institutionalized at UNCED.

Liberal environmentalism accepts the liberalization of trade and finance as consistent with, and even necessary for, international environmental protection. It also promotes market and other economic mechanisms (such as tradeable pollution permit schemes[13] or the privatization of commons) over "command-and-control" methods (standards, bans, quotas, and so on) as the preferred method of environmental management. The concept of sustainable development, while it legitimated this shift in norms, now masks this compromise that characterizes international environmental governance.

A number of studies identify various elements of what I call liberal environmentalism, but they use terms such as ecological modernization or simply sustainable development.[14] Many of these studies aim to uncover contradictions in such concepts. Some also critique the form of environmental governance promoted as too accepting of the status quo of state control and of patterns of economic development and practices that created most of the world's environmental problems in the first place (see especially Chatterjee and Finger 1994). These critiques are not the focus of this study, although the concluding chapter addresses various implications of the institutionalization of liberal environmentalism. Instead, the value added here is to uncover how and why liberal environmentalism became institutionalized, at least at the international level, rather than simply offering a critique of the outcome. To date, no study has carefully traced through the institutionalization of such ideas. A critical understanding of the constraints and opportunities for change in international environmental governance requires understanding how that structure of governance developed over time.

EXPLAINING THE EVOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Unlike studies that focus on how best to achieve international cooperation on environmental problems, in the second part of the book I explain why a particular set of norms dominates such arrangements. Explanations for the

observed normative developments in environmental governance address two questions: What actors and institutions carried ideas that led to liberal environmentalism? And, why did the set of ideas associated with norms of liberal environmentalism become institutionalized, or, more generally, why does the set of ideas associated with a prevailing norm-complex become institutionalized over others?

The movement from one norm-complex to another occurs when a new set of ideas either redefines existing norms or introduces new norms not previously considered as relevant.[15] "Ideas" here simply refer to proposals for new norms, whether stated as an ideology, worldview, principled belief, or causal belief.[16] Each type of idea can be potentially stated as a norm if it provides an orientation to action. The importance of ideas in politics comes about through their collective legitimation—that is, when they take on a normative flavor—which is ignored by utilitarian theories focused on individual beliefs. The distinction between "idea" and "norm," although somewhat artificial,[17] distinguishes the initial articulation of ideas by individuals or groups, with the causal properties attributed to normative statements once they become a "collective intentionality" or institutionalized.[18]

I put forward two competing explanations for the selection of norms in chapters 4 and 5 that focus on the causal role of ideas in international governance. Such a focus is appropriate given the overriding concern with the content of international governance, since only knowledge or ideas-based explanations focus on what set of ideas dominate attempts to solve the problem in question.

Still, I take seriously Geoffrey Garrett and Barry Weingast's (1993:203) assertion that an ideas-based explanation first requires a null hypothesis that only material interests matter. Three difficulties, explored below, stand out that make standard power and interest approaches inadequate or inappropriate for this study. First, most such theories explicitly leave the content of interests unexplained. Second, even when state interests are known, outcomes in international environmental governance cannot be easily extrapolated from them. Finally, existing explanations that do link power and interests to the content of governance leave many of the most important empirical outcomes in environmental governance unexplained.

Limitations of Power and Interest-based Explanations

Leading power and interest-based approaches in International Relations do not, on their own, explain the normative content of institutions, first

and foremost because interests are exogenous, thus unexplained in such theories. Robert Keohane forcefully makes this point in his discussion of neoliberal institutionalist and neorealist explanations for cooperation, the two dominant rationalist explanations in the literature:

> In the absence of a specification of interests . . . institutionalist predictions about cooperation are indeterminate.
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> That is, institutional theory takes states' conceptions of their interests as exogenous: unexplained within the terms of the theory. Unlike naive versions of commercial or republican liberalism, institutionalist theory does not infer a utility function for states simply from the material economic interests or the alleged values common to democracy. . . . Nor does realism predict interest (1993:285).

As a result, theories that do attempt to explain normative outcomes almost always import interests, usually taking them for granted (Ruggie 1983:198). The literature on environmental institutions partakes in this bias, which accounts for its failure to explore adequately the collective purposes behind responses to global environmental problems.[19]

Analysts are then left with a very thin conception of interests. Depending on the theory of world politics employed, interests in international politics are assumed to be relatively stable and based on core values such as economic costs/benefits or protection of physical security from outside attack. In realist thought, interests are taken as given and the interests of dominant state-actors generally prevail, although the ability of those actors to prevail is conditioned on factors such as the current distribution of capabilities in the international system. Later institutionalist literature broadens the focus from the interaction of rational state actors to include institutional, transnational, and/or domestic factors to the mix of variables considered (Young 1994; Haas, Keohane and Levy 1993). Whatever the merit of specific rational-interest approaches to explaining cooperation (the critiques of specific theories are many and varied and need not be rehearsed here), by themselves they offer little in the way of analysis of the content of cooperative arrangements that prevail.

Instead, interest-based explanations for international phenomena have typically focused on the problem of how to achieve common interests or joint gains. Such explanations rely on modeling the strategic interaction of actors with given interests or they hypothesize that when core interests of powerful actors are threatened (for example, when they are vulnerable to costly environmental damage), those actors, either by threat, coercion, or by

shouldering extra costs, will ensure action is taken in response to those threats. The outcomes explained by such theories are usually dichotomous—agreement/no agreement, action/no action, or cooperation/conflict—on the concern in question. Studies in this vein can provide interesting analysis of cooperation on particular international environmental issues. For example, Sprinz and Vaahtoranta (1994), while not explicitly presenting a theory of cooperation, use an interest-based explanation to show why some countries more strongly supported international environmental cooperation on controlling acid rain and ozone depletion than others. Paterson (1996) and Rowlands (1995a) assess the merits of interest-based explanations, among others, to explain the politics of global responses to climate change. These approaches nonetheless fail to explain the construction of an "interest" in environmental protection, which would require a subsidiary theory of interest formation. More importantly, the actual framing or kind of responses to environmental problems are also beyond the scope of such theories because a cooperative result, for example, says little about what goals or ends obtain in the cooperative solution.

Supporters of a more traditional liberalism that "takes preferences seriously" might still counter that the preferences of all relevant actors could have been gauged on the eve of the Earth Summit, and outcomes extrapolated from them (Moravcsik 1997). Such a unit-preference theory would propose that the South wanted primarily to develop and to defend sovereignty, while it had a limited interest in the environment. Therefore, liberal environmentalism was the best that could be achieved given the North's desire to protect open trade and investment while at the same time appearing to do something about global environmental problems. Likewise, the North would have liked to see the South do more for the environment, but liberal environmentalism was the best it could do, given the South's interests. Although this approach moves closer to addressing the problem of identifying interests, a simple extrapolation of outcomes from domestic preferences fails to explain the changes in the normative basis of environmental governance since 1972.

Earth Summit outcomes did indeed reflect, to varying degrees, the pursuit of domestic material interests. However, if interests provided a sufficient explanation, those outcomes should have more closely resembled the competing sets of interests reflected in the Stockholm conference outcomes 20 years earlier, which for the most part simply juxtaposed environment and development. That UNCED produced different outcomes reflects in part that the South's "interest" in the environment changed drastically between 1972 and 1992, as I show in chapters two and three. As one author de-

scribes it (Imber 1994:86), unlike the uniformly defensive position taken by the South at Stockholm, some countries in the South, as in the North, took positions at UNCED that could be considered "activist" on both environment and development concerns, others took "ambiguous" positions, and still others were on the "defensive." Indeed, the Stockholm outcomes appeared to reflect competing sets of material interests to a much greater degree since nascent ideas that linked environment and development had only limited influence. In the intervening years, new ideas that linked environment and development increasingly shaped interest-definition for countries in the North and South.

For example, positions changed substantially between 1972 and 1992 on arguments put forward by the South over the way in which development ought to be promoted within a framework that also considered environmental protection. The embrace (albeit grudging in many cases) of market norms by the South, the support for incorporating environmental concerns into development projects and policies, and the willingness to acknowledge the severity of global and local threats to the environment all represented substantial shifts from 20 years earlier. Likewise, the North's embrace of the concept of sustainable development in the late 1980s, with its explicit linkage of environment and development, cannot be derived from interests alone, unless those interests changed since 1972. The North resisted the linkage at that time because policymakers perceived the two interests to be fundamentally incompatible, and could not conceive of institutions that could promote both goals simultaneously. Admittedly, the priority given to particular environmental issues still often differed in North and South. Nonetheless, the shifts in positions noted above that facilitated the acceptance of liberal environmentalism suggests that its institutionalization reflects more than the sum of material interests or a simple North-South compromise. Ideas needed to intervene from some source to create, modify, or, at the least, find a focal point around which existing interests might converge and consensus might form.

Even in regard to the type of world order the North supported, nothing inherent in the material interest of a wealthy or powerful country makes it desire an economic system characterized by open trade and investment, the liberal side of liberal environmentalism. The Cold War period, wherein the two most powerful countries pursued vastly different conceptions of world economic order, not to mention the long periods of history where economic nationalist policies of powerful countries dominated, demonstrates that power and material interests do not dictate particular policy preferences in a predictable direction. Ultimately, even the

quest to protect sovereignty on the part of the South cannot be considered solely a material interest since it is conditioned on a pre-existing set of social arrangements within the international system that privileges the role of sovereign states and defines relations between sovereign states in particular ways.

Finally, even if a focus on domestic preferences could explain outcomes at given times, such explanations remain extremely inefficient, requiring constant reevaluations of changing preferences over time, and would still require a domestic theory of preference formation and change. An explanation that either attempts to explain why interests changed or that endogenizes interests to some degree would be more efficient. Chapter 5, as I explain below, puts forward a more efficient theory than a pure rational-interest approach because it endogenizes the evolving normative context of state practices rather than relying on either the repeated evaluation of particular state preferences or the uncritical importation of assumed interests.

A third possible approach is to employ theories that attempt a more explicit linkage of power and interest to norms, most notably those that focus on hegemony. They nonetheless still encounter the theoretical pitfalls of standard rational-interest approaches. Moreover, they have performed poorly as explanations of environmental governance in studies to date and the evidence in subsequent chapters lends little support for such an explanation in this case.

The most prominent example is Hegemonic Stability Theory, developed in the 1980s. In its various forms, the theory explains which norms prevail by arguing that international regimes, and the norms they embody, reflect the interest of a dominant or "hegemonic" state in the system, or, in some modified versions, a group of dominant states (e.g., Snidal 1985). This theory served as the fallback position to explain the creation of international institutions for much of the "international regimes" scholarship, and for questions of world order more broadly. For example, Robert Gilpin, Robert Keohane, and Stephen Krasner—despite differences in their work in other respects—all implicitly or explicitly supported the view that a hegemonic state that is able and willing to play a leadership role, is necessary (though perhaps not sufficient) for the establishment of international regimes.[20]

This state-centric view of hegemonic stability theory has proven of limited usefulness in explaining either international environmental cooperation or normative development. Oran Young, for example, has shown in a series of articles that hegemonic leadership was not necessary for the formation of many multilateral environmental agreements and sometimes

played only a minor role, even when a hegemonic power participated in the regime or agreement eventually (Young 1989, 1994). Even if one considers the United States a hegemon in the environmental issue area (a dubious proposition in any case) the experience of the Stockholm and Rio conferences seems at odds with the basic hypothesis of hegemonic stability theory.[21] At Stockholm, the United States did play a leadership role, although the agreements reached did not reflect U.S. interests solely, especially since it showed very little interest in the development side of the agenda. At Rio, the United States was a disengaged player for much of the negotiations, while the European Union (EU) assumed a much more assertive leadership role (Hajost 1994; Sjöstedt et al. 1994). However, in both cases, the basic framing of issues and interest-definition came as much from the entrepreneurial leadership of the conference secretariat as from particular states, and drew from ideas and institutional developments not directly derived from dominant state interests.

Granted, dominant states may be able to block agreement on or effectively veto international norms, since they may provide the resources needed to implement the norm or their practices may be a vital part of those that the norm targets. For example, the norm of additionality—that aid transfers for environmental matters from North to South ought to be new and in addition to existing transfers—probably owes its lack of successful institutionalization to consistent opposition by the United States.[22] Nonetheless, little evidence supports the position that given interests of dominant states determine what norms *will* actually arise. One would be hard pressed to make the argument, for example, that norms of environmental protection could be derived from the structural power position of major states, (which requires a questionable theoretical strategy in any case as noted above). The role of interests then cannot be easily derived from a material structural theory of international politics. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, the pursuit of interests by states and groups of states in particular negotiations occurred within a broader normative context that shaped those interests, even those of dominant states.

A more classical argument on the same theme focuses not on state power *per se*, but on ideational hegemony within particular world orders. This Gramscian approach argues that both the dominant state's interest and the international order rest on the ideational hegemony of a dominant class privileged by the current global mode and relations of production. To simplify a varied literature, the central argument of Gramscian and historical materialist approaches is that the international order serves the interest of the class privileged by the international division of labor

which reflects, in the modern world, the current stage of capitalist development and economic relations (Gill 1993; Cox 1983, 1987). International organizations and regimes thus reflect such class interests, and give legitimacy to these interests.[23]

While these approaches pay more attention to interest-definition and ideational factors, they still say little directly about an issue area such as the environment, interest in which cannot be derived strictly from economic structural factors. Their main advantage is to open up critical appraisals of prevailing practices by shifting the focus from multilateral cooperation to the underlying structural conditions that give rise to environmental degradation. They can also reveal contradictions in environmental policies (and the potential of such contradictions to produce historical change) and the underlying patterns of capitalist production that may (or may not) contribute to environmentally destructive patterns of development. These radical critiques, however, while revealing of evidence obscured by rational-interest approaches, offer more in terms of description than explanation.

Gramscian approaches are weakest, however, in explaining the dynamic processes through which responses to environmental problems are shaped or why the environment has become a mainstream issue in international politics at all, except by post hoc reasoning (Williams 1996:51–52). A Gramscian analysis is consistent with some of the patterns of governance identified in chapters 2 and 3 since liberal environmentalism could certainly be viewed as a way to legitimate or provide optimal political and economic conditions for the maximization of private capital returns (by supporting, for example, the free movement of goods, capital and technology) while appearing to respond to growing environmental concerns. But much remains vague and unexplained. The overly general treatment of forces of capitalist production behind a liberal economic order, and underspecification of the links between material forces and class interests, and the institutions that promote, sustain, and legitimate hegemonic orders, limits the ability of Gramscian approaches to explain how environmental governance has evolved. Particularly obscure is the role of agency in promoting new values such as environmental concern, since, evidence suggests, these concerns did not originate from the interests of capital.

For example, the resistance to liberal environmentalism by segments of industry suggests that ideas played an independent role from the structural dictates of capital (or else globally minded capitalists did not act in their class interest). Those who suggest that business did play a privileged role in the support of what I call liberal environmentalism point to the close relationship between UNCED secretary-general Maurice Strong and Stephan

Schmidheiny, who founded the Business Council for Sustainable Development (BCSD) with Strong's "encouragement and support."[24] Strong appointed Schmidheiny as one of his top advisers and gave funding to BCSD in the lead-up to Rio.[25] The group had representation from a number of the largest multinational corporations in the world and its popular report, *Changing Course*, articulated a version of environmentalism that meshed closely with many of the Rio outcomes (Schmidheiny 1992). However, the ideas contained in *Changing Course* were already well established within organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the EU. While Gramscians might be correct that such institutions often function to further the legitimation of hegemonic orders, they are also forums where new ideas can be generated that redefine, in keeping with this language, the form that hegemony will take. Just as an analysis of modern capitalism requires explanations of the rise and decline of the Keynesian welfare state that look to ideas as well as economic variables, so too does change in global governance, where international institutions sometimes operate like the state in domestic society, that is, as at least somewhat independent of as well as interactive with the market and the power of private capital.

In the case of environmental governance, whereas the privileged access given to business, or at least Schmidheiny's group and perhaps the International Chamber of Commerce at UNCED is beyond doubt, industry as a group cannot be credited with formulating ideas around sustainable development or with being overly significant players in its institutionalization, although BCSD's support surely helped the profile of UNCED in the international business community. As subsequent chapters demonstrate, industry consistently came late and often fought the compromises that eventually evolved into liberal environmentalism.

A key example is the resistance of a major industry lobby to findings of an OECD conference in 1984 on Environment and Economics (OECD 1985). As chapter 5 will show, this conference articulated many of the core ideas that would later inform the Brundtland Commission report. Among the varied nongovernmental groups and members of governments involved,[26] only the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD issued a separate statement that qualified the findings of the conference (OECD 1985:243–247). The group showed resistance to the idea that the economy and environment can be mutually reinforcing, a key finding of the conference and the Brundtland Commission. Instead, it argued, "there should be a balance between environment policy and economic policy," indicating that it viewed the balance of environmental and

economic policies as a zero-sum game. Furthermore, industry has tended to be reactive rather than proactive, and in general has shown resistance to environmental policies when they threaten particular interests of individual industries or sectors. This approach outweighs the limited attempts on the part of industry to fit policies into an overall structure supportive of liberal norms.

In addition, little unity can be discerned among industry groups on shaping environmental norms in the main period under investigation. Rather, corporations tend to address specific issues based on how policies directly affect their profits. For example, in negotiations on a climate change convention, oil producers—who formed their own nongovernmental organizations such as the Global Climate Coalition (GCC)—actively lobbied to prevent any regulation or action that might limit oil consumption.[27] Meanwhile, renewable energy providers, through the World Sustainable Energy Coalition, emerged as supporters of greenhouse gas emission reductions. Similarly, an alliance arose in the mid-1990s between the environmental group Greenpeace and the insurance industry, which feels vulnerable to catastrophic weather events that may come with global warming (Paterson 1996:164–167; Rogers 1993:244–245).

Finally, observers and analysts of environmental policies have noted that while corporate head offices have endorsed cost-effective, market-oriented approaches to environmental protection for some time, industry lobbyists have shown "a curious resistance" (Hahn and Stavins 1991:25). Hahn and Stavins, for example, note this trend in a study of the switch from command-and-control to market-based policies. Specific businesses or industries may resist, they argue, because although market-based policies may provide a given level of environmental protection at minimum cost for society as a whole, they often involve substantial transfers between sectors. Thus the changes I identify toward liberal environmentalism appear to have pulled industry along, rather than vice-versa.

In sum, a Gramscian argument ultimately rests on an overly blunt explanatory scheme where classes empowered by the current mode of global production ultimately triumph. If those classes are in fact pulled along, then other causal factors must also be accounted for in any explanation of what international order prevails. A broader historicism that takes account of intellectual movements and noneconomic social forces would open up analyses of other causal linkages, but then also moves beyond variables identified as most important by neo-Gramscian contributions to international relations.[28] My proposal below for a "socio-evolutionary" explanation builds on the neo-Gramscian insight that ideas interact with broader

international structures, but attempts a more generalizable explanatory scheme by focusing on international social structure more broadly rather than the structure of capitalist production or the implicit assumption that ideas that succeed are necessarily generated to serve the interests of capital.

The inadequacies of strictly rationalist, power and interest-based explanations point to the need for alternatives that examine the causal role of ideas in international relations.

Ideational Explanations

The recent attention to the role of ideas in international politics arose to overcome limitations of rationalist approaches by including explanations of why a reconceptualization of interests occurs. The literature is split between those who treat ideas as intervening variables between interests and behavioral outcomes and those who take an interpretivist approach that focuses on the persuasive power of ideas or their embodiment in discourses.

The former approaches have the advantage of easily fitting into a positivist epistemology where outcomes can be clearly coded and the conditions for those outcomes to occur may be identified in a testable way. Goldstein and Keohane (1993a), for example, take a rationalist approach, in which ideas inform the preferences actors bring with them to strategic interactions, they provide focal points for cooperation when obvious equilibria are absent, or they act like Max Weber's famous "switchmen," directing future policies along certain paths. In all these cases, they view ideas as important not because of their meaning, but because they provide solutions to rational cooperation problems or because they are functional for institutional stability. Nonetheless, they admit their approach does "not suggest a theory for the creation of [ideational] switches, or even a fully worked-out model to explain the process by which ideas are selected" (Goldstein and Keohane 1993b:12). The causal capacity of ideas—their ability to provide reasons for actions based in their meanings—is beyond the scope of their approach (Ruggie 1998, 22; Woods 1995; Yee 1996).

To achieve a more direct focus on the content, or ideational basis, of environmental governance structures, other authors have turned to discourse-theoretical approaches. For example, Maarten Hajer (1995) has used discourse analysis to examine how the discursive practices around "ecological modernization"—the notion that environmental problems can be solved in accordance with the workings of the main institutional arrangements of society—influenced the regulation of environmental con-

flict around acid rain policy in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Similarly, Karen Litfin (1994) has shown how the framing and interpretation of scientific knowledge shaped international responses to ozone depletion. A discourse approach performs best as a way to understand social context and meanings that constrain and enable certain policy choices and regulate social conflict. It can generate revealing descriptions that identify changing discourses and how such changes might influence the legitimacy of particular policy choices.

Discourse analysis performs less well in specifying actual practices or institutional arrangements that prevail. Discourse is significant when it becomes institutionalized, as competing discourses are constantly present. But discourse analysis alone occurs almost exclusively in the realm of language and meaning, thus is weak in its analysis of political processes that make some discourses heard over others. This method of analysis also makes it difficult to separate the sources of discourse from its effects and runs into the danger of presenting discourses as if they float freely,[29] to be snared by actors in a fashion left unexplained within such approaches.[30] Discursive approaches, while equipped to analyze symbolic languages and intersubjective meanings, thus face criticism for not being sufficiently explanatory because they emphasize "the interpretation of meaning and/or the ambiguity and instability of all interpretations" (Yee 1996:200; Blyth 1997).

The attempt here is to ground discussion in how, when, and why ideas became institutionalized. I therefore avoid the ambiguities of a focus on the role of discourse and instead examine agreed-to norms and where they originated. The nature of norms as based in intersubjective meanings suggests that any norm-based analysis, including this one, shows an affinity to what social theorists refer to as discourse. However, this study attempts to ground its analysis more in practice and institutionalization as these have identifiable empirical referents. The focus below on the movement of ideas to norms accomplishes this task.

From Ideas to Institutionalized Norms: Epistemic Communities and Socio-evolution

Chapters 4 and 5 test in detail two approaches that focus on how ideas associated with liberal environmentalism became institutionalized. These approaches respond more directly than those just reviewed to the two questions posed at the start of the section—who carried ideas associated with liberal environmentalism and why did they become institutionalized?

Chapter 4 tests an "epistemic communities" explanation that looks primarily at actors who carry or create ideas. It argues that the ability of new ideas to become institutionalized rests primarily on the legitimacy of their source, focusing especially on the role of groups of scientific experts. It asserts *that scientific consensus within an epistemic community, "politically empowered through its claims to exercise authoritative knowledge and motivated by shared causal and principled beliefs," and its promotion of norms derived from that consensual knowledge, leads to the adoption of its ideas over others as guides to appropriate behavior* (Haas 1992a:41—emphasis mine). Following an argument put forward by Peter Haas in the environmental issue area, I test the claim that new norms arose in response to consensus within a "scientific ecology" community of experts (Haas 1989, 1990, 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Haas and Haas 1995). In undertaking a thorough analysis of the influence of scientists and scientific ideas on the evolution of environmental governance, chapter 4 not only tests an epistemic communities hypothesis, but also offers more general insights into how science and politics have in fact interacted in the shaping of environmental governance.

The epistemic communities explanation has been used primarily to show how consensual knowledge within such groups aids international policy coordination by redefining state interests to facilitate rational cooperation. However, I am drawn to it here more for its underlying assertions about how and why a particular set of ideas (in this case, those associated with an expert group of ecological scientists) comes to dominate cooperative outcomes. An epistemic communities approach thus offers clear answers to questions of both who carried ideas (scientists) and why those ideas had causal weight (legitimacy of their knowledge claims).

Despite recent critiques, the epistemic communities literature still provides the clearest explanatory framework available of how scientific knowledge translates into changed patterns of state behavior and international interactions (Susskind 1994; Yee 1996). It has also been influential in scholarly work on the role of ideas in international relations more broadly (Goldstein and Keohane 1993b:11 fn. 18; Yee 1996; Litfin 1994). Furthermore, it often serves as a point of departure for studies on international environmental action since the complex and uncertain nature of environmental problems appears to privilege experts in determining the nature of environmental problems and the technical requirements needed to address them. These factors combine to make environmental governance a paradigmatic or crucial case for the approach in that it should perform best in issue areas characterized by uncertainty and technical complexity.

Ultimately, I find that an epistemic communities approach fails to account for normative evolution in this case. Chapter 4 demonstrates that consensus on both cause-effect knowledge and values within the relevant communities of experts were weaker than often portrayed. Furthermore, core ideas of environmental governance did not originate from a single identifiable epistemic community, and often contradicted the preferred outcomes of scientific ecology, as Haas defines it. Indeed, the historical evidence suggests that the causal arrow often ran in the opposite direction, with ideas around liberal environmentalism increasingly influencing global environmental research.

Despite this finding, chapters 4 and 5 should be read as more of a rescue than a wrecking operation. They highlight that important insights underlying the epistemic communities argument can be too easily dismissed when tied to the dominant way in which the epistemic communities argument has been presented in empirical research. First, its basic insight about the importance of knowledge and discourse in global policy is too easily dismissed because even friendly critics find that studies that apply the argument to explain policy change or coordination overplay the causal significance of particular expert groups (agency) and their influence through domestic bureaucracies. Second, perhaps for strategic reasons on the part of its proponents, most published research in this vein remains wedded to a rational institutionalist research program focused on the problem of cooperation rather than broader questions of political change.

Chapter 5 can be read as an attempt to recapture many of the core insights of the research program (e.g., Adler and Haas 1992), while also moving it in a new direction with greater sensitivity to wider constraints of international social structure. It introduces an alternative explanation that focuses on the causal role of economic ideas, but not simply as embodied in an epistemic community of economists. Instead, I put forward a *socio-evolutionary* explanation that draws from recent work on the evolution of norms in international politics.[31]

This explanation begins not with actors or state power and interests (as do liberal and realist explanations), nor with economic structures and class interests (as do Gramscians) but with systemic social structure. It contends that explaining the selection[32] of norms requires an examination of the interaction of ideas (proposals for new norms) with the social structural environment of institutionalized norms they encounter. The main argument is that the *social* fitness of proposals for new norms with extant social structure[33] better explains why some norms are selected, while others fall by the wayside.[34] This starting point follows from insights from "construc-

tivist" scholars of international relations who argue that interests themselves are derived, at least in part, from an existing social structure of norms and institutions in which actors participate (Finnemore 1996a, Katzenstein 1996, Ruggie 1998).

The explanation argues that three factors determine the selection of new norms: *the perceived legitimacy of the source of new ideas; fitness with extant international social structure; and fitness with key actors' identities at various levels of social structure*. By identities I mean both their status as agents as constituted by international social structure and their socioeconomic identities generated domestically which they project in their international affairs, such as their view of legitimate political and economic order as reflected in domestic institutions.

Since social structure and state identities and interests are mutually constitutive, this explanation does not exclude material interests or power as important factors in the selection process. Rather, by using extant social structure as a starting point of analysis it endogenizes an important source of interests, and thus offers a more efficient explanation. In so doing, it takes a modest step toward responding to James Caporaso's challenge to constructivists, "to explain institutions and sociality given some data on extant and prior institutions and sociality" (1993:82–83).

Chapter 5 goes over the socio-evolutionary approach and concepts used in detail. This explanation reveals the importance of particular sets of economic ideas, but attempts to push the current ideas literature further by emphasizing the interaction of new ideas with an existing social structure. In this case, the approach highlights how a group of policy entrepreneurs, drawing primarily on a set of economic ideas, were able to successfully reframe norms of international environmental governance to fit better with the broader international social structure than had previous attempts. The resulting compromise of liberal environmentalism made possible increased international efforts to address environmental problems and shaped how responses would be framed.

The concluding chapter discusses some of the implications of my findings for international environmental governance and for explaining and understanding change in international or global governance more broadly. It suggests that certain kinds of knowledge and policy responses are privileged not because of their inherent truth or even effectiveness, but because the institutionalization of liberal environmentalism grants them legitimacy. The legitimation of liberal environmentalism in turn has and will open up and close off various courses of action, with important implications for our ability to manage global environmental problems. The implications of

these constraints on current and future policies and new potential sources of change are also explored. Knowing the origins of these norms and the processes through which they become institutionalized contributes to opening up critical questions of the kind of order institutions promote, rather than taking the progress of international environmental cooperation for granted.

METATHEORETICAL ISSUES

The socio-evolutionary approach and the focus on norms more generally raise epistemological issues of explanation and causality that I want to address at the outset, since they may be a source of confusion.

The socio-evolutionary approach developed in chapter 5 is an attempt to move the discussion away from a focus on an expert group alone, and toward the interaction of ideas with their environment. In the formation of international norms, that environment is the existing set of institutionalized norms that make up international social structure. Because international social structure is constantly evolving in response to the institutionalization of new norms and altering of old ones, the socio-evolutionary approach lends itself naturally to a historical and interpretivist methodology. The content, in terms of meaning, of social structure must be investigated at any given time as the environment in which new ideas compete. The approach is limited in its ability to model mechanical causal relationships because the fitness of ideas associated with liberal environmentalism is historically contingent.

What kind of explanation, then, does a socio-evolutionary approach entail? Two kinds of explanation are actually at work in the socio-evolutionary approach: causal and constitutive (Wendt 1998). The explanation is causal because it identifies factors that make some ideas more likely candidates for institutionalization or legitimation than others. Even though these factors, such as fitness with social structure or promotion of ideas through legitimating institutions, are based in part on intersubjective understandings of meaning, they can still possess causal weight, and have empirical referents. However, the focus on social structure means a constitutive explanation is also at work (although social structure also produces causal effects). Constitutive explanations answer "how-possible" or "what" questions. The goal of a constitutive explanation is to "account for the properties of things by reference to the structures in virtue of which they exist" (Wendt 1998:105). Social

structures have constitutive effects that explain how something (such as an event, practice, or relationship) is possible, or what its properties are.

Indeed, the outcome to be explained here is not cooperation, but the very meaning and understanding of the global environment, which is part and parcel of the constitution of global environmental governance. The two are inseparable in at least one explanatory sense: international environmental governance makes sense only when relevant actors understand who is part of the international and what is being governed. States, sovereignty, property rights, global commons, pollution, and so on are all socially constructed, but have constitutive and causal consequences for what international environmental governance is and what actors engaging in the process are likely to do.

Because both causal and constitutive explanations *are* explanations (not merely descriptions), the approach does not entail a complete rejection of neopositivist understandings of evidence or testability. Thus, unlike postmodernists, poststructuralists and other forms of postpositivism, the socioevolutionary explanation argues that the context for action (social structure) can at any given moment in time be held constant for the purposes of analysis, and has a determinative content (norms and institutions) which can be gleaned through careful historical analysis and informed interpretation. Although this explanation differs ontologically from dominant positivist perspectives in International Relations in stressing intersubjectivity, epistemologically, it falls into the "modernist" school of constructivist scholarship, which does not preclude the use of "standard (positivist) methods alongside interpretive methods" (Adler 1997:335).

A second source of confusion arises with the terminology of causation itself. This confusion can be addressed by contrasting the notion of causality employed here with a mechanistic or Newtonian view of causation, which is still prevalent in international relations research (e.g., King et al. 1994). That version of positivist epistemology, with its roots in Humean empiricism, makes no claim about actual forces of causation. Rather, it seeks to identify regular and predictable series of events that occur whenever the same conditions hold. Causation, in this view, exists outside of time and space. The positivist method is to propose a generalization or theory about some event or situation, deduce a testable hypothesis from the theory, and observe whether the prediction succeeds. Positivist theory is predictive to the degree that one gains confidence, through testing (of falsifiable hypotheses) and modifying of theories (or generalizations), that one has identified necessary and sufficient conditions, which can then be inferred to cause the outcome in question.[35]

However, the social world, including international politics, does exist in time and space, and thus is indeterminate. John Ruggie, beginning with this observation, contrasts the Humean notion of causality above with what he calls "narrative" causality. This notion of causality "conforms to its ordinary-language meaning: whatever antecedent conditions, events, or actions are significant in producing or influencing an effect, result, or consequence."[36] This difference is important for studying intentionalistic and reflective human beings in history, where generalizable mechanical laws do not always apply.[37] The social world consists of reasoned and intentioned action as well as unintended consequences, the causes of which can be found as much in ideas, norms, and institutions as in the physicalist universe of "distinct actors, with palpable properties, engaged in discrete events" (Ruggie 1995:96). As already mentioned, international relations theories that focus solely on power and interest—which can most easily be modeled in the physicalist universe of positivist epistemology—may tell us something about the form of international relations (whether cooperative outcomes are more or less likely, for example) but little about the content.

A focus on content also means turning to "social facts" of intention and meaning.[38] "Social facts" are not "causes" in a simple mechanical way via external constraint, but can internally or cognitively define and redefine the identities and interests of actors. Constructivist international relations theory has made much of this aspect of international norms and institutions, which includes both the idea of constitutive or enabling rules as opposed to the strict focus on only specialized regulative and enforcement rules that characterizes rational-interest approaches to norms and ideas, as well as the world of intentions and meanings.[39] Norms condition the possibilities of action by defining the range of meaningful if not of conceivable behavior, and by pre/proscribing the types of appropriate or legitimate behavior that can be performed in particular social contexts. The institutionalization of norms has causal effects because it increases the likelihood of the behavior they prescribe and decreases the likelihood of the behavior they proscribe. While this may not guarantee that all behavior will conform to the norm, it shifts the burden of effort and proof onto those actors who contest its validity, and empowers actors in conformity with the norm. Following such reasoning, Yee (1996:97) argues that norms "quasi-causally affect certain actions not by directly or inevitably determining them but rather by rendering these actions plausible or implausible, acceptable or unacceptable, conceivable or inconceivable, respectable or disreputable, etc." Unless one is confident that knowledge about international politics can be derived solely from the brute facts of power politics, a posi-

tion I have already shown to be inadequate, then one must be open to a notion of causality that recognizes the causal power of human intentions and reasons (ideas) and the norms and institutions (social structure) that provide the intersubjective context of human action.

Building explanations with a notion of narrative causality in mind has two advantages according to Ruggie. First, it focuses on linking events to one another over time to discover their effects, even when such "events" include thickly described social facts. The second is that it organizes these statements into an "interpretive 'gestalt' or 'coherence structure.' "[40] This method, which Polkinghorne calls "emplotment" is "not the imposition of a ready-made plot structure on an independent set of events; instead it is a dialectic process that takes place between the events themselves and a theme which discloses their significance and allows them to be grasped together as parts of one story" (Ruggie 1998:94). The goal, according to Ruggie (1998:94), "is to produce results that are verisimilar and believable to others looking over the same events," not to produce a covering law across time and space.[41]

Following on these metatheoretical positions, the socio-evolutionary approach is explanatory because it not only identifies social structure and posits its explanatory power in the constitutive sense, but also emphasizes that specific factors can be identified that reveal processes through which intersubjective meanings evolve. In chapter 5 I will identify the general contours of social structure that provides the environment with which new ideas interact, a step glossed over in the often loose formulations of recent theoretical work in this vein.

The question of prediction also arises whenever one makes causal claims. If some force, social fact, or material condition possesses causal weight, its presence or absence would be a basis on which to expect certain outcomes. The difficulty again comes with equating narrative causality with the more mechanistic, formal causality. The latter implies a precision in predicting outcomes given the presence or absence of particular causes. The former recognizes the indeterminacy of human action, and the contingent nature of the conditions it views as causes. Liberal environmentalism is not a dependent variable that can be measured along a quantifiable axis. Rather, it is an intersubjective understanding of international environmental governance that exists within a particular historical context. The causes are thus also historically specific, and their significance can only be determined through careful historical and interpretive analysis of the ideas that led to those understandings and the processes through which those ideas were selected. Counterfactuals are one useful methodological

tool to evaluate the causal role of ideas or of the norms they informed. One might ask, for example, what would have happened in the absence of ideas associated with liberal environmentalism? This question is entertained, for example, in chapter 5, where it is noted that the idea of ecodevelopment would have led global environmentalism in a different direction if alternatives along the lines of liberal environmentalism had not come along.

In addition, the success of some ideas can be compared to the failure of others to look for clues as to the selection mechanisms at work. Thus, all is not contingent under this explanatory framework. Given an extant social structure, even if historically contingent (i.e., the social structure itself also evolves over time), selection processes determine or explain ideational success. The socio-evolutionary approach in chapter 5 does identify a selection process that makes it more likely that some ideas will be selected over others in becoming institutionalized, and in that sense it is predictive. But given the historical contingency of social structure, and even the generation of new ideas, the explanation cannot be fully predictive since the conditions that hold within a given social structure may not hold in the future. A socio-evolutionary explanation is not predictive in the sense of specifying generalizable antecedent conditions for particular outcomes. Neither is the theory predictive in a functional sense, that is, based on a logic—such as reproductive logic in evolutionary theory—that explains normative outcomes simply by the benefits social structure provides for particular norms.[42] Thus, although evolutionary terminology is used in both cases, the view of history is quite different than that type of rational evolutionary argument common in the economic literature on institutions. That approach views the emergence and change of institutions as efficient responses to their environment. History is simply an efficient response to changing technology or other material factors in the external environment, where the most efficient (that is, "fit") institutions consistently win out. A method of comparative statics suffices over narrative (Caporaso 1993:79). In contrast, the socio-evolutionary approach views history similarly to sociological institutionalists, who, as Caporaso explains, stress the "contingent, path-dependent nature of institutional change." Choices made by individuals cannot be explained in purely instrumental terms because "their future choices, their perceptions of what is possible, and their beliefs and standard operating procedures are products of past historical choices."

In the case of socio-evolution, the explanation is historical, in that the mechanism of change I focus on stems from conscious efforts at social construction, which have no parallel in evolutionary theory. The selection process that occurs through the interaction of these efforts with social

structure does not determine these formulations, but selects them through an interactive, recursive, and historical process, as agents are often aware of the social structural reality within which they interact, even if some structures are so deeply institutionalized that they are taken for granted. Given the contingent and historical nature of social structure, narrative methodology drives out comparative statics.

The place to begin such an analysis, then, is with the story of environmental governance as it evolved over the last thirty years.