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Nielsen April 26th Reaction Paper

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Campaigning for Corporate Change: Global Citizen Action on the Environment (Newell)

Newell highlights the growing trend within the environmental non-state movement to direct targeted campaigns against the corporate sector. He argues this is due to the associated shift in globalization and the realignment of power arrangements among global actors, which fits nicely with our earlier discussion of governance trends by Mathews, Clark, Kaldor and Smith. Newell argues that NGOs utilize two key strategies to influence transnational corporate behaviour: cooperative and confrontation strategies. A cooperative strategy is a form of collaboration between NGOs and the corporate sector that essentially seeks to "work within the current economic system, to improve the way in which it functions, and to offset its worst environmental practices." This strategy includes eco-consumerism, project collaboration, codes of conduct and stewardship regimes. This strategy seeks to avoid antagonistic approaches (the stick) and instead focuses on rewarding good corporate behaviour (the carrot). A confrontational strategy contrasts with the cooperative approach by directly targeting corporate behaviour in an assertive and highly public manner. This includes consumer boycotts, public relations wars, TNC monitors and stakeholder activism. Newell highlights a number of challenges faced by citizen and NGO action including ad hoc behaviour, limited geographical scope of action, the strategies tend to focus on a limited number of TNCs, private collaboration between NGOs and private companies may not be open to public scrutiny. I agree with Lindsay and her query regarding whether these are 'citizen driven' and not just new forms of NGO strategies. In addition, which strategies are more appropriate in which context? Was a cooperative strategy applied first and if that failed then a confrontation strategy was applied? How was the decision made to use which strategy?

How Corporations and Environmental Groups Cooperate: Assessing Cross-Sector Alliances and Collaborations (Rondinelli and London)

The authors highlight the shift from an antagonistic relationship between the non-profit and corporate sectors toward a more collaborative strategic partnership. Historically this relationship has been fraught with tension and mutual distrust, however, given the "complementary resources these two types of organizations" possess, there is growing awareness that collaborative cross-sector arrangements can yield not only greater corporate profitability, but also stronger environmental protection. Although it appears that these new forms of collaboration are not necessarily based on good-will and respect, but rather based on the need for corporations to clean up their tarnished image or that they do not want to spend the money or time to develop the necessary expertise that non-profits hold in the area of environmental protection. One of the key areas of concern the authors highlight is how the cross-sector collaboration can be effectively managed; how can heterogeneous alliances function given the fundamentally different missions and goals of the two types of organizations. Furthermore, the authors question how trust can be crafted within these new relationships given the historical lack of trust and even respect for one another, what Rondinelli and London term "sleeping with the enemy". The authors subsequently developed a relationship matrix that sub-divides relationships into three broad categories including: Arm's-Length Relationships; Interactive Collaborations; and Intensive Environmental Management Alliances; essentially a hierarchy of collaborative arrangements ranging from corporate outreach or

materials contributions to full support for environmental research and participation in environmental workshops. The fundamental focus of the paper is on how arrangements are crafted and the decision-making process to determine which type of strategic alliance is most appropriate.

Gaining Leverage: NGO Influence on Certification Institutions in the Forest Products Sector (Sasser)

In this article the authors discuss how NGOs have been particularly active in recent years collaborating with the private sector to develop and enforce voluntary certification schemes over the management and harvesting of forest resources. The authors review the literature on the role of NGOs in global affairs and specifically highlight that NGOs are more frequently targeting their campaigns and action toward firms rather than states given the organizational as well as policy concerns of civil society and TNCs are truly global in nature; the state has not disappeared, but governments find it increasingly difficult to “stretch beyond domestic political agendas to engage [in global] issues in any real way”. This view would be surely be contested by Anne-Marie Slaughter who argues that the nation state has become increasingly embedded in horizontal and vertical global networks. One of the most interesting contributions by Sasser is the “new boomerang effect”, the “market boomerang” or the “ricochet boomerang” that essentially ignores the state within the supply chain process of forestry products. Instead of applying Keck and Sikkink’s “traditional” boomerang process where non-state actors in State A seek the assistance of non-state actors in States B, C and D to get their respective governments to put pressure on State A to reform, in this new boomerang dynamic the role of the state is wholly absent. Within this new boomerang process neither NGOs nor firms seek to involve the “traditionally powerful central actor [the state].” Traditionally NGOs targeted states to enact policy reform over industry; however, in this case the new boomerang pattern therefore targets consumers and/or retailers to leverage action and reform. I love boomerangs, of course, if you don’t throw them properly they fly through windows (of opportunity?)!!!