

## Abstract

Daniel Berlin (2007): *Green Power Generators: How the Political Stakes of Environmental Conventions Make Some NGOs More Fit for Power than Others*. English text. Göteborg Studies in Politics 102. Department of Political Science, Box 711, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden. Göteborg 2007. 216 pages. ISBN 978-91-89246-28-7, ISSN 0346-5942

*Green Power Generators* deals with NGO influence in global environmental conventions. The question under investigation is how the convention characteristics *issue tangibility* and *political stakes* affect the relative importance of various organizational resources in the quest for influence. In contrast to the bulk of process tracing studies in the field, this study provides a macro-picture of the relation between resources, power and convention characteristics. Also in contrast to most earlier research, the study exploits the vast diversity and competitive elements within the NGO community by systematically comparing the influence of differently equipped individual organizations.

The author identifies two broad strands of theoretical assumptions about power generating resources. One strand postulates that the *physical capacity* of NGOs explains their level of influence, and focuses on economic resources, staff, number of supporters, and geographical distribution. Another strand emphasizes the importance of the *status* of organizations in the form of expertise, prominence and independence.

Power is thoroughly discussed in the thesis. The concept is broadly defined as effects on politics, including effects on decisions, discussions and considerations. It is measured with an index of nine indicators based on organizations' presence and activities in global conventions (documented in convention proceedings) as well as informants' ratings of organizational influence. Data on organizational resources is drawn from a multitude of sources, such as websites, annual reports, databases, yearbooks, media archives and interviews. The relative importance of power resources is analyzed by comparisons of NGOs with different levels of power and different resource equipments in five different conventions; the *Climate Change Convention*, the *Convention on Biological Diversity*, the *Convention to Combat Desertification*, the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*, and the Stockholm convention on *Persistent Organic Pollutants*.

The main findings are that the political stakes of a convention affect the importance of the status resources *expertise*, *prominence* and *independence*, and (to some extent) of *economic resources*. Higher political stakes makes expertise, prominence and economy more important, while the importance of independence decreased with higher stakes. The other convention characteristic, *issue tangibility*, does not seem to affect the importance of power resources.

In the concluding sections, the author discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical assumptions of the macro approach, its usefulness and how the study contributes to already existing knowledge. He also elaborates on the validity and usefulness of the power index, and the implications for transnational democracy.

**Key words:** global environmental politics, NGO influence, power resources, transnational civil society, environmental conventions, interest-groups