

# A Descriptive Study on Recent Trends in Global Environmental Politics

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## Abstract

One of the fundamental requirements for every nation's overall growth is environmental conservation. There must be a contribution to biodiversity if economic growth and development are to be achieved, which is something that every nation in the world desires. Human understanding of the necessity to maintain the environment by avoiding adverse effects on nature grows along with environmental preservation knowledge. Law is a key component of these efforts in a scientific field. The primary environmental issues of the day, population and resources (particularly ocean resources), were considered as worldwide rather than national or regional in the early literature on international environmental politics (IEP). This is not to imply that trans-boundary and other worldwide challenges just weren't relevant, but instead to point out that the worldwide scale was incorporated into the research of IEP as soon as World War II ended, just as it was with regard to economic, political, and military matters. The global objectives and means of American politics and the resource and ecological legacies of colonial empires appear to be the two reasons that explain for this global perspective on IEP.

**Keywords:** International environmental politics, IEP, environmentalism, globalization, linked issues

## 1. Introduction

Nature, primarily living systems, has given us food and fibre for millennia, as well as materials for housing and transportation [1]. Living systems provided the soil that supported our expanding agriculture, managed the global water cycle, and conditioned the air we breathe. They absorbed and broke down our garbage. Nature nurtured the human soul in ways that went beyond utility. However, the influence of 6 billion people on wildlife is having a negative impact. The world's living systems are disintegrating. We did not always cause such terrible damage. Around 200,000 years ago, when modern humans first appeared, changes were gradually brought about throughout a narrow geographic area. However, due to unchecked population expansion and developing technology, change is now occurring quickly. Not only are farm fields "human controlled ecosystems," but the entire world. The environmental impact of contemporary human society is substantial. Global ecological disturbance and biotic perturbation are the results. However, contemporary culture still acts as if there are no long-term effects of altering the biosphere and as if we are not dependent on nature's life-support systems.

Since ancient times, people have been most concerned about each other's health, including accidents, famines that occasionally occur, illnesses spread by insects, and injuries sustained in conflicts or wars. Due to the spread of a wide variety of new infectious illnesses among people as a result of modern agriculture and the domestication of animals, there are now new health issues. Waterborne illness incidence decreased as a result of wastewater treatment, which was one benefit of the industrial revolution. However, new technology also brought along new dangers, such as hazardous industrial chemicals and international transportation networks that spread infectious illnesses and exposed people to a wider range of ailments. While modern environmental control and medicine have made strides in addressing these issues, they still face challenges in foreseeing developing, unanticipated outcomes, such as the resistance of many disease organisms to drugs. Of course, from the dawn of civilization, people have been thinking deeply and acting practically about the human predicament. However, the industrial revolution saw economic and political developments that led people to lose their dependence on the land. It appeared that trade and technology had freed people from worries about life support systems. Lessons learned in the past, particularly the body of information regarding linkages to biological systems, looked less and less relevant. New economic theories predicted that, given freedom to function, "the market" would take care of humanity. The so-called neoclassical school of thought made the false claim that the poor and the environment benefit from economic expansion and the factors that support it. It was believed that achieving social well-being was a natural by-product of a market economy [2].

## 2. Bringing Politics and Ecology Together

The idea that politics should be "placed first" in the quest to comprehend how human-environment interactions may be connected to the development of environmental degradation is at the core of political ecology study. Due to the apparent apolitical character of previous environmental studies, third-world political ecology has grown into a diverse study topic since the 1970s [3–4]. Alternative theories have fallen short in explaining the "political sources, circumstances, and repercussions of environmental change," which has contributed to the field's continued success [5].

There was no "classic" work that heralded the start of the area; rather, a Wolf essay from 1972 is regarded as one of the earliest works in what would one day become third-world political ecology [6]. Instead, the latter owes its inception to advancements in the linked disciplines of cultural ecology and radical development geography. Third-world political ecology has been greatly influenced by the development of radical development geography, a branch of geography. Although radical development geography was a part of a larger revision of geography that started in the late 1960s, it gained popularity in the 1970s in part because of its effective advertisement against neo-Malthusian ideas about how to best address the world's expanding population and ecological "crisis" [7-11]. Radical geographers' work on "natural" risks and catastrophes was a notable example of how these concerns can affect future study. A series of investigation into how political economic systems intersect with ecological processes was started by O'Keefe and Wisner in 1975, and it culminated in the publication of an alternative

research agenda on catastrophes and hazards in the early 1980s. The programme was centred on risks and catastrophes, but it also made broader remarks on the necessity for research into the political economy of environmental change in the developing world. As a result, it had a significant impact on the growth of third-world political ecology, which was recognised in important political ecology texts [12-14].

By the early 1980s, however, cultural ecology was coming under increasing attack. For instance, Hjort (1982) and Grossman (1984) emphasised the need for what Vayda (1983) called "progressive contextualization," or the framing of anthropological insights about human environmental interaction in the context of an appreciation of the larger political and economic structures that influence activity in any given locality. Following this, political ecologists started to focus heavily on how to integrate local research conducted in an anthropological way with politico-economic structural analysis [15-17].

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, political ecologists looking to combine place- and non place-based analyses mostly resorted to neo-Marxism. The second one was diverse in nature and included modes of production theory, dependency theory, and world-systems concept. It is significant to notice here is that neo-Marxism was at its height of influence in the humanities at a period when several political ecologists were looking for a revolutionary theory to guide their case studies [18]. This work has been examined thoroughly here. Undoubtedly, the degradation of resources has long been a topic of Marxist studies, even in the context of developing countries. But correctly states that "Marxist theory about the process of development has ascribed a secondary place to the local habitat," a fact later discussed in discussions of ecology and Marxism. However, for several political ecologists focusing on the developing world in the first half of the 1980s, neo-Marxism provided a way to connect regional social repression and ecological pollution to more general political and economic worries about manufacturing problems [19-21].

### **3. International environmental Law**

Regarding the normative substance of its principles, international environmental law is infamously ambiguous [22]. There are several factors that lead to this situation, the first being the process of global law, which is frequently based on the principle of balancing the interests of all interested parties. Examples of this principle in action include the management and allocation of rights in relation to international waterways and the commitment of States for damage to the environment, both of which depend to some extent on this principle. The conflicting interests and differences in the legal standing of developed and developing States are additional elements that have a considerable impact on the establishment of ecological standards.

In response to these demands, policymakers are becoming more aware that environmental preservation requires a comprehensive approach [23]. Local issues are inextricably linked to larger regional, national, and even international issues. The intersection of domestic (national and municipal) and international environmental law has since grown quickly. This progression is consistent with the physical reality of a biosphere made up of interdependent components that transcend political boundaries and the increasingly global nature of human

activities that degrade nature and its processes. New opportunities and challenges are presented by the globalisation of civil society and the internationalisation of commerce. The broad mobility of people and goods could also lead to ecological difficulties, notably through the presence of foreign fragments and the spread of contaminants, but communication networks make it possible for more quick understanding of the prevalence and magnitude of ecological concerns. Excessive consumption poses a risk to the depletion of both living and nonliving resources, while increasing greenhouse gas emissions adversely affect the weather on a worldwide scale. Density of population puts a burden on resources and produces pollution levels that are too high for the planet to handle. The entry of untreated endocrine-disrupting drugs into fresh water is only one example of the numerous issues that are continuously being discovered as a result of technology and changes in the type or extent of human activity. As a result, the national and international legal structure must constantly be developed and revised. Environmental law has a worldwide geographic reach, but it also has transdisciplinary needs. Laws and regulations pertaining to power, commerce, business, transit, and consumer rights, in addition to such apparent subjects as water law and endangered species legislation, also have an impact on environmental circumstances. Persons with rights protected by national and international law are at the heart of the issues, effects, and **remedies**.

#### 4. GEP/ IR/IEP

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the emergence of the field of GEP. Today, it is undoubtedly informed in part by ideas of international relations (IR) as well as the subject of political science, which examines the roles of states, organizations globally, and power globally . However, the study spans disciplinary boundaries since practically every concern about global ecological change is interdisciplinary by nature. Clearly, there is indeed a great deal of disagreement on the field's boundaries. The boundaries of this subject have become even more hazy due to the recent rapid expansion in the number of GEP investigation.

Critics believe that the research on states and transnational administration contains the essence of the discipline. Several believe that it is included into IR concepts of ecological regulations [24]. Others identify the central issue in the study on how the global political economy affects the environment, namely in the politics of business, finance, companies, and consumerism. Others believe that the area encompasses much more, including works on nations, the global political economy, as well as civil societies, environmental security, ethics, and even corporate global governance. Undoubtedly, a wide concept of global environmental politics has some of the same drawbacks as other multidisciplinary endeavours. In addition, the sheer quantity and range of study places high burden on the analysts' time and cognitive adaptability. It might be tempting to limit the area, to read just political scientists, or to define international environmental politics in a very specific way. Moreover, no single study could ever stay current with all of the advancements in the social and environmental disciplines. But in my opinion, the multidisciplinary nature of the study is this field's greatest asset and its biggest contribution to the hunt for intellectual discovery [25,26]

Mitchell concentrates on the IR study on regimes and institutions, much as Zürn [27]. Furthermore, Mitchell goes into further detail on the reasons behind each step of the international environmental policy framework [28]. Every study constantly flows across in terms of features and historical evolution, therefore these groupings of research are not rigid categories. Furthermore, the groups are helpful for arranging the GEP literature in a way that exposes recurring patterns and modern trends. As an area of social scientific inquiry, global environmental politics academic research is embracing a growing range of research issues, theoretical frameworks, and methodological techniques, which serves to support one of the section's main arguments. As with all progressive review, the chapter's goal is to illustrate the present state of the topic and potential future study avenues rather than to create a static image of the subject [29].

## 5. The Scope of IR/IEP

While this essay is anchored around the discipline of IR, it is apparent that the framing and study of IEP is not the monopoly of IR scholars [30-31]. It is not feasible to do justice to the range of IEP work in the other social sciences and management, a realization that has led to one of the suggestions for future research at the end of this study.

Anticipating the central finding of this article, neither IR nor Political Science as a whole has as cohesive and defined environmental subfields as seems to be the case in some other social sciences such as Economics or Sociology. Rather, what we have is a vibrant polyphony of research areas and agendas strongly tethered to the various IR subfields. As a result there are various ways to organize the intellectual genealogies of IR/IEP. For the purposes of this study the discussion of each period is organized in terms of four general themes, i.e., Theory, Governance, Security, and Political Economy. This decision reflects the author's estimate, seconded by various readers and reviewers, of the distribution of IR/IEP research. "Theory" traces broad theoretical developments such as the interface between IR and non-IR approaches, the range of theoretical perspectives within IR/IEP, and debates over the broad causes of environmental harm. "Governance" covers all manner of efforts at dealing with environmental problems, ranging over time from the role of IGOs to the more recent use of the term "governance" to include formal and informal, public and private policies. "Security" also ranges from concerns over the impacts of scarcities on conflict amongst humans to concerns about ecocide. Finally, "Political Economy" includes geopolitical concerns over resource scarcities and North-South relations, as well as ecopolitical debates over decarbonization and sustainability.

While these four themes are evident during each of the four periods it also becomes apparent that there are many ways in which people have approached them, both theoretically and substantively. Thus, the essay also pays attention to important shifts and developments with respect to four crosscutting themes, i.e., nature and society, structure and agency, power and equity, and knowledge and technology. Environmental politics is both about nature and about people, it is not only about people. As one examines IEP it is possible to place research into three categories. Geopolitical IEP research tends to focus on the use of resources; environmentalist IEP research

approaches IEP as another issue area amongst many, in the process recognizing that environmental issues may have their own dynamics. Finally, ecopolitical IEP research extends some “standing” to nature. As is evident, there are important differences and divisions within each of these approaches as there are important overlaps. The question of agency and structure has been central to the social sciences. Over time there has been a broadening and deepening in terms of the actors (e.g., movements, networks, environmental nongovernmental organizations [EN- GOs], corporations, local governments) and social categories (e.g., gender, indigenous people, workers, consumers) around which researchers may examine theory, governance, security or political economy. From a focus on IGOs and states, for example, there is now vibrant work on societal entities and categories. Structural accounts have also become richer, ranging from earlier concerns over the aggregate characteristics of the globe and North–South relations to the study of the implications of global capitalism, accumulation, risk society, or world systems for the international environment. From an early preoccupation with the aggregate causes and impacts of environmental problems we have slowly but increasingly come to explore the social and ecological dimensions of power, justice, and equity from a variety of angles. Finally, from early views of the potential and adverse impacts of technology and knowledge we have come to appreciate the complexities of their social and ecological embeddedness [32]. Weapons, diseases, economic activities are all global. However, their impacts and their governance are largely not globalized. This is so not only because of the persistence of the state but, also, because boundaries are as much the creation of societal forces as they are of state forces. Stated differently, bringing in capital and society has, so far, reconfigured rather than erased boundaries. Thus, IEP denotes all sorts of environmental issues and policies that cross boundaries, whether global or subglobal, international or transnational.

## 6. Conclusion

The goal of environmental protection legislation is to prevent negative effects on nature by encompassing all legal standards pertaining to environmental protection. The ability of nature to defend itself is deteriorating, and the need of safeguarding natural resources is being increasingly disregarded. These are the fundamental justifications for national and international legal control in this field. Future research output is difficult to anticipate, if not impossible. It is inevitable that new ideas, as well as new players, processes, and issues, will surface. The GEP industry will inevitably keep developing. Nevertheless, it is conceivable to identify certain new patterns in recent studies, ones that at least point towards a plausible path for the future.

The vital importance of nations, democracy, administrations, and organizations will undoubtedly be further studied conceptually by scholars. These literary works are now quite sophisticated. Even as a large portion of the IR research shifts away from systems and toward more formal legal procedures, standards, and nonstate causes of change, GEP academics continue to pioneer new territory in the field of regime study. The development of global legislation and our knowledge of international cooperation have benefited greatly from the ecological discourse. As IR researchers look for methods to adopt a more comprehensive study of global environmental management, it is also advancing the theoretical literature on global governance.

It appears more likely that GEP study will consider extending outside of political science. International law, finance, and geography already have significant influence, but political science study is increasingly referencing works from a broader variety of academic fields. The literature in international relations and comparable politics on the worldwide ecology is progressively being included by academics from other fields as well. In other words, rather than describing the development of political institutions, the focus will increasingly move to understanding environmental change. In our admittedly speculative opinion, a significant portion of future research will also blatantly aim to enhance the understanding among an expanding and competent community of experts inside the GEP discipline.

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