NGO involvement in the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm 1972

Interrelations Between Intergovernmental Discourse Framing and Activist Influence.

By

Peter Nilsson

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The purpose of this study is to analyze how Swedish NGOs and their related networks influenced environmental discourses during and following the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm 1972. The purpose is also to analyze how they in turn were affected by the conference process and the context in which NGOs function.

This study is concerned with how social movements became engaged in official global meetings and the effects of this process. It is a study of the interrelations between intergovernmental discourse framing and activist influence. To understand this we take in consideration what motivated the actions of relevant actors, how actors selected strategies to obtain their purposes and how diverse frames of understanding emerged.
Nyckelord

Keyword

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Summary

Introduction
The Stockholm conference has been recognized as bringing political attention to environmental problems. Researchers have acknowledged the importance of NGO activities during the conference, initiating a trend of engagement of NGOs in official global meetings. But NGOs were not permitted to speak at the plenary or participate in working groups in the official Conference. The influence of NGOs could still be substantial but in another arenas delivering perceptions, knowledge and information to the general public and officials, directly or through the intense media coverage of the conference. NGOs engaged in these parallel activities and individuals in the official initiating process are central to this research.

Conclusions
Ruling elites became severely questioned and lost legitimacy and power in the late 1960s. Critics of the environmental paradigmatic tradition found support in a new generation making rebellion towards the establishment and the institutions of earlier generations. Environmental problems and US activities in Vietnam reached the public and contributed to an arising discontent. Activists strived for more than economic accesses; they strived for general influence with a belief that they could shape a better world. Social movements in Stockholm started to work with preparations for parallel activities, finding ways to use the attention that they expected on the Stockholm conference. In 1970 transnational preparations of independent parallel activities to the Stockholm conference started, meetings were held and youth groups and networks were created.

During the time of the official UN conference there were parallel activities going on in Stockholm involving NGOs such as “Environmental Forum” a parallel meeting and a place for seminars initiated by the UN and by the UN Association of Sweden and National Council of Swedish Youth. Another activity of importance was “Peoples Forum” an alternative meeting and a place for seminars organized by volunteer social movements and networks. There where Dai Dong Forum who shared housing and cooperated with Peoples forum. Dai Dong was a part of International Fellowship of Reconciliation and consisted of scientists presenting new knowledge mainly of the warfare in Indochina (Vietnam). There was also Life Forum that took place in the camping place in Skarpnäck. This forum got mostly presented as non serious and pulled most attention because their wide use of narcotics. There were also exhibitions, bus tours, and activities in a number of locations in Stockholm.

Alarming reports revealed substantial environmental degradation caused in the industrialized world. Theories assuming that environmental degradation quickly would be extended to the third world were experienced as constituting an enormous threat to the global environment. This resulted in a conviction held by an initiator of the Stockholm Conference; “the negative effects of civilization should not be allowed to be maintained by the developing countries”. US theorists with a considerable support claimed that the dooms day was close in time and that the only solution was to enforce a complete control and regulation of the third world population and industrialization, hindering a population bomb. This control was to be held by US and West Europe. During the preparations for the Stockholm Conference the extent of North-South polarization got revealed. The environmental paradigm that officially motivated the Stockholm Conference was a creation built on specific western experiences and assumptions. The third world criticized the western approaches as not reflecting the real problems as the unequal distribution of recourses and accused industrialized countries for using environmental arguments to keep developing countries subordinate.
The engagement from elite’s in the human environment can be understood as a necessity to keep dominance. We can regard the conference as a result of public experiences of societal dysfunction’s and public demands forcing governments to find possibilities to recapture the initiative, on the other hand individuals in the elite seams to have been effected by the presentation of environmental reports leading to a genuine environmental engagement from parts of the elites as well.

We can se indications on several attempts from elites to re-take initiative and distort attention from the highly critical parallel activities that were independent of intergovernmental or governmental approval.

Many western social movements and nongovernmental networks attempts to reshape the society got halted. Researchers as Humle and Edwards has described that many NGOs has got closer to donors and governments. NGOs has kept or strengthened their influence but perhaps as a partly new discourse framing elite rather than as creators of alternatives.

We can recognize tendencies of a shift in private cooperation’s methods to achieve influence from working in the silent or in the dark striving to affect UN officials and domestic governments. According to research of Jon Pierre and former activists an addition in methods has emerged; using NGOs to affect the public opinion advertising specific discourses and producing material with selected knowledge. This can be understood as; the financial community in the North has made their perception of the world more spread and accepted making it more convenient for them to act more openly. NGOs may have expanded in size and scope strengthening their interests, but this does not mean that the influence of NGOs as advocates of a broader audience has increased. This is logically not the case as NGOs has lost contact with a broader audience and got closer to the dominating groups.

Official institutions are completely dependent of legitimacy and trust from the public. To have the initiative, creating specific frames of understanding, selecting concepts and a specific perception of the world is central and a necessity for domination. In a situation where contesting paradigmatic understandings were arising and the paradigmatic understanding of the establishment were loosing terrain, it became necessary for dominant groups to get closer to the public, to achieve control of opposing groups through a combination of co-optation and destabilization.

An elaboration with alternative discourses with the aim of creating more relevant or alternative conceptions of the world, welding dispersed wills and heterogeneous aims to a perhaps temporary but single aim, is a way to challenge the contemporary “hegemony” or dominating discourse. This can serve as a description of what a social movement as such basically can achieve, regarding societal influence or change.

Reflections
Perhaps if we climb the ladder of theoretical abstractions, investigate our conceptions as temporary products of history, we can avoid some risks attached with an all too dominant paradigm or confessions to a paradigm; blindness for inherent structural problems, suppression of divergent individuals and alternative paradigms as intolerance and despise for other cultures.
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Introduction

“The 1972 Stockholm conference is identified a number of scholars and practitioners as an important catalyst for bringing international political attention to the environmental issues, and stimulating international environmental protection and mobilization”.¹ We can state that parallel NGO meetings have taken place during the Stockholm conference and at all major UN events after the Stockholm conference.² NGOs activities at the time for the Stockholm conference can be regarded as initiating a trend of engagement of NGOs in official global meetings. But a study concerned with the effects of NGO activities on the outcomes of the Stockholm conference has not been an object for research. It is such an understanding that this study is to enhance.

Environmental problems were experienced as severe and acute. According to the Swedish foreign department (1972) the Stockholm conference was “to meet the worldwide environmental destruction”.³ The Swedish government was convinced that “a great deal of the planning of the environmental conference occurred under the pressure of different acute environmental polluting problems”.⁴ In the US dooms day prophets, with a considerable support, claimed that the environmental problems was caused by a “population bomb” that threatened to overthrow the “civilization” if not drastic measures was implemented.

Selected NGOs were invited into the conference as observers. But no NGOs were permitted to speak at the plenary or participate in working groups at the official conference.⁵ The influence of NGOs may still have been substantial but in other arenas. NGOs presented perceptions, knowledge and information to the general public and officials, directly or through the intense media coverage of the conference.

During the official UN conferences there were parallel activities going on in Stockholm involving NGOs such as “Environmental Forum” a parallel conference and a place for seminars initiated by the UN and by the UN Association of Sweden and National Council of Swedish Youth.⁶ Another activity of importance was “Peoples Forum” an alternative conference and a place for seminars organized by, more than thirty, volunteers social movements and networks.⁷ There was Dai Dong Forum who shared housing and cooperated with Peoples forum. Dai Dong was a part of International Fellowship of Reconciliation and consisted of scientists presenting new knowledge mainly of the

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³ Swedish Foreign Department 1972 Aktstycken utgivna av Utrikesdepartementet II:25 Förenta Nationernas miljökonferens i Stockholm 5-16 juni 1972 (Stockholm) p. 9
⁵ Björn-Ola Linnér Henrik Selin How It All Began: Global Efforts on Sustainable Development from Stockholm to Rio p. 9 Paper presented at 6th Nordic Conference on Environmental Social Science, Åbo, Finland, June 12-14, 2003, as part of the panel “Johannesburg: A First Anniversary”
⁶ Björn Berglund Dagens Nyheter 1972-05-19 p. 31 ”Stort program i folkets forum...” (Swedish Foreign dep. Archive PM 1972-05-24) Authors translation
⁷ Interviews with Janse, Fjellander and Björk Authors translation
warfare in Indochina (Vietnam). There was also Life Forum that took place in the camping place in Skarpnäck. This forum got mostly presented as non serious and pulled most attention because their wide use of narcotics. In this Forum the North American Harley Davidson Motorcycle organization Hog Farm was most active, delivering narcotics. There were exhibitions, bus tours, and activities in a number of locations in Stockholm, some arranged by Peoples Forum and some by Environmental forum. There were diverse activities in a number of locations over the world pulling attention to the issue.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze how Swedish NGOs and their related networks influenced environmental discourses during and following the UN conference on the human environment in Stockholm 1972. The purpose is also to analyze how they in turn were effected by the conference process and the context in which NGOs function. To reach this purpose we have distinguished questions that are possible to answer, out of the empiric material.

Demarcation

This is not an attempt to determine “the truth” or to create very generalized and reliable conclusions. Rather it is an attempt to describe interrelations between intergovernmental discourse framing and activist influence from a specific perspective. This perspective recognizes the informants point of view through specific theories compared with selected researches and primary references. This is a political research concerned with how we ought to understand NGOs and networks today, from the perspective of the 1972 Stockholm conference. This makes us recognize historical aspects and political implications of today, mostly regarding how we ought to understand the options of NGOs.

Main questions

What factors lead to the Stockholm conference?

What motivated actions of Swedish NGOs and dominating groups engaged in the Stockholm conference?

What were the major environmental conflicts according to relevant actors engaged in the Stockholm conference?

What were the options of actors engaged in the Stockholm conference?

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8 Jordens Vänner 1972 medlemsinformation. Deliverd By Tord Björk. Authors translation
9 Interviews with Janse, Fjellander, Björk and an article by Mikael Nyberg (2001-03-29) 5. The Stockholm conference http://www.mikaelnyberg.nu/english/greut_0.5html 2003-08-06 Authors translation
10 Björn Berglund “Stort program i folkets forum..” p. 31
11 This study is performed in association with a multi-year research project on sustainable development policy making within the UN system with focus on the major environmental conferences 1972-2002. http://www.tema.liu.se/milhist/sthlm72/default.html.
What strategies and paradigms can be revealed from relevant discourses?

What roles had NGOs during and following the Stockholm conference?

**Method and disposition**
This is an attempt to enhance an understanding of the roles of Swedish NGOs from a specific perspective recognizing the understandings of key figures engaged in parallel activities and the contemporary Swedish UN-ambassador that can be regarded as responsible to the realization of the official conference. Through these individuals we can develop an understanding of how political initiative can arise, what motivates people to act politically and how and why NGOs at the Stockholm conference came to effect coming perceptions of environmental problems as well as how NGOs became effected by the process. We also need to recognize written material in order to try the descriptions, of the few informers, and to get an addition of relevant aspects and facts.

This is an attempt to investigate a specific phenomenon from a defined purpose, but with the ambition to be open for unexpected perceptions, connections and descriptions. This makes it important for us to analyze intentions from the actor’s point of view, to regard phenomena from diverse frames of understanding and to rewrite the initial frames of the research according to unexpected conclusions, and through the research achieved knowledge of what is important. The reader will notice that this research is made with overlapping themes. This disposition is selected to facilitate descriptions of phenomena from diverse perspectives. This method and disposition is in line with Alberto Meluccis earlier work *Nomads of the Present*. 12

The size of this research was set from the beginning and the time and resources I had available was limited. The limited number of informers does not hinder a relatively deep understanding of the unique and divergent, but it does hinder possibilities to draw very generalized and reliable conclusions. This is a qualitative interview research combined with text analysis. A research concerned with interpretation of frames of reference, motive, social processes and social context.

When analyzing a phenomenon one ought to be aware of assumptions that lead to the selected approach. This study starts with a basic discussion of perceptions. A political research such as this is engaged in power relations, that is how actors could spread their view of the world into dominance or influence. When messages becomes internalized this results in changes of politics. This focus on power makes it important for us to be aware of what we mean with power, how power can be defined and how power can be exercised.

Before we turn our attention towards different NGOs we ought to reflect why organizations come to existence, how the phenomena organizations can be effected by sociological contexts and how organizations can contribute to the society. Next theme is there to explore contesting approaches to the concept NGO. When searching for a thorough understanding of the activities of NGOs we ought to consider possible opportunities for different NGOs to achieve influence. This is significant when analyzing, why NGOs act in certain ways and the consequences of different strategies.

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12 Alberto Melucci (1991) *Nomader i nuet. Sociala rörelser och individuella behov i dagens samhälle* P. 19-21 (Bokförlaget Daidalos AB, Göteborg)
This research is an attempt to create an understanding of organizational opportunities from the activist point of view. This is a perspective recommended by Manuell Castells, as the only alternative to this approach is trying to interpret the “true” consciousness of NGOs. Trying to interpret the “true” consciousness of NGOs is deemed to fail according to Thomas Kuhns theories. “There is no way to reconstruct phrases as “really exists” as do not depend on a theory”. Kuhn and Castells theories lead us to recognize the descriptions of central actors. To make this possible we need to select informers that were engaged in the conference as activists and UN officials.

Many actors engaged in the conference strived for or expected a fundamental societal change. This makes it valuable to consider how such a change can occur. An understanding of paradigms is also relevant as central actors’ had highly diverse perceptions. As this is a political research concerned with how we ought to understand NGOs and networks today from the perspective of the 1972 Stockholm conference, we need to consider modern perceptions held by NGOs and networks. I have chosen to present and discuss writers with opposing frames of understanding. One is Chossudovsky who has a close connection to Third World Network an important network of today, the other is Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez Alier who describe and enhance an understanding of third world environmental movements of today. These writers are also relevant for this research because they share many basic values with opposing NGOs and networks in the 1970s, even if the modern theories can be regarded as more thoroughly analyzed and detailed.

After the theoretical part comes an integrated description and analysis of the empirical material, presented thematically, where contrasting and harmonizing aspects are being discussed theme by theme to finally debouch into conclusions. A central part of the empirical material contains of four interviews with practitioners involved in the Stockholm conference: Tord Björk, Jan Fjellander, Per Janse and Sverker Åström. Other important parts of the empirical material contains of statements from actors engaged in the Stockholm conference and analyses and conclusions of other researchers. This material makes it possible to draw more generalized conclusions than what would otherwise be possible and it is also important in adding relevant aspects and understandings. The informants have clear connections to specific actors during the conference. The informants have also been chosen on behalf of knowledge about the Stockholm conference and their strong continuity of engagement in environmental questions. More thorough descriptions of the informers will be presented in the empirical part.

To avoid too much maneuvering from my side based on pre-understanding and possibly prejudices I have had the ambition to let the informants express what they consider is relevant. This chosen method has however implications, the informants have partly not discussed the issues in the same way and how they have answered questions has varied considerable. To avoid a too scattered collection of information I have been prepared with an interview manual containing issues and questions. I have during the interviews found unexpected descriptions of actors, and rationalities. I hope that these differing descriptions can give an interesting contribution to our understanding of what has happened and how we can understand it. We ought to be aware of that the descriptions in the interviews describing a phenomena starting more then thirty years ago inevitably can

be regarded as reconstructions. This has made it even more important to use written material from the relevant period as reference. When comparing information given by the informers with written material from the relevant period I have not found any contradictions of significance. The interviews have been recorded, which gave us an opportunity to more dynamic interview situations. It has also improved possibilities to correctness in the interpretation. The interviews were carried out by telephone as a result of limited access of economic recourses. The interviews were carried out in Swedish and have been interpreted into English by me. From the start I had ambitions to interview more people but since more than thirty years have gone physical hinders have arisen, the availability of the contemplated informers has decreased and the size of this work was set from the start, by the economic institution where I am to defend this work. It would have been of value to get more interviews with activists from Sweden the third world and interviews with lobby groups but this remains a task for coming research.
Theoretical Part

When studying a phenomenon that occurred some thirty years ago, it is of value to identify time-bound discourses (to apprehend how environmental problems have been perceived differently over time and space). Changes in environmental understanding did not just happen. They can be regarded as a result of competing frames of understanding that is actors engaged in getting their view of the world accepted into dominance or public consciousness. If one ignores how competing frames of understanding have influenced our understanding, things might appear as if history evolves in a predetermined liner way from a specific discourse thirty years ago to the perspective hold by the researcher. This research is to analyze how and why NGOs at the Stockholm conference came to influence coming perceptions of environmental problems as well as how NGOs became effected by the process, revealing confrontations, dialogues, independence and consensus. This focus makes it essential to apprehend what are decisive for our perceptions, what power is, the essentials in domination, how resistance can arise and how major changes occur. We also need to recognize sociological contexts and competing frames of understanding. The actors that are central for this study are networks, social movements, governments and UN.

Perception

To find out how the Stockholm conference came to influence our understanding of environmental problems we have to start discussing: What shapes our perception? Kuhn assume that, what a human being sees depends both on what he is watching and on what his earlier visual-conceptional experience has thought him to see. Human perception can therefore be viewed as a product of the selection of objects of interest, which logically only can be a result of a pre-understanding, what people has been thought to look at. And how to interpret the stimuli apprehended of the surrounding, which must be dependent on what earlier experiences has taught us how to understand.

According to Kuhn “There is no way to reconstruct phrases as “really exists” as do not depend on a theory”. The idea of conformity between a theory’s ontological status and its “real” correspondence seems to be illusory. This also leads us to a suspicion that something similar to a paradigm is a prerequisite to the perception.

Power

A political research concerned with power relations ought to take in consideration what power is and how power or influence can be exercised. To achieve a relevant understanding of how the Stockholm conference came to effect coming perceptions, we have to consider who decides what we are to see and who select the information on which we ground our perception.

14 Kuhn p. 97
15 Kuhn p. 97
16 Kuhn p. 167
M Edelman and H.D Lasswell mean that power does not only operate through external force, it “also operates in the way in which myths and symbols are manipulated” (Gramsci adds;) and in the existence of an “ideological hegemony”. Berger and Luckman conclude that power exists in the “construction” of meaning in society. These theories coincide with the writings of Foucault. He argues that:

We rather ought to admit that power produces knowledge (not only promotes knowledge because it serves it or practices knowledge because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly presupposes each other; that there is no power relation without that a connected area of knowledge is produced and that there is no knowledge as do not presuppose and educate a contemporary power relation.

Foucault explains that power must be seen as strategies function on many levels. Power ought to be seen in networks in “the micro-physics of power” rather existing in knowledge than in the houses of power.

Melucci criticize traditional approaches. These approaches have common assumptions regarding theories of knowledge. Collective phenomena regarding panic, a social movement or a revolutionary process are treated as something uniform empirically given, as they imagine can be perceived and interred by an observer. They assume that individuals’ behaviour creates a uniform character or figure. The collective reality is viewed as a thing. This interpretation of “the collective act” reshapes social action to an uncontroversial fact, something given as do not demand further investigation. “The picture of a shapeless mass that is lead by their flock instincts” has now become suspect.

Alberto Melucci started discussing the societal context in which the phenomena in focus emanate. “Today the problem of how to deal with cultural power and cultural differences is an issue constantly subsumed by reflection on contemporary social movements, especially because collective action today has a great deal to do with the ways in which we name the world”. Melucci argues that contemporary modern societies can be regarded as complex. When discussing social movements, Melucci, describes that;

On the one hand, contemporary societies founded on information produce increasing resources of autonomy for individual and collective actors. Complex systems can only work if the information produced circulates internally to them and if actors are able to receive this information, interpret it, and transmit it. On the other hand, complex systems require forms of power and control that ensure their integration, and this power must extend itself to the most intimate level at which the meaning of individual and collective action is formed. It is not enough to control manifest action; it is necessary to intervene in its motivational, cognitive, and affective roots; to manipulate the profound structure of the personality and perhaps even the biological structure itself.

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18 Parsons (1995) p.142 Referring to Gramsci A
19 Parsons (1995) p.142 Referring to Berger and Luckman
This is a description on how contemporary societies function as a system of domination, not mainly through physical repression but through shaping the information, creating a specific world-view and making it to the dominating. It also reveals the necessity of institutions of power to shape the identities of the subjects or citizens. “Complex systems based on information, as contemporary societies, must enable autonomous actors to function as reliable receivers of the information networks”. This implies that power in the contemporary society is manifested and reproduced through the way in which meaning for individual and collective action is framed; through the information produced and how it is presented through selected and constructed concepts, in the structure of the society.

A construction of hegemony requires, according to Antonio Gramsci (1971)

the attainment of a cultural-social unity through which a multiplicity of dispersed wills, with heterogeneous aims, is welded together with a single aim, on the basis of an equal and common conception of the world.

This phenomenon described as framing, can according to MacAdam, be defined “as the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action”. This framing is not done in a cultural vacuum. Motivating frameworks are constructed out of preexisting cultural materials that seldom go unopposed. The constructions of frames take place in an environment with contesting frame-settings. Mass media institutions are central for the outcomes of these activities. The media attention to framing attempts, which aims to alter or reinforce contemporary frames, can be vital for the outcomes, but to measure the effectiveness of this framing activities through measuring the correspondence in framing and the mass media coverage is to ignore that the role of transnational media actors themselves. As Smith puts it “almost all media are profit-making enterprises and, as a result, have deep-seated interests in the outcomes of many framing contests”. It can be of value to stress that policy’s created by dominant actors serve to create common identities and there might be specific interests not announced that these policy’s are made to serve. Public policy might be consciously pronounced to appear to serve in a “common interest” when aiming to produce useful citizens or subjects.

Organization

Central for this research is nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The concept NGO includes a highly diverse collection of organizations. As we will discuss there may bee important disparities that can be kept in the dark if we do not distinguish these differences. We also need to understand how categories of NGOs can arise and how they can achieve influence.

Deborah Stienstra concluded that attempts to add NGOs to a liberal pluralist framework is unsatisfactory for understanding the more encompassing relationships between states,

27 McAdam quoted by Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield and Ron Pagnucco (1997) Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics Solidarity Beyond the State p.244 (New York, Syracuse University Press)
28 Smith (1997) p.244-247
intergovernmental organizations and social movements. What Stienstra described as a more useful approach is to explore how specific states and the institutions of the interstate system, as UN and the International Monetary Fund, uses and are shaped by global civil society. In this case Stienstra use the term global civil society to refer to the “institutions that make up society outside the state including the media, educational institutions, churches, unions, families, non governmental organizations, social movements and transnational corporations. Stienstra describe these institutions as in a dynamic relationship with states and intergovernmental organizations”.  

When using the term Social movements we mean; an organization that mainly consists of volunteers taking time out from their daily activities to engage in change or resistance efforts. This definition does not include organizations with aims set up by big external donors, mainly consisting of paid professionals.

When it comes to the possibility for social movements to have an impact on global governance Stienstra referred to Sidney Tarrow, who suggested that social movements can be most effective when a political opportunity structure exists. This opportunity structure, as it is described by Tarrow 1994 “becomes available when there is the opening up of access to participation, shifts in ruling alignments, the availability of influential allies, and cleavages within and among elites”.  

This provides, as Stienstra describe it, the possibility for effective action by social movements. Stienstra suggests “they will be particularly effective when they are seen to be stakeholders; when they are seen to provide a necessary expertise”. This suggests that social movements can have the most impact, given the possibility to shape the dominating discourse, structures, and policies that maintain the norms, when social movements are more or less incorporated with the “old” established structures of power. This theory is contestable, and will be analyzed in this research.

When discussing how social organizations can act to achieve the greatest impact we need to recognize goals and purposes of specific social movements. Castells describes that “social movements must be understood in their own terms; that is according to what they say they are their practice (and mainly the discursive practice) is their own definition”.  

With this approach we do not need to try interpreting the “true” consciousness within these movements, being aware of the fact the reasons for individuals to engage in a specific social movements can diverge considerable.

We ought to distinguish differences between NGOs. When it comes to local level, much activism is done by volunteers who take time out of their daily activities to engage in change or resistance efforts, but in the case of transnational advocacy work it is less likely to consist only of volunteer efforts, but according to John D. McCarthy, more – and particularly in wealthy societies- of paid professional activism.  

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29 Deborah Stienstra Of Roots, Leaves, and Trees: Gender, Social Movements, in gender Politics in Global Governance, p. 260 eds Mary K Meyer. E Prugl (International Feminist Jornal of Politics vol 4 no 2)
30 Stienza p. 271
31 Stienza p. 271-272
32 Manuel Castells (1997) Informationsåldern ekonomi, samhälle och kultur p.84-85 band II Identitetens Makt (Oxford, Bokförlaget Daidalos) Authors translation
33 Reasons for individuals to engage can be; trying to make an effort for a better society, trying to find a social group belonging, a way of trying to make a career, to improve their social status or of a sets of more or less consistent reasons.
34 Smith (1997) p. 249
particularly likely if economic recourses do not have to come from economically limited people, but from economically powerful institutions like media institutions and the financial community.

This leads us to recognize the possibility of separating social movements or advocacy networks, mainly consisting of volunteers of who are working on an issue, bound together by shared values, a common discourse, from advocacy networks supported by economic actors and firms, mainly consisting of paid professionals engaged in advocacy work.

Paradigmatic change

Drastic changes have occurred in history, changes that were to alter fundamental values and concepts. As will be explained later, there were many in the early 1970s that expected drastic and fundamental change in societies. Some imagined new challenging possibilities that were tied to an experienced necessity to adopt societies to the conditions of nature. Other expected a threatening future where the best option was to sustain prosperity in some locations scarifying the rest of the globe to environmental misery. Many NGOs were engaged in advocating fundamental change and environmental solutions, but how does fundamental change occur?

Thomas Kuhn describes the patterns that rules scientific thought. A paradigm can, according to Kuhn, be described as a scientific work that for a limited time gives rise to a puzzling scientific tradition. To work within a scientific tradition (or paradigmatic tradition) means to work with a common theoretical structure and with common ways of perceiving this specific reality and to belong to a specific social group a group of scientists. Research within the frames of a dominating paradigm consists mainly of applying existing methods and theories to new problems, improving technique of measurement, refinement of observations, modulate conceptions and mach theory with fact. Kuhn describes that in time anomalies will appear, that old formerly accepted paradigmatic assumptions will appear to be inconsistent with more modern refined research, or observations that does not fit in the paradigm. When, according to Kuhn, the amount of anomalies has accumulated up to the degree that they can no longer be ignored, a paradigmatic crisis will appear. This will lead to questioning of assumptions and its philosophical fundaments resulting in a paradigmatic change or revolution. According to Kuhn there are no all-embracing neutral criteria, which can serve decisively in between competing theories. Kuhn points out that social relation in the scientist community as power relations and shifts in-between generation are decisive. Kuhn concludes that science evolves from knowledge accumulated in the communities’ at a certain time. Science has not a predisposition goal and he puts severe doubt in the idea of a right linear way to an objective and true description of reality.

Kuhn mainly made descriptions of science but his theories can also function as descriptions of other arenas in the society were paradigms are changed. According to Kuhn scientific development is not essentially different from development in other

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35 Descriptions of such expectations will be discussed later in this work.
36 Kuhn (1997) p. 40–46
37 Kuhn (1997) p. 52–61
38 Kuhn (1997) p. 132–142
Perhaps it is even suspect to draw a clear line between a scientific community and the surrounding society. On the whole the scientific community is a vital part of contemporary societies and can hardly be regarded as non-dependent of power relations that constitute the structures of contemporary society. In fact the scientific community constitutes a powerful institution, when producing selective knowledge of how to understand politics, economics and social relations, producing teachers and administrators and creating an educational system with the aim of producing useful citizens or subjects. On the same time the scientific community is completely dependent of the state and the financial community regarding economic allowances and regulations.

When we study social movements and how paradigmatic changes occur we have to take in consideration, according to Kuhn, that paradigmatic activities and paradigmatic revolutions are community based activities, meaning that a paradigm does not primarily effect the discursive practice but a specific social group.40

According to Melucci “people with power are those who are deciding the language used to name reality and choosing the codes that organize it”. 41 This can induce us to regard societal changes as products of the outcome of the competition in between those seeking influence and those trying to maintain power.

Competing frames of understanding

To be able to understand the role of social movements of today from their view, we ought to recognize their contemporary descriptions of major conflicts and environmental problems. I have chosen to present and discuss two Third World writers: Michel Chossudovsky who is closely connected to Third World Network, a most acknowledged group creating opposing conceptions and frames of understanding, and Ramachandra Guha who is describing environmental movements in the Third World. These writers give us descriptions of major environmental conflicts, modern roles of NGOs and competing frames of understanding. These writers can also help us to understand rationalities of contemporary NGOs. This is of value as we are to discuss the role of NGOs today from the perspective of the 1972 Stockholm conference.

A Modern Third World Critic
Michael Chossudovsky discusses the effects of a dominating discourse. He describes how the dominating economic discourse from the early eighties has strengthened its grip over the academic and investigating institutions all over the world. Social and economic realities are viewed, according to the contemporary dominating discourse through a set of presumptions about economic relations. Chossudovsky consider that “the dominating economic dogma” do not permit another opinion, or discussion about the fundamental theoretical paradigm. 42 Chossudovsky is here questioning the economic science “Mainstream economic scholarship produces theory without fact (pure theory) and facts without theory (applied economics)”. 43 This “official neoliberal dogma” creates, according to Chossudovsky, its own contra discourse the incarnation of high moral and

39 Kuhn (1997) p. 134
40 Kuhn (1997) p. 134
41 Melucci (1998) p. 423
43 Chossudovsky (1997) p. 42
ethical discourse, were the latter focus on environmental questions and poverty alleviation when policy questions, dealing with poverty and its maintenance, gets distorted and redefined. Chossudovsky describes a contra-ideology that seldom challenges the contemporary policy prescriptions. This contra ideology, dealing with environmental protection and protection of women’s social rights, is developed alongside and in harmony rather than in opposition to the neoliberal dogma. According to Chossudovksy the researching establishment finances this contra ideology generously. The role of the actors within this contra-discourse is to generate an illusory debate without affecting the social fundamentals of the global market system. The World Bank has, according to Chossudovsky, in this aspect a key role in promoting research dealing with poverty and the so-called social dimensions of adjustment. This ethical focus and its underlying categories, poverty alleviation, gender questions, justice so forth, apply the institutions of Bretton-Woods with a human face. But just as much as this analysis is functionally separated from an understanding of the main changes, just as little does it constitute a threat to the economic agenda. According to Chossudovsky does

This new international financial order feeds on human poverty and the destruction of the natural environment. It generates social apartheid, encourages racism and ethnic strife, undermines the rights of women and often precipitates countries into destructive confrontations between nationalities (…) these reforms - when applied simultaneously in more than hundred different countries – are conducive to a globalisation of poverty.

Chossudovksys descriptions of “the dominating economic dogma” is described as a paradigmatic tradition (that is to work with a common theoretical structure and a common approach to perceive this specific reality and belonging to a specific social group). Chossudovksky can be categorized as a candidate from an opposing paradigm and the contra discourse described as paradigmatic. The critic of the “dominating economic dogma” presented by Chossudovksky can be described as emanating anomalies or at least Chossudovksy show the ambition of revealing anomalies.

### Environmental Movements in the Third World

Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier are describing extensive environmental movements in the third world that are engaged in environmental protection with a focus on the sustainability of the natural environment, including the natural resources that upholds the local human society. Guha describes that this engagement often is in conflict with the globalizing dominating market institution, especially the version enforced by IMF and its Structural adjustment program, and in conflict with the western environmental paradigm. Guha describes a fundamental dilemma that Third World countries are to handle.

The relationship between “adjustment” and ecological damage arises from the need to produce a surplus in order to bring external trade payments into balance, including debt interest payments. This surplus may be obtained by means of low salaries or better terms of trade, or by an increase in technical efficiency that does not increase the flow of energy and materials in the economy. A fourth method of increasing the size of the surplus is

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44 To the Bretton Woods institutions count the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.
45 Chossudovsky (1997) p. 33-34
46 Chossudovsky (1997) p. 34-35
47 Kuhn (1997)
exploiting the environment; in other words, externalizing costs and undervaluing future needs.\textsuperscript{48}

Guha criticize the western environmental paradigm and the radical deep ecology, in particular. “That intervention in nature should be guided primarily by the need to preserve biotic integrity rather than by the needs of humans.”\textsuperscript{49} The two fundamental ecological problems, according to Guha and Martinez-Alier, are “Over consumption by the industrialized world and by urban elite’s in the third world and growing militarization, both in a short-term sense (i.e., ongoing regional wars) and in a long-term sense (i.e. the arms race and the prospect of nuclear annihilation)”.\textsuperscript{50} The western emphasis on wilderness is explained as harmful, when applied to the third world. Guha and Martinez-Alier describes how the setting aside of wilderness areas, has resulted in a direct transfer of resources from poor to the rich or putting the interest of wild animals ahead of those of poor peasants. Guha and Martinez-Alier note that west-worlds conditionalities regarding environmental consideration often function as moralizing argument to force poor countries to adopt to a politic the west regard as proper and true. That is promoting recreation areas on behalf of rich tourists and big game hunters or biologists wanting to be able to continue their studies of the eldorados of biodiversity still existing in the third world.\textsuperscript{51}

This third-world perspective can be viewed as an environmental paradigm, where the dominating neoliberal market system is non functional and incommensurable with environmentally sustainable societies. While the Western environmental paradigm, with its focus on protecting the nature from humans, is assuming that environmentalism and the dominating market system is compatible.

The theories of Guha and Martinez-Alier can be compared with John D. McCarthy’s theories. MacCarthy concludes that “theorists of new social movement have stressed the importance of new ways of postmaterialist living that they argue give rise to the possibilities of new feminist and ecological identities”.\textsuperscript{52} This assumption implies that John D. MacCarthy expect that interesting feminist and ecologist identities are likely to be created in the rich world, while people in the third world lack these possibilities and will not contribute to this paradigm. Such a paradigm can be categorized as a Western paradigmatic understanding. The third-world environmental movements, as described by Guha and Martinez-Alier do not emanate from post materialist conditions, but from facing environmental problem as a threat to their livelihood. These movements approach environmental problems from an environmental paradigm incommensurable and seemingly invisible from the approach chosen by these theorists.

\textsuperscript{48} Ramachandra Guha Ramachandra, Juan Martinez-Alier (1997) \textit{Varieties of Environmentalism Essays North and South} p. 65-66 London, Earthscan
\textsuperscript{49} Guha (1997) p. 94-95
\textsuperscript{50} Guha (1997) p. 95
\textsuperscript{51} Guha (1997) p. 94-108
\textsuperscript{52} Smith (1997) p. 247
Empirical and Analytical part

Identification of political actors and informers

In correspondence with the theories of Kuhn we need to recognize specific actors that are responsible for the creation of competing paradigms. Of interest are both dominating paradigm of the 70s and the paradigms that were institutionalized in the UN system and challenging paradigms of NGOs. Castells described that social movements ought to be understood according to what they say they are and their discursive practice. The alternative to this approach seems to be less relevant, as explained earlier. This leads us to accept the approach recommended by Castells. Kuhn and Castells also lead us to recognize the descriptions of members in central networks and social movements. To achieve conformity in our approach this also leads us to discuss UN in the same way.

UN ambassador

Sverker Åström was a key figure in the initiating process and perhaps his work to achieve an environmental conference was of major importance for the realization of a conference and in shaping the fundamental purpose and disposition of the Stockholm conference. This makes him suitable for a study of how and why the Stockholm conference came into existence. His descriptions also express a specific rationality of the establishment explaining reasoning behind the conference.

Åström explained during our interview that he came into the Swedish foreign ministry at 1939, since then he had differing assignments within the ministry as chief of the political department, and undersecretary of state, he has also been the Swedish ambassador in the UN. It is in the latter assignment he initiated and, according to Åström, on his own initiative pushed for the realization of an environmental conference.

Åström explained that the technical scientific committee within UN who every year suggested different alternatives for global conferences. In the fall of 1968 this committee suggested different subjects. Among these was a suggestion of an environmental conference. Sverker Åström was notified of this and it was this idea that he brought up. The environmental issue was favored by the Swedish delegation in UN partly as a reaction and an attempt to avoid a repeating global conference aimed at the peaceful use of nuclear energy. According to Åström this issue had been subject for too many UN conferences and that they mainly served American commercial interests. In spring 1969 Åström writes an explanatory memorandum to ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council), which gives the fundamental purpose and disposition of this environmental conference. In this memorandum there is an underlining, saying that there was a real need to create a forum “where governments and international, official as well as private, organizations could confer about the action that so obviously was needed”. Åström also pointed out that the purpose for the conference did not really change.

53 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
54 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
55 Sverker Åström (1992) p. 159
56 Sverker Åström (1992) p. 159
Åström regarded the inclusion of private organizations (NGOs) “as natural, these creators of public opinion were important, both on the international and national level”.\(^{57}\) If this is the case, then we ought to reconsider descriptions by Stienstra stating that private organizations became integrated within UN starting with the Stockholm conference. Perhaps private organizations already were important actors within the UN, a more thorough discussion of this will be presented under the heading handling of conflicts.

According to Åström, the Swedish delegation had the initiative and was striving for the realization of a global environmental conference. In this early preparatory face the Swedish delegation did not have any contacts with NGOs.\(^{58}\) 1970 Åström's work is taken over by Maurice Strong, at that time chef for the Canadian aid program.

Åström explained that he was convinced; that “the negative effects of civilization should not be allowed to be maintained by the developing countries”.\(^{59}\) In retrospect Åström highlights this as very important and the hardest question to deal with from the very start, and it was this question that Maurice Strong mainly worked with. Åström expressed his opinion; the third world countries wanted “as many smoking chimneys as possible”\(^{60}\). The third world regarded the industrialized worlds concern for the environment as an excuse for hindering the development in the third world.\(^{60}\) During the aftermath of the de-colonization and the late 1960s there was an expectation that “developing” countries were in an early stage of quick industrialization, consequently a need to prevent the environmental degradation and destruction of the natural recourses seemed obvious.\(^{61}\)

Because we knew that it could be difficult to win the developing countries support, I insisted in that the chairman should come from a developing country.\(^{62}\)

Åström reasoned, “It was important not to wake up any bears too early and give cause to a discussion about details that threatened to overturn the whole project (...) in diplomacy as in private life one does not need to immediately say all one has in mind.”\(^{63}\) Åström notes “that the first and the biggest problem that Maurice Strong had to deal with affected the developing countries. This was a problem that had troubled us from the first moment but now it had to be solved or on some way got out of the way”.\(^{64}\)

In the interview with Åström he did not explain how “the problem” (the developing countries) could be solved or got out of the way. His characterizing of the environmental problems as products of industrialization and civilization is more in line with Guha and Martinez-Alier than Ward and Dubos. On the other hand, if we expect that the third world dilemmas (described by Guha and Martinez-Alier) are relevant, then it is not enough to convince the third world of the emergency of preserving nature. What Åström did was striving to achieve a centralized international institution to deal with or solve environmental problems and trying to convince the third world and the industrial world to internalize specific conceptions. He did not suggest increased influence for those mainly

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\(^{57}\) Interview with Sverker Åström 030617

\(^{58}\) Interview with Sverker Åström 030617

\(^{59}\) Interview with Sverker Åström 030617

\(^{60}\) Interview with Sverker Åström 030617

\(^{61}\) Sverker Åström (1992) Ögonblick från ett halvsekel i UD-tjänst Bonnier Alba AB, Stockholm p. 161

Authors translation

\(^{62}\) Åström (1992) p. 162

\(^{63}\) Åström (1992) p. 162

\(^{64}\) Åström (1992) p. 165
affected as a way to handle environmental problems. This is clearly in line with Ward and Dubos and in line with Western traditional paradigm.

A prerequisite for the realization of the conference was that the Americans supported the idea, according to Åström. Consequently he had preparatory discussions with North-American politicians and US environmental experts (that Åström supposed to be) bound to the North-American delegation. 65

This might induce that specific US and European concerns interests and discourse was taking into account already in the initiating phase. Specific Swedish and perhaps specific North American concerns and interests ought to have had a special influence initiating and organizing the conference, while third world countries perspectives, their concerns and interests appear to have been of subordinated signification. The efforts acting strategically to ensure the participation of third world countries and to persuade them to accept the frame setting groups understanding of the environmental problems clearly supports this. This is of special interest, if there was a significant difference between discourses in the industrialized world and the third world. The described revealing of a North-South conflict implies that this was the case. 66 Perhaps this induces us to regard the Stockholm conference initiating process as characterized by western environmental paradigm.

Åström noted that there was a strong opinion in Sweden that “brought up this interest in a high degree (…) this opinion was a part of the background, I knew that I had support for this thought.” 67 He also noted that scientists knew about environmental problems and that many of them was deeply worried and felt despair, “they reached no access to decision makers and they received no interest of their alarming reports and signals of warning, this made the conference so important”. 68

Åström notes that there was an opinion in Sweden supporting an environmental initiative or even pressured for change. He also notes that scientists pressured for environmental concern and an arena for them to reach decision makers and public opinion. These factors are described as important in decisions leading to an environmental conference.

Only one earth

Only one earth the care and maintenance of a small planet was the title of a report commissioned by the secretary-general of the UN, Maurice F. Strong, this was an integral part of the preparations for the Stockholm conference. The main purpose with this book was to provide background information relevant to official policy decisions. 69 This report was emphasizing the need of intensified international cooperation, especially when it comes to protection of the human environment. Mankind, as presented in this report, has been brought to a threshold.

In short, the two worlds of man—the biosphere of his inheritance, the techno sphere of his creation—are out of balance, indeed potentially in deep conflict (…), the door of the future opening on to a crisis more sudden, more global, more inescapable, and more bewildering

65 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
66 This will be discussed under the heading North-South
67 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
68 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
69 Barbara Ward and René Dubos (1972) Only one Earth the care and maintenance of a small planet p viii
W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York
than any ever encountered by the human species and one which will take decisive shape with in the life span of children who are already born. \footnote{Ward (1972) p. 12}

In the report there was an emphasis on policies for growth starting with appraising the “Green Revolution”, that is the high-tech agricultural industry and its creation of new hybrid crops adapted to pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, giving significant higher productivity. \footnote{Ward (1972) p. 156-174} Now thirty years after we can see effects not accounted for in this report. “As argued by the critics, the Green Revolution would lead to a rapid increase in the inequality of income and marginalization of small-scale farmers in areas affected”. \footnote{Magnus Jirström (1996) In the wake of the Green Revolution, Environmental and socio-economic consequences of intensive rice agriculture – The problems of weeds in Munda, Malaysia p. 9 (Lund University Press)}

“The existence of a Post-Green Revolution phase of declining outputs and productivity growth is already well established in many areas of Asia. Partly this can be explained by declining price of rice which has slowed the growth in input use and caused a slowdown in investment (…) Environmental consequences such as the build-up of salinity and water logging, changes in soil nutrients status, nutrient deficiencies, and increased pest build-up and pest related yield losses, together represent important examples of sustainability problems…” \footnote{Jirström (1996) p. 10}

According to Jirström one central question is the “distributional or equity implications of emerging sustainability problems. The scale-neutrality of these problems cannot be taken for granted”. \footnote{Jirström (1996) p. 11} This illustrates that a specific technology, in this case the green revolution, may increase sustainability problems and that it does effect social relations in this case income and asset distribution, disempowering small-scale farmers. To hinder increasing social gaps and amplified poverty Ward and Dubos recommended state regulations.

If governments in developing lands do not permit the concentration of rewards of growth into few hands-either in industrial and urban affairs or in agriculture- if they safeguard them-selves through taxation and public savings against any shortfall in their own desperately needed supplies of public capital, then there are a wide variety of new techniques and opportunity which they can successfully adapt to their own local conditions. \footnote{Ward (1972) p. 180}

These state regulations did not become implemented in the way recommended or they are today removed. According to Joseph Stiglitz, actors such as the IMF, World Bank and the financial community have effectively deprived these opportunities from poor countries. \footnote{Joseph Stiglitz (2002) Globalization and its discontents (W.W Norton & Company)}

Another approach, probably not considered by Ward and Dubos can bee to empower poor people and facilitate for them to solve sustainability problems.

There are descriptions in \textit{Only One Planet} explaining that in “most ex-colonial areas, economic dependence continues to be almost as great as in the times of direct political control”. \footnote{Ward (1972) p. 175} There are also descriptions telling us the magnitude of the environmental problem. But every approach is bound by assumptions. This report is taking for granted that global problems of environmental problems and inequality are best handled within a
centralized international regime, ignoring or not being aware of the problem of which powers that is likely to dominate such regime. Can we be sure that a centralized international regime will be sincerely devoted to confront the problems we want it to? An alternative rationality is telling us that it is the centralization of power and the inconsiderate strive for accumulated recourses that created the global environmental problem in the first place.\footnote{Alf Hornborg (1997) Människans försörjning teknologi, ekologi och ekonomi I ett globalt och historiskt perspektiv (Lunds universitet)} We can say that the industrialism confiscated large areas of land, a great amount of unpaid labor and assets of coming generations in peripheral areas, to create great accumulated resources in the center for minor elite.\footnote{Hornborg (1997)}

When giving a centralized institution staggering influence, this implies a reduction in influence somewhere else. If the interests that withhold the degradation of the human environment are the ones that see a reduction of influence, this can lead to appreciation of the human environment. But if it is the poor and disempowered that mainly loses influence, there might be a problem of inducements of the protection of those affected by environmental problems, assuming that it is mainly the poor and disempowered that mainly is affected by environmental degradation. Another approach can be to empower those who get affected by environmental degradation. Perhaps the picture, presented in the report, \textit{Only One Earth} serves specific, perhaps western, interests, through the association with the usually hierarchic and non-democratic power relations onboard a ship and the appraisal of loyalty. “Today, in human society, we can perhaps hope to survive in all our prized diversity provided we can achieve an ultimate loyalty to our single, beautiful, and vulnerable planet Earth. Alone in space…”\footnote{Ward (1972) p. 220}

These are mainly descriptions of the rationality of dominating groups. This is of interests as dominating groups constitutes the counterparts of what is central for this research that is Networks and social movements.

**Networks and social movements**

Jan Fjellander and Per Janse were key figures in the process of parallel activities to the Stockholm conference. They were engaged from the start initiating, preparing and participating in the parallel activities. This makes them suitable as informers in this research. Tord Björk was also engaged in the preparation for parallel activities but he got engaged in a later stage. He has after the conference been investigating and collecting a great deal of fact and spent a lot of time finding out what really happened during the Stockholm conference. This makes him suitable as informer in this research.

Fjellander explained thoroughly, during our interview, how his engagement in the society has developed during his life. His engagement has can be characterized as deeply concerned with humanitarian issues. In the mid 60s he studied the humanities. In the same time he became aware about the over-exploitation of natural recourses, adding the question of contamination of the natural environment, actualized by Rachel Carson and her book \textit{Silent Spring}. In 1964 Fjellander initiated a group that was to study this more thoroughly. The pre-understanding of this group was that these problems were highly acute and in need for solutions. This devotion also included the situation in the third world, which was freeing itself from colonialism. This group tried to trot out that the world recourses are limited and that specific resources are ending. Fjellander described

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78 Alf Hornborg (1997) Människans försörjning teknologi, ekologi och ekonomi I ett globalt och historiskt perspektiv (Lunds universitet)
79 Hornborg (1997)
80 Ward (1972) p. 220
that this message were laughed at even if they tried to discuss things that today are considered as basic. In 1967 he founded an international scientific group named LASITOC starting with a summer-university concerned with the state of the world. The participants in this group were young and came mainly from Sweden, Germany, Holland, France and England, searching for knowledge for the future. This group met almost every second month in seminars. The approach of this group explains Fjellander as parallel to the approach of Johan Galtung (famous Norwegian peace scientist). In 1968 Fjellander decided to leave the academic world dissatisfied with a de-orientation of the universities role in society. Fjellander thought that the universities role in society had become too dependent on commercial interests. In the same year he got aware of the plans of the UN environmental conference. Receiving this information LASITOC organized a meeting in 1970 in London named Threats and Promises of Science. This meeting assembled participants from thirty different countries, completely on voluntary basis and without external recourses. This meeting led to the creation of a committee that was to prepare parallel activities to the UN environmental conference. Out of this process there emanated a group named PowWow (meaning a gathering of people). This group, including Fjellander, advertised their existence and its engagement. It was in contact with certain international organizations having consultative statues within UN, ECOSOC. Through these channels they got informed about the plan of a big international youth conference named Hamilton in Canada 1971. Fjellander participated in the Hamilton conference and experienced how the participants of this conference, including him self became dissatisfied with the originating agenda and enforced a new and “more relevant” agenda. Through the work with reorganizing the conference, Fjellander became engaged in a new network called the Oi committee that became a central actor inviting and organizing the participation of 63 younger scientists from all over the world. These 63 scientists gave the Stockholm conference their presentations of environmental problems revealing a North–South conflict both at the Environmental Forum and Peoples Forum. Fjellander was engaged in the PowWow group that arranged Peoples Forum but, as will be explained later, Fjellander got rejected from Peoples Forum. Fjellanders part in the Stockholm conference did not stop here. Just before the conference started he became a coordinator of Environmental Forum which he carried out.

In Environmental Forum there were many international participating groups. Among the numerous participating groups were; International Planed Parenthood Federation, World Wildlife Fund, National Audoban Society, Scientist’s Institute for Public Information, Sierra Club, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Friends of the Earth, The United FNL groups and Oi-committee.

It can be worth mentioning that Fjellander got involved in the Swedish green party and its first campaign to the general election 1983. After this he took part in the starting of an organization “Samarbete för fred” (Co-operation for Peace) now named Peace quest were he was active until 1988.

Per Janse described, during our interview, himself as an activist and volunteer engaged in the parallel activities during and before the Stockholm conference. He was a globally engaged environmental activist and a student at Stockholm’s University studying political science. He was very active in the environmental movements through “Byalagsrörelsen” (Village Community Movement) and “Alternativ stad” (Alternative City) that a long time

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81 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
82 Jordens Vänner 1972 medlemsinformation.
before the conference was engaged in finding ways to use the attention that they expected on the Stockholm conference. He described that his engagement was based in strive for global justice, solidarity and democracy, he ads that he was highly critical to the regimes in Soviet and China. Janse explained that the interest in environmental questions was coming strongly at this time. An alternative movement was developing, expressing itself through the new music, new ways of being and socializing, influenced of non European cultures as Indian, Chinese and African cultures. These alternative groups were according to Janse focused on creating alternative cultures and expressions, as pointing out alternative urban housing, parks and children’s environment, through attempts of materializing their ideas and symbolic action. He described a generation striving for more than economic accesses, a generation striving for general influence with a belief that they could shape a better world. He described this spirit of the time as reactions on the narrow and dull strive for higher standards characterizing wary many of the earlier generation.  

This leads us to regard aspects of generations, that possibly and most simplified can be described as certain young generations filled with visions can challenge, as Janse described it, a dull older generation. Perhaps we can regard new generations as a key factor for paradigmatic change as many young individuals starts up without any commission from the establishment and often with an opposing attitude. But as these young individuals turn older, they will to a higher degree end up constituting a part of establishment. In this situation they can be expected to have a will to conserve what they may regard as their generations achievements. Kuhn also stresses the importance of generations in paradigmatic change.

Janse became engaged in the forming of network called PowWow. The PowWow network had visions of a society with new modes of production and argued for solidarity with oppressed in poor and other countries. “Permitting us to live with the recourses of the earth, instead of poison it and devastate it”. This group regarded humans as a part of nature dependent on the natural ecology and the interrelation between species. They rejected the idea of economic growth per se as aim for human societies. They argued that centralization of power to “multinational giant corporations, monstrous military complexes and bureaucracies” alienates the human from its natural environment and reduce humans to objects of control. The aim of this network was to initiate discussions of fundamental aspects of the environmental question and take the initiative to a broader assembled activity/action, including both international as Swedish actors. PowWow took the initiative to assemble environmental groups and leftwing groups in a meeting that came to be named Peoples Forum this forum became realized in the “ABF-huset” (in the house of Workers Education Alliance). Participating organizations finally paid this meeting. PowWow had an own press center during the Stockholm conference and arranged a minor exhibition describing new alternative technology, having vernissage in these June weeks in 1972.

In the second meeting in the preparation of Peoples Forum (14/febr.1972) 32 organizations participated in the preparatory work. Among the participants were Alternative City, The Anarchistic working group, United FNL-groups, environmental

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83 Interview with Per Janse 030627  
84 PowWow manifest 1972 delivered by Per Janse 2003 10 03 Authors translation  
85 PowWow manifest 1972  
86 PowWow manifest 1972  
87 PowWow manifest 1972
groups, Swedish political parties from the center to the left, two international groups Dai Dong and Oi-Committee. On the agenda were issues as working environment, urbanization, natural recourses, “the energy crisis”, ecocide (in Vietnam) and drugs. Among these groups was also the Swedish part of Friends of the earth the environmental group that in cooperation with Ehrlich gave out the *Population Bomb*. 88 This group was also engaged in the question of whaling during the Stockholm conference and in producing a daily newspaper together with the English periodical *The Ecologist* that covered events during the June weeks in Stockholm 1972 named *Stockholm Conference Eco.* 89 In the final realization of the meeting we can add a number of cultural and antimitilitaristic groups. 90

Tord Björk described that he had a strong continuity of engagement in environmental questions. During our interview he described himself, at 1971, as young and active in a theosophical youth group. Through this group he got the opportunity to listen to Per Janse who was speaking for Alternative City, discussing the coming environmental conference and mentioning the PowWow network. Björk got directly engaged in the PowWow network in the spring 1971 planning alternative activities that were to take place in time for the conference. 91

**Critical Climate**

We have to consider the context in which the Stockholm conference occurred, in order to understand how competing frames of understanding shaped coming perceptions of environmental problems.

Åström described that the Swedish delegation had the initiative and was striving for the realization of a global environmental conference, partly to avoid another repeating global conferences aimed at the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Janse stressed that the pressure for environmental concern came from environmental groups, scientists and writers such as Hans Palmstierna and Rachel Carlson. This is partly in line with Åström’s descriptions as he explained that he knew he would have support for his initiative, from scientists and public opinion. Åström also mentions these two writers as important for his environmental understanding. 92

In his speech in the Stockholm conference the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme warned for doom day prophets and announced that he was sincerely concerned with environmental problems, describing environmental problems as “very urgent indeed”. 93 He described that people feels a worry and demands action;

…attacking the representative for the bureaucratic prevailing order, attacking anonymous economic forces – all these powers as correctly or non-correctly are pointed out as responsible to the present and possible future situations. 94

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88 Pressmeddelande från Peoples Forum 1972-02-14 delivered by Janse. Authors translation
89 Jordens Vänner 1972 medlemsinformation.
90 Jordens Vänner 1972 medlemsinformation.
91 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
92 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
93 Swedish Delegation, Svenska delegationen vid FNs miljökonferens Statsminister Olof Palmes anförande vid plenarmötet 1972-06-06 preliminär översättning Foreign dep. Archive. Authors translation
94 Svenska delegationen vid FNs miljökonferens Statsminister Olof Palmes anförande.
In later parts of his speech Palme tries to convince the public to put comfort in the international cooperation ensuring that he is convinced that “we can find solutions”. He announced that solutions will demand extensive changes in attitudes and societal organization. He described that the extensive inequity between nations as within nations is a major problem, and he criticized the result of the, at that time, latest world trade conference. He announced that “it is a frightening fact that enormous recourses continues being consumed” on arms race and armed conflicts increasing the degradation of the human environment, creating further threats.95

Palme described that he has recognized the width of the problem. He includes inequity, arms race and armed conflicts as parts of environmental problem, and attacks established institutions. When doing this he also places himself close to the raging people, he almost appears to be apart of the raging people, that is lacking confident in established institutions. But in fact he was the Swedish Prime minister and can be regarded as a part of the “bureaucratic prevailing order”. These parts of Olof Palme´s speech was constructed in a specific way that could result in a re-take of the initiative from opposing groups and to nurture comfort in the representatives of the UN and the Swedish government.

As will be more thoroughly explained later under the heading A Clash the participants took over the agenda from the hosts in the Hamilton conference 1971. This clearly signals an uprisng of challenging conceptions to established institutions. Fjellander described how the reorganizing of the Hamilton conference also led to a new group, the Oi-Committee, engaged in searching for “as it seemed” a non-visible agenda of international environmental politics. The Oi-Committee consisted of twelve persons representing different world parts. Fjellander explained that this group found interesting patterns, giving an example: Certain governments in third-world countries sets out specific areas as nature parks, (a protected area from exploitation). This was followed by prospecting’s made by international mining companies that found exploitable resources. Finally these international mining companies achieved exploitation rights after intense lobbing and moving of the nature park from the originating place enough to be able to exploit. These procedures made it possible to offset domestic control of these recourses. Fjellander also noted that it was the same actors involved in two cases in Latin America and one in Africa. Fjellander argues that in such cases there ought to exist knowledge of specific actor’s and their strategic behavior, in order to be able to act in accordance to ones intentions.96 This research is an example of the early existence of transnational nongovernmental networking.

According to Björk there was little if any confidence in the official conference on the human environment. The hope held by activists was; creating an independent movement that was to change the world according to Björk. He noted that it was we (the environmental movement) that were enforcing environmental concern, “now we have forced them (officials) to discuss this question”.97 The PowWow group assured 1972 that it was through independent work any meaningful accomplishments could be achieved.98 Björk explains that it was through confrontation with the messages the establishment expressed any meaningful accomplishments could be achieved. Messages that Björk

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95 Svenska delegationen vid FN:s miljökonferens Statsminister Olof Palmes anförande.
96 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
97 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
98 PowWow Manifest 1972 delivered by Per Janse 2003 10 03.
criticized was the ideology of the club of Rome (presented at Environmental Forum\textsuperscript{99}) and distortion from “the essential environmental problems” to whaling (subject for engagement by the US delegation, Friends of the Earth\textsuperscript{100} and Hog Farm).\textsuperscript{101}

The experiences of Fjellander, Janse and Björk illustrate that there was a staggering will to change earlier conceptions. In fact the groups they were involved in were searching for new way of conceiving the world. Colonialism was losing terrain, dominating institutions were in question, groups tried to create alternative ways of achieving knowledge, the initiative were moving from the establishment to new groups confronting established institutions that were experienced as hindering a positive development. This is in line with the descriptions of Palme. It seems as possibilities to create new competing paradigms was arising from a situation with a dominating perhaps hegemonic paradigmatic tradition. In common for the former activists and informers is also that they experienced a gap between official rhetoric and the world as they experienced it. They experienced a possible opportunity to alter societal dysfunctions.

Melucci describes “that the conflicts and the movements that express them are the main channels of information about the new patterns of inequality and new forms of power that society re-creates”.\textsuperscript{102} These are descriptions of a situation where discourse framing was getting more de-centralised. If governments, international institutions and corporations had left the field of environmental discourse framing to the ones that had wakening the environmental concern and not tried to come closer to the public; then it would be likely that this would have resulted in a widening gap between official rhetoric and the world as experienced by the public. This might have lead to escalation of conflicts and losing of initiative for established groups. Consequently would the dominating groups have lost opportunity of framing and capacity “to manipulate the profound structure of the personality”, that is their domination.\textsuperscript{103} Perhaps it is of vital interest for dominating groups to keep the initiative, to withhold the framing of discourses.

Perhaps we can view the sudden engagement from elite’s in the human environment as a necessity to keep dominance. We can regard the conference as a result of public experiences of societal dysfunction’s and public demands forcing governments to find possibilities to recapture the initiative, on the other hand individuals in the elite seems to have been affected by the presentation of environmental reports leading to a genuine environmental engagement from parts of the elites as well.

Applying the same logic to social movements this leads us to understand that influence of social movements as based on creating alternative opposing discourse and collecting support. Perhaps this can be the main way in achieving power, to enforce influence by social movements.

We have descriptions of how activists experienced substantial environmental and structural problems that threatened the human environment. In the years before the Stockholm conference we have descriptions of an arising distrust towards officials and established institutions. Polarities between young activists and the establishment were

\textsuperscript{99} Wetterstrand Elisabeth 1972 Final program for Environmental Forum 5-16 June 1972
\textsuperscript{100} Jordens Vänner 1972 medlemsinformation. Delivered By Tord Björk
\textsuperscript{101} Interview with Tord Björk 030724
\textsuperscript{102} Melucci (1998) p.428-429
\textsuperscript{103} Melucci (1998) p.425
arising. Melucci suggests that social movements ought to be viewed as a result of conflicts emanating in new and/or old conflicts that “increasingly transform themselves into dilemmas, making manifest polarities in the system that cannot be eliminated because they define its very structure”. 104

We can understand the appearance and growth of social movement in time for the conference as a response on societal dilemmas, polarities and conflict. We can see how this polarity was experienced by activists as they define the societal structure, in time for the conference.

Environmental understanding

To achieve a better understanding of specific paradigms in focus we ought to recognize fundamental assumptions and approaches held by central actors, explaining their perceptions.

Åström regarded the fundamental environmental problems as mainly caused by industrialization and the waste products of civilization. Åström assumed that the environmental hazards of an industrialization of the third world, congruent with the one realized by the industrialized world, was the main environmental threat. 105 An aspect, hold as important by Åström, was that “the negative effects of civilization should not be allowed to be maintained by the developing countries”. 106 This “aspect” or approach signals a need from industrialized countries to take control over the development in poor countries. It is worth noting that Åström acknowledged fundamental societal dysfunctions.

Janse was 2003 of the opinion that concepts as sustainable development has made a great effect on governmental institutions and corporations and regard the ideas of sustainable development and green economic growth as a suitable approach to environmental problems. He recommended specific methods to achieve this: consumer activities, fees and taxation, subsidies, progressive purchasing and finally (according to Janse, the most sluggish) international legislation. Janse concluded that “the map and compass, is all set” meaning that the way to achieve a better ecological balance is all set, “we describe the same world”. He describes that this makes a contrast to the situation 1972 as “was characterized by the east - west conflict, today every one is moving within the market economy.” 107 Now the challenge is to “move the market economy to get “less capitalistic” i.e. more controlled and geared towards social and ecological responsibility”. 108 Janse described the PowWow network as a pioneer thinking outside the east – west conflict. He put great hope in technical innovations during our interview “if there is a will to make alternative technical innovations competitive.” 109

Janse felt comfort in the dominating concept of sustainable development and green economic growth where alternative technical innovations are made competitive. As methods he preferred a combination of state regulations and public purchasing based on

104 Melucci (1998) p.428
105 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
106 Interview with Sverker Åström 030617
107 Interview with Per Janse 030627
108 Discussion with Per Janse 040115
109 Interview with Per Janse 030627
moral codes. This confidence in green economic growth, moral and state regulations are worth noting. Janse add (after taken part of these descriptions) that he is convinced that broad innovative. Movements are necessary in order to have reforms realized and followed up. And a prerequisite to counteract resistance of change from privileged groups concerned with profit-making and sluggish bureaucracies’.110

Fjellander described 2003 environmental problem as a result of lacking consciousness about ecological connections. He described how oceans have been considered as infinite. “You could pour anything into it and it would swallow it (...) we could not imagine us that our activity could effect nature”. Here he explained that Rachel Carlson’s book Silent Spring constituted an introduction to ecological consciousness. Fjellander also discussed an ecological contra movement that is characterized by technological opportunism regarding all problems as solvable by technology, an approach assuming that human innovations and opportunities as unlimited and that it is just to continue and to solve next problem with technological applications. Fjellander did not define this ecological contra movement in the way Chossudovsky did but he shared the experiences of a contra discourse that does not challenge contemporary policy prescriptions.

Fjellander described, “We have to go through a Copernican revolution” (Copernicus tried to oppose the paradigmatic tradition of the Catholic Church, arguing that the earth circles round the sun. Copernicus rejected the contemporary dominating descriptions of the sun circling around the earth). Fjellander noted that we subsequently have achieved consciousness about human capacity to alter ecological balances, but that we so far haven’t achieved consciousness of that we can not continue to introduce a stream of new chemicals that we do not now the poisonous effects of or the synergistic effects, which is almost completely ignored.111 According to Fjellander we can expect an enormously log raw of alarming reports congruent with Silent Spring, with contemporary environmental approach. Fjellander expressed a worry seeing how society in specific occasions “depresses and abuses these groups”. He described how groups engaged in global problems and the environment is depressed and abused by police and the judicial system “acting as a pure instrument of power”, how media distorts attention from the major event focusing on a relative minor riot, “there is things you out to do and things you shouldn’t do”.112 According to Meluccis theories such groups could make power more visible and therefore more negotiable.113

Fjellander argued for both a centralized approach where people are helped to knowledge from governments and a decentralized approach where non-governmental environmental groups deliver alternative perspectives.

Björk considered 2003 environmental problems as a result of the society’s fundamental organizing, and that a serious attempt to limit environmental problems has to be directed towards “ordinary people”. He described that a considerable change is needed but was less interested in the time it will take. He described that during the 1970s he “did not view the financial community as the only problem but also the intellectual power that

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110 Discussion with Per Janse 040115
111 Synergistic effects; means here that the combinations of two or more chemicals can be more devastating than the sum of the separate effects.
112 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
113 Melucci (1998) p. 428-429
flourish in bureaucracies and Marxist groups". This is in line with the PowWow manifest from 1972. He had a vision of a contemporaneous popular mobilization where environmental problems are not divided from the questions of justice or peace. He argued “The ecocide in Vietnam was an environmental question, a peace question and a social question. “This was apparent to us during the 1970s”. This coincides with the message of the PowWow manifest from 1972. He explained that he puts severe doubts in environmental bureaucracies, and points out UNEP as “a typical UN ideological solution where they ties together some sort of power elite in the third world with the interests of big corporations, building up some sort of bureaucracy to handle this”. The discussion concerned with economic growth or not, is a fragmentizing construction spread by media and a question reflecting the environmental discussion of the petit bourgeoisie while the democratic popular movement viewed this division as out of interests. He explained that the Swedish green party was created around the idea of non-growth “and now they look positive to the idea of economic growth”. Björk means that this focus on non-growth or growth has hindered a constructive approach “today they have no basic critic” because they have to keep to the ideology of economic growth.

Björk distrusted bureaucracies and the financial community and was highly critical to concepts that he described as fragmenting and functions as distortions from serious approaches. Björk, Chossudovsky, Guha and Alier describe these “distortions” as serving the interests of dominant groups. The approaches by Björk, Chossudovsky, Guha and Alier take in consideration the importance of the way we name the world and how concepts limit the way we think. Björk regarded a public mobilization as the only possible way of achieving necessary change.

A Clash

A major clash between paradigms was the confrontations between a western environmental understanding and a third world equivalent. This confrontation was evident from the start of the preparatory work, and revealed a gap between environmental paradigms. It illustrates how methods to achieve influence and sustain domination became practiced. This conflict became an issue in the Hamilton conference, the Official UN conference on the Human Environment, the Environmental Forum and Peoples Forum. This clash also reveals global power relations.

Fjellander noted that the Hamilton conference was quite unique; the participants represented the world population (meaning between countries, the majority of the participants came directly from the third world). The participants constituted a wide global knowledge and they represented very big and important organizations with clear linkages to big countries governments and heavy industrial sectors. During this conference the participants became dissatisfied with the agenda as it according to

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114 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
115 PowWow Manifest 1972
116 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
117 PowWow Manifest 1972
118 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
119 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
Fjellander focused on a very Western and technological approach, ignoring what the participants experienced as the central questions. There was also dissatisfaction with numbers of “strange individuals that questioned and affected the meeting in the background in some strange way, as we later understood, they were linked to CIA or Foreign department in the US”.  

These descriptions of a clash between a western environmental approach and third world experiences seem to have surprised the hosts and created a feeling of need to control and prevent the conference from approaching certain problems. I have no proof of these described attempts from CIA and foreign department in the US. But it is not far fetched to assume that there were attempts to hinder independent conclusions.

In the originating agenda was based on an assumption; that the limiting of the population is one of the major problems to be solved, through family planning. This approach was in contrast to many of the participant’s experiences. Fjellander described that, according to many of the participants the major problem was the unequal distribution and control of the world’s resources, the northern exploitation of third worlds natural resources, and the hindering of third world countries to process their natural resources. The originating agenda was experienced as hindering the third world industrialization. This dissatisfaction resulted in a revolt; the whole conference went in strike enforcing a completely new agenda, which Fjellander experienced as “reflecting the major world problems from the majorities point of view”. There had been an invitation from UN from the start; to send an official delegate from the Hamilton conference that was to “constitute the voice of the youth” in the official Stockholm conference. The participants of the Hamilton conference thought that this offer was too paltry and decided to send a delegation on twelve persons.

This attitude from the participants clearly signals distrust to authoritative powers and self-confidence strong enough to challenge contemporary dominating groups. Fjellander described congruent with Guha and Martinez-Alier a Western tradition of exploitation of the rest of the world, most visible through colonialism. Fjellander argued that this tradition of domination and dominated is internalized and accepted in world society, where those in power can act in there interests without receiving resistance. This has resulted in claims of resources in the rich world that is 16 times greater than in the third world. Fjellander regarded this inequality as offensive and leads to structural collapse in third world countries facing the possibilities to generate resources enough to cope with environmental problems that occur. From a long-term ecological approach this is not functioning, dominating actors may not be negatively affected but coming generations and peoples in the periphery will be or are affected. The approach of the participants of the Hamilton conference clearly signals anomalies to the dominating western paradigm.

Population Question

The population question was central in the contemporary dominating western environmental understanding while the environmental understanding of the third world regarded this question as secondary and not reflecting the major world problems from the

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121 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
122 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
123 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
The population question can be described as more central in the initiating process of the official Stockholm conference than during the actual conference. Researchers much attended during the preparations of the Stockholm conference claimed that the population question was the central question. The most attended advocate for the population question as the central question was Paul Ehrlich. We know that the concept of a “population bomb” was a major subject for discussions and presentation in the Environmental Forum, both Ehrlich and Barry Commoner was speakers in the debates in Environmental Forum.

Paul Ehrlich took a stance in the picture of “Spaceship Earth”. In 1971 he wrote that “our children” will inherit a completely different society than the present affluent society. He announced that we today are in the middle of a development that leads to starvation and a complete breakdown; “tomorrow this can lead to our ruin”. What he proposed was a “program that combines an environmentally sound development within the agricultural sector with an effective population control” that “must be started and supported in developing countries (...) the cancer must be cut away”. Ehrlich proposed a strategy for the nearest “fateful centuries” where industrialized countries organizes a plan for “rehabilitation of areas” with population control as the major pillar and with migration control to isolate less advantaged areas from flooding other countries with humans. The idea was to permit an industrialization of selected co-operative countries or parts of selected countries. He imagined how small transistorized TV-sets is spread into villages, how TV-programs were to explain the necessity of population control and that continued provisions is conditioned, “perhaps one could make them understand that they could avoid a disaster only through birth control and self-support”. Demographic goals was to be set up deciding what can be seen as reasonable regarding the particular country and world assets. He suggested that the US could act on their own in many cases. Here he gave an example; providing incentives to mass force sterilization of all Indian men with three or more children.

Garrett Harding announced in an addition in this book, the Swedish addition “If the world is one and only big common land where food is delivered equally, then we are lost. If there is no control of the population growth this will results in a tragedy and a completely miserable world” the distribution of rights based on territory must be defended.
(US and industrialized countries) must function as guardian of a civilization that is threatened by well-meaning but ignorant intensions, if we (in US) are not to be lost.\textsuperscript{133}

Today thirty years later, after the “the nearest fateful centuries” we have still not seen any traces of the predicted complete breakdown and the children in the west that were to inherit everything but an affluent society still live in an affluent society. The predicted problems to produce enough food to feed the world are absent. Rather a major problem for industrialized countries is limiting the amount of food produced, most obvious in the discussions about EU and its agricultural policy CAP. This even though Ehrlich suggestions did not become realized in a worldwide scale.

There have been and there still are many attempts to control the size of populations through western and elitist dominance. The idea of the threatened living space or “lebensraum” for “our people” still persists. This idea is built around the concept of a threatened minority expressed in nationalistic terms or by terms of biology. A threat that comes from an expanding/flooding crowd of ignorant or genetically inferior, threatening “our” superior race or culture.

But we should not take for granted that the population question was invented by the rich, powerful nations to legitimate western elitist dominance over the world. Björn-Ola Linnér describes that “as represented by the tradition of Leopold, Vogt, Osborn, Borgström and others” the question of population was “certainly not invented as a disguised neo-imperialism”. Linnér illustrate that their discourse could be “very critical and subversive challenging the ruling order. Nevertheless, it was part of a globalization discourse, a common way of talking about an interlinked world.”\textsuperscript{134} Linnér describe “the conservationist-style neo-Malthusianism has been picked up by other interest groups at least partly”.\textsuperscript{135} Perhaps we can trace the conservation tradition of Ehrlich and Garrett Harding as serving specific interest groups in the west, while the conservation tradition of Borgström regarded the interests of a global audience through “the call for nutritional equity”.\textsuperscript{136} This conservation tradition includes inequalities in resource distribution, shifting of social and ecological costs of production to other classes, to foreigners and to future generations.\textsuperscript{137}

Fjellander describes that Ehrlich and the population question received in proportion a very big part of the time in the originating agenda in Environmental Forum but as Fjellander came to take over the role as coordinator in this forum he reduced the time for Ehrlich and the population question and shared out this time to issues and scientists from the third world.

Barry Commoner argued 1971 for a more complex approach, compared with Ehrlich. Commoner discussed how environmental problems come to existence. He started explaining that population growth and environmental problems do not coincide. It is not the amount of humans that create environmental problems it is a specific rationality that creates specific problems. Economic growth can lead to pollutions, but it is how economic growth is achieved that is central, it is a new mode of production that results in

\textsuperscript{133} Ehrlich (1971) p. 181
\textsuperscript{135} Linnér (2003) p. 108
\textsuperscript{136} Linnér (2003) p. 218
\textsuperscript{137} Linnér (2003) p. 218
the environmental crises, it is the methods that the human society has chosen for extracting, distribute and use the resources the earth offers. Commoner suggested that it is the collective will to social justice that is central to create social solutions and social measures that permits us to preserve our biological inherits and our humanity. He explained that it is necessary for environmental scientists to study national economy and economic politics. He quotes Kapp (1963)

“If the business calculations do not include the real total production costs because these partly shifts the costs on to other shoulders, then the traditional calculations of costs and gains is not only misleading, but work as a institutionalized cover-up for a destruction...”

Commoners concluded that the environmental crises are a product of social acts of humans, there is a need of radical social changes in form of rational and insights full collective acts, a retry of basic economic values, as an end of tolerating poverty, race discrimination and war.

The population question revealed a North-South conflict. In a memorandum made by Hans Blix to the Swedish foreign department he described the dissatisfaction of the Chinese delegation concerning the US description of the population question as a primary question. The Chinese delegation regarded the population question as secondary and not a major hinder for environmental protection.

Åström noted that “the real threat to the environment is if third world countries act the way we have”, Suggesting that efforts from the industrialized world for achieving global agreements could be based on this threat. This included the fear for a population explosion in the third world. In retro respect Janse points out the fear for a population explosion as over emphasized in the environmental movement’s childhood.

Fjellander regarded 2003 the population question as secondary and the distribution of recourses as central. Fjellander is here referring to what he regards as stabile and reliable statistics stating; that giving the people security and a decrease in premature mortality is the only successful way of regulating birth rate. The logic in this aspect relates to the will or need of people to limit their amount of children. This will primarily occur as the need of many children as a future pension supply decreases and as the possibility that one child survives to adulthood increases, securing the possibility of ancestors.

Björk described 2003 the discussion of population growth as a distortion from real environmental problems, the contemporary power relations. Björk is highly critical to, what he described as, a western fragmentizing of questions concerning environmental problem from peace, social relations and distribution of recourses. He described this approach as hindering an understanding of connections.

139 Commoner (1971) p. 222
140 Commoner (1971) p. 255-259
141 Hans Blix utrikesråd promemoria 1972-07-24 Foreign dep. Archive HP57K
142 Interview with Sverker Aström 030617
143 Interview with Per Janse 030627
144 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
145 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
The concept of a population bomb was used by the establishment in US and partly in Europe as a major motivation explaining the urgency of the environmental problem. The Stockholm conference became an arena where this concept became seriously questioned.

Conference achievements

What is described as the most important achievements by different actors illustrates differences in what actors regard as a positive societal change, revealing diverse underlying conceptions and approaches. This makes it possible for us to distinguish paradigmatic assumptions and possible approaches.

Åström described one of the biggest achievements of the Stockholm Conference.

They were forced to listen and they were forced to take concrete action in shape of legislation and creating new specialized authorities. This I regard as the most important positive consequences of the Stockholm conference.\textsuperscript{146}

In the declaration of the Stockholm conference, Åström pointed out the acknowledgement that states have responsibility for the environment in the nation and also to other states, as the most important factor. This is also pointed out as the perhaps most important guiding principle in the environmental declaration by the Swedish Foreign dep. 1972.\textsuperscript{147} It can be worth noting that official conference agreements were central for Åströms and the Swedish Foreign department’s attention. Åström assumed that the creation of authoritative institutions was positive for achieving a sustainable society.

Fjellander regarded the Stockholm conference as central and important; initiating a process, establishing UN-Environment program (UNEP) in a third world country and leading to the conference in Rio de Janeiro where an important document was created, Agenda 21.\textsuperscript{148} This document described Fjellander as unique to its character, where countries obligates themselves to act and take care of certain environmental problem and to bring down the agenda 21 work to more local authorities. He regarded the parallel activities to the official conferences as most important as “the environmental engagement gets rooted through the participation of civil society”.\textsuperscript{149} The engagement in these events is described as creating information and contacts.\textsuperscript{150}

What Fjellander regarded as central can be described as a spread of a specific information, local authoritative institutions and governmental commitments.

Björk describes that the UN has a defensive positive role working with environmental questions, human rights, gender issues so forth, even if there might be problematic if UN creates too much illusions. Björk was convinced that the activities by social movements and networks during the Stockholm conference were important; the primary cause of

\textsuperscript{146} Interview with Sverker Åström 030617  
\textsuperscript{147} Utrikesdepartementet serie II.25 1972  
\textsuperscript{148} UNEP were to act as a coordinator and catalyst of multilateral cooperation on the environment. According to Björn-Ola Linnér, Henrik Selin 2003 How It All Began: Global Efforts on Sustainable Development from Stockholm to Rio  
\textsuperscript{149} Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630  
\textsuperscript{150} Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
significance was that the environmental discussion in the west (“that often is devastating and imperialistic dealing with ideas of compulsory sterilizations in the third world, projecting internal problems in the rich world to poor countries and projecting political problems to external actors”) met a serious breakdown in the confrontation with Third world and Swedish popular movements. Björk described that the opposing attitude that was still characterizing environmentalists after the conference was very positive, and an achievement of the social movements both in south and north. Björk is positive to that the environmental question did not become integrated into the establishment and viewed this as positive for the environment.\(^\text{151}\)

Björk described that the most positive change was a serious breakdown of a western devastating discourse. He rejects the idea that the creation of authoritative institutions is positive for achieving a sustainable society. Instead he regarded independent public movements as contributing to an environmentally adopted society.

In a leaflet from 13/6 1972 the PowWow group announces what they regards as shortcomings of the official Stockholm conference

\textit{“Neglect of ecocide in Indochina, economic growth in developed countries, working environment, food pollution, centralization of control over people and industry, unequal distribution of the fruits of production, dominance of Third World by developed countries, mental environment (advertising, television, etc.)”}.\(^\text{152}\)

When it comes to environmental outcomes; both Janse and Fjellander noted that environmental problems have increased substantially and that environmental engagement also has increased. Even though substantial improvements as been achieved in specific areas, this implies that the increased environmental engagement not has resulted in societies more adapted to environmental conditions. This can be understood in different ways: Groups engaged in environmental questions are overrun by other more powerful groups when it comes to politics, the dominating environmental paradigm does not prevent environmental degradation, or it takes time to turn the ship.

If we regard the creations of concepts and frames of understanding as important, it is of value to note that the concept of sustainability can be regarded as a result of the Stockholm conference. Scientists have traced the idea of sustainable development to the Stockholm conference.\(^\text{153}\) According to N.Y.\textit{Times} 1972-06-07 Maurice Strong (named the 43-year-old Canadian industrialist-turned-diplomat) announced, “We are only at the threshold of an emerging new synthesis between development and growth”.\(^\text{154}\) The concept of sustainability can be described as a theoretical synthesis between development and growth. The environmental concept of sustainable development had the international break through in the Bruntland report \textit{Our Common Future} 1987.

**Sustainable development**

The concept of sustainable development is built around the idea to fully integrate environmental protection with social and economic considerations. The concept also includes the importance of equity. “A world in which poverty and inequity are endemic...”

\(^{151}\) Interview with Tord Björk 030724

\(^{152}\) PowWow leaflet 19720613 delivered by Janse 031020

\(^{153}\) Linnéer Björn-Ola, Selin Henrik (2003) \textit{How It All Began: Global Efforts on Sustainable Development from Stockholm to Rio}

\(^{154}\) N.Y.\textit{Times} Service19720607 \textit{Rich Nations Called On to Rethink for Environment}
will always be prone to ecological and other crisis (...) High levels of productive activity and widespread poverty can coexist, and can endanger the environment.”\textsuperscript{155} There is also an acknowledgment of the importance of solidarity with coming generations.\textsuperscript{156}

The integration of these aspects can be described as radical and in contrast to the promotion of a dominating and regulating minority suggested by Paul Erlich.\textsuperscript{157} When it comes to methods on how to achieve this ideal there are two basic suggestions: Promotion of specific values, and defining of limits for maximum sustainable yield.\textsuperscript{158} The former can be concretized to, spreading selected information, knowledge or moralizing, that is “to manipulate the profound structure of the personality” and the second as a tecnification where improved and refined methods of measurement gives us possibilities for utilitarian decisions.

Handling of conflicts

To find out the effects of NGO engagement in the Stockholm conference we ought to consider strategies that were practiced as specific opportunities for specific actors. It can also be of value to discuss how perceptions lead to specific action, how limited or selected information results in different ways of understanding possible courses. In this chapter there is a discussion of different issues; the cold war, the Vietnam war, the role of NGO during the Stockholm conference, the increased influence of NGOs. It is the handling of conflicts that is in focus rather than East-West or North-South..

The presence of the cold war during the Stockholm conference was evident and a dominating global conflict during this period. This got visualized in the non-participating of Soviet Union countries as a response of a refusal of admitting DDR to participate in the UN.\textsuperscript{159}

Olof Palme condemned “the enormous destruction that is caused by extensive bombings without distinction, by the extensive use of bulldozers and vegetable poison, some times described as ecocide”.\textsuperscript{160} This condemning of US warfare in Vietnam was highly controversial (It is most likely that Olof Palme’s speech concerning “ecocide” was directed towards the US warfare in Vietnam). The furious press release made by the US delegation the day after accused Palme for “gratuitous politicizing of our environmental discussions”.\textsuperscript{161} The US reaction reveals a highly technological approach regarding the environmental question as something apolitical.

The speech of Olof Palme also expressed the Swedish Social Democrats official strive for a third way including non-aligned foreign policy and mixed economy. “We can not afford a laissez-faire economy or a laissez-faire technology”.\textsuperscript{162} What he meant with “laissez-faire technology” is not very clear but it seams that he meant that there ought to be some,

\textsuperscript{156} World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) p. 43-46
\textsuperscript{157} This will be explained later.
\textsuperscript{158} World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) p. 43-46
\textsuperscript{159} N.Y.Times 1972-06-07 Service \textit{Rich Nations Called On to Rethink for Environment}
\textsuperscript{160} Swedish Agricultural dep. Jordbruksdep. (1972) \textit{En enda värld} p. 11
\textsuperscript{161} United States information service 1972-06-07 Swedish Foreign dep. (Archive. HP.57K)
\textsuperscript{162} Svenska jordbruksdepartementet. (1972) \textit{En enda värld} p. 11 Authors translation
perhaps expanding public control of developing of technology, congruent with the temporary state regulations of the economy. This parallel can be understood as if the Swedish delegation had in mind a handling of the environmental conflict in a manner similar with the Swedish Social Democrats handling of the conflict between the workers movement and the bourgeoisie.

The Stockholm conference was highly political at the scope, according to Keck and Sikkink (1998), “the role of NGOs was enhanced: the UN wanted their input without alienating their governments”. This might explain why UN offered facilities for a congruent Environmental Forum, consisting of NGOs. “This first NGO forum parallel to the UN official conference pioneered a transnational process that would become absolutely central to the formation and strengthening of advocacy networks around the world”. Keck and Sikkink regarded “this first NGO forum” as resulting in dialogue, conflict, creativity, and advantages of co-ordination, as a result of face-to-face contact and the recognition of commonalities and establishing of trust necessary to sustain more distant network contacts. I regard this as an oversimplified and misleading description of a complicated phenomenon. Descriptions of Fjellander, Janse and Björk are telling us that there already existed global contacts, dialog, face-to-face contacts and recognition of commonalities and trust. Keck and Sikkink do not seem to have been aware of Peoples Forum. The preparation for parallel activities started at the latest 1970 with the conference Threats and Promises of Science that took place in London. This conference, Peoples Forum and much of the planning of parallel activities was not initiated or sponsored from the UN or governments but from autonomous environmental groups and networks. The invitation of NGOs to a new parallel forum, separate from the official and Peoples Forum in a time when governments and international institutions were losing initiative, can be understood as if the UN was seeking legitimacy from NGOs and a broader audience. The invitation of selected NGOs into a kind of cooperation through Environmental Forum could be understood as an attempt by UN and governments to prevent NGOs from legitimizing the opposing and autonomous Peoples Forum. Instead NGOs came to legitimize UN and governmental organizations thorough the perhaps new construction of cooperation with NGOs; that is Environmental Forum.

These objections can alter the understanding described by Keck and Sikkink of how networks and social movements functioned and how they achieved influence.

Perhaps the Swedish government had in mind a method of handling potential conflicts, when funding Environmental Forum, that can be compared to a Swedish model called “Saltsjöbadsandan”, which emanated from a situation where the Swedish government failed to control the labor market from conflicts through legislation. This led to negotiations between the Swedish Employers Confederation and Trade Unions, resulting in something like fundamental laws of the labor market. Perhaps we can view the idea to invite NGOs to the conference and a parallel forum as based in a similar logic, Where governments chose to dislocate or shift this conflict from a more state political arena towards a situation where the state or UN functions as mediators in a competition between social movements on one side and the financial community with its NGOs on the other. During the period of “Saltsjöbadsandan”, Swedish Employers Confederation and trade unions were given direct and considerable influence in the Swedish governance. This combination can be regarded as a step towards corporativism, where the meaning of

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corporativism partly lies in the interest organizations voluntary or negotiation regulated cooperation and the influence and the role they are given as an instrument of public policy.\textsuperscript{164} Recreating a monistic structure where, in the case of the Stockholm Conference, international intergovernmental organizations, transnational companies and transnational activists end up as parts of one international hierarchy.

Stienstra suggested that; social movements “will be particularly effective when they are seen to be stakeholders; when they are seen to provide a necessary expertise”\textsuperscript{165} This suggests that social movements can have their strongest impact, when given the possibility to shape the dominating discourse, structures, and policies that maintain the norms. That is when social movements are more or less incorporated with the “old” established structures of power. We can suppose that this observation is convincing when it comes to empirical studies engaged in finding out the right moment of the greatest impact, and in the case of advocacy networks which consists of economic actors and firms trying to strengthening their interests within contemporary structures and NGOs that do not strive for a paradigmatic change. When it comes to social movements based on activists working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values and a common discourse, it may be less likely, especially if the discourse of the NGO is incommensurable with the co-opting establishment. Perhaps what happens in such a situation is a trade off, between the establishment and the opposing social movement. A trade off where the social movement achieves temporary influence in the shaping of state discourse, structures and policies, at the cost of diminishing autonomy and diminishing power, as in the case of creating state opposing discourses and challenging the state legitimacy. This can be described as the situation when the social movement gets co-opted by the state and when the alternative gets lost to a partly new discourse formulating elite.

Edwards and Humle have recognized the danger of co-optation into the neoliberal agendas of governments and international bodies. There are descriptions of NGOs that have been drawn into a project of capitalist modernization and political liberalization by official bilateral and multilateral funding agencies and governments. “Serving the state and big external donors can and often contradict with social transformatory projects involving the empowerment of the poor”.\textsuperscript{166} According to Edwards and Humle the numbers of NGOs have grown exponentially and the size of some makes them “significant players in social welfare and employment markets at the national level; the funding they attract has increased enormously; and their visibility in policy-making fora, the media and with the general public, has never been higher”.\textsuperscript{167} As Edwards and Humle show there is a dilemma that is critical, “whether NGOs are getting to close (in terms of interests, values, methods, priorities and other factors) to Northern-government donors, to a lesser degree, developing-country states...” Perhaps NGOs are losing radical ideas, and with alternatives to the orthodoxy’s of the rich and powerful. Over the last fifteen years, and particularly since the end of the Cold

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{164} Nationalencyklopedin (bokförlaget Bra Böcker AB 1997) “Saltsjöbadsandan” \\
\textsuperscript{165} Stienstra p. 271-272 \\
\textsuperscript{166} David Humle, Michael Edwards (1997) NGOs, States and Donors Too Close For Comfort p. 257-258 (Macmillan Press LTD, London) \\
\textsuperscript{167} Humle (1997) p. 3
\end{flushright}
War, development policy and aid transfers have come to be driven by beliefs organized around the twin poles of neo-liberal economics and liberal democratic theory.\textsuperscript{168}

Co-optation is one way to control opposing groups, distortions of attention and destabilization is other. There existed many attempts, according to Per Janse, Jan Fjellander and Tord Björk to divert attention from Peoples Forum and other manifestations that had been organized by activists, networks and political organizations.\textsuperscript{169} After the conference the PowWow group described how the financial community (Robert Anderson from Atlantic Richfield and personal friend to President Nixon) had financed and infiltrated Friends of the Earth, and made attempts to finance and control Environmental Forum. There were descriptions of possible interventions by big corporations made undercover through NGOs.\textsuperscript{170}

According to Janse and Björk there were conspiracy engagements from the central power in the US. Suggesting that a group named Hog Farm (the American Harley Davidson motorcycle organization) was supported to undermine critics and alternative movements through the introduction and supplying of narcotics. Hog-Farm was also explained as active in diffusing the focus from US activities that could be regarded as environmental or humanitarian problematic, creating an opinion on the only environmental problematic area that US was not involved in, that is whaling.\textsuperscript{171} Fjellander, Per Janse and Björk describe how dominating powers, especially central powers in US tried to withhold the initiative and intervened in the dark trying to distort the attention from critical concepts and approaches. This is also a general theme in a manuscript to an unpublished book written close after the Stockholm conference.\textsuperscript{172}

Björk explained that during this period he knew nothing of the methods of lobby groups as Aspen in Colorado that he now described as very active in achieving control of the discourse and the different activities during the conference, as in the preparations.\textsuperscript{173}

Björk described how specific groups and institutions involved from the very start had ambitions behind the preparation of the Stockholm Conference especially represented by Aspen institute and Maurice Strong. He described attempts to distort attention from power relations towards an approach where the state delivers knowledge, morality and labeling of products, leaving for the individuals or consumers to act, that is to choose products according to moral codes. Björk meant that this leads to a moralizing of individuals, and constitutes an approach that is in line with the interests of corporations, and does not constitute a major possibility of positive change.\textsuperscript{174}

A big opposition to American interventions was quickly creating a perhaps over exaggerated fear for conspiracies in many of the participants of the Peoples Forum. Janse describes activist’s that were engaged anti-drug liberals, as Tom Nässbjer and Gun Zacharias as very negative to the US interventions and possible conspiracies, during the conference. According to Janse this fear for conspiracies created a turmoil resulting in the

\textsuperscript{168} Humle (1997) p. 5
\textsuperscript{169} Interview with Per Janse 030627, Tord Björk 030724 and Jan Fjellander 030630
\textsuperscript{170} PowWow group (in the time after the Stockholm Conference) (manuscript to a unpublished book)
\textsuperscript{171} Interview with Per Janse 030627 and Tord Björk 030724
\textsuperscript{172} PowWow group (in the time after the Stockholm Conference) (manuscript to a unpublished book)
\textsuperscript{173} Interview with Tord Björk 030724
\textsuperscript{174} Interview with Tord Björk 030724
rejection of Jan Fjellander from Peoples Forum as he was accused of taking money from imperialists. Fjellander is described by Janse in retro respect as engaged in finding funding for third-world scientists that he were in contact with, in time for the conference. Fjellander described a significant difference between Environmental Forum and Peoples Forum. In Peoples Forum there was a thorough analyze of US-ecocide in Vietnam, arranged by the FNL-groups, this thorough analyze of US-ecocide was not a subject at the Environmental Forum. Janse explained that Jan Fjellander was cautious in his critic. Peoples Forum was more provoking and radical than Environmental Forum that was funded by the Swedish government. Environmental Forum is in retro respect explained by Janse as a conference with similarities to the official UN-conference but freer in the debate and in the selecting of participants.

According to Janse the Stockholm conference can be viewed as an embryo to the later conferences in Rio de Janeiro and in Johannesburg. In the later conferences the extension of parallel events and forums has increased dramatically, according to Janses experiences as participant in all three conferences. Janse described that what was establishment or not was rather obvious in the Stockholm conference, while it was harder to distinguish what was establishment, semi establishment, special interest or non-establishment in later UN-environmental conferences. Janse explained that UN today is inviting NGOs and scientist communities as panels. UN is organizing special events with NGO within the frames of the UN. Both Janse and Fjellander described how the UN system has opened up towards other interests than governments. They also stressed the importance of media as actors and media descriptions of events as important.

This leads us to recognize that the basic constitution of UN, that is cooperation between national governments, may have lost ground. It might be so that Governments have found it necessary or profitable to acknowledge the powers of the financial community and social movements as separate actors engaged in UN international conferences.

North-South

The Stockholm conference heightened divisions between the third world and the rich world. During the preparations for the Stockholm Conference the extent of North-South polarization got revealed. The third world criticized the concept of a population bomb as not reflecting the real environmental problems that is the unequal distribution of resources and using environmental arguments to try to keep developing countries subordinate.

During the conference delegations from India, Brazil, and newly admitted China stressed poverty as a great polluter and development as the solution. “Stressing sovereignty over resources and development, delegates from China and Brazil accused the industrialized north of using environmental arguments to try to keep developing countries subordinate”. China (mainland China) had its first invitation to UN. There were an apparent unity of

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175 Interview with Per Janse 030627, this descriptions do also coincide with descriptions of Tord Björk 030724, Jan Fjellander 030630 and PowWow group (in the time after the Stockholm Conference) (manuscript to a unpublished book)
176 This coincides with the programs of Environmental Forum and Peoples Forum Berglund Björn Dagens Nyheter 1972-05-19 and Wetterstrand Elisabeth Final program for Environmental Forum 5-16 June 1972.
177 Interview with Per Janse 030627
178 Hans Blix utrikesråd promemoria 1972-07-24
poor countries. According to Keck and Sikkink, even though they putted doubt in the consistency of their manner.

Masking a more complex reality: Brazil’s military government (…) which so eloquently pleaded the cause of poor nations in the international arena, was simultaneously presiding over one of the most significant income redistribution from poor to the rich in the country’s history. Defining the conflict over environment and development in north-south term portrays nation-states (and economic agents associated with them) as unitary actors in the international arena. \(^{179}\)

This possible lack of consistency does not automatically reveal there arguments as empty on contents, there might have been a strong opinion supporting Brazils demands in the third world even if the specific regime can be considered mainly as representing a wealthy minority in Brazil. The opposing of a structural inequality between nations does not always also include the opposition to structural inequality within a nation. But perhaps we ought to consider whom actors could be regarded to represent, intergovernmental as nongovernmental. Structural inequality plays a constitutive role in the identities of third-world and the rich world’s actors, even if it is one of many factors that shape identities. Another factor to consider is the Structural inequality within the nation. Here it is worth noting that the new southern majority in the UN General Assembly 1974-75 promoted a developing agenda, with proposals for a radical “New International Economic Order”. \(^{180}\) This proves that there was a serious discontent with the Western domination, serious enough to collect a support from a majority in the General Assembly.

### Changing power relations and globalization

It is of value to regard important changes in the sociological context in order to understand, not only the surroundings, but perhaps even what shapes the phenomena in focus. A longer perspective enables us to distinguish how power relations evolve over time, revealing connections in context and time-bound assumptions and strategies. The power relations between the financial community, states and intergovernmental cooperation affect the context in which social movements and networks function. This makes it important to recognize substantial changes.

Janse explained that the market institution has increased its influence at the parliamentary institutions expense, taking over much of what parliamentary institutions earlier controlled. Corporations has become much more of global actors since 1972 affecting through networks with specific epicenters, while states has lost a considerable part of there dominance. Free financial flows and the abandon of currency regulations have altered the context in which corporations act. \(^{181}\) Janse described that corporations do manage states and trade unions “but at the same time he meant that these changes have made ground for consumer-, environment-, and solidarity movements to constitute a

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\(^{180}\) New International Economic Order highlighted demands on; Full control over natural recourses, higher and stable raw material prices, increased opportunity to process raw material in poor countries, liquidation of trade barriers for processed products from third-world countries, greater influence over the international monetary system...

\(^{181}\) Interview with Per Janse 030627
considerable threats to companies in the short run”.\(^\text{182}\) He also notes that “poor masses in the world have increased their standard of living”.\(^\text{183}\)

He argued that changes have affected corporations to act in their interest outside the state, that taxes have diminished, economic segregation has increased, and billionaires have clustered. “Specific actors within the financial community have achieved power” but according to Janse, the globalization has made it more complicated to distinguish specific financial communities as dominant, “but financial centers in the north has a considerable power that earlier were allocated to ministries”.\(^\text{184}\)

Fjellander described that “transnational corporations have become incredibly more powerful (...) the power of the international capital is enormous”.\(^\text{185}\) Fjellander argued that transnational corporation’s has become a new form of international actor with an economic power much greater than nations. This change has increased the impact of decisions made for short termed speculation, made without environmental concern increasing the gravity in the environmental problems. He described that transnational corporations is working with an increasing demand on short run profit that is hindering long-term investments that could create a good environment and a positive development. These problems miss, according to Fjellander, a balancing counter weight, but he puts some hope in a UN institute working with corporate responsibility and the social movement, ATTAC.\(^\text{186}\)

Björk described how transnational corporations today work much more open and less concerned of being revealed in their attempts to reinforce their interests. Björk described a substantial change; dominating commercial interests were acting in the dark during the Stockholm conference while commercial sponsoring of the Rio conference was official. Clusters of big financial corporations were directly linked and decisive in the preparation of the Rio conference. This does not mean that a substantial increase in power has been accumulated into corporations; the influence of corporations was decisive in the preparations of the official Stockholm conference, according to Björk.\(^\text{187}\)

This signals a considerable shift in power relations, a shift where states have lost power and the financial community has achieved an increased power. The financial community has made their perception of the world more spread and accepted making it more convenient for them to act more openly.

Janse as well as Björk and Fjellander describe an increased segregation both between the rich and the poor world as within countries. Fjellander notes that the changed economic structures have increased the impact of decisions made without environmental considerations, increasing the gravity of environmental problems.

Björk warns us for making hasty conclusions noting that the financial community was deeply involved in effecting the Stockholm conference. Björk describes that the gap between poor and rich countries as the gap between poor and rich within nations has

\(^\text{182}\) Interview with Per Janse 030627
\(^\text{183}\) Discussion with Per Janse 040115
\(^\text{184}\) Interview with Per Janse 030627
\(^\text{185}\) Interview with Per Janse 030627
\(^\text{186}\) Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
\(^\text{187}\) Interview with Tord Björk 030724
increased substantially, tacking up speed after the early 70s and the promises of action to correct discords made at the Stockholm conference by rich countries. He describes that UN has lost influence after 1964, and has become more of a human face for the new world order where the Bretton-Woods institutions (IMF and the World Bank) and NATO has increased their power. He describe a major change in the agenda from a more critical agenda during the Stockholm conference where transnational company’s attempts to distort attention from power relations were attempts made in the hidden, while the agenda of today is described as neo-liberal and critical to the state where corporations has moved forward there positions, being able to act more openly.  

According to Jon Pierre has the discursive power of the financial community increased during the 90s. Their concepts have become the foundation from where to interpret occurrences. They have received status as economic experts, defining what a good or necessary politic is. Consequently has the dominating economic interests been articulated as common interest or a political necessity. This has, according to Håkan Thörn, resulted in an increased segregation and escalation of environmental problems. The weakened position of national politics has resulted in a crisis of democracy. He has described how corporations through lobbying and as creators of public opinion has increased there influence as political actors on national and the international arenas. Thörn argued that “This politically assisted globalization has after 25 years created escalating economic gaps everywhere, both between countries in north and south and within countries in south as well as north”.

Here we can conclude that the financial community in the North seems to have achieved a substantial influence that earlier was located to ministries, making their perception of the world more spread and accepted.

Björn-Ola Linnér and Henrik Selin, described that;

The globalization discourse until the Stockholm conference was a Euro-American defined common destiny, there were a paradigmatic conception assuming that all nations of the world were perceived to be moving along the same track, sharing the same goal and of the early intended destiny.

Already in the declaration of the conference started, mentioned the ambition to consider “the need for a common outlook and for common principles to inspire and guide the peoples of the world...” This idea implies that the world’s population shared the same defined historical goal, as it reveals the ambition to establish a new discourse that portraits the unitary appeal in defining environmental problems as global. “A unitary and undifferentiated global we was defined for humankind”, ignoring the fact that different groups and people could have diverse interests in defining policy’s regarding natural resources. Perhaps this defining of global common principles creates a specific

188 Interview with Tord Björk 030724
189 Håkan Thörn (2002) Globaliseringens dimensioner p. 59 (Bokförlaget Atlas) Authors translation
190 Thörn (2002) p. 61-62
191 Thörn (2002) p. 70
192 Björn-Ola Linnér, Henrik Selin The Global Quest for Sustainability: Accomplishments and Failures of the 1972 UN Conference on Human Environment p.4
discourse that now prevails as a dominating discourse supporting a globalizing trend, which obviously has its opponents.

There are numerous definitions of the meanings of globalization. Perhaps one of the definitions close to the perceptions outlined above is the one presented by Albrow. The second author tries to specify specific changes associated globalization, while the final is in direct opposition to the promoters of globalization.

1 Globalization refers to all those processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society.¹⁹⁵ (Martin Albrow 1990)

2 The characteristics of the globalization trend include the internationalizing of production, the new international division of labor, new migratory movements from South to North, the new competitive environment that accelerates these processes, and the internationalizing of the state (…) making states into agencies of the globalizing world.¹⁹⁶ (Robert Cox 1994)

3 Globalization is what we in the Third World have for several centuries called colonization.¹⁹⁷ (Martin Khor 1995)

The financial community’s and NGOs seem to have increased their influence at the expense of the national governments. Another description is that the financial community has turned from attempts to strengthen their interests in the hidden trying to affect our understanding mainly on the national arena, towards a situation where financial communities tend to work more openly and more as direct and independent actor on the global arena. NGOs have expanded in size and scope strengthening there interests. But this does not necessarily mean that NGOs as advocates of a broader audience has increased their influence, this is logically not the case if NGOs have lost contact with a broader audience and got closer to dominating groups.

Changing states, social movements and networks

Globalization and its effects combined with an uprising frustration have now led new social movements to rage against dominant institutions that are enforcing a specific globalizing politic. The OECD-negotiations illustrates how transnational corporations through lobby organizations constituted an enforcing power in the preparations for the suggestion at table (the MAI-treaty). On the other side the MAI-treaty was stopped by a quickly emerging social movement acting globally and nationally, where network mobilization on internet had an important function. These networks have continued to deliver resistance against the WTO-meetings. There have been massive demonstrations in Washington, Prague and Genua where the IMF, the World Bank and G8 have held meetings.¹⁹⁸

Among the more important western critical social movements connected to these networks is Attac. This social movement is raging against the globalization of financial markets as, according to their policy statement, leads to increasing economic insecurity

¹⁹⁶ Baylis (1997) p. 15
¹⁹⁷ Baylis (1997) p. 15
¹⁹⁸ Thörn (2002) p. 72-73
and increasing social gaps. Bim Clinell explained that a movement as Attac does not originate from above; it arises with a force in the gap between the descriptions of society made of those in power and how the same reality is experienced by grassroots.\footnote{Bim Clinell Attac- gräsrötternas revolt mot marknaden (Agoras writing serie 3 Agora)} This is in line with Meluccis descriptions of how conflicts transform themselves into dilemmas making polarities that come to define its very structure. Perhaps a specific globalizing trend and rising resistance now is or will be defining our perception of the concepts of globalization. The statement of Attac signals such a perception of a global structure. An increased public influence over societal decision processes has historically been enforced by social movements. Consequently can an increased democratization only be expected with the participation of strong and wide global social movements, according to Thörn.\footnote{Thörn (2002) p.72-73} Melucci described “that the conflicts and the movements that expresses them are the main channels of information about the new patterns of inequality and new forms of power that society re-creates”. Given that we want to enhance the democratic influence we ought to consider societal transparency. Melucci proposes that we should make power more visible and therefore more negotiable.\footnote{Melucci (1998) p. 428-429} In these aspects independent social movements has a key role enforcing democracy.

During these thirty years the sociological context has changed. This can be regarded as resulting in changing social movements and networks, as they try to adapt to new conditions. But the changed sociological context is also a result of more or less conscious attempts to shape societies in ways preferred by the discourse framing elites and contesting social movements. The most important factors in shaping the sociological context are today, completely dependent on social relations. In these social relations the interrelations between elites discourse framing and activist influence is most significant.

Åström described that the Stockholm conference gave Sweden an exceptional goodwill and a special authority. He also described a governmental un-interest.

\[\ldots\text{when the delegates had left Stockholm and the special organization leading the preparation and the implementation had dissolved; the engagement appears to have vanished as of the volunteer organizations. We (Sweden) took part as if we were bound by duty, in the work that was pursued in the environmental authority UNEP in Nairobi, which was constituted and decided at the Stockholm conference, and even in other arenas. There was no drive behind the work. What were especially remarkable: no proper attempts were made to use the special authority as Sweden achieved throw the initiative and housing of the conference.}\footnote{Sverker Åström (1992) p. 175}

\[\ldots\text{Åström noted that the relative un-interest that existed during the preparations continued after the conference.}\footnote{Sverker Åström (1992) p. 175}

\[\ldots\text{This can be understood as if the Swedish government did not have a real serious interest in working with the environmental question. This described lack of interest can be understood as if the drive for environmental concerns emanated somewhere else, perhaps in the general public, scientist communities and Åström personally.}\footnote{Sverker Åström (1992) p. 175}

\[\ldots\text{Fjellander described how new radical internationally engaged organizations appeared after 1972 that were more oriented towards networks consisting of activists, working with}\footnote{Sverker Åström (1992) p. 175}
international campaigns as method. He described the later spread of Internet as a new tool, making information much more available. Fjellander describes that this hinders delegates of dominating groups from meeting without hearing voices from the people. He also argued, “Networks today possess an enormous knowledge”. Fjellander was convinced that there exists much more detailed knowledge, also within UN, that is based on academic insight. Knowledge held by the campaign-making groups has been recognized by the establishment leading to a situation where these groups functions as institution of remittance.  

There is probably a more spread knowledge of detailed specific environmental phenomena based on improving techniques of measurement, but we ought to be cautious about an assumption as we now have better understanding than earlier generations. According to Kuhn knowledge does not evolve in a predetermined linear way. With another approach we can draw the conclusions that the knowledge of campaign-making groups are regarded as useable for the establishment, or that the co-opting of campaign making groups as usable for the establishment.

Björk made a distinction between popular movements and NGOs that works together with the establishment. He described these NGOs as officially independent but in reality rather a part of the establishment than constituting an alternative. These NGOs function as an illusory alternative while in fact, their close cooperation with establishment constitutes a support and excuse for the establishment, constituting a distortion from serious networks or popular movements. Björk described that the environmental question in the south is not separated from social questions or power relations. He described that the approach of NGOs in the south is functioning in contrast to the “absurd” fragmentized approach of NGOs in the west. He described the creative environment in the Third World Network (TWN) that started 1984 in Malaysia leading to World Rainforest Movement and Asian Network for environment. TWN was most central in bringing serious critic to the Rio conference, in Seattle and against the MAI treaty. From the end of the 80s there was a massive attempt to integrate the environmental movement into the agenda of the establishment that partly succeeds in the Rio conference. This integration is brought to an end by TWN and the popular mass movements in the third world through the refusal of the MAI treaty instead of suggesting reforms.  

Björk described that it is the Third World that forced NGOs in the north to a refusal of the MAI treaty. It is the movements that integrate the environmental questions with social questions that succeed in achieving change. It is the same type of reasoning that was characterizing the Hamilton documents. In the north resistance has a tendency to quickly get professionalized and institutionalized into small profitable niches without taking confrontation with the system as a complex. Björk noted that the Stockholm conference had more of this confrontation and support from the Swedish government to this kind of popular politics, while the Rio conference is described as a catastrophe by Björk. He noted that the big popular manifestations are a result of an approach regarding international conferences as temporary opportunities to confront environmental problems. In the cases of the Stockholm conference this approach succeeded in decreasing environmental destruction.

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204 Interview with Jan Fjellander 030630
205 MAI is The Multilateral Agreement on Investment
In this way UN is important giving opportunities to discuss and confront actors, creating worldwide opinion and change.\textsuperscript{207}

Björk described how the market of environmentally adopted products has grown hiding the fact of an increasing total spread of poisons in the agricultural sector. A specific detailed environmental consciousness has been improved but this is used to hide the basic fact of increasing environmental problems and the need of structural change. Critical sharpness and capacity to describe connections has been lost in a fragmentized agenda and an “NGO-isation”. Environmental organizations have still influence regarding connections in physical health, working environment and global questions of justice, but they have problems of pronouncing a functioning politic. Environmental organizations have become a part of a global system of negotiations, instead of pronouncing basic critics, according to Björk.\textsuperscript{208}

The last descriptions is clearly comparable with the critic made by Edwards and Humle where NGOs have been co-opted into neoliberal agendas and lost alternatives to the orthodoxy’s of the rich and powerful. Björk described examples of how “effective” social movements can achieve change through constructing opposing discourses challenging the dominating rationality, creating worldwide opinion and change. Guha, Alier and Björk criticize the dominating northern environmental discourse for distorting attention from the essential. Björk contradicts theories of Stienstra, describing the way for NGOs to work closely with the establishment as a disaster. A paradigmatic change, demands revealing of anomalies and a competing paradigm these components might be hard to make real working closely with or as a part of a group that work within the dominating paradigmatic tradition. To work within a paradigmatic tradition means to work with a common theoretical structure and with ways of perceiving this specific social reality and to belong to a specific social group.

Chossudovsky and Björk both described a contra ideology that seldom challenges contemporary policy prescriptions, a contra ideology developing alongside rather than in opposition to dominating groups.

In the early 70s the environmental discourse in Sweden, as Jonas Anshelm described it, was to be connected to visions of a radically different society. In the environmental movement this alternative society came to be mentioned “the low-energy-society”. This idea was built on visions of ecological balance, zero economic-growth, de-centralization, local democracy, and a relation to nature built on the idea of Humankind living together with nature rather than Humankind consuming nature. A consequence of this rationality, according to Anshelm, was that the focus on the material welfare and economic growth was to be pushed into the background in favor of other values as solidarity with other countries and coming generations.\textsuperscript{209} But, according to Johan Hedrén, the existential- and civilization-critical questions were to be tuned-out and replaced with a technocratic view and a discourse seeking support in science.\textsuperscript{210} This development, together with the notion that big environmental organizations today function as expertise in the governance of Sweden, can be viewed as indicating that environmental movements went co-opted by the

\textsuperscript{207} Interview with Tord Björk 030724
\textsuperscript{208} Interview with Tord Björk 030724
\textsuperscript{209} Johan Hedrén (2002) \textit{Naturen som brytpunkt om miljöfrågans mystifieringar konflikter och motsägelser} p. 34 Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposium AB Stockholm Authors translation
\textsuperscript{210} Hedrén (2002) p. 35
establishment in a manner congruent with what Stienstra has proposed. Stienstra described this as an effective way for social movements to influence governance. This change can also be described as a re-centralization of the shaping of discourses and the cease to appear of alternatives. Parts of these descriptions are in line with the descriptions of Manuell Castell concerning a worldwide tendency.

Castells described a worldwide tendency where social movements in urban areas have developed during the 80s and 90s. He concluded that the discourses of these actors and organizations have been integrated in the local governance and its practices, either directly or in direct, through a shifting system of citizen-participation and community-development. This tendency has liquidated the urban movements as sources to an alternative change in the society. In the same time it has legitimated the local governance and opened up possibilities to the local governance to be an important authority of reconstruction of political control and social meaning.\footnote{Castells (1997) p. 75-76}

This can be understood as follows; some decades ago western environmental movements were emerging creating awareness about environmental problems. State environmental discourse and its legitimacy were severely questioned. This can be described as resulting in a de-centralization of the shaping of environmental discourses. Environmental movements during these periods can be described as heterogeneous and highly fragmented, where quite autonomous organizations created there own rationalities and doing this quite separate from donor-control-system. Jonas Anshelm, Johan Hedrén and Manuel Castells described that social movements after this have been liquidated or have ceased to deliver alternative conceptions.

NGOs involved in economic and social development have prospered:

Sweeping the globe in the late twentieth century. Their number have grown exponentially; the size of some makes them significant players in social welfare and employment market at national level; the funding they attract has increased enormously; and their visibility in policy-making fora, the media, and with the general public, has never been higher. And yet, many NGO personnel and analysts have major concerns about the contribution that NGOs are making to development and about the ways in which ‘success has changed and is changing them.\footnote{Humle (1997) p. 3}

Humle and Edwards have found that donors have seen an increase in influence, in association and collective action, while the felt need of the poor and disadvantaged have seen a corresponding decrease in the significance when it comes to group formation and mobilization.\footnote{Humle (1997) p. 276} Humle and Edwards described a dilemma; when NGOs gets popular to donors this do not only lead to greater influence. It has brought with it an internal change where NGOs are losing their roots – getting closer to donors and governments. Perhaps NGOs have got too close (in terms of interests, values, methods, priorities and other factors) to donors? The striking success when it comes to attract funding has lead to internal change.\footnote{Humle (1997) p. 3}
Embarrassing those in position of power has always been a hallmark of NGO activity; the problem is that many NGOs themselves have now become the powerful, with a depressing consequence for their ability to be self-critical, honest and courageous about the future.\footnote{Humle (1997) p. 283}

Hans Holmén consider if this popularity reflects “genuine recognition or does it accrue because NGOs have now been socialized into the establishment – the development industry”.\footnote{Humle (1997) p. 3} Holmén has acknowledged staggering claims of NGOs in policy making fora.

“In recent years NGOs have claimed –and also attained – the right to speak for grassroots and civil society in a multitude of national and international fora (…) Sometimes, NGOs have had to be satisfied with presenting their analyses and claims at parallel, unofficial, sessions but increasingly they claim the right to take part in formal decision-making processes as delegates with official status in, for example UN summits”.\footnote{Hans Holmén July 2002 NGOs, Networking, and Problems of Representation p. 2 (Linköpings University and ICER)}

Possibly social movements through creating alternative opposing discourse and collecting support find the main way in achieving power, to enforce influence and achieve legitimacy. Perhaps this achieved power can have its optimum delivery effect when and if the social movement is being co-opted by the establishment and losing its autonomous possibility to sustain or develop an opposing discourse and change from undermining the dominating discourse to legitimizing the, perhaps updated version of the, dominant discourse. According to this reasoning we are to measure the effectiveness of a social movement by its ability to influence in accordance of the aims set up, taking into account the short-term effect as well as the long-run effect.

There is of vital interest to distinguish between commensurable and incommensurable discourses. A social movement striving for a paradigmatic change might have the greatest influence as an autonomous critic; a too close cooperation might lead to an upheaval of the originating visions as the possibility of maintaining an opposing character and a cease to appear as alternative. This might bee the case even if the movement is given substantial influence in the short run. A too close cooperation with donors might lead to co-option of a social movement into the structures of dominance.

This can make us confirm that we out to distinguish differences between NGOs. Separating social movements mainly consisting of volunteers bound together by shared values and a common discourse from advocacy networks supported by economic actors, consisting of paid professionals.

Perhaps the Stockholm conference but mainly the following effects and UN environmental conferences, can be seen as resulting in a re-centralization in shaping of discourses and contributing to a “technicalization” of the environmental issues as well as “bringing international political attention to environmental issues, and stimulating international environmental protection and mobilization”.\footnote{Björn-Ola Linnér, Henrik Selin The Global Quest for Sustainability: Accomplishments and Failures of the 1972 UN Conference on Human Environment p. 3}
Conclusions

Human perception can be viewed as a product of the selection of objects of interest, which logically only can be a result of a pre-understanding, what people has been thought to look at. And how to interpret the stimuli apprehended of the surrounding, which must be dependent on what earlier experiences has taught us how to understand. If we accept these theories by Kuhn and agree that “There is no way to reconstruct phrases as “really exists” as do not depend on a theory”. Then we can not regard the conclusions of this research as descriptions of the truth. The conclusions of this research are to be regarded as dependent of the theories selected by the author and the selection of references. Hopefully the conclusions can be regarded as convincing and logic. This is an attempt of describing interrelations between intergovernmental discourse framing and activist influence from a specific perspective. This perspective recognizes the informants point of view through specific theories compared with selected researches and primary references.

Factors leading to the Stockholm conference
We have called attention to collective actions based on specific perceptions that resulted in the Stockholm conference. In the Global North ruling elites had become severely questioned loosing legitimacy and power in the late 1960s, as described under the heading Critical Climate. Critics of the environmental paradigmatic tradition found support in a new generation making rebellion towards the establishment and the institutions of earlier generations. We have taken part of descriptions stating that was a staggering frustration with social inequalities, the bureaucratic prevailing order, and anonymous economic forces starting in the 1960s. Researchers did pressure for environmental concern delivering alarming reports and as it seemed, searched for an arena where they could reach decision makers and public opinion. When environmental problems and US activities in Vietnam reached the public this resulted in arising discontent. Possibly a gap arose between official rhetoric and the world as experienced by the public. The legitimacy of governments, international institutions and the financial community seams to have been deeply in question.

There was a will to change earlier conceptions. Colonialism was losing terrain, dominating institutions became questioned and groups tried to create alternative ways of achieving knowledge. This induces that the initiative were moving from the establishment to new groups confronting established institutions that was experienced as hindering a positive development. It seems as new competing paradigms were arising from a paradigmatic tradition that was losing terrain.

Motives to for the actions of Swedish social movements
We have taken part of descriptions stating that a new generation was striving for more than economic accesses, a generation striving for general influence with a belief that they could shape a better world. This can be described as spirits of the time, a reaction on a narrow and dull strive for higher standards characterizing an earlier generation. Social movements in Stockholm did start to work with preparations for parallel activities, finding ways to use the attention that they expected to be on the Stockholm conference. In 1970 transnational preparations of independent parallel activities to the Stockholm conference started, conferences were held and youth groups and networks were created. A network of social movements and individuals (PowWow) announces their visions of a

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society adapted to nature expressing a global solidarity with temporary and coming generations. This group acknowledged a new mode of production. They were convinced that it was the methods that the western society has chosen for extracting, distribute and use the resources the earth offers that resulted in environmental degradation. They initiated discussions of fundamental aspects of the environmental question and took initiative to a broader assembled activity, including both international as Swedish actors. PowWow took the initiative to assemble environmental groups and left-wing groups in a conference that came to be named Peoples Forum. Among the over thirty groups that were involved in the preparations, were Alternative City, The Anarchistic working group, United FNL-groups, environmental groups, Swedish political parties from the center to the left, two international groups Dai Dong and Oi-Committee.

There was also Environmental Forum a parallel conference and a place for seminars initiated by the UN and by the UN Association of Sweden and National Council of Swedish Youth. In Environmental Forum there were many international participating groups. Among the numerous participating groups were; International Planed Parenthood Federation, World Wildlife Fund, National Audoban Society, Scientist’s Institute for Public Information, Sierra Club, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Friends of the Earth, The United FNL groups and Oi-committee.

Motives to the actions of dominating groups
Until the Stockholm conference there was a paradigmatic conception in the Global North “assuming that all nations of the world were perceived to be moving along the same track, sharing the same goal and of the early intended destiny”. This conception characterized the contemporary environmental understanding and was an important factor to the realization of the Stockholm conference. Alarming reports revealed substantial environmental degradation caused in the industrialized world. Theories assuming that environmental degradation quickly would be extended to the third world became accepted, the third world was expected to be quickly industrialized. This combination resulted in assumptions of a substantial threat to the global environment.

US theorists with a considerable support claimed that the dooms day was close in time and that the only solution was to enforce a massive control and regulation of the third world population and industrialization, hindering a “population bomb”. This control was to be held by US and West Europe.

The Swedish UN ambassador was convinced that something was fundamentally wrong in the western civilization and expected a major global threat from a similar development in third world countries. This resulted in a conviction held by the Swedish UN ambassador an initiator of the Stockholm conference; “the negative effects of civilization should not be allowed to be maintained by the developing countries”. The Swedish government announced a “third way” with a considerable state or public control of both economy and technology. The Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme acknowledged inequality (global and domestic), arms race and armed conflicts as parts of environmental problem. The speech of Olof Palme in the official conference was constructed in a specific way that could result in a re-take of the initiative from opposing groups and to nurture comfort in the representatives of the UN and the Swedish government. Possibly this construction of a speech can be understood as motivated by a will to retake the initiative from opposing groups.
As we have discussed under the heading *Handling of conflicts*, we can understand the creation of the Environmental Forum as a UN and Swedish governmental attempts to re-take the initiative and distort attention from the highly critical parallel Peoples Forum and other activities that were independent of intergovernmental or governmental approval. Perhaps the Swedish governments founding of a parallel forum (Environmental Forum) was based in a specific logic congruent with the one that structured the conflict between the workers movement and the bourgeoisie, in Sweden. A logic where governments chose to dislocate or shift a specific conflict, from a situation where the state was seen as responsible, towards a situation where the state or UN functions as mediators in a competition between social movements on one side and the financial community with its NGOs on the other. This is to be achieved through inviting selected counterparts to considerable and direct influence in the governance. This combination can be regarded as a step towards corporativism, where the meaning of corporativism partly lies in the interest organizations voluntary or negotiation regulated cooperation and the influence and the role they are given as an instrument of public policy. On the one hand; If this approach continues to be a way of handling emanating conflicts this would be an effective way of preventing violent conflicts through mediation, as long as the evolving elites includes the major parts in new conflicts. On the other hand; given that we want to enhance the democratic influence we ought to consider societal transparency. Melucci proposes that we should make power more visible and therefore more negotiable. In these aspects independent social movements has a key role.

The engagement from elite’s in the human environment can logically be understood as a necessity to keep dominance. On one hand we can regard the conference as a result of public experiences of societal dysfunction’s and public demands forcing governments to find possibilities to recapture the initiative, on the other hand individuals in the elite seems to have been influenced by the presentation of environmental reports leading to a genuine environmental engagement from parts of the elites.

The book *Only one Earth* and *The Bruntland report* were constructed to be acceptable by governments and dominant institutions. Both these publications assume that what is to be done must be achieved within the contemporary structures of power. In this way environmental problems appear as something to be regulated within the system that is well functioning and not incompatible with a society that is environmentally sustainable.

**Environmental conflicts and strategies**

A theme that was highly divisive was the war in Vietnam. This issue seems to have been central for dominant groups in US and it seems as it was important for US activities during the Stockholm conference. It was a central question for many social movements and other NGOs as for many third world delegates. The warfare in Vietnam was also a source to an exceptional conflict between the US- and Swedish government. Other dominating conflicts were the choice of economic models and the cold war, that resulted in the nonparticipating of Soviet Union countries.

Basic sources of conflict were the issues how to limit environmental problems and what the basic causes of environmental problems consisted of. Specific European and North American concerns and interests had a special influence initiating and organizing the conference, while third world countries their perspectives, concerns and interests appears to have been of subordinated signification. During the preparations for the Stockholm Conference the extent of north-south polarization got revealed. The third world criticized
the North American concept of a population bomb as not reflecting the real problems as the unequal distribution of resources and accused industrialized countries for using environmental arguments to keep developing countries subordinate. Third world representatives also noted that it was the rich world’s consumption of natural resources that resulted in global environmental degradation and that it is deeply unfair to blame poor countries for problems caused by the rich world. This critic was also a major theme of many social movements during the Stockholm conference.

In the Bruntland report there are two basic strategies to handle environmental problems. One is to define “maximum sustainable yield”. But as Kuhn has pointed out “There is no way to reconstruct phrases as “really exists” as do not depend on a theory”. When it comes to the idea of defining limits for maximum sustainable yield we ought to be aware that there are no such definite limits. The only defining of limits we can produce is based on our perception of the environment and our acceptance for environmental change; this is to a high degree a question of social relations. To refine methods of measurement does not mean that we are close to the truth. It rather signals that we work within a paradigmatic tradition, ignoring or being unaware of anomalies. The second strategy is to promote specific values through spreading of selected information, knowledge or moralizing. That is to manipulate the profound structure of the personality. What this report could not deliver was discussions of how contemporary power relations effect the human environment or discussions concerned with alternatives to centralized authorities. Deliverance of anomalies and challenges to dominating paradigm can hardly be expected from those constituting dominating groups, this can be delivered by social movements, public networks and relatively independent researchers.

We have been taken part of descriptions explaining that the will of many social movements and nongovernmental networks to reshape the society got halted. Researchers as Humle and Edwards have described that many NGOs have got closer to donors and governments. NGOs has kept or strengthened their influence but perhaps as a partly new discourse framing elite rather then as creators of alternatives. But not all NGOs ceased to deliver alternatives. Third world and western networks and social movements, today, deliver alternative conceptions and challenges to the paradigmatic tradition.

Opportunities to Act
Perhaps we can view Rachel Carlson’s report Silent Spring, Hans Palmstierna, Barry Commoner as describing anomalies to a time bound rationality creating challenging paradigms. It did not come to a paradigmatic change, former rationalities got modernized but the basics of the former understanding did not alter. The ruling elites in the 1970s have kept their positions, as dominating actors in the shaping of frames of understanding. Perhaps we can view the concept of sustainability as contributing to a modernization of the old paradigmatic tradition. But the concept of sustainability can in time be expected to appear as time bound and not a final understanding and not even the most rational approach in its time, but as a result of social relations, social statues and the temporary distribution of power, that is the power of discourse framing.

As we have discussed under the heading Changing power relations and globalization we can note a shift in the financial community’s methods to achieve influence from working in the silent or in the hidden striving to affect UN officials and domestic governments.

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According to Jon Pierre, Björk, and Fjellander an addition in methods has emerged; using NGOs to affect the public opinion advertising specific discourses and producing material with selected knowledge. This can be understood as; the financial community in the North has made their perception of the world more spread and accepted making it more convenient for them to act more openly. Fjellander argues that corporations have achieved a substantial influence that earlier was located to ministries. NGOs may have expanded in size and scope strengthening their interests, but this does not mean that the influence of NGOs as advocates of a broader audience has increased. This is logically not the case if NGOs has lost contact with a broader audience and got closer to donors and governments, which Humle and Edward, Björk, Janse and Fjellander has described. Jonas Anshelm, Johan Hedrén and Manuel Castells described social movements that have been liquidated or has ceased to deliver alternative conceptions.

An elaboration with alternative discourses with the aim of creating more relevant or alternative conceptions of the world, welding dispersed wills and heterogeneous aims to a perhaps temporally but single aim, is a way to challenge the contemporary “hegemony” or dominating discourse. This can serve as a description of what a social movement as such basically can achieve, regarding societal influence and major change.

Official institutions are completely dependent of legitimacy and trust from the public. To have the initiative, creating specific frames of understanding, selected concepts and a specific perception of the world is central and a necessity for domination. In a situation where contesting paradigmatic understandings were arising and the paradigmatic understanding of the establishment were loosing terrain, it became necessary for dominant groups to get closer to the public, to achieve control of opposing groups through a combination of co-optation and destabilization.

**Consequences of a specific rationality**

When giving a centralized institution increasing influence this implies a reduction in influence somewhere else. If the interests that withhold the degradation of the human environment are the ones that see a reduction of influence, this can lead to appreciation of the human environment. But if the poor and disempowered are the ones that mainly lose influence, there might be a problem of inducements of the protection of those effected by environmental problems. If we assume that the poor and disempowered is those who mainly get hit by environmental degradation. Then this might be a question of importance. Another approach can be to empower those who get effected by environmental degradation. Perhaps the picture, presented in the report, *Only One Earth* serves specific, perhaps western, interests, through the association with the usually hierarchic and non-democratic power relations onboard a ship and the appraisal of loyalty. “Today, in human society, we can perhaps hope to survive in all our prized diversity provided we can achieve an ultimate loyalty to our single, beautiful, and vulnerable planet Earth. Alone in space…”

Perhaps societal transparency demands subjects that are creating opposing discourses and undermine the legitimacy of dominating groups. These subjects may find it necessary to constitute social movements or networks in order to reach out to the public.

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221 Ward (1972) p. 220
Reflections

It can be of value to consider the interrelations between intergovernmental discourse framing and activist influence in a wider sense, to climb the ladder of theoretical abstraction. This can be of vital interest when focusing on how specific phenomena alter discourses. To study dominating conceptions can be both controversial and inflict difficulties when discussing dominating conceptions of contemporary society, with the ambition of making time and geographically specific assumptions perceptible. This can be, partly because we seem to have a disposition to regard local contemporary conceptions as true, or even final, this even though we in the light of history never have been able to produce much more than assumptions bound by time and place. Perhaps if we climb the ladder of theoretical abstractions, investigate our conceptions as temporary products of history, we can avoid some risks attached with an all too dominant paradigm or confessions to a paradigm; blindness for inherent structural problems, suppression of divergent individuals and alternative paradigms as intolerance and despise for other cultures.
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