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Greenpeace Australia, 1988-1990: the restructuring of an information services organisation

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University of Wollongong

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GREENPEACE AUSTRALIA: 1988-1990

The restructuring of an information services organisation

A thesis submitted in
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS (HONOURS)

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Andrew Grahame Brownlow, B.A., B.Ed., Armidale

Department of
Science and Technology Studies
1990
Since 1987 the Greenpeace operation in Australia has evolved from a financially bankrupt and relatively obscure organisation into one of the most prominent pressure groups affiliated with the mainstream environmental movement. An analysis of this transition must acknowledge the unique service that Greenpeace provides and the dynamics involved in the organisation's three year program of acute restructuring. Greenpeace can be perceived as an 'information services organisation' that has implemented initiatives designed to secure greater control over the acquisition, organisation and dissemination of information about both environmental issues and financial supporters. To facilitate this process Greenpeace has demonstrated a willingness to invest in computer and telecommunication technologies. The shaping and impact of a technological infrastructure have been influenced by Greenpeace's information needs as a pressure group, company and actor within a social movement.
DECLARATION

This work has not been submitted for a degree at any other university or institution.

Andrew Grahame Brownlow
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A special thankyou to Mark Rix for his direction and proof reading and Sally for her practical advice and encouragement.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Pam Scott and Dr Brian Martin for their patience and feedback.
"If we do pass successfully through this era of ecological crisis, to paraphrase Thomas Hardy, we most certainly will owe our success in practice to our inconsistencies in principle."

Andrea Carothers
Greenpeace International
July 1989
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1987 the Greenpeace operation in Australia has undergone a radical transformation. It has evolved from a financially bankrupt and relatively obscure organisation, into one of the most prominent pressure groups associated with the Australian mainstream environmental movement. As a not-for-profit organisation that is totally dependent on public support, Greenpeace has pursued innovative marketing strategies to become the dominant supplier in a revitalised social movement industry. Through attention to product differentiation, Greenpeace has now secured a distinct market niche and provides a service that caters for the demands of an increasing number of environmentally concerned individuals.

As a pressure group advocating environmental reform and social change, Greenpeace challenges pervasive social, political and economic forces. Firmly entrenched features of industrialised society hinder Greenpeace efforts to protect the ecosystem. An adherence to the virtues of the free market, a cultural perception of progress that presupposes humanity's domination over nature, and a demonstrated reluctance by governments to implement adequate policy and regulatory mechanisms are some of the more visible obstacles.

A more subtle, yet equally effective constraint that hinders social change is the political economy of information. Sceptics of the much heralded 'information society', such as Touraine, Mosco, Winner, Danziger and Wessel, suggest that the centralised control of information can be used to dissipate public concern and hence accommodate social
problems. Alternatively, as Roszak claims, 'infoglut' can disguise political priorities, induce apathy and therefore constitutes an effective form of social control.

What computer enthusiasts overlook is the fact that data glut is not some unforeseen, accidental fluctuation of supply, like a bumper crop of wheat. It is a strategy of social control, deliberately and often expertly wielded.

To empower individuals, exercise political influence and generate operating revenue, given these structures of constraint, Greenpeace has assumed the role of an information services organisation. By focusing on the priorities of the restructuring program that began in early 1988, and understanding what service Greenpeace provides, it is possible to trace a pattern of investment that confirms the view that information is a vital strategic resource for the organisation. The success of the Greenpeace operation can be linked to initiatives that have concentrated on the development of techniques to effectively acquire, organise and disseminate critical environmental information.

This thesis will identify Greenpeace's various information needs. It will explain how these needs have been shaped by both the structure of the organisation and the Greenpeace style of environmental activism. Based on Winner's suggestion that information is a 'perishable commodity', it will be shown which factors combine to determine the value of different types of information and the problems that Greenpeace has experienced in seeking to organise this resource. After analysing how Greenpeace has responded to its diverse information needs it will be argued that the organisation obtains political power and public support through an ability to process information in a manner that maximises its value. Accordingly, Greenpeace activity since 1988 can be

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interpreted as an attempt to secure greater control over the production and distribution of environmental information.

The second part of this thesis will focus on the specific techniques Greenpeace uses to acquire, organise and disseminate information. While a range of options are utilised, sophisticated computer and telecommunication technologies have played an important role. Although there have been very few studies about the way in which political interest groups adopt information technology, Haight and Rubinyi suggest that there are central issues which any such study should consider. These include the capacity of relatively resource-poor interest groups to invest in expensive technology; whether the information technology marketplace is adequately satisfying the needs of interest groups or is just designing products for the more affluent users; a possible aversion to use a technology which has military origins; and finally, the efficacy of this technology in helping the interest groups achieve their goals.

The development of a technological infrastructure has enabled Greenpeace to satisfy its corporate responsibilities. It has also provided an efficient and highly flexible fundraising tool as well as integrated the Australian operation more comprehensively into the international Greenpeace network. In this context, prudent investment and cautious experimentation in information technology have been beneficial. However, contrary to the claims of 'computopians' like Toffler and Naisbitt, this technology has not provided Greenpeace with unlimited access to information or new opportunities to participate in government decision-making processes.

Greenpeace activities since 1988 reflect an awareness of the value in managing information as a strategic resource. An enhanced public profile, a phenomenal growth in

support and an ability to demand accountability from government and industry are direct consequences of having recognised the value of this resource.

1.2 THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter two analyses the financial support of, and investment in, not-for-profit organisations as a dominant feature of popular environmental concern. It is argued that this phenomenon is more accurately interpreted as a social and political construction, rather than a transitory condition contingent on favourable economic circumstances. Further, it is suggested that this expression of concern has created a market demand whereby organisations affiliated with the environmental movement behave as suppliers of a service, participating in a social movement industry.

Chapter three examines the genesis and organisational structure of Greenpeace, a dominant actor in this industry. It traces the development of Greenpeace from an idea, to the formation and management of a multi-national corporation nurturing an active international network of operations. The second section of this chapter concentrates specifically on the Greenpeace presence in Australia. In particular, it considers the pressures, strategies and assistance that account for the radical transformation of this organisation between 1988 and 1990. This chapter concludes with an assessment of the criticism that Greenpeace has drawn as a result of the organisation's acute restructuring over this three year period.

Chapter four describes the service that Greenpeace provides and introduces the concept of an information services organisation. As a vehicle for empowerment, Greenpeace disseminates information that enables individuals to accept personal responsibility to protect the environment. Greenpeace also acts as a pressure group that demands accountability from industry and attempts to influence government decision makers in
elite forums. This chapter identifies those techniques that Greenpeace has utilised in order to access political power and secure input into the policy making process. Options which other organisations have pursued, yet Greenpeace has chosen to avoid, are also discussed.

Chapter five concentrates on the Greenpeace reputation for staging flamboyant direct actions. It seeks to offer an explanation as to how and why this particular style of political activism is used as a tactical option within broader campaign strategies. It is argued that as a mechanism to apply pressure, demand accountability and enhance public awareness, direct action is successful because it enables campaigners to maximise the political value and use of information. Analysing the role of direct action in the Clean Waters Campaign illustrates this point. This chapter also considers the dual role of direct action in terms of its value as a form of corporate advertising that complements Greenpeace fundraising programs and recruitment drives. Chapter five concludes with an assessment of the skills, costs and risks associated with the use of direct action. In particular, it evaluates the importance of maintaining a constructive working relationship with the mass media and the increased vulnerability which has accompanied Greenpeace's enhanced public profile.

The second part of this thesis analyses the techniques that Greenpeace has developed to acquire, organise and disseminate information. It traces the emergence of a technological infrastructure and discusses the role played by computer and telecommunication technologies in helping Greenpeace to fulfil its diverse information needs. Chapter six focuses on the different methods and sources that campaigners utilise in order to acquire information. These include personal networks, original research, members of the public, employees and the Freedom of Information Act. It is also shown how an electronic mail service has provided campaigners with greater access to the organisation's global information network. However, in terms of accessing information from sources outside
this network (such as government agencies), it is argued that information technologies have played an insignificant role.

Chapter seven discusses the changes within Greenpeace's administration in relation to the management of its human and financial resources. This chapter depicts Greenpeace as a company with clearly defined statutory obligations and fiscal responsibilities. The application of information technologies can be interpreted as an effort to satisfy these corporate requirements. Although a strictly deterministic explanation is inadequate, it is suggested that this process was probably inevitable given the growth that Greenpeace has experienced and the abundance of high quality computer software that is designed specifically for companies to organise information.

Chapter eight examines what is without doubt the most innovative application of computer and telecommunications technology within Greenpeace. This chapter traces the origins and development of the direct mail facility which is based in Adelaide. This includes the problems that Greenpeace has experienced and the reasons why this investment has been so successful. It is argued that this facility has had a major impact on the organisation through providing a technique to target a large, yet select audience for fundraising purposes. As a social movement organisation that is totally dependent on public support, direct mail has evolved into an integral component of the Greenpeace operation.
2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

An understanding of the political and social environment provides a historical context to analyse the distinguishing features of a social movement. This chapter identifies individual investment with not-for-profit environmental organisations as a form of political expression and a clearly visible social phenomenon. These organisations are both actors within the environmental movement and participants in a social movement industry.

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL DEMAND

In the late 1960s social scientists searched for an explanation to account for the wave of popular environmental concern that had swept through industrialised nations during that decade. One of the more favoured theories presupposed that environmental concern was like any other social problem that competed to remain on the political agenda. Chapman argued that support for the environmental movement was dependent on external economic circumstances.6 As immediate needs like food and shelter were satisfied in the period of economic growth and affluence following the Second World War, individuals in industrialised nations like the United States, Britain and Australia could afford to worry about environmental degradation. The decline in popular support in the early 1970s coincided with an end to this boom period and added credence to this idea. Consequently, the rise and decline of environmental concern within industrialised nations was explained in terms of external economic conditions.

However, there is reason to question this proposition given the growth of popular environmental concern since the late 1980s. In Australia this period has been

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6 Chapman, J. 'Interactions between man and his resources', National Academy of Sciences, (eds), Resources and man: a study and recommendations, San Francisco, 1969, pp.31-42.
characterised by escalating interest rates and increased structural unemployment. The living standards of an increasing number of middle class Australians have declined, as has their capacity to satisfy immediate needs. According to an explanation in terms of economic circumstances, and given that Fuentes and Gunder Frank's study of the composition of social movements confirms that support comes predominantly from the middle class, these conditions are not conducive to a growth in environmental concern.7

Fears that the strength of the environmental movement would be threatened by deteriorating economic conditions were voiced back in 1987. Peter Christoff, Assistant to the Victorian Commissioner for the Environment, warned,

For the past three decades, environmental activism has been buoyed by a climate of economic optimism... Now, the chill winds of economic austerity and political conservatism threaten to erode the reserves of sympathy upon which the environment movement has operated.8

Yet rather than diminish, support for the environmental movement in Australia has increased dramatically since 1987. Given the economic climate in which this has occurred it is contentious to assume that this recent phenomenon is just a transitory spasm of middle class guilt. There is a more plausible explanation that accounts for this development. Popular environmental concern is a social and political construct.

Sandbach has suggested that environmental concern in the 1960s was principally a social response to the developments of the preceding decade. Concern emanated from an awareness of the risks involved with the intense program of nuclear weapons testing during the height of the Cold War in the late 1950s. This concern was then fuelled by the work of charismatic individuals like Barry Commoner, Rachel Carson and Paul Ehrlich

who sketched horrific scenarios of environmental degradation.\textsuperscript{9} The technological idolatry which had engulfed industrialised nations began to dissipate as individuals were informed of the adverse impact of industrial activity on the environment. For many, according to Sandbach, this information and awareness provoked a response.

The importance of the disturbing revelations of the late 1960s was not only that they suddenly uncovered a mass of hitherto unsuspected environmental problems but also that they created a sense of insecurity: alarmism and predictions of catastrophe inevitably aroused fear.\textsuperscript{10}

In the 1980s similar fears have been invoked. The consequences of environmentally hostile production processes and a general disregard for the fragility and value of the ecosystem are becoming more obvious. Environmental degradation has been transformed from a regional issue to a matter of global concern. Confirmation of damage to the protective ozone layer and the prospects of an induced climatic change once again expose humanity's vulnerability.

In the 1960s these fears were partially allayed through the intervention of the state. New legislation, government bureaucracies and policy were sold to concerned individuals anxiously waiting to be reassured that their political institutions would assume responsibility to protect the environment. The accelerated deterioration of the environment over the last twenty years now confirms that these responses have been largely ineffective. Longer discharge pipes and higher smokestacks merely disguised the problems. The bureaucracies have had ambiguous roles and been poorly resourced.\textsuperscript{11} The legislation has been inadequate and used only sparingly.\textsuperscript{12}


\textsuperscript{11} Bailey, P. 'Nil pollution unrealistic', \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 14th April 1990, p.9.

\textsuperscript{12} Solomon, D. 'Words say so little and mean so much', \textit{The Australian}, 17th December 1989, p.13.
2.2 SOCIAL MOVEMENT INDUSTRY

A dominant feature of environmental concern since the late 1980s is an awareness of the need to invest meaningfully in the future. An increasing number of individuals, conscious of the pitfalls of expecting governments to respond adequately to the current environmental crisis, have chosen to affiliate themselves with the environmental movement. As Fuentes and Gunder Frank suggest,

More and more people feel increasingly powerless themselves, and see that their hallowed political, social and cultural institutions are less and less able to protect and support them. Therefore, ... they seek renewed or greater empowerment through social movements.13

An increasingly popular option for seeking empowerment is to invest money with not-for-profit environmental organisations. In March 1990 approximately 200,000 Australians maintained a financial affiliation with various environmental organisations. This figure represented approximately 1% of the population. At this time, Austin reported that current predictions by these organisations anticipated, that by the turn of the century, this figure could be as high as 15%.14 It would appear that environmental concern and insecurity about the future have created a market demand.

To satisfy this demand a plethora of not-for-profit environmental organisations offer a diverse range of services to the concerned individual. Because some of these operate at a purely local level and are very small in size (both in terms of supporters and operating funds) it is difficult to establish exactly how many of these organisations exist. In October 1989 it was estimated that in NSW alone there were between 400 and 450. On a national basis it has been suggested that there are as many as 2,500 different organisations.15

13 Fuentes, Gunder Frank, op.cit.,p.183.
McCarthy and Zald claim that social movement organisations function within a broader social movement industry. In this free enterprise market analogy, not-for-profit environmental organisations, like commercial companies, compete for a market share through product differentiation. These organisations, or suppliers, can be likened to 'issue entrepreneurs' that mobilise limited resources to define, create, sustain and manipulate public discontent.

In terms of this conceptualisation, the environmental market in Australia is most accurately described as an oligopoly. In March 1990 four principal suppliers dominated over 50% of the total market share. These organisations were The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), The Wilderness Society (TWS), the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and Greenpeace. Of these Greenpeace had 42,000 financial supporters; the WWF 27,000 supporters; the ACF 20,000 supporters and TWS 13,000 supporters. The respective market shares (expressed as a percentage of the total market) of each of these four organisations is shown in the graph below.

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17 Austin, op.cit.,p.7.
Each of these organisations offers a unique service and has developed a distinct market reputation. The WWF is best known for its efforts to protect endangered species and a willingness to accept corporate support from companies like Elders IXL, CRA and Western Mining Corporation. TWS and the ACF are considered the 'peak groups' of the mainstream Australian environmental movement and have cultivated a structured dialogue with the federal government. The largest of these, Greenpeace, is noted for its confrontational style of environmental activism and in particular its use of flamboyant direct action.18

The remainder of this thesis will concentrate specifically on the Greenpeace organisation. McCarthy and Zald's market analogy provides a framework for the analysis of the dynamics that account for Greenpeace's current status as one of the dominant actors in a revitalised social movement industry. Although the focus of this thesis is restricted to the Greenpeace presence within Australia since 1987, it is important to understand both the history and structure of this international organisation. Chapter two examines these factors to establish the historical and structural context for interpreting the radical transformation of the Greenpeace operation in Australia over this three year period.

3 GREENPEACE: THE ORGANISATION

This chapter traces the history of the Greenpeace organisation. It shows how Greenpeace first appeared as an idea and evolved into a multi-national corporation. The organisational structure of the corporation and the management of the international network of 'franchise' operations are discussed. This outline provides a basis to explain how the Greenpeace presence in Australia is integrated within the international network. An understanding of the obligations a national organisation has to the parent company Greenpeace International is especially significant given the performance of Greenpeace Australia prior to 1988.

The second section of this chapter concentrates on the restructuring of Greenpeace Australia since 1988. It considers the pressures, strategies and assistance that account for the radical transformation of the national organisation. It is suggested that the recruitment of expertise, innovative marketing initiatives and the support and patience of the parent company were crucial factors. Given that this period of acute restructuring has been a sensitive and difficult process, chapter two concludes with a discussion of some criticism that Greenpeace has received. This includes accusations of autocratic management, the parent company flexing its corporate muscle, and the claim that Greenpeace is an undemocratic organisation.
3.1 GENESIS

On 1st October 1968 seven thousand protesters blocked the Douglas border crossing that links western Canada with the United States. The aim of this protest was to draw attention to the underground nuclear weapons testing program at Amchitka Island, Alaska. Despite this vigil, the United State's government detonated a one megaton nuclear explosion two days later. Frustrated by the failure to focus media attention on this testing program, and determined to prevent it from continuing, three Canadians (Jim Bohlen, Irving Stowe and Paul Cote) formed a local action group called the Don't Make a Wave Committee. Their ambition was to inform the public of the potential dangers of this program by protesting in a fashion that the media would not ignore. To achieve this goal the Committee decided to sail a vessel to the actual testing zone.\textsuperscript{19}

In September 1971, a crew of ten, including three journalists and a photographer, sailed from Vancouver Harbour on a chartered vessel bearing the name Greenpeace. They managed to get within five days sailing of the test zone before the American coastguard arrested the crew for going ashore at Akutan Bay without first reporting to customs. On returning to Vancouver the crew were welcomed by thousands of supporters who had been following their exploits in the media. Encouraged by this show of public support, a second attempt was launched soon after. It failed to reach the testing zone before the United States government detonated a second nuclear weapon.

Although neither mission was successful in reaching the test zone, both attempts attracted considerable coverage by the American media. This attention generated widespread public interest and concern about the testing program. The issue evolved into

a sensitive political problem, and in early 1972 the United States government officially abandoned the testing ground at Amchitka Island 'for political and other reasons.'

Later that year fellow Canadian David McTaggart, with financial support from the Don't Make a Wave Committee, sailed to Moruroa Atoll to protest against the French government's nuclear testing program in the Pacific. Although McTaggart and his crew of three managed the 3,500 mile journey from New Zealand, the French sabotaged his efforts to report what he witnessed. The French navy jammed McTaggart's radio transmissions, preventing him from communicating with the closest media outlet, Radio Australia. Then, in violation of international navigation laws, a French minesweeper rammed his vessel causing extensive structural damage. When McTaggart returned to Moruroa a second time in 1973, French navy personnel boarded his vessel and physically assaulted him. On returning to Canada McTaggart decided to sue the French government for damages and instigate proceedings to challenge the legality of its testing program.

After discussions between McTaggart and Bohlen it was decided that the Don't Make a Wave Committee would not get involved with the ensuing court case. In an agreement between these two individuals, McTaggart was given the right to use the Greenpeace name. In September 1973 he opened a bank account in Vancouver under this name: Greenpeace the idea became an organisation.

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20 ibid., p.167.
3.2 INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

Since its official inception in 1973 Greenpeace has evolved from a single issue campaigner into an international organisation with a broad mandate to protect the ecosystem. In addition to opposing the civil and military use of nuclear technology, Greenpeace has developed campaigns to tackle atmospheric pollution, the production and disposal of toxic wastes, land degradation, the extinction of species and the preservation of environmentally fragile regions like the Antarctic.

Greenpeace is currently the world's largest not-for-profit environmental organisation. It is a multi-national corporation and in 1989 generated a gross operating revenue of $100 million. The sole source of this revenue is its four million supporters spread through thirty different countries.

Greenpeace exposes environmental atrocities and reveals the negligence or culpability of the parties responsible. In adopting the role of global custodian Greenpeace eschews the concept of national sovereignty and has demonstrated a willingness to vehemently criticise, embarrass and influence governments of nation states. It has also acquired a reputation for targeting large and powerful multi-national corporations such as ICI, Shell, Dow Chemicals, Monsanto and Caltex.21

To maintain a global perspective Greenpeace has developed a structure designed to cultivate an active international network of operations. Geographically isolated Greenpeace activities are linked together and co-ordinated through membership and adherence to the rules of the Stitching Greenpeace Council. In October each year national representatives from those countries with an established Greenpeace presence convene for six days to discuss strategies and negotiate major policy directions for the

organisation. This forum provides the opportunity to implement and emphasise initiatives that promote a balanced global perspective.

At the centre of this network is the multi-national corporation Greenpeace International Limited (GPI). While the analogy is not precisely accurate, the Greenpeace organisation operates in a fashion very similar to that of a commercial franchise arrangement. There is consistency in the Greenpeace product and the parent company encourages the establishment of Greenpeace operations in countries all around the world.

Obtaining the right to function under the Greenpeace trademark entails conformity. All national operations are required to share a common commitment to concentrate on select environmental issues. While the parent company recognises that regional circumstances may influence a particular emphasis, all national operations are obligated to acknowledge their role as part of an international organisation with a common mandate.

National operations are also expected to allocate an annual pledge to the parent company. The optimum amount is set at 24% of gross operating revenue. This money is used to finance an international working fund and build a communal resource pool of sophisticated campaigning hardware and research facilities, including the only non-governmental scientific laboratory in the Antarctic. The national operations are integrated into a global information network that provides instantaneous access to the expertise and skill of all Greenpeace campaigners around the world. The international working fund also enables Greenpeace to finance campaigns in third world and Eastern bloc countries where the capacity to raise sufficient funds is limited. There is an expectation that Greenpeace operations in the more affluent industrialised nations should willingly subsidise these efforts.
3.3 GREENPEACE AUSTRALIA LIMITED

Greenpeace first established an Australian presence in 1978. An office was opened in Sydney and staffed by several full-time campaigners. These positions were financed by the parent organisation, Greenpeace International. Two years later, in 1980, volunteers opened an office in Adelaide. In these early years both operations functioned as virtually separate entities and there was little formal co-ordination of efforts between the two. This arrangement changed in 1983 when Greenpeace Australia Limited (GPA) was formed and the Adelaide office was absorbed into this single national Greenpeace organisation.

The company, Greenpeace Australia Limited, became the legal entity around which the national organisation was structured. As required by law, it is registered under the New South Wales Companies Code, and its corporate behaviour is regulated by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. Although this company exists as a separate entity, it remains part of the international Greenpeace organisation. Former Chairperson of the Australian Board of Directors, Gerard Craddock, has suggested that the primary rationale behind creating Greenpeace Australia Limited was that of credibility.

Its value is that it lends a degree of legitimacy to the organisation in its dealings with the world of government and commerce. It has no other value apart from this cloak of respectability. It is only permitted to exist by the international organisation because it is convenient. If the international organisation had to cope with the myriad of individual tax, corporate and political requirements in each nation in which it wished to operate, it would spend all the money that it holds in trust for its supporters on lawyers, commissions and other government bodies.22

From 1984 to 1987 Greenpeace Australia experienced a gradual growth in its support base and membership grew to approximately 3,000 national members. However, despite this growth in support and the new corporate structure, Greenpeace Australia continued to lack co-ordinated management of its activities. As a consequence the Australian

22 Craddock, G. Letter to the Australian Board of Directors, 1st May 1990.
operation was dependent on financial support from Greenpeace International and suffered from a very low public profile in the Australian environmental movement.

By 1987 Greenpeace Australia Limited was on the brink of bankruptcy and in danger of collapsing. The threat that this posed to the organisation was revealed publicly in the 1988 Annual Report. Gerard Craddock, Chairperson of the Australian Board of Directors, confirmed that,

Greenpeace in the previous year experienced very lean times which threatened the very existence of Greenpeace in Australia.23

In early 1988 the Australian Board of Directors acknowledged the need for a comprehensive restructuring of the Greenpeace organisation. Three factors prompted this decision. First, as a company registered under the New South Wales Companies Code, Greenpeace had clearly defined corporate responsibilities. Although Greenpeace Australia Limited was a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, and did not issue share capital, it nevertheless accrued financial obligations to a range of creditors. If Greenpeace was to continue to depend on the services and products of other organisations then it was vital that the company address its deteriorating financial status.

Second, Greenpeace Australia was not fulfilling its obligations to the international Greenpeace network of operations. It was not pledging enough to the international working fund. While the preferred amount, as determined by the Stitching Council, was set at 24% of gross operating revenue, the Australian 'franchise' only managed less than 4% in 1987. Greenpeace International was heavily subsidising the Australian operation. In the same year 23% of GPA's gross revenue came from international grants.

This situation was only tolerated because Greenpeace International desperately wanted to establish a strong Greenpeace presence in the South Pacific region. For this reason it had continued to provide financial assistance to the Australian operation since its inception in 1978. However, the patience of the parent organisation was being pushed to the limit. Not only was Greenpeace remaining a low profile organisation in Australia, it was also failing to efficiently manage the financial assistance that was provided. In particular, internationally funded positions, which GPA had responsibility to administer and act as trustee for, were poorly controlled and regularly ran over budget.

Of equal concern to the Australian Board and parent company at this time was the development of a 'Euro-centric' tilt to the international Greenpeace network. This was a consequence of the success of Greenpeace activities in Europe and the languishing of Greenpeace efforts elsewhere in the world. To ensure a balanced global perspective it was considered imperative that Greenpeace in Australia adopt a more vocal role in the Stitching Greenpeace Council. GPA's right to do this, however, was threatened by its failure to contribute sufficiently to the international working fund and its continued dependence on financial assistance. In corporate terms, the international organisation was not securing a return on its investment. Subsequently, the question of whether Australia deserved to retain its voting rights on the Stitching Council was raised.  

The final consideration which prompted an organisational review was the changing environment in which Greenpeace Australia operated. In late 1987 the current wave of popular environmental concern began to gain momentum within Australia. These changing circumstances provided an ideal opportunity for Greenpeace to capitalise on this concern.

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24 McAllister, S. Memorandum to Voting Members, 23rd May 1990, p.3.
3.4 RESTRUCTURING

Since 1987 Greenpeace has become a far more dominant actor in the Australian environmental movement. From 1988 to 1990 it experienced phenomenal growth and acquired a high public profile. With the current support of over 54,000 financial members (June 1990) Greenpeace is presently the largest environmental organisation operating in Australia. A new national head office is located in Sydney with branch offices in Adelaide, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, Canberra and Brisbane. Unlike the situation in 1987, Greenpeace has now secured a healthy financial base for campaigning. In 1989 its gross operating revenue was in excess of $2.3 million, five times the amount in 1987.25

Greenpeace Australia has also begun to fulfil its obligation to the international network. Internationally funded positions are managed more efficiently and in 1989 GPA pledged $200,000 to the international working fund, fifteen times the amount given in 1987. This success has resulted from a comprehensive review of the Greenpeace operation in Australia. A wide range of reforms and innovative programs have radically transformed the way in which Greenpeace markets its service.

The first stage of the restructuring began in early 1988. Attention focused on creating a sound administrative base for Greenpeace operations. The Australian Board appointed H.P. Singh to the position of Company Secretary/Administrative Director. Singh was assigned the task to tidy-up and tighten the administrative arm of the organisation. Singh quickly made an impact on the organisation. Less than twelve months later Gerard Craddock, Chairperson of the Australian Board of Directors, reported that Singh,

...has almost single-handedly taken control of an administration in danger of imminent collapse and transformed it into a most healthy and reliable base for GPA operations.26

Other major initiatives in 1988 were the decisions to enhance Greenpeace's profile in Australia and concentrate on the internal development of the organisation. With financial support from Greenpeace International, the new position of Development Director was created. Cheryl McEgan, who was appointed to this position, assumed responsibility for fundraising and increasing public awareness of the Greenpeace mandate for environmental reform. To help achieve this goal Greenpeace contracted the services of W. Osborne and Partners, a professional fundraising consultancy firm. A publicity program was instigated and Greenpeace began to advertise on radio, television and in the print media.

A donor survey had been conducted at the end of 1987 and the majority of Greenpeace supporters were found to be professional females aged between 22 and 45. Consequently, McEgan concentrated on broadening the diversity of this support base. As she reported in the 1988 Annual Report,

The aim of the program was to greatly increase the number of Australians who were familiar with Greenpeace, who understood the importance of our work, and who were prepared to join us through a demonstration of support in a variety of ways.27

In the same year Greenpeace also launched a new canvassing operation. This technique of environmental outreach involved using representatives of the organisation to establish personal contact with members of the public. Canvassers were dispatched into the suburbs of Sydney and Adelaide where they 'door-knocked' to inform the public of Greenpeace activities and attract new supporters.

26 Craddock, Chairperson's Report, op.cit., p.2.
These initiatives proved to be highly successful in terms of fundraising and increasing public awareness of the service that Greenpeace offered. In the space of twelve months national membership grew from 7,000 to approximately 18,000 members. Although other environmental organisations in Australia also experienced growth in this same period, none equalled that which was achieved by Greenpeace. Further, this growth in membership has been sustained, and in June 1990 Greenpeace had attracted a financial membership of 54,000.

In her report as Development Director McEgan attributed this unprecedented growth in support to a priority that was inherent to all aspects of the new development program,

...at the heart of them all lies the need to communicate and maintain very real links between our organisation and the people who support us.\(^{28}\)

Allocating sufficient resources to this activity was something Greenpeace had failed to do adequately prior to 1988. The significance of this period in the history of Greenpeace Australia is that, as an environmental organisation, it discovered the value of

\(^{28}\) loc.cit.
aggressively marketing its service. In the space of twelve months Greenpeace had taken a major step towards solving its financial dilemma.

An expanding supporter base facilitated a shift towards financial autonomy which reduced the dependence on support from Greenpeace International. Grants received from the parent company dropped from 23% of gross operating revenue in 1987 to 10% in 1988. Similarly its pledge to the international working fund doubled to 8% of gross revenue in this same period.

Addressing the company's financial status was not the sole rationale behind the restructuring program. The principal objective was to find a structure that enabled Greenpeace to use its resources to campaign on select environmental issues in the most effective manner. Despite success in the areas of administration and development, the Australian Board was concerned that Greenpeace was missing out on opportunities to capitalise on the growing environmental concern within the community.

Indeed Greenpeace was not the only environmental organisation in Australia that was having difficulty keeping up with the speed of changing community attitudes. During this same period the ACF was reported to be undergoing 'a massive and long overdue reorganisation', and TWS was also 'having severe internal debates about its focus and its future.'

In November 1988 Doug Mulhall, a member of Greenpeace International's Board of Directors, visited Australia to observe the Greenpeace operation. Mulhall reported his observations to Steve Sawyer, the Executive Director of Greenpeace International. Sawyer, in turn, compiled a report based on this research and presented it to the

Australian Board of Directors for consideration. Craddock claims that this report assisted the Australian Board's decision-making process and,

...was in fact the collected musings of the GPA staff and board extracted by an objective and experienced outsider and offered to us in the form of a well reasoned discussion of the problems we all knew existed.\(^{30}\)

In late 1988 the Australian Board established the new position of Executive Director. The rationale behind creating the position was that it would enable the Board to delegate management responsibility. The occupant of this position was to assume responsibility for managing and co-ordinating Greenpeace activities on a day to day basis. This would relieve the Board of this function and by doing so, enable it to spend its time planning the organisation's future. The Board was to assume a policy, as opposed to a management, orientated role.

In June 1989, the Australian Board appointed Steve McAllister as the first Executive Director of Greenpeace Australia. McAllister, at this time, was Co-Director of Greenpeace operations in the United States. Accordingly, McAllister was familiar with the Greenpeace style of environmental activism as well as the structure and dynamics of the international organisation. McAllister was seconded from his position in the United States under a joint funding arrangement and was appointed for a fixed term of twelve months.

McAllister's arrival signalled the beginning of a sensitive period of acute transition within Greenpeace. His first impressions of the Australian environmental movement, Greenpeace included, were unfavourable. McAllister believed that environmental organisations in Australia had failed to keep up with changing community attitudes. In an interview with Paul Bailey in March 1990 McAllister stated,

\(^{30}\) Craddock, Chairperson's Report, \textit{op.cit.}, p.2.
I think the green movement was very inward looking in Australia. It's like they were in a scrum with their heads together looking down at the ground waiting for someone to role the ball in and the game went roaring past them.\(^{31}\)

McAllister's tasks, as he defined them, were to 'kick-start' the Greenpeace operation in Australia and provide a vision of what it could become. Soon after his arrival he identified a lack of accountability as a fundamental problem.

There was no [staff] review process, there was no hierarchy, people weren't being evaluated on their performance; no-one was minding the store basically.\(^{32}\)

Under the guidance and ultimate control of the Australian Board, McAllister's immediate priority was to introduce a new professionalism within the organisation. Critics of McAllister argue that this signalled the beginning of an autocratic regime of management within Greenpeace. Notion claims that,

He immediately fired a quarter of the existing campaign staff and replaced them with people better suited to the new conservative and bureaucratic requirements. The survivors of the shake-out tended to be those skilled at internal campaigning. That is, instead of spending their time campaigning on environmental issues, they saved their best efforts for promoting themselves on the internal international Greenpeace network. Career orientation and corporate loyalty are apparently the qualities Greenpeace is now seeking in their employees.\(^{33}\)

Another criticism of McAllister is that the initiatives he recommended in relation to campaigning were merely a formula imported from overseas. One Greenpeace campaigner complained that,

To him [McAllister], Greenpeace is just like McDonald's. And just as there can be no Australian flavour in McDonald's, just as there can be

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\(^{32}\) \textit{loc.cit.}

no beetroot in Australian hamburgers, there will be no particular Australian flavour in Greenpeace after he's finished.34

McAllister fiercely defends his actions and argues that a mandate for change meant that conflict was inevitable. Established work practices and the judgement of dedicated staff had to be critically scrutinised: unpleasant and uncomfortable decisions had to be made. He also believes that there was resentment because he was a 'Yank' with the delegated authority to change the way Greenpeace operated. Nor is there any reason to assume that environmental organisations are immune to internal politics, personality clashes and power struggles.

There is little doubt that when McAllister left Australia in June 1990 to take up the position of Assistant Executive Director of Greenpeace International, Greenpeace Australia was a very different organisation than it was prior to his arrival. However, the image of McAllister arriving in Australia as the 'corporate troubleshooter', at the bequest of Greenpeace International, ignores the active role the Australian Board of Directors played during this period.

3.5 CLUB GREENPEACE

In terms of organisational structure, Greenpeace exhibits many features of a bureaucracy. Staff are appointed to positions as opposed to being elected. The delegation of responsibilities, the division of tasks and the introduction of lines of authority create a hierarchy within the organisation. Power is distributed within the organisation by a particular type of authority regime which is a distinguishing characteristic of a bureaucracy. Weber labelled this a rational/legal authority, which is built on,

Greenpeace has often drawn criticism from other environmental organisations, the media, and on occasion its own staff, for being an undemocratic organisation. The accusation is that an elite maintain ultimate control over the organisation and that the vast majority of Greenpeace members are excluded from the decision-making process. This has given rise to what has been coined the 'Club Greenpeace' syndrome.

There are two different categories of Greenpeace membership. 'Members' are those individuals and families who maintain a regular financial affiliation with Greenpeace by paying an annual membership fee. 'Voting members' are elected from this pool of members. The fundamental difference between these two categories is that members with

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voting rights have the prime responsibility of electing the Australian Board. The Board of Directors is the body which has responsibility for co-ordinating all activities of the organisation. It is this body which selects the Australian representative, referred to as the Trustee, to participate on the Stitching Council. It also appoints the Executive Director and Company Secretary. Each year a new Board is elected from the pool of voting members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Conditional on nomination, any voting member can stand for a position on the Board. As required by the company's Articles of Association the Board must have at least five, and at most seven, members.

Although the Board presides at the top of the organisational hierarchy it remains accountable to the voting members. If considered necessary, the voting members can call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) where a special motion of no confidence can remove an individual from the Board. However, the Board is not directly accountable to the ordinary financial member.\textsuperscript{36} Voting members have the responsibility to hold the Board accountable. This is considered the fundamental function of the voting membership. McAllister reminded the voting members of this responsibility at the AGM in May 1990.

The seriousness of our job means that there is no job security in Greenpeace beyond doing one's job very well. I hope and expect you all to hold the Board of Directors to the same high standards.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36}The desire to maintain accountability within all levels of an environmental organisation, including the central bureaucratic elite, is definitely justified. An example of the consequences of failing to monitor the actions of all personnel was demonstrated by the collapse of Friends of the Earth in the United States. This international organisation, unlike Greenpeace, has developed a reputation for a loose decentralised structure and an open participatory style of decision making. However, for the United States operation, this reputation was shattered, dedicated employees resigned and supporters left in droves when in April 1986 it fell victim to what one observer called 'a hostile corporate-style takeover'. Salzman argues that the cause of this was a corrupt board of management. For a more detailed analysis of this episode see, Salzman, L. 'The decline and fall of Friends of the Earth in the United States', \textit{Philosophy and Social Action}, Vol.16, No.3, 1990. In press. and Coyote, H. 'The Corporate Takeover of Friends of the Earth', \textit{Earth First!}, December 1988, pp.24-25.

As stated previously, the 'Club Greenpeace' syndrome is based on criticism about the size of the voting membership in relation to Greenpeace's broader support base. Prior to 1990, this category of membership was restricted to twenty-five financial members. It was therefore a major step towards shedding the image created by the Club Greenpeace syndrome when on the 16th December 1989, at an EGM, the number of members with voting rights was doubled to fifty. The Board of Directors instigated this push to expand the voting membership and recommended a steady increase at future AGMs.

Although developments such as these are promising, it is perhaps disappointing to consider that the size of the voting membership has not grown nearly as fast as the financial membership. One reason for this is that some Greenpeace employees, who are also voting members, have tended to vote as a block and hinder attempts to radically increase the size of the voting membership. At the AGM in May 1990 only two out of a proposed fourteen new voting members were eventually approved. It is also significant that at the same meeting an attempt to relax the requirements for appointing new voting members was unsuccessful. A motion to change the Articles of Association so that a new member could be admitted with support from two-thirds of the existing voting membership, as opposed to three-quarters, failed to carry. The opinion of one Board member is that those Greenpeace employees who also have voting rights are reluctant to increase the size of the voting membership because this may reduce their power as a voting block, and hence their capacity determine the outcome of decisions made at AGMs.

As a result of the restructuring program, Greenpeace Australia is a very different organisation than it was in 1987. Greenpeace Australia now enjoys a considerably enhanced public profile and healthy financial base to fund operations and fulfil its responsibilities to the international Greenpeace network. The recruitment of expertise and willingness to experiment with new marketing strategies have played a crucial role
during this period of transition. And, as Zald and Garner suggest, no social movement organisation that is dependent on public support can prosper unless there is a popular demand for that organisation's service.\(^{38}\) The following chapter examines what service it is that Greenpeace provides to environmentally concerned individuals.

4 GREENPEACE: THE SERVICE

Conflicting ideological perspectives about suitable strategies of political activism ensure that every environmental organisation provides a unique service. To determine the value of the service that any one organisation provides, Greenpeace included, it is first necessary to clarify what criteria are being used for this judgement. This chapter introduces the concept of Greenpeace as an information services organisation. It identifies the provision of empowering information as a major component in all campaign strategies. In particular, Greenpeace disseminates information that enables individuals to accept personal responsibility to protect the environment.

To complement this 'grassroots' approach, Greenpeace also acts as a pressure group that attempts to influence government decision makers in elite forums. This chapter outlines, albeit simplistically, the fundamental dynamics of the policy making process to suggest that governments are reluctant to intervene and instigate appropriate environmental policy. It identifies those techniques which Greenpeace has utilised in order to access political power and secure input into the process of policy determination. The option of offering party political endorsement as a means to draw concessions from government is also discussed. The chapter concludes with the suggestion that it is the capacity to recognise the political value of information, and structure campaign arguments to accommodate the concerns of government decision makers, that accounts for the power and influence which Greenpeace exercises when participating in institutionalised arrangements for voicing social grievances.
4.1 BEARING WITNESS

The environmental movement in Australia is not a coherent or united entity. There is no structure or arrangement that formalises relationships and co-ordinates activity between disparate environmental organisations. There is no dominant course of action prescribing a desirable mode of activism that is unanimously adhered to. As Doyle defines it,

A vast array of networks, organisations, groups and individuals are involved in what is loosely termed 'the environmental movement' in Australia. The movement's physical fragmentation is a reflection of a broad range of differing political ideals and means for achieving objectives. \(^{39}\)

On occasion, these differing political ideals have led to bitter conflict between organisations within the environmental movement. \(^{40}\) An example of this was the publicised hostility between the Green Electoral Network (GEN) and the Green Alliance in 1989. Both these alliances consisted of organisations in New South Wales that were trying to develop collective strategies to place candidates in the 1990 half-Senate election. GEN consisted of what the media labelled the 'peak organisations in the mainstream environmental movement'. This included the Nature Conservation Council, the Total Environment Centre, The Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation. The Green Alliance was considered the 'radical fringe element' and consisted of the Nuclear Disarmament Party, the Green Australia Party, the Aboriginal Land Council and the Socialist Workers Party (now the Democratic Socialist Party). The reason for the conflict was that spokespeople from GEN claimed that the Green Alliance was infiltrated by opportunistic Trotskyites falsely using the environmental issue to secure a presence in parliament. As the debate between these alliances escalated and

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40 Bailey, P. 'Voters puzzled as greens mushroom', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17th December 1989, p.5.
became increasingly hostile the *Bulletin* ran a cover story on environmentalism in Australia titled 'The Green Mess'.

The reality is that environmental organisations adopt different approaches to environmental activism. The criteria for passing judgement on the value of a particular style of activism are dependent on ideological assumptions about preferable strategies for environmental reform and social change. As a dominant organisation in the environmental movement, Greenpeace is not without its critics. Apart from drawing valid criticism concerning its structure and the centralisation of power, the value of the Greenpeace service has also been questioned.

For critic Hazel Notion, the essential problem with Greenpeace stems from its supposed preference for environmental reform as opposed to comprehensive social change: fixing the world we have rather than changing it. In regard to the Greenpeace service, Notion argues that,

> As a light green organisation integrated into the new environment industry one can see them as packagers and marketers of a new product; environmental theatre. This product is sold by subscription to urban householders who use it as a palliative for enviro-anxiety. Regular doses appear to allow suburbanites to continue normal producer/consumer lifestyles.

Behind this criticism lies an assertion that Greenpeace does not involve individuals meaningfully in environmental activism. This remains a legitimate concern given that the criteria for defining what constitutes 'meaningful participation' are open to conflicting interpretation and debate. However, whether this is the effect or not, Greenpeace does not aim to act as a vehicle through which the individual can conveniently appease their environmental conscience simply by making a financial contribution to the organisation.

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41 Barnett, *op.cit.*, pp.50-56.
42 Notion, *op.cit.*
Campaigners advocate that financial support should complement an active personal involvement in Greenpeace campaigns rather than substitute for it.

Greenpeace staff believe that Notion's criticism devalues the diversity of campaign strategies and exaggerates the campaigners' reliance on flamboyant direct action. As will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, direct action is used as a tactical option within broader campaign strategies. Although direct action often performs a critical role, it is only one Greenpeace campaigning activity. For example, in the campaign to tackle atmospheric pollution direct action has played a very minor role. The focus of this campaign during 1990 was to concentrate efforts on the area of energy conservation with the specific goal of 'broadening this campaign out into most aspects of how people live and work.'

Notion's accusation also conflicts with the underlying philosophy of the Greenpeace strategy to utilise human potential and encourage individuals to recognise their personal responsibility to protect the environment. This philosophy is built on the Quaker concept of 'bearing witness': that is, upon witnessing an injustice there is an incumbent responsibility to try and stop it. To do otherwise is to become part of the problem.

Greenpeace activities embody an assumption that the more informed individuals are, the more capable they are of accepting this responsibility. A central task, therefore, is to provide information that not only motivates, but shows, individuals how they can contribute to a process of environmental reform. In this context Greenpeace acts as an information services organisation with a definite 'grassroots' flavour.

The public's perception of environmental problems is influenced by the information made available to them. The major source of environmental information is the

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43 Direct Mailing, Atmosphere Campaign, September 1989
mainstream mass media. Douglas and Barclay suggest that this is unfortunate since the media is a particularly poor source of quality information. Douglas and Barclay argue that the media's treatment of environmentalism reflects its traditional role of legitimising the exercise of power by ruling elites.

Interestingly, media reporting of the environment parallels the way other 'big' issues are covered, especially the economy. Reporting has more to do with a saturation style product marketing strategy, than serious journalism. Despite extensive coverage there is very little depth of analysis. Most importantly it is never reported from an integrated ecological perspective. If it was they would have to question the fundamental tenets of exponential economic growth which the government and media whole-heartedly endorse as the only direction possible.44

Greenpeace documents the scientific, political and economic dimensions of environmental atrocities. It publishes papers, produces films, video tapes and slides in an attempt to disseminate critical information. Campaigners compile succinct information leaflets that clarify short and long term campaign objectives, critically analyse national and international responses, and identify the obstacles preventing reform. All this is done in an attempt to provide members of the public with information that will enable them to recognise the social, political and economic dimensions of environmental degradation.

More recent initiatives indicate that Greenpeace is focusing more intently on the task of providing critical environmental information. Prior to 1990 Greenpeace maintained contact with its supporters through distributing a bi-monthly publication. This magazine was produced in the United States and reported on Greenpeace campaigns at an international level. Vera Hughes in the Adelaide office edited a locally produced insert which was included in this publication. In 1990 this international magazine was replaced with an Australian publication. Hughes now has responsibility as editor to produce this magazine and provide Greenpeace supporters in Australia with a publication that not only

monitors international developments, but focuses on local and regional issues. By supplying this information Greenpeace hopes to enhance the individual's understanding of the forces which exacerbate environmental damage. This information also provides a balance to the political rhetoric which tends to exaggerate the achievements and commitment of government.\textsuperscript{45}

Another purpose of providing this information is to educate concerned individuals as to when, where and how they can most effectively voice their concerns over particular issues. Supporters are encouraged to participate in 'ball-point' activism. This technique involves influencing government decision makers by inundating them with letters requesting action on specific demands. When centrally co-ordinated this technique enables individuals to convey a coherent and articulate call for precise action. It also demonstrates the depth of concern and strength of public sentiment. To ensure these requests have optimum impact, campaigners identify which decision makers need to be targeted and provide detailed background information explaining what action must be taken if an environmentally hostile practice is to stop.

This approach was used in the Ocean Ecology campaign after Greenpeace 'discovered' that the Tasmanian government was issuing seal shooting licences to operators of salmon fish farms. Campaigners first provided information showing that there are non-lethal means of preventing seal predation. Greenpeace supporters were then urged to ask wildlife authorities in Tasmania why these options were not implemented and what initiatives were being taken to facilitate habitat protection for seal populations.\textsuperscript{46}

This type of activity is designed to encourage individuals to recognise their tacit obligation as citizens to scrutinise decisions which are being made on their behalf. The

\textsuperscript{45} Seccombe, M. 'PM: We'll take the big green decisions',\textit{ Sydney Morning Herald}, 20th March 1990, p.6.

rationale behind this activity is the assumption that the more informed an individual is, the more inclined and capable he/she is of exercising political power as a citizen. Campaigners hope that as the public becomes more informed about the issues involved, the task of justifying deficient policy and defending environmentally hostile practices will become more problematic for government departments.

Like other environmental organisations, Greenpeace also provides information that enables individuals to adopt more environmentally benign lifestyles. Discussions with campaign staff confirm that the public response to this type of information has been overwhelming. An example of this was the unprecedented demand for a Greenpeace publication titled *Stepping Lightly on Earth: A Guide to Toxics in the Home*. This information leaflet lists environmentally benign alternatives to a range of common household products such as cleaners, polishes and insecticides.

Educating individuals about the importance of exercising care and discretion as consumers, and prescribing changes to personal lifestyles, is an important aspect of all Greenpeace campaigns. For example, a significant component of Greenpeace efforts to tackle global warming is directed at showing individuals how they can minimise their contribution to atmospheric pollution. Emphasis is placed on simple initiatives that can be taken in the home or workplace which, for example, will reduce energy consumption.47

Campaigners also identify products which cause environmental damage and recommend that as consumers, Greenpeace supporters boycott these. This type of information is not always readily available to the Australian consumer and, as evidenced by Greenpeace's efforts to stop driftnet fishing, obtaining it can be a difficult task. After a high profile campaign of direct action during the 1989/90 fishing season, Greenpeace revealed to the

Australian public that, by purchasing certain (but unspecified) canned tuna products, it was contributing directly to the mass slaughter of marine life; particularly the drowning of dolphins.

Campaigners anticipated that individuals would use this information to boycott canned tuna products supplied by those companies that used driftnets. However, Greenpeace was unable to obtain this information and make it public knowledge. Several food companies operating in Australia refused to co-operate with Greenpeace investigations and would not surrender this information. The reluctance confirmed that these companies were aware of the adverse impact it would have on sales. This effect was precisely what the Greenpeace strategy was based on. If the demand for these products declined, so too would the economic incentive to use driftnets. A reduction in sales would reduce profits and negate the cost effectiveness of this practice.

It was crucial to the Greenpeace strategy that this information be made available to the Australian consumer. A major obstacle was the fact that the companies involved were not under any legal obligation to provide this information. In February 1990 Greenpeace called upon its supporters to apply pressure on the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Senator Nick Bolkus. Bolkus was asked to introduce mandatory labelling laws on canned tuna products so that consumers could make their preferred product selection.48

At this time the Federal Government was toying with a national environmental labelling scheme known as 'green-spot'. There was, however, considerable opposition to this from sections of the Australian business community who were complaining that there was already excessive regulation in packaging and advertising of products.49 A breakthrough came in March 1990 when StarKist Pty Ltd, the world's largest supplier of

canned tuna, announced it would only buy dolphin-safe catches.\textsuperscript{50} In an attempt to protect their respective market shares other suppliers have since followed this lead and a major theme in current advertising campaigns is to stress that their products are 'dolphin-safe'.

For Greenpeace, the provision of information that enables individuals to refine and modify consumer behaviour is considered a constructive step towards protecting the environment. As a result, one aspect of the Greenpeace strategy is to educate consumers on how to use purchasing power as a lever to pressure companies into producing environmentally benign products. However, some question whether this is a positive contribution. For example, Notion considers it flawed because it does nothing to seriously challenge or disrupt the consumer culture that plays such a destructive role in perpetuating environmental damage. And further, it merely provides 'free advertising' to producers that are 'just the leading edge of the free market economy adapting to and exploiting a new market'.\textsuperscript{51}

This section has avoided drawing any conclusions about the value or worth of the contribution Greenpeace makes as a participant in the environmental movement. One reason for this, as shown earlier, is that there is no omnipresent strategy that binds the movement together and prescribes a desirable course of activism. Consequently, there are no clearly defined or commonly accepted criteria to gauge how valuable a particular contribution is. Conflicting ideological assumptions about what constitutes the most appropriate path to environmental reform and social change means that there can even be disagreement as to whether a contribution is constructive at all. Unless these assumptions are identified (which is not the aim of this thesis), any judgement or appraisal of the relative value of the Greenpeace service would be incomplete.

\textsuperscript{50} Quiddington, P. 'Canned fish companies face dolphin-safe move', \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 14th April 1990, p.6.
\textsuperscript{51} Notion, \textit{op.cit.}
The purpose of this section has been to analyse the ways in which Greenpeace encourages its supporters to be actively involved in environmental activism. It is evident that Greenpeace acts as an information services organisation in an attempt to encourage individuals to accept personal responsibility to protect the environment. A significant component of the Greenpeace service is the provision of empowering information. Campaigners expect Greenpeace supporters to utilise the information that is provided to adopt appropriate changes in their personal lifestyle. However, educating concerned individuals to 'bear witness' is only one dimension of the Greenpeace service. In terms of facilitating a process that will encourage a shift towards environmental reform, Greenpeace supplements this 'grassroots' approach with efforts to directly influence and shape government policy.

4.2 GOVERNMENT RELUCTANCE

Although individuals can contribute to a process of environmental reform through changing their personal lifestyle and consumer behaviour, the government has great power to intervene directly and regulate those activities which cause environmental damage, in a way impossible for individuals. Individuals who make a financial contribution to Greenpeace are purchasing a service apart from the provision of empowering information. This service is the expertise and skill required to exercise power as a pressure group.

While environmental damage is a physical condition, popular environmental concern represents a political problem. One reason for this is that various interest groups in industrialised society hold conflicting beliefs about what responses or actions would constitute an acceptable solution. Greenpeace argues that there is no longer any doubt that particular types of industrial activity must be stopped in order to protect the
ecosystem. However, progress towards a transition to an environmentally benign form of industrialisation is a painfully slow process.

A major obstacle (from the point of view of many environmentalists) is the reluctance of governments to accept responsibility for instigating environmental reform. In Australia this condition is partly a legacy of the political system, and the dominance over national and state politics that is exercised by the two major political parties. On obtaining office the central preoccupation of either party is the consolidation of political power. Pareto, a classical elite theorist, called this quest for political security the 'instinct of the persistence of aggregates' and argued that it acts as the most basic motivation behind all political behaviour.52

The political process of policy determination is complex and constantly re-shaped by a range of factors. Factional divisions within the party, a key individual's political ambition, links to numerous interest groups such as the trade union movement or influential sections within the business community, and obligations to foreign governments are only some of the considerations that can shape the outcome of the policy making process.53 However, based on the assumption that political security is the dominant consideration for determining political action, it is possible to identify the more overt dynamics of policy determination.

In a parliamentary democracy the government's hegemony is threatened by the need to compete for popular support at regular elections. Government action can be interpreted

as an attempt to facilitate political security through a process of appeasement. This process creates a framework that determines the desirability of pursuing certain policy options. Most noticeably it devalues initiatives that will invoke an immediate threat to political security. Accordingly, rather than act as an impartial mediator that responds in accordance with the 'loudest noise in the political market place', as a pluralist perspective of the state presupposes, the government too is an interest group with its own agenda.

In relation to environmental regulation, policy developments reflect a calculated judgement of which actions will alienate as few interest groups as possible whilst simultaneously appearing to satisfy a demand to act. The policy making process can be considered a responsive action rather than an initiative. Unless there is enough pressure, and hence incentive to intervene, governments are reluctant to embark on the arduous task of implementing sensitive environmental policy. The prospect of alienating pressure groups whose interests conflict with the fundamental tenets of environmental protection acts as a deterrent.

Part of the Greenpeace service can therefore be interpreted as efforts to force governments to accept responsibility for protecting the environment and to intervene through implementing appropriate policy. Greenpeace campaigns include efforts to exercise power as a pressure group and influence elite decision makers in political parties, government departments and international commissions. Attempts to establish an influence and secure a presence in this restrictive domain of policy determination require political power to be successful. Party political endorsement is one technique that Greenpeace could adopt in an attempt to acquire this power. As will be discussed in the following section, the Greenpeace policy not to do this has proven to be a prudent decision.
4.3 NON-PARTY POLITICAL STATUS

The fact that Greenpeace does not offer party political endorsement constitutes a major policy decision. This section will focus on identifying some of the limitations and potential dangers in offering endorsement as compared to the advantages in maintaining a non-party political status. Although endorsement may result in 'smoother access' into normally restricted domains of government decision-making, it is suggested that this is a precarious arrangement and a very unstable platform for securing political power.

To participate in elite decision-making forums at which policy is formulated, environmental organisations must possess political power. Government decision makers need to be convinced of the value in listening to the demands of pressure groups before access is considered. As popular environmental concern has grown since the late 1980s, so too has the importance of the 'green' vote in influencing the outcome of state and federal elections. In the 1988 New South Wales state election green preferences cost Nick Greiner's Liberal Party control of the Legislative Council.54 After the Tasmanian state election in 1989 Robin Gray's Liberal government was ousted. Michael Field only managed to become the new State Premier because five newly elected green independents agreed to form a political alliance with the Labor Party.55 Most recently, in the March 1990 federal election, there was broad consensus amongst senior political commentators that the environmental issue was a decisive factor in keeping the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in government.56

This phenomenon has created opportunities for both political parties and environmental organisations. The most overt example of this is the relationship that has developed between the ALP and the two largest strictly national environmental organisations; the

55 Lohrey, A. 'At the frontier', Australian Society, September 1989, p.15.
56 Stekette, M. 'ALP's hope is green votes', Sydney Morning Herald, 6th March 1990, p.4.
Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and, to a lesser extent, The Wilderness Society (TWS). Like any other political alliance, an arrangement has developed between these organisations which is perceived to be advantageous to their respective interests. While popular environmental concern remains a contentious political issue, the ALP is eager to secure the green vote and recognise the value of having TWS and the ACF endorse its environmental record. Confirmation of this was the role played by the ALP's 'numbers-man' Graham Richardson and his charter to 'capture' the green vote.\(^57\)

Historically, both the ACF and TWS have demonstrated a willingness to offer this endorsement, and more. For example, on the 6th March 1990, two weeks before the federal election, TWS and the ACF held a press conference where they recommended to their 33,000 members that second preferences should be allocated to Labor candidates.\(^58\) This endorsement quite clearly enabled Prime Minister Hawke to draw political capital out of Labor's environmental record.\(^59\) In this same election TWS and the ACF also agreed to target ten House of Representative seats in various states and actively advocate a vote against the Coalition.\(^60\)

In return for this service the ALP appears more willing to integrate TWS and the ACF into normally restricted domains of government decision-making. Evidence of this was


\(^58\) The mainstream media has created visible advocates and peak groups in the Australian environmental movement. This profile appears to have been awarded to those organisations that negotiate their demands in an institutionally comfortable fashion. This status has been awarded to the ACF and TWS. Because of this, these organisations are depicted as representative of the whole environmental movement. As Austin observes, "Sections of the media seem to believe that the Wilderness Society and ACF are the environmental movement." Further, as evident from the media's interpretation of the ACF and TWS endorsement of the Hawke government this leads to distortion and misrepresentation. For example, two weeks prior to the federal election the *Bulletin* ran a cover story in which O'Reilly applauded the environmental movement for a coherence and unity which simply do not exist. "With its announcement next week, the green movement will stand to be counted." The reality is that most environmental groups did not recommend any particular vote. O'Reilly, D. 'The pressure of scepticism and the pull of independence', *The Bulletin*, March 1990, p.40.

\(^59\) Editorial, 'Greens plant some votes', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7th March 1990, p.16.

\(^60\) Seccombe, M. 'Vote Democrat or Ind say the green groups', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6th March 1990, p.4.
the ACF's input into the prolonged Cabinet deliberations in October 1989 concerning a proposal by BHP to begin mining at Coronation Hill in Kakadu National Park. During this debate Phillip Toyne, Executive Director of the ACF, was granted a personal audience with the Prime Minister. Seccombe suggests that this episode was significant considering the inability of other interested parties to obtain similar input. As Seccombe reported,

How much bearing the Toyne phone call had on the outcome is impossible to gauge, but the fact that he got 90 minutes out of the PM's busy schedule - when the then Minister for Resources, Senator Cook, nor the boss of BHP, Sir Arvi Parbo, could get through - says a lot about his relationship with the government.61

The above example would appear to support claims that a willingness to offer endorsement has, on this occasion, awarded the ACF with certain privileges. However, more recent developments since the March 1990 federal election, after the ALP was returned to office, indicate that this privilege is quickly revoked when the government is not so dependent on endorsement for political security.62 Immediately after the ALP was returned to office in March numerous Labor MPs began to question the contribution that the green vote had made to Labor's election victory, and accordingly, what obligation the ALP held to these organisations.63

After elections have been won, it is apparent that the bargaining power of these organisations diminishes and the government becomes less willing to accommodate their demands. Indeed Toyne has complained that since March there has been nothing but a backlash from the economic rationalists in the ALP, particularly in relation to drafting a strategy for sustainable development. Rather than benefit from active support, Toyne has complained that the ACF has been 'let-down' and that,

62 Seccombe, M. 'Labor has forgotten us, say greens', Sydney Morning Herald, 16th August 1990, p.3.
63 Humphries, D. 'Green vote was no help: MP', Sydney Morning Herald, 27th March 1990, p.4.
We've seen a wonderful silence from ministers who ought to be talking on the issue.64

In supporting the ALP, both these organisations have also renewed the intensity of the Coalition's long-standing disaffection with them. The Opposition spokesperson on the environment, Senator Puplick, made this clear following the ACF and TWS endorsement of the ALP in March. Puplick claimed that both organisations had become 'fronts' for the ALP and that under a Coalition government their funding and tax exemption status would be withdrawn.65 One may also assume that a Coalition government would be less willing to include these organisations in the decision-making process.

Apart from doubts as to what privileges endorsement actually does provide, and whether bargaining power is enhanced, historically, the affiliation with the ALP has been controversial for both TWS and the ACF. There is evidence to suggest that this relationship has been disruptive, expensive and exhausting. For example, Doyle has argued that attempts to 'play the political game', as defined by the party and government agenda, have adversely effected the structure of decision-making and the scope of the organisation's goals. Doyle claims that as a result, the ACF and TWS have become less democratic and are controlled by a network of professional elites.66 Spokespeople from both organisations have dismissed Doyle's claims as conspiracy theory and reject his assertion that the organisations have been infiltrated by an ALP 'fifth-column elite.'67 Nevertheless, it is clear that the decision to endorse political parties during election campaigns has created schisms within both organisations.68

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64 Seccombe, 'Labor has forgotten us, says greens', op.cit., p.3.
66 Doyle, op.cit.
67 Wootten, H. 'Fantasy of the fifth', Times on Sunday, 1st November 1987, p.12.
68 Higgins, E. 'The taint of politics splits the greenies', Times on Sunday, 8th October 1987, p.16.
Following the 1987 federal election the West Australian branch of the ACF threatened to disassociate itself from the national organisation. Colin Hall, head of the WA branch, complained that part of their dissatisfaction arose because they were not consulted or involved in the decision-making process which resulted in endorsement. Similarly, again in 1989 it was reported that there was a 'nasty little row' within the ACF about the consistency of its support for the ALP.

Another risk of party political endorsement is the threat that this may pose to the diversity of the organisation's support base. Membership may become restricted to the supporters of political parties and consequently limit the potential growth of these organisations and the diversity of their membership. Doyle suggests that this happened following the 1987 federal election and that the ACF and TWS experienced a large scale defection of members. Even though these claims were disputed, Hal Wootten, the then President of the ACF, did acknowledge that endorsement could lead to support coming from a narrow political base. Wootten also confirmed that participation in elections did 'draw heavily on the stock of human, financial and emotive resources'. For example, in the 1987 federal election the ACF and TWS conducted intensive polling research and targeted eleven seats for concentrated campaigning. This cost both these organisations approximately $150,000 and required the mobilisation of 1,500 volunteers to work on polling day to distribute how to vote cards.

Finally, there is the issue of conformity. While it remains very difficult to substantiate, it may be the case that securing involvement in government decision-making is conditional on abiding to an institutionally comfortable form of political activism. Bachrach and

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69 Doyle, op.cit.
70 Barnett, op.cit., p.51.
72 Doyle, op.cit.
73 Higgins, op.cit., p.8.
74 Seccombe, 'Vote democrat or Ind say the green groups', op.cit., p.4. and Higgins, op.cit., p.8.
Baratz argue that governments disguise 'non-decision making' (a technique which enables governments to thwart and dilute the demands of a pressure group) within institutionalised procedures and government committees.\textsuperscript{75}

The Labor government's tendency to delay making judgements on contentious environmental issues and refer them to the Resource Assessment Commission (RAC) can be interpreted as an example of non-decision making. While other environmental organisations believe this is a device 'to muzzle them in the politically manageable business of government committees dominated by conservative bureaucrats, economic rationalists and hostile industry representatives',\textsuperscript{76} the Chairperson of the RAC, Justice Stewart, is reported as saying that the ACF is one environmental organisation that the Commission is prepared to take seriously. As Stannard observes,

...this is hardly surprising since the ACF is the only environmental group which has seen fit to participate in it.\textsuperscript{77}

Peter Garrett, President of the ACF, has also stated that maintaining a dialogue with the government does entail a responsibility to behave in a particular fashion.

We have to be quite conscious of the fact that as an organisation the ACF deals with the government of the day and so we have to do it in a way which is seen to be constructive and proper.\textsuperscript{78}

One consequence of accessing political power through offering endorsement, and agreeing to play what Doyle defines as the 'political game', is that the ACF may have surrendered control over determining what constitutes 'proper' behaviour. In his study on the political strategies available to environmental pressure groups, O'Riordan also identifies the trap of becoming too conformist.

\textsuperscript{76} Stannard, B. 'Dark greens at bay', \textit{The Bulletin}, August 1990, p.47.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{ibid.}, p.51.
\textsuperscript{78} Lees, C. 'The bald bloke and the pressure to perform', \textit{The Bulletin}, October 1989, p.55.
Environmental pressure groups have to gain sufficient recognition to become regular ears of governments. This can take a long time, for usually it means playing the game so as to appear politically respectable. However, this may pose a moral dilemma for those who believe commando operations to achieve immediate results are justifiable, even if they do jeopardise their group's political respectability.\(^79\)

Party political endorsement is one way in which a pressure group can attempt to obtain political power. As shown above there are dangers and limitations with choosing this option. Greenpeace is strictly non-party political and does not prescribe voting preferences to its members. Rick Humphries, Greenpeace's National Liaison Officer based in Canberra, concedes that this has disadvantages. Most noticeably, Greenpeace does not get the 'smooth access' into the policy making process that the ACF and TWS have.\(^80\)

Given that Greenpeace has a support base well in excess of both the ACF and TWS combined, one could assume that the ALP would value a similar endorsement from Greenpeace. However, Greenpeace has consistently refused to do this and the policy that closes this option is not expected to change. Greenpeace's independent, non-partisan approach has provided the organisation with a maverick political status. McAllister believes that this has been vitally important and rather than enhance political power, endorsement could actually threaten the organisation. In an interview with Nigel Austin in March 1990 McAllister emphasised the importance of this policy for Greenpeace when he stated quite candidly that,

I think we would have self-destructed years ago if we had supported political parties.\(^81\)

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\(^80\) Personal communication, 16th June 1990.

\(^81\) Austin, N. 'Outbreak of green', *The Intelligencer*, March 1990, p.6.
Opting to trade party political endorsement in order to access restricted domains of government decision-making is fraught with problems. There is no guarantee that this will enhance the organisation's bargaining power or ensure concessions from government when debating environmental issues. Nevertheless, Greenpeace acknowledges that most major impacts on the environment are influenced by government decisions. Accordingly, Greenpeace endeavours to gain input into the arena of policy determination. How it manages to do this without offering party political endorsement, is another dimension of the lobbying expertise that Greenpeace supporters purchase when they make a financial contribution to the organisation.

4.4 ECONOMIC RATIONALISM

Greenpeace utilises an array of techniques to pressure the government into implementing appropriate environmental policies. These range from presenting arguments through structured channels of participation in government decision-making, to more forceful mechanisms of direct action. When attempting to advise and convince government decision makers in official forums (such as commissions, public inquiries and standing committees), Greenpeace formulates campaign arguments that acknowledge the ideology of economic rationalism. Greenpeace needs to be conversant with the scientific, economic and political dimensions of environmental problems. Campaigners must be able to address complex technical and scientific arguments, acknowledge the dominance of economic imperatives and recognise subtle political considerations.

Appeals to morality or a sense of global responsibility may be legitimate pleas to stop environmentally hostile industrial practices. However, these appeals are rendered irrelevant if decision makers are using different criteria when formulating policy. This is precisely the dilemma that an environmental organisation like Greenpeace is constantly faced with. In industrialised nations like Australia, governments perceive their primary
responsibility to be one of prudent economic management. This perception establishes a rationale for policy. A government's performance is gauged by indicators which are used to monitor the strength and health of the national economy. Low inflation, low unemployment, a trade surplus, investment in value-added industries and a favourable balance of payments have become the guidelines for political security. These indicators establish the parameters of what is portrayed as practicable and responsible government policy. Any decision that results in the loss of jobs, a reduction in export earnings or hinders investment is depicted as counter-productive and dangerous.

Already there are ominous signals of a media-led backlash against environmental pressure groups for this very reason. The demands of the green lobby are frequently presented as being unreasonable and jeopardising the nation's economic well-being. Economic rationalists within government are becoming more vocal and major power brokers within Cabinet, such as the Minister for Primary Industry and Energy, John Kerin, have condemned their party for its excessive pandering to environmental interest groups.

83 An example of the way in which economic considerations determine environmental policy options is the Cabinet’s recent proposal to reduce Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions. Although the target is set at a 20% reduction by the year 2005, Cabinet has declared that this will only be adhered to if these reductions can be achieved without 'net adverse economic impacts nationally or on Australia's trade competitiveness'. Strutchbury, M. 'Clayton's greenhouse plan makes sense', Australian Financial Review, 17th October 1990, p.15. Editorial, "The greenhouse compromise", Sydney Morning Herald, 13th October 1990, p.24. Millet, M. and Hextall, B. 'Cut could hurt economy: Parbo', Sydney Morning Herald, 13th October 1990, p.12.
84 Haupt, R, 'It isn't easy seeing green', The Age, 15th July 1989, p.11. Cleary, P. 'Sustainable development may lead us right into a black hole', Sydney Morning Herald, 16th June 1990, p.36.
The effect of this onslaught is that it challenges the credibility of environmental organisations. This is particularly threatening to these organisations as it denies them legitimacy. As McClelland observes,

> It is a time honoured but not very reputable debating trick to discredit an idea by depicting it in its most extreme form. Thus the Greens are often portrayed as romantic Luddites who oppose all industrial development, without which our society will sink into backwardness. 87

It is becoming increasingly clear that governments expect environmental organisations to engage in compromise politics. As the debate about drafting a policy on sustainable development became more intense in August 1990, so too did the warnings to environmental organisations about the dangers of ignoring the economic ideology which dominates government decision-making. For example, in a cover story appearing in the *Bulletin*, Stannard warned that,

> As Australia braces itself for economic tough times, radical greens who are not elected and who shun the process of dialogue on all but their own terms with those who are elected may find themselves marginalised and increasingly irrelevant. 88

This framework for debate has direct implications for environmental pressure groups that seek input into government decision-making through tightly structured channels of participation. In particular, Government decision makers are not receptive to arguments that challenge the ideology of economic growth. While Greenpeace continues to participate in forums where this ideology is sanctioned, campaign arguments are structured to acknowledge the importance placed on economic considerations. This presents a challenge given that free market economics devalues future savings and distorts the real costs of industrial activity. Accordingly, campaigners attempt to show

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87 McClelland, J. 'Who says Independent is a dirty word?’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27th March 1990, p.16.

government decision makers that environmentally benign policies are not necessarily a threat to industry or the national economy.

Using economic arguments as a reason for reviewing an environmentally hostile practice can produce tangible results. For example, this approach was used successfully by Greenpeace in October 1988 at the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. Attending delegates were shown how fish farming practices in this region posed a direct threat to the long term commercial viability of this industry. As a result, the main fishing grounds in the Antarctic region were closed for the 1988/89 harvesting season.89

Economic rationalism is only one factor that government decision makers use as a rationale for determining policy. Government decisions are also influenced by the recommendations of scientists and technocrats within government departments. To retain credibility as an informed participant in environmental debates, Greenpeace needs to be capable of responding to complex scientific and technical arguments. On occasion this requires the recruitment of outside expertise. Sandbach claims that this requirement often imposes additional costs on environmental organisations.

The problems of presenting a solid rational case opposing certain proposals or promoting new ones is not as straightforward as it might appear. Experts have often to be approached. The arguments of the 'opposition' must be understood and successfully countered. Viable alternatives must also be put forward using persuasive arguments backed up by reliable and detailed information. Access to such information and its presentation may impose heavy costs, and it is in this aspect of planning that the wealth of pressure groups and their contacts with professionals willing to give advice freely or at little cost are undoubtedly of great importance.90

90 Sandbach, op.cit., p.108.
Greenpeace has demonstrated a tendency to use the advice and knowledge of recognised 'experts' when the issues of acceptable risk and public safety are involved. For example, in the Nuclear Free Seas campaign, campaign co-ordinator Faith Doherty believed that the decision to permit foreign warship visits had been made on the basis of incomplete information. Doherty saw Greenpeace's role as an educator, with the task of informing politicians, bureaucrats and departmental committees about the 'realities' of the risks involved.91

An opportunity to do this was made available in 1988 with the formation of a Senate Inquiry by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense. Greenpeace, with the assistance of Professor Jackson Davis from the University of California, presented a comprehensive submission to this inquiry. Davis has an international reputation for conducting site-specific analyses that identify the risks to public safety posed by warship visits. This submission exposed the lack of safety procedures and highlighted the dangers of a warship accident in both Sydney and Fremantle ports.92

Governments structure participation in the policy making process through creating inquiries that call for submissions from the public and responses to 'discussion papers' that are released by government bodies. Campaigners look for opportunities to present Greenpeace arguments and ideas at these inquiries. For example, in campaign efforts to tackle atmospheric pollution, Carla Bell liaised with railway unions during 1990 and presented submissions to government departments that were intending to cut back public transport services.93 During 1990 Greenpeace also responded to an invitation from the federal government calling for public submissions on formulating appropriate guidelines for the proposed establishment of an Environmental Protection Authority.

92 loc.cit.
93 Personal communication, 18th July 1990.
More often than not, campaigners have to search for these opportunities rather than receive invitations to participate. Nor is it unusual for the government to give very short notice that interest groups like Greenpeace can have input into the decision-making process. On these occasions the invitation is often delayed until after the agenda for discussion has been firmly established. In effect this excludes Greenpeace from having any meaningful input into the critical early stages of policy formation. An example of this was the working paper on sustainable development that the federal government asked Greenpeace and other environmental organisations to comment on. This discussion paper had been circulated around numerous government inter-departmental committees for close to eighteen months before Greenpeace was given an opportunity to see it. When the paper was released in August 1990, Greenpeace (along with the other large environmental organisations) was given an impossible deadline for passing comment.

As a pressure group, Greenpeace seeks to influence the outcome of policy determination through searching for avenues to participate in government decision-making. However, as Bachrach and Baratz suggest, these avenues can be structured in a fashion that demands strict adherence to an institutionally comfortable form of political activism. Commissions, public enquiries and calls for expressions of interest can dilute the demands of pressure groups and act as mechanisms to placate social grievances. Participating in these forums means that Greenpeace needs to construct campaign arguments that acknowledge the ideology of economic growth. Campaigners may also need to counter complex scientific and technical recommendations.

Although Greenpeace continues to pursue this particular style of lobbying, campaigners are conscious of its limitations. Economic rationalism enables the government to impose

95 Stannard, *op.cit.*, p.54.
a framework for debate on environmental issues. This framework defines the value of information used in campaign arguments. The government also controls how and when pressure groups can participate in the decision-making process. For these reasons, Greenpeace frequently resorts to a more confrontational and persuasive style of political activism. Direct action is an aggressive lobbying technique that enables campaigners to demand accountability from government through maximising the political value of information. As one campaigner commented, 'direct action is the sharp end of a very broad Greenpeace campaigning effort.'
5 DIRECT ACTION

Historically, flamboyant direct action has been an integral feature of Greenpeace's status as a high-profile environmental organisation. This chapter describes the Greenpeace style of direct action and examines the way in which it is used as a tactical option to complement broader campaign strategies. It will identify the different reasons as to why direct action has been used in particular circumstances, and trace the impact of these actions. This chapter also explains how direct action is used as a technique to expose environmental atrocities and disseminate critical information to a large audience.

As a technique to apply pressure, demand accountability and mobilise public attention, direct action is successful because it enables campaigners to maximise the political value and use of information. Analysing the role of direct action in the Clean Waters Campaign illustrates this point. It is also evident that there is a correlation between the power and influence that Greenpeace exercises as a pressure group, and the ability to process information in a fashion that ensures environmental concern remains a political problem. This chapter concludes with an assessment of the skills, costs and risks associated with the use of direct action. In particular, it considers the importance of packaging these actions for media consumption and the dangers involved in challenging the interests of powerful business elites.
5.1 STYLE

Since its inception in 1971 Greenpeace has acquired a reputation for staging flamboyant direct actions. Film footage of activists in zodiac craft positioning themselves between harpooners and whales, or giant banners suspended from belching smokestacks, convey the popular image of Greenpeace at work.

As a form of political expression, direct action is not new to the environmental movement. During the nineteenth century environmental pressure groups in England resorted to the use of direct action to oppose the enclosure of common land. One of the first recorded incidents of direct action was in 1866 when the London based Commons Preservation Society organised workmen, during the cover of night, to pull down miles of newly erected fencing.97

Greenpeace is only one of many environmental organisations that use this technique of activism. For example, during 1990 the East Gippsland Coalition and the Rainforest Action Group instigated an intense program of direct action to stop logging operations in Victoria and New South Wales National Estate forests. A distinguishing characteristic of this program was the desire to mobilise as many people as possible to actively participate in non-violent protests in these forests.98 On this occasion direct action was used primarily to build solidarity amongst individuals concerned with these logging operations.

The style of direct action that Greenpeace has developed is not conducive to widespread public involvement. Acting as the 'on-site conscience' of environmental villains means that many Greenpeace actions take place in remote and isolated locations. This factor

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97 Stannard, op.cit., p.113.
alone imposes constraints on what type of protest or direct action is practical. For example, it would have been logistically impossible to organise and conduct a mass on-site demonstration to oppose the construction of the airstrip at the French Dumont d'Urville base in the Antarctic.

Greenpeace direct actions are also very often dangerous and can pose considerable risks to the personal safety of those involved. For example, when plugging industrial discharge pipes activists expose themselves to chemicals which can cause respiratory complaints, nasal passage damage and neurological disorders. The extent of the dangers involved in participating in a Greenpeace action was revealed in tragic circumstances on the 10th July 1985. In a brutal act of state financed terrorism the French government's General Directorate for External Security sank Greenpeace's flagship the *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland harbour. Fernando Pereira, a Greenpeace photographer and crew member, was trapped on board and drowned.99

To minimise the risks involved in these actions, Greenpeace utilises the skills of trained activists: individuals with experience in activities such as seamanship, scuba diving, climbing and film-making. Detailed planning, dummy practice runs, intense training and the provision of support personnel and the appropriate safety equipment ensure that direct actions are conducted with a military style precision.

The financial cost of staging these actions, the dangers involved and logistical considerations limit extensive public involvement. However, Greenpeace has deliberately chosen to pursue this particular style of direct action because it has produced results. The value of this particular style of direct action became apparent in 1972 when the United States government agreed to stop its nuclear testing program at Amchitka Island. Morgan and Whitaker suggest that this first success for Greenpeace highlighted

the potential of carefully orchestrated and well publicised direct action. More importantly, it prescribed a 'recipe' for future actions.

There were several lessons in this which Greenpeace has since used to great effect. First, they discovered that the number of people involved in a protest did not really count. Thousands of people could march through the streets and fail to dent a government's armour. But put a handful of people in a small boat and the result could be very different. Their second discovery was that a small number of people could be an advantage. It turned the issue into a David and Goliath struggle, where the public naturally tended to support the underdog. All that was needed then was to choose an imaginative course of action, to provide the public with an exciting and moving spectacle - and ensure that the news media were there to report it.\textsuperscript{100}

This 'recipe' for successful direct action has been stringently adhered to and has since become a distinguishing trademark of the Greenpeace organisation. However, as stated previously, it is incorrect to assume that direct action is the extent of Greenpeace campaigning activity. Instead, direct action represents only one option from a range of lobbying techniques that campaigners can choose to use. The reasons for staging a direct action, and the anticipated value of doing so, vary considerably.

5.2 A TACTICAL OPTION

Direct action is used as a tactical option within broader campaign strategies. The role that direct action performs varies according to the particular priorities and objectives of different campaigns at different times. There is no obligation or expectation for campaigners to use this technique unless they feel it will complement other campaign efforts. Accordingly, it is not unusual for some Greenpeace campaigns, such as efforts during 1990 to tackle global warming and ozone depletion, to adopt strategies that include only a very minor use of direct action.

\textsuperscript{100} ibid., p.123.
In some instances direct action has been used because Greenpeace has decided that immediate intervention was necessary and that no other course of action could produce the desired results. Analysis of the Ocean Ecology campaign demonstrates that direct action has been used to preserve life by providing a temporary reprieve for endangered species. Direct action has been used because it can guarantee immediate and tangible results. An example of this was Greenpeace action to stop the slaughter of harp seal pups in Eastern Canada. Motivated by the commercial value of the soft white fur of these pups, sealers swamped the nursery grounds on the ice floes of Eastern Canada to club new born pups with spiked gaffs. With annual kills averaging 278,000 pups it was apparent to Greenpeace that the quota system introduced by the Canadian government was ineffective.101

From 1976 to 1985 Greenpeace adopted a program of innovative direct action that prevented the slaughter of thousands of these seal pups. Greenpeace activists harassed and delayed the sealing ships and began spraying the pups with a harmless dye. By marking the furs in this manner they became stained and were rendered commercially useless. This practice continued even after the Canadian government, in a direct response, introduced legislation making it illegal to mark any living seal.

Direct action is also used when circumstances provide an ideal opportunity to do so. For the Nuclear Free Seas campaign such an opportunity was presented in 1988 during Australia's Bicentennial celebration. During this year over sixty warships from sixteen different countries visited Australian ports. Over this twelve month period Greenpeace conducted nine separate direct actions.102

Greenpeace has also used direct action in response to requests from local interest groups for assistance in fighting a particular environmental issue. An example of this was the direct action taken at Lake Bonney in South Australia in December 1989. The water in Lake Bonney, the largest freshwater lake in South Australia, is contaminated with toxic wastes released from a paper mill operating upstream. Greenpeace was approached by commercial fishermen who feared that the lake's outfall was polluting local fishing grounds. In a collaborative effort the outfall was blocked and the South Australian state government agreed to leave the plug in place.\textsuperscript{103}

The above examples demonstrate that, for each separate campaign, there are different reasons why Greenpeace uses direct action. Sometimes, as in the case of the Ocean Ecology campaign, direct action is considered necessary in order for Greenpeace to 'bear witness' and stop an environmentally hostile practice. On other occasions, as in the Nuclear Free Seas campaign during 1988, direct action has been used because the prevailing circumstances provided a unique opportunity to do so. However, apart from any specific tactical rationale that justifies the use of direct action at certain times, this style of political activism also performs a more ubiquitous function for the Greenpeace organisation. As a technique that enables campaigners to disseminate critical information to a large audience, direct action helps mobilise public attention and sustain popular environmental concern. Given that there are numerous mechanisms that allow government and industry to placate public fears about environmental destruction, direct action makes a significant contribution to Greenpeace in terms of satisfying one of its most fundamental needs as an information services organisation.

To understand the nature of this contribution it is helpful to consider a relevant theoretical explanation as to why an ability to disseminate information is of critical importance for a pressure group like Greenpeace. Downs has argued that environmental concern, like any

\textsuperscript{103} 'Current Campaign Activities', Greenpeace Adelaide, 1990, p.3.
other social problem, faces a finite life-span because the public's ability to focus attention on one particular problem is limited. In the development of his 'issue-attention' model, Downs suggests that there is a critical stage in the life of all social problems where intense public interest wanes. Adapting this model somewhat, Sandbach argues that a subtle process of accommodation dissipates public concern. As the demands of environmental pressure groups clash with the interests of business and question the dynamics of capital accumulation,

The differences in objectives and interests are accommodated through the development of new institutions, compromise legislation, and the appearance of acceptable explanations and solutions to these problems.

This process of accommodation is assisted by a media that sells the image of a responsive political system, offering reassurance that government and industry are responding appropriately to environmental crises. As stated previously, the mass media as an institution legitimises the exercise of power by ruling elites. Therefore, it is not surprising (if not inevitable), that the media attacks the credibility of pressure groups like Greenpeace who remain critical of government and industry. An example of this can be found in a recent editorial appearing in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Greenpeace and other environmental groups may claim much credit for raising public awareness about the dangers that human activity, especially in the industrialised world, poses to the environment. It is strange, however, that when appropriate steps are taken to control, reduce and ultimately eliminate such damage, they do not welcome such measures. Unless these groups learn to moderate their criticism when moderation - or even praise - is called for, their voices will appear increasingly shrill, unreasonable and irrelevant.

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105 Sandbach, *op.cit.*, pp.32-36.


For Greenpeace, one value of direct action is that it can be used to expose government bureaucracies with regulatory responsibilities as being negligent, environmental policy as inadequate, and industrial corporations as environmentally hostile. Campaigners can utilise direct action to send a clear message to the public that challenges what Greenpeace perceives as the 'misinformation' coming from government and industry. As a pressure group, this capability is vitally important for Greenpeace because it is only when there is widespread popular concern that environmental degradation constitutes a political problem. Alternatively, as an organisation that is totally dependent on public support, Greenpeace has to justify the need for sustained widespread environmental concern in order to survive.

Compared to Greenpeace activities in Europe and the United States in the 1980s, high profile direct action was not a prominent feature of Greenpeace campaigning efforts within Australia. This situation changed in January 1990 when Greenpeace instigated an intense schedule of direct actions against some of the biggest industrial polluters in Australia. The following section will trace the impacts and repercussions resulting from the use of direct action in the Clean Waters Campaign. In terms of cultivating public discontent and exercising political influence as a pressure group, Greenpeace activity can be interpreted as the actions of what McCarthy and Zald call an 'issue entrepreneur'. By maximising the political value and use of information, direct action has simultaneously enhanced Greenpeace's profile and elevated the issue of urban/industrial pollution onto the political agenda.

5.3 ISSUE ENTREPRENEUR: CLEAN WATERS CAMPAIGN

In January 1990 Greenpeace launched its Clean Waters Campaign. One of the more immediate campaign objectives was to focus public attention on urban pollution and expose the problems associated with the production and disposal of toxic substances. Campaign co-ordinator Paul Gilding decided that an important priority was the identification of those companies operating in Australia that either legally or illegally discharged toxic effluent into the oceans and waterways.\(^{109}\)

An examination of the role that direct action has played in this campaign indicates that the overt political use of information can provide a powerful mechanism to pressure government and demand accountability from industry. The impact of the direct actions staged against Caltex and BHP confirms that Greenpeace has developed highly specialised and sophisticated skills in packaging and disseminating critical environmental information. The effectiveness with which this is done has prompted an angry response from these companies and a desire by the New South Wales state government to be seen as responding to the problems that Greenpeace has exposed. In this context, direct action not only constitutes a threat to corporate Australia, but acts as a catalyst that initiates a political response from government.\(^{110}\)

On Australia Day, 26th January, Gilding took evidence to the State Pollution Control Commission (SPCC) showing that Caltex had discharged six times the legal limit of phenol compounds into Botany Bay. Greenpeace divers had located, then collected samples from an underwater discharge pipe at the Caltex refinery in Kurnell. Gilding, in front of television cameras, demanded that the SPCC acknowledge its statutory obligations and prosecute Caltex. The samples taken had been chemically analysed at

approved independent laboratories in Sydney and supported Gilding's assertion that Caltex had failed to satisfy its corporate responsibilities as defined in state environmental legislation. Media interest in this issue escalated as it became apparent that this action by Greenpeace was a cause of considerable embarrassment for the SPCC. In addition, if Caltex was prosecuted to the full extent of the law, the company faced fines of $3.5 million as well as the possibility of further legal action against individual company directors.111

Even though Greenpeace had acquired the information needed to prosecute Caltex, the options available as to how it could be used were restricted. In theory, Greenpeace could have instigated the relevant legal proceedings against Caltex. However, Gilding decided not to take this course of action. One reason for this was the prohibitive legal costs involved in fighting a prolonged court case. Corporate lawyers were ready to argue that Greenpeace, when taking these samples, had been trespassing. Further, Caltex claimed that it was impossible to verify whether Greenpeace had adhered to the prescribed procedures for collecting discharge samples.

Two weeks later the SPCC, which had initially informed Gilding that it would not take any legal action against Caltex, declared publicly that it would prosecute Caltex under the Clean Waters Act. This decision appeared to be a direct response to criticism in the media that focussed on the SPCC's inability and reluctance to stringently enforce its regulatory responsibilities. The case, which is yet to be resolved, is before the Land and Environment Court and Caltex faces a maximum penalty of $40,000. Although this amount is not a crippling financial penalty to a multi-national corporation like Caltex, the company has since changed its testing procedures and now analyses samples daily. Before the Greenpeace action in January sampling was conducted on a weekly basis.

For Greenpeace, this single direct action against Caltex served several functions. By identifying a major corporation that was breaching environmental legislation Greenpeace was able to mobilise public attention on the issues and problems involved with industrial pollution. In particular, the SPCC, the New South Wales state government’s environmental watchdog authority was subject to critical scrutiny in the media.112

In February 1990, Greenpeace sailed south to Wollongong and challenged Australia’s largest corporation, BHP. The decision to confront BHP was prompted by two considerations. First, Greenpeace wanted to make the public aware of the fact that BHP was pumping up to 1.6 billion litres of toxic wastes into the inner harbour of Port Kembla each day. These wastes included quantities of oil, grease, zinc, phenols, ammonia, lead, chromium and cyanide. Second, as Campbell has suggested,

They intended to ram home to the public that polluters are not just shoddy second-rate firms out for a fast buck, or even large foreign multi-nationals who don’t care, but large, respected Australian firms, financed by Australian shareholders.113

Unlike the action against Caltex, where management were unaware of Greenpeace activities, BHP had advance warning. However, this did not help management deal with the Greenpeace raid. Media co-ordinator Michelle Grosvenor believes that efforts by John Brown, BHP’s public affairs superintendent, to stop Greenpeace collecting samples from a discharge pipe only succeeded in enhancing media interest in the confrontation.114 As a result, this action received extensive media coverage. On the evening news all national television networks showed footage of police arresting Greenpeace campaigners and Brown’s unsuccessful attempts to stop the filming by

television cameras. Prompted by questions from the media, Gilding claimed that this response to Greenpeace efforts to take samples confirmed that BHP was trying to hide information from the public.

The direct action at BHP also revealed another dimension to the problems involved with regulating industrial pollution. As the episode unfolded it became apparent that a government body was protecting BHP from the law. When the SPCC eventually decided to prosecute the company under the Clean Waters Act in late April, management at BHP responded by stating publicly that they were both surprised and angered by this decision. Although the company admitted to discharging three times the legal limit of cyanide into the inner harbour of Port Kembla, BHP's General Manager Grahame Parker complained that the SPCC had been aware of this situation for some time.

In reality, the company was only slightly outside the regulations. We had been doing this with the knowledge of the SPCC, which until now has been prepared to accept the situation because we are busy trying to reduce the outflow.

The direct actions against Caltex and BHP revealed the inadequacies of existing regulatory mechanisms designed to protect the environment. The SPCC's reluctance and inability to stringently enforce environmental law, and its performance as a policing authority over industry became a sensitive political issue. The issue became even more controversial when it was revealed that tax payers in New South Wales were subsidising major polluters by $5 million a year. As Gilding commented immediately after the Caltex action,

116 Stevens, op.cit., p.53.
Watching the watchers was a role we found ourselves playing though one we never intended. The SPCC is regulating pollution but not controlling or reducing it, and that's of major concern to us.\textsuperscript{118}

Direct action created pressure for official action by focusing public attention on the problems associated with the management of industrial pollution.\textsuperscript{119} The key factor in this process was Greenpeace's ability to maximise the political value and use of information. Through using the media to send a clear message to the public, Greenpeace was able to mobilise public concern and demand accountability from government. One week after the Greenpeace action against BHP, the Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, announced that the state government was planning to introduce a new regulatory system aimed at forcing industry to reduce the discharge of toxic chemicals.\textsuperscript{120} Moore stated that the cost of licensing fees would be dramatically increased and new pollution abatement strategies would be negotiated with individual companies operating in New South Wales. Further, under this new arrangement, companies would be required to pay a bond which they would immediately forfeit if these agreements were breached.\textsuperscript{121}

At the time of this announcement Moore said that these reforms were being implemented because the community was demanding an increasingly high level of environmental performance from industry. One of the catalysts behind this demand was Greenpeace direct action that exposed a poor performance from industry and the failure of the state government's environmental watchdog. Where other environmental organisations had tried unsuccessfully to demand accountability from the SPCC, Greenpeace, through the use of direct action, had succeeded. Richard Gosden, a spokesperson for a Sydney based action group campaigning to stop ocean pollution (and former toxics campaigner for Greenpeace), claims that this was a significant achievement:

\textsuperscript{118} Stevenson, A. 'Voyage for watching the watchers', \textit{Illawarra Mercury}, 19th February 1990, p.4.
\textsuperscript{120} Bailey, P. 'Polluters face huge payouts', \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 27th February 1990, p.1.
\textsuperscript{121} Bailey, P. 'Govt to tighten controls on major polluters', \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 14th April 1990, p.1.
..they [Greenpeace] have been successful in targeting the SPCC in a way we at STOP [Stop The Ocean Pollution] never were. You have got to give them credit for that.¹²²

Direct action is a technique that can be used to focus public attention on an industrial practice, and by doing so, transform it into a controversial political issue. As is evident from Moore's response, direct action can contribute to a political process that applies pressure on government to accept responsibility to protect the environment. Through invoking this process, Greenpeace challenges the power that major corporate polluters are able to wield. In an era when companies recognise the value of selling the image of being environmentally responsible, evidence to the contrary can incur more than just adverse corporate publicity.

How damaging a Greenpeace action can be to a corporation is dependent on a range of factors. It can, for instance, be influenced by how the media choose to report the action. One factor which does determine how effective direct action is in challenging a company's right to pollute the environment is the location at which the action takes place. For example, while the SPCC in New South Wales was reluctant to take action on what Greenpeace exposed, the response to a similar action in Victoria was very different. In May 1990 Greenpeace accused the company Nufarm of releasing toxics, specifically dioxin, at its chemical plant located in North Laverton, a suburb of Melbourne. The Victorian government's environmental agency, the Environmental Protection Authority, immediately ordered this plant to be closed down until Nufarm could prove that Greenpeace claims were incorrect.

A cover story in the June 1990 edition of Business Review Weekly indicates that corporate Australia does have a legitimate reason to feel threatened by Greenpeace. In

¹²² Bailey, P. 'The Yank now cleaning up Greenpeace', op.cit., p.76.
this feature article Stevens labelled Greenpeace the new 'corporate raider' and reported that,

To fall foul of Greenpeace these days is to suffer, at best, a serious setback in public relations. At worst, as in the case of the most recent Greenpeace action in Melbourne, there can be a full scale investigation of the company, a partial suspension of its operations and a lot of unanswered questions about the legal ramifications for both the company and its directors if all Greenpeace's allegations are proved correct. Quite simply Greenpeace has become a management issue: a raid will cost companies executive time and potentially a lot of money in fines, the cost of improved pollution controls or even in lost cashflow from having the business closed down.123

Although direct action is an effective technique to exercise pressure and demand accountability from industry, it also increases the vulnerability of the Greenpeace organisation. The high public profile that accompanies the use of flamboyant direct action exposes Greenpeace to criticism and counter-attack. Until recently, companies operating in Australia have escaped the need to vigorously defend their corporate behaviour in relation to environmental damage. Attempts by Greenpeace to change this situation are therefore perceived as a direct threat to these companies. Consequently, it is not surprising to detect a response from industry that is designed to attack one of Greenpeace's most valuable assets, its credibility.

5.4 VULNERABILITY

By challenging large multi-national corporations Greenpeace is advocating the introduction of industrial regulatory reforms which threaten the interests of powerful business elites. These groups therefore have an interest in attacking Greenpeace's credibility. The way in which corporations have responded to Greenpeace actions reveals that there are different strategies used to achieve this effect.

123 Stevens, op.cit., p.48.
Following the direct actions against Caltex and BHP, both these companies quickly mobilised their public relations departments to defend their environmental record. Phil Gross, head of public affairs at Caltex, even went so far as to claim that management investigated the possibility that the company's filtration system had been sabotaged. After implying that Greenpeace was capable of doing this, Gross offered Caltex's official explanation. Gross claimed that excessive rainfall in Sydney during January had created unusual technical problems with the company's filtration system and insisted that Caltex had been unfairly 'set-up'.

Management at BHP adopted a slightly different strategy. The company's General Manager, Grahame Parker, argued that BHP had drastically reduced its discharges over the last decade and was allocating $14 million to the construction of a biological treatment facility that would further reduce these discharges. Parker also complained that Greenpeace had chosen BHP primarily because it was an 'easy target' and alleged that the whole Greenpeace campaign was based on 'misinformation'.

Company spokespeople have also claimed that Greenpeace is less concerned with stopping pollution than it is with winning the public's support. They are cynical about what motivates Greenpeace direct action and suggest that it is used primarily as a means to facilitate intense membership recruitment drives and generate operating revenue. Certainly there is little doubt that direct action fulfils a dual role given that it also conveys the popular image of Greenpeace at work. Direct action is an effective form of advertising for Greenpeace. As McCarthy and Zald argue, social movement organisations that derive their power from public support often need to aggressively

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124 ibid., p.49.
market their services through 'slick packaging and convoluted appeals to self interest'. Direct action achieves this, and as Stevens concludes,

> It can embarrass victims into contrite compliance with the green line and attract that most tangible display of public support, working capital.

The media, eager to attach labels to environmental organisations, often use the analogy of an ecological army engaging in commando style raids when describing Greenpeace direct actions. Bailey has coined the Greenpeace style of activism a form of 'eco-terrorism'. However, the associated imagery of violence is antithetical to the Greenpeace philosophy based on the Quaker principle of non-violent confrontation. McAllister believes that strict adherence to this principle has been critically important for Greenpeace and that all campaigners are aware that the organisation would undoubtedly lose support if it ever did commit an act of personal violence.

On occasion Greenpeace has been forced to call off a proposed action because it threatened the safety of others. For example, this occurred in Wollongong after management at BHP convinced toxics co-ordinator Paul Gilding that blocking discharge pipes draining into Port Kembla could have caused an explosion in one of the blast furnaces. In this instance, Gilding had little option but to accept the judgement of a company engineer and called off the action.

Companies that have trouble dealing with Greenpeace often invoke the image of 'eco-terrorism' in order to portray Greenpeace actions as reckless and endangering the safety of others. This approach was adopted by the company EZ when Greenpeace conducted a direct action at its Risdon zinc works in Hobart. Although the company later admitted

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127 Stevens, op.cit., p.53.
128 Bailey, 'The Yank now cleaning up Greenpeace', op.cit., p.36.
that accounts of the confrontation had been distorted and grossly exaggerated, rumours abounded that Greenpeace had endangered the crew of the *Anson* by sabotaging the pump valves on this ocean dumping vessel.\(^{129}\)

Greenpeace also draws criticism for acting as a self-appointed watchdog and failing to offer constructive solutions to the problems that campaigners reveal. The risks of exposing itself to this type of criticism have increased along with the enhanced public profile that Greenpeace now enjoys. However, Gilding claims that Greenpeace is not threatened by these attacks on the organisation's credibility and believes there is a far more accurate way of evaluating and directing its activities,

> We get criticism for being self-appointed watchdogs and that we are unelected. But the ultimate constraint on us is public opinion. If we alienate the public we lose public support. If we do that we lose the fight. And so far we have had nothing but support from the public for our program.\(^{130}\)

Apart from the physical and organisational risks associated with the use of direct action, there are also considerable financial costs entailed in using this technique of political activism. For example, the direct action against the company Nufarm in May 1990 cost Greenpeace $25,000 to stage. These costs are determined by the need to package direct action for media consumption. As stated previously, the value of a Greenpeace action is only realised if it is shown to as large an audience as possible. To ensure that this happens Greenpeace has allocated resources and developed skills to cultivate a professional working relationship with representatives of the media.

\(^{129}\) Stevens, *op.cit.*, p.55.

\(^{130}\) *ibid.*, p.55.
5.5 MEDIA MACHINE

The Greenpeace style of direct action has proven to be a highly effective technique of disseminating critical information to a large audience. As a tactical option used to mobilise community concern and exert pressure on government and industry, direct action has little value for Greenpeace unless it is shown to as many individuals as possible. Accordingly, Greenpeace organises and conducts direct actions in a fashion that will ensure maximum media coverage.

Representatives of the media, including press journalists and television reporters, are sometimes asked to accompany Greenpeace activists on direct actions. Alternatively, they are advised of impending Greenpeace actions and lured by the prospect of a newsworthy confrontation. For those actions staged in more remote locations, where the media can not be present, Greenpeace has invested in communications hardware. Crew members aboard the *Rainbow Warrior 2*, regardless of its location, can access an Inmarsat Satellite service to makes calls anywhere in the world. A facsimile and wire-photo machine also enable crew members to relay information and pictures for immediate distribution to the media.

The visual element of Greenpeace direct actions is particularly suited to television. On several occasions in 1990 Greenpeace has received extensive coverage on all major television networks in Australia. Spokespeople for Greenpeace exhibit the skills associated with being 'media smart'; they are relaxed and articulate in interviews and able to exploit the '30 second grab' needed to ensure a television appearance.

Victims of Greenpeace high profile direct actions testify to the organisation's professional capacity to cater for the needs of the media. Major industrial corporations
with large public relations departments have conceded that they often feel impotent and powerless to respond. As Stevens reports,

> After the Greenpeace experience, both Caltex and BHP concluded that there is little point in fighting the Greenpeace media strategy once it gets rolling.\(^{131}\)

The skills involved in using the media to raise Greenpeace's profile and disseminate information have been enhanced as a result of the organisation's restructuring program and, in particular, the decision by the Australian Board to employ a full-time media co-ordinator. Michelle Grosvenor, who currently occupies this position, has the responsibility to nurture a constructive working relationship with the media. This includes efforts to provide specific information that caters for the interests and needs of individual journalists. More recently Grosvenor has also spent time establishing contacts with journalists in community radio services and the ethnic press.

Although Greenpeace has drawn criticism for packaging its direct actions for media consumption, Grosvenor fiercely defends this approach.

> We don't deny it, Greenpeace is a tightly run media machine, but when you are talking about issues as important as the end of the world as we know it and because our budget is small compared with other corporations, we must use the media to get our message across.\(^{132}\)

Grosvenor has been highly successful in terms of enhancing the organisation's profile through increased media attention. In 1990 Greenpeace has regularly made headlines and been the subject of feature articles and cover stories in current affairs programs, periodicals like the *Business Review Weekly*, and major metropolitan newspapers such as the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Grosvenor claims that Greenpeace also acts as a resource bank of information for the media. Much of her time is spent providing

\(^{131}\) *ibid.*, p.52.
\(^{132}\) *ibid.*, p.54.
background information to journalists for articles and reports that deal with environmental issues. The quality of this information makes Greenpeace a reliable and valuable source for journalists. For example, Rick Humphries, Greenpeace's National Liaison Officer based in Canberra often passes on critical information to members of the press gallery so that they can then ask what he describes as difficult and 'sticky' questions to politicians at press conferences.

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Since its inception as an 'idea' in 1971, Greenpeace has developed a unique style of direct action which is now widely recognised as an integral feature of its lobbying efforts. The image of Greenpeace at work has proven to be a highly effective technique of mobilising public attention and exerting pressure on government and industry. Packaging critical environmental information for media consumption enables campaigners to maximise the political value of this information. Exposing industrial villains and regulatory negligence contributes to a process that helps sustain environmental concern at a popular level. This concern provides a platform to demand accountability from government and industry. The effectiveness of this technique is confirmed by attempts to attack one of Greenpeace's most valuable assets, its credibility.

The Greenpeace service is comprehensive. It includes efforts to empower individuals; influence policy through participating in government decision-making processes; and to force governments and industry to share responsibility to protect the environment. In all these three domains of political activism, Greenpeace activity can be interpreted as the actions of an information services organisation. Greenpeace is either processing, producing, providing or using information. This first part of this thesis has concentrated on establishing an understanding of why Greenpeace has diverse information needs. The second part of this thesis examines the techniques that Greenpeace has developed to
manage information. The focus widens to identify the diversity of Greenpeace's information needs. Rather than restrict the analysis to those needs that are created by Greenpeace as a pressure group contributing to the environmental movement, it also considers the demands created by Greenpeace as a social movement organisation within a social movement industry.
PART TWO

The second part of this thesis focuses on the techniques that Greenpeace has developed in order to acquire, organise and disseminate information. Greenpeace is portrayed as having three separate categories of information needs. As a pressure group and participant in the environmental movement, Greenpeace has information needs that determine its capacity to exercise political power. As a registered company and part of an international corporation, clearly defined statutory obligations and fiscal responsibilities dictate another category of information needs. Finally, as a social movement organisation that is totally dependent on public support, Greenpeace has information needs that are created by the challenge involved in generating sufficient operating revenue.

The analysis of how Greenpeace has responded to these information requirements concentrates on clarifying the role played by computer and telecommunication technologies. This section seeks to determine the efficacy of these technologies in helping Greenpeace to achieve its goals. Chapters six, seven and eight trace the development of a technological infrastructure and identify the dominant considerations that have shaped this investment. These chapters also examine the advantages that this infrastructure provides and how the infrastructure has affected various Greenpeace activities in relation to processing information.
6 INFORMATION ACQUISITION

To construct convincing arguments and defend campaign demands, Greenpeace campaigners need access to a gamut of scientific, technical, economic and political information. The acquisition of this information constitutes a major component of campaigning activity. Without the ability to perform this function effectively, the power and influence that Greenpeace exercises as a pressure group would diminish. Further, its credibility as an informed participant in environmental debates would be jeopardised. Accordingly, the capacity to locate and collect accurate information is critically important. This chapter identifies those techniques which Greenpeace has developed in order to accommodate this most essential need.

The most favoured and efficient technique is the development of personal networks. Campaigners, as well as a liaison officer based in Canberra, cultivate a network of contacts in order to obtain information pertinent to campaign needs. These contacts include employees working in government departments, trade unions, the media or industry. They also include professionals such as economists and scientists who possess specialised skills and expertise. However, campaigners can not assume that these networks will adequately cater for all their information needs. In some cases, the information that campaigners require is simply not available from these sources. On these occasions Greenpeace may decide to conduct original research programs. Given the costs and time involved, this type of activity represents an investment decision. Another important source of information is individuals who are sympathetic to the Greenpeace cause and willing to pass on information that they feel may be of use to campaigners. This may range from a copy of a suppressed government document to specific details about a controversial industrial practice. A far less helpful mechanism,
and one that is used only when it is absolutely necessary, is purchasing information through the Freedom of Information Act.

This chapter concludes with an examination of what role information technologies have played in helping Greenpeace campaigners acquire information. It is apparent that the development of an in-house electronic mail system has had a major impact. Most noticeably, this facility enables campaigners within the global Greenpeace network to share information. The advantage of this service is that it allows campaigners to do this quickly, cheaply and conveniently. Computer and telecommunication technologies have enhanced Greenpeace's ability to control, access and distribute information within the organisation's international network.

However, as a tool to acquire information from outside this global Greenpeace network, computer and telecommunication technologies do not play a significant role. Contrary to the claims of computopians like Toffler and Naisbitt, these technologies have not automatically provided open access to unlimited information. Campaigners can not use these technologies to monitor what decisions are being made by government departments. Nor has this technology presented Greenpeace with new opportunities to participate in elite decision-making. This is not a result of a reluctance by Greenpeace to experiment with these technologies. Although some other environmental organisations have expressed ideological reservations about using computer technology, Greenpeace has no such aversion. To the contrary, Greenpeace actively supports a new computer networking service even though it is barely used. This is done out of a sense of obligation to support initiatives that are designed to use information technology for socially and politically constructive purposes.

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133 Fraser, I. 'Chips, with a grain of salt', Baker, G. 'Are computers really necessary?', Bogong, November 1984, pp.12-14.
6.1 NETWORKS

Based on their study of the successful campaigns conducted by various environmental pressure groups during the 1960s, Kimber and Richardson have suggested that one of the most valuable resources an environmental pressure group can possess is 'advance intelligence.'\(^{134}\) Similarly, in his study on the strategies of environmental activism, O'Riordan also advocates that advance intelligence represents a major asset.

> Forewarned is forearmed: the more a group has access to policy determinations or decisions before these become legally, morally, or politically binding, the better its chance of success. But obtaining advance warning is always difficult because governments, despite their public declarations to reduce secrecy, fully realise the dangers of too much 'openness'. Obviously, friends in the 'right' places can be enormously useful.\(^ {135}\)

As a result of the restructuring within Greenpeace a full-time lobbyist is now employed in Canberra. The creation of this position reflects both the desire and intention by Greenpeace to establish a presence and influence in the heart of Australian parliamentary politics. In March 1990, Rick Humphries was appointed to this position and became Greenpeace's first National Liaison Officer. Humphries, who was recruited from the ACF and has experience in the field of political lobbying, has suggested that one of his most important functions is to 'glean snippets of useful information'.\(^ {136}\)

Humphries closely monitors developments in government activity that are in any way associated with environmental issues. He achieves this through cultivating a network of contacts within the Canberra press gallery and the offices of federal ministers. Through these contacts Humphries has created a network that provides him with access to information which would otherwise be extremely difficult to obtain. This includes

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\(^ {136}\) Personal communication, 21st June 1990.
finding out when meetings on particular issues are to be held and who will be attending, clarifying the positions of those parties and interests involved in the policy-making process, and identifying opportunities to capitalise on factional splits within Cabinet. By relaying this type of information to the national head office in Sydney, campaigners are kept informed of developments that they should be aware of. This gives them the opportunity to incorporate this knowledge into the planning of campaign tactics.

Individual campaigners have also established their own personal networks of contacts in order to access reliable information quickly. These contacts can include professional economic consultants, scientists, union personnel and senior bureaucrats within government departments. To help preserve Australia's pro-whale conservation policy, campaigners in the Ocean Ecology campaign maintain constant communication with key personnel in the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The value in doing so is obvious given that the director of this government agency is the Australian government's representative on the International Whaling Commission.137

Interviews with campaign staff confirm that these networks are considered a most valuable resource. They are used to provide fast access to information that is needed in order to refine and modify campaign efforts. A common complaint amongst campaigners is that rather than suffer from a lack of quality information, the more frustrating problem arises from information 'overload'. Without these networks, campaigners agree that the process of acquiring information for campaigning purposes would be a far more difficult and tedious task.

Protecting the confidentiality of these contacts (if so required) and nurturing a relationship that facilitates the free exchange of accurate information are considered essential skills for campaign staff to develop. Networks are most useful when

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campaigners seek answers to specific questions or wish to be kept informed of developments relevant to their campaign. For example, a telephone call may verify the intentions of a government department or clarify the correct interpretation of a particular piece of environmental legislation. However, networks can only satisfy some of the campaigners' information needs. When the situation arises where information that is considered essential for formulating a strong campaign is not available, Greenpeace often finance original research programs.

6.2 ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Usually, it is the longer term campaign objectives that dictate what type of information campaigners may require. If this information is not readily available, Greenpeace has few options but to acquire this information itself. The task of collecting information so that it can be used for campaigning purposes can be a time consuming and costly process. For example, in the Wildlife and Ocean Ecology campaign one objective is the establishment of endangered species legislation in all Australian states and territories. To formulate adequate guidelines for this legislation, Greenpeace first needs to find, then collate any relevant information that is already available. This is a major task and in December 1989 a full-time researcher was appointed to undertake this role.138

Campaigners also need to critically evaluate the accuracy of the information that is made available to them from sources like government departments. The importance of this is illustrated by campaigner Lindy Stacker's discovery in her efforts to stop the commercial slaughter of kangaroos. Closer examination and appraisal of the methods used to assess the size of the kangaroo population (and hence justify the slaughter of three million a year) reveal, according to Stacker, that they are grossly inaccurate.139

Greenpeace not only analyses information that is readily available, it also collects original data. While the costs involved with conducting scientific research programs are extensive, this activity is considered to be an investment. Original research is undertaken on the assumption that it will enhance the power that Greenpeace can exercise when participating in elite decision-making forums. Such a decision was made in relation to campaign efforts to stop driftnet fishing in the South Pacific region. In February 1990 Greenpeace began a survey voyage to assess the impacts of driftnet fishing. This survey was conducted from the *Rainbow Warrior 2* and the research team included divers, filmmakers, oceanographers and a marine biologist. This study is the first ever scientific investigation of the impacts of driftnets on marine life in the South Pacific region.\(^{140}\)

The value of this research program is that the information Greenpeace collects will enable it to speak with greater authority on this issue. This will be important if Greenpeace is to successfully close a loophole in the United Nations General Assembly provisional ban on driftnet fishing which comes into effect after the 1990/91 season. Greenpeace believes this ban to be flawed because it will allow driftnetting to continue in international waters if 'appropriate conservation and management arrangements' are adopted. Having documented the impacts, Greenpeace believes it will be able to verify that these sixty kilometre walls of nylon filament can not, in reality, be 'managed'. Already Greenpeace has collected compelling data that illustrates how destructive driftnet operations can be. After monitoring the Japanese in the Tasman Sea over the 1989/90 summer, Greenpeace has recorded over 5,000 drowned dolphins cut from these nets and discarded as unwanted catches.\(^ {141}\)

\(^{140}\) Driftnet Direct Mailing, February 1990.

\(^{141}\) Direct Mailing, Ocean Ecology, February 1990.
Funding research projects designed to analyse and collate information, or collect original data for use in future campaigning, is an investment decision. Greenpeace allocates resources and finances for these projects in the hope of securing a future return. Campaigners anticipate that the costs involved in acquiring the information will be recovered when it is used successfully to strengthen campaign demands. This process illustrates that like a commodity, information has both a value and a cost. This also applies to information that governments possess.

6.3 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

On occasion, information which can be particularly useful for Greenpeace campaigns is contained in documents and files stored in the archives of government departments and statutory authorities. This may include official reports, feasibility studies, environmental impact statements or summaries of the recommendations used to make decisions that have had adverse repercussions on the environment. Open access to this information would enable campaigners to identify pitfalls in the decision-making process, conflicting scientific and technical advice, and possible breaches of statutory responsibility. This type of information has a significant tactical value as it can be used by campaigners to expose inconsistencies in policy and incidents of political expediency.

In order to acquire certain information that is held by government departments and authorities, Greenpeace must use the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. This Act provides a legally enforceable right to obtain access to documents held by government agencies. However, there are provisions in the Act which allow an agency to refuse certain information. This includes documents concerning 'public safety' or where there is a 'legitimate need for confidentiality'. A government agency also need not comply if
the request 'would unreasonably divert the agency's resources from its normal functions.'\textsuperscript{142}

There are also other limitations and constraints involved in using FOI as a means of acquiring information. FOI is not designed to provide open and random access to government files. Instead, it is structured in a such way that government bureaucracies are only required to provide very specific information. FOI is only practical if campaigners know in advance what information they want. In effect, this means that campaigners must first be aware that specific information exists before they can ask to see it. Therefore, FOI is more useful for purposes of confirmation, than a means of searching through government files in order to 'discover' new information.

Requesting information under FOI can also be an expensive and time consuming process. An initial charge of $30 must accompany the official application lodged with the relevant government agency. The agency then has forty-five days to decide whether it will comply. In addition, the agency can then charge an additional searching fee of $30 an hour to locate and photocopy the information that has been requested. A reticent bureaucracy, reluctant to provide potentially damaging information, can dramatically increase the total costs involved.

Greenpeace campaigners do not depend on FOI as a practical source of information. FOI is used sparingly and in 1990 it only really featured in Greenpeace efforts to tackle the problems of urban pollution, specifically the disposal of toxic wastes. The following case study provides an example of how and why FOI was used in the toxics campaign. It illustrates the circumstances in which campaigners may decide to use FOI and more importantly, demonstrates its limitations.

\textsuperscript{142} NSW Premier's Department, \textit{Freedom of Information: Guidelines for using FOI in NSW}, October 1989.
In March 1990, a local action group based in the western suburbs of Sydney approached Greenpeace for help. Around two hundred local residents had formed the Residents Action Group for the Environment (RAGE) to voice their concern over a landfill based disposal depot located at Castlereagh, a suburb of Sydney. RAGE was experiencing difficulty in obtaining information about this facility from the Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA). Greenpeace's toxics campaigner, Donna Russo, first visited the area with the aim of finding out exactly what types of waste were being disposed of at this facility. With the assistance of a biochemist, Russo collected samples of discharges that were seeping into a local creek. These were then sent to independent laboratories for chemical analysis. At the same time, Russo lodged a FOI application to check what information was being held by the MWDA in relation to the Castlereagh facility.

The decision to use FOI was prompted by the fact that Russo knew that the MWDA had previously commissioned a study of this facility. A copy of this document had been anonymously forwarded to Greenpeace. The document revealed that when this study was originally commissioned, in 1983, the MWDA was arguing for the establishment of a new high temperature incineration facility at Bankstown, another suburb of Sydney. As outlined in the document, part of the case for supporting this project was technical and scientific advice warning that the facility at Castlereagh was already overloaded. After it was decided not to build a new incinerator at Bankstown, this study was conveniently shelved.

Russo hoped that the FOI application would produce information explaining how the MWDA, seven years later, defended the safety aspects of operations at Castlereagh considering that the quantity of processed wastes had increased dramatically since 1983. The information that was provided failed to answer this question. Russo believes that the MWDA was unco-operative in responding to her application and that relevant
information may have been deliberately withheld. Russo eventually released a copy of the controversial document to the ABC's investigative program *Four Corners*. The information in this document is now being used as the basis for a feature documentary on the Castlereagh facility.

For Greenpeace, the FOI Act is not a particularly useful source of information, nor is it designed to be. Requests can be expensive, time consuming and fail to produce anything of value. Fortunately, the problems associated with FOI do not prevent Greenpeace from obtaining the information it needs. Information that government agencies would prefer Greenpeace not to obtain often reaches campaigners through a different route. A similar process occurs in relation to information that large industrial corporations would prefer go unnoticed. Members of the public and employees are often willing to provide this type of information to Greenpeace free of charge.

6.4 THE PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEES

A reputation for being able to use information effectively and protect the anonymity of its sources prompts members of the public and employees to provide campaigners with information they would otherwise be unable to obtain. Sometimes this information comes as an unexpected windfall where campaigners receive anonymous telephone calls or documents in the mail. Alternatively, campaigners claim that there is never any difficulty in finding employees, or ex-employees, who are prepared to provide information.

Companies that Greenpeace has targeted have been amazed at the detail and accuracy of the information that campaigners have been able to acquire. Following the raid on Caltex in January 1990, management ordered an internal investigation to find out how Greenpeace knew so much about the Caltex plant. Phil Gross, head of public affairs at
Caltex, claimed that it came as a shock to management to learn how precise Greenpeace's information was.

They certainly were very well informed about us. They knew when to take their samples and that we were having trouble with the filtration. We didn't know we had a problem, not at management level anyway.\textsuperscript{143}

Governments have also been embarrassed because Greenpeace has acquired highly sensitive information that they would prefer to keep from the public. For example, in May 1988 Greenpeace 'obtained' a government document titled, \textit{Prospects For a Nuclear Fuel Cycle in the Northern Territory}. This document confirmed that the government, without public knowledge, was investigating the feasibility of creating an extended nuclear industry in the Northern Territory. This was to include enrichment, fuel rod fabrication, reprocessing and high level radioactive waste management facilities. In this instance nuclear campaigner Melanie Theideman leaked this document to the media and convened a public forum in Darwin to mobilise community concern.\textsuperscript{144}

Greenpeace also seeks local expertise and advice in order to obtain information. In the Clean Waters Campaign Greenpeace campaigners collected information and the opinions from people with first hand experience with the problems of water pollution. For example, when Greenpeace staged the direct action against BHP at Wollongong, campaigners spent a lot of time discussing the issue of industrial outfalls with local fishermen.\textsuperscript{145}

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\textsuperscript{143} Stevens, \textit{op.cit.}, p.53.
\textsuperscript{144} Theideman, M. 'Campaign Report: Uranium Mining', \textit{Greenpeace Annual Report}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.29.
\textsuperscript{145} Stevenson, \textit{op.cit.}, p.1.
Campaigners acquire information through a diverse range of techniques. Personal networks of contacts, original research programs, members of the public, government and industry employees, and less frequently the Freedom of Information Act are all sources of information. Another major reservoir of information is the international Greenpeace network of operations. Utilising the resources within this network has not always been an easy or practical option. Until recently, Australia's geographic location tended to isolate campaigners in Australia from Greenpeace activities elsewhere in the world. Integrating the Australian operation more comprehensively into this network has provided campaigners with unlimited access to a huge reservoir of knowledge, expertise and skill. This development has been made possible by the use of computer and telecommunication technology.

6.5 GREENLINK 2

Communication within the geographically fragmented international Greenpeace network is conducted through an electronic mail and news service system called Greenlink 2. This facility is owned totally by the parent organisation Greenpeace International, yet the Boston based company MaxLink has been contracted to manage the system. Satellite radio channel services provided by Infonet and British Telecom Tymnet are used for the international transmission linkages to connect Greenpeace operations in different countries.

Access to this facility integrates Greenpeace Australia into an instantaneous global information network. Users are allocated an electronic mailbox (of which there are 500 in the Greenlink 2 network) that enables them to send and receive information from other users in the network. For security and confidentiality these boxes are protected by password. In addition to individual boxes there are also several communal campaign
boxes that contain the most recent information on Greenpeace campaign developments all around the world.

Campaigners can use Greenlink 2 to send requests for specific information. Hoyle suggests that this ability to gain access to world-wide expertise has provided a flexibility that campaigners did not enjoy when Greenpeace Australia relied on the telephone to keep in touch with the rest of the Greenpeace network. Although Hoyle's analysis is symptomatic of a technological deterministic approach, his observations of the impact of Greenlink 2 are accurate.

The result is that Greenpeace is able to draw on the opinions of experts throughout the world for material to prepare reports on environmental issues. This global reservoir of scientific knowledge can be coordinated and swung into action behind any campaign anywhere in the world.146

Greenlink 2 provides a reliable facility for acquiring, distributing and sharing information within the international Greenpeace network. Staff find Greenlink 2 easy to use and consider it a quick and accurate way of transmitting, receiving and requesting information. It is also a low cost technology to utilise since the parent company Greenpeace International provides the computer software free of charge. It also pays the first $500 in charges for each mailbox. In terms of hardware requirement, all that is needed to access Greenlink 2 is a modem attached to a microcomputer. The modem links the user into the subscriber network for overseas switching. Greenpeace Australia uses a modem which can automatically adjust its send-receive speed to match the speed of the modem at the other end of the call. This overcomes any problems of incompatibility and ensures that the speed at which the modem transmits data minimises the costs of the ISD call charges. This modem, valued at $700, was donated to Greenpeace by the company NetComm Australia.147

147 Hoyle, S. Personal communication, 17th August 1990.
Greenlink 2 is a relatively cheap, yet highly effective technique of managing information within the international Greenpeace network. Its introduction in 1989 provided campaigners with open access to a vast new resource. Campaigners have been quick to recognise the potential of this facility and Greenlink 2 is now a significant source of information. In terms of maximising the value of the knowledge, skills and expertise that reside within the international organisation, computer and telecommunications technology have been of great assistance to Greenpeace.

While this technology has enhanced the campaigners' ability to obtain information that is available within the Greenpeace organisation, it has played a far less significant role in terms of providing access to information from other sources. This is not because computer networking services designed for this purpose do not exist. For example, Pegasus is an electronic mail system that offers a comparable service to Greenlink 2. The difference is that any individual, community group, research centre, government department or corporation can subscribe.

Pegasus is linked to the Association for Progressive Communication, a body that aims to promote the use of computer and telecommunication technologies in a socially constructive manner. Ian Peters, managing director of Pegasus Networks, believes that Pegasus has enormous potential for helping to resolve environmental problems. Providing a low cost communications system is supposed to encourage interaction between individuals, social movement organisations, government agencies and corporations through the exchange of ideas and information. Subscription costs to Pegasus include an initial joining fee of $30 and a monthly service charge of $12.

Since Pegasus became available in Australia in 1989 several environmental organisations, including Greenpeace, have joined this network. In August 1990 these included the World Wildlife Fund, Friends of the Earth, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Rainforest Information Centre. The New South Wales state government's Ministry of Natural Resources and the multi-national corporation ICI Australia Limited are also subscribers. Michael Henry, corporate affairs manager of ICI, claims that Pegasus provides an opportunity to resolve environmental problems through interaction. Stephen Cropper, communications adviser with the Ministry of Natural Resources is also convinced that Pegasus has an integral role to play in environmental reform.

It is important for any business whose operations in any way touch on the environmental debate because they are representative of what is a developing 'new morality' in government and society at large; in order to responsibly navigate your way through the new morality it's essential to have access to information.149

While Greenpeace holds similar hopes that Pegasus will be used constructively in facilitating environmental reform, at present it is not providing campaigners with access to information or opening new channels of communication for interactive dialogue with government and industry. The most regular user of Pegasus in Greenpeace is the Ocean and Wildlife campaign co-ordinator Molly Olson. Olson accesses Pegasus on average once a week and uses it to send and receive information from the ACF and the Rainforest Information Centre. The reality is that Pegasus is not used in any interactive fashion. Nor has it proven useful as a technique to lodge requests for specific information. Instead, Pegasus is used primarily as a substitute for the facsimile or post. Despite its limited use Greenpeace continue to subscribe to the Pegasus network. Information Services Officer, Armin Wittfoth, justifies this because Pegasus is what he describes as, 'the type of technology that Greenpeace should support.'150

149 ibid., p.17.
150 Wittfoth A. Personal communication, 16th February 1990,
To exercise power as a pressure group and maintain credibility as an informed participant in environmental debates, Greenpeace campaigners need reliable sources and techniques to acquire information. To satisfy these needs campaigners have cultivated personal networks of contacts, financed original research programs, and less frequently, used the Freedom of Information Act. Campaigners also benefit from a willingness by members of the public and employees to supply valuable information. Computer and telecommunication technologies, in the form of an in-house electronic mail system, have significantly broadened the campaigners' ability to acquire information. Greenlink 2 enables campaigners to utilise the resources that exist within Greenpeace's global information network. However, these technologies have been less helpful in terms of providing access to critical information outside the Greenpeace organisation.
7 INFORMATION ORGANISATION: ADMINISTRATION

As a registered company, Greenpeace has clearly defined fiduciary obligations that regulate and control its corporate behaviour. Satisfying these responsibilities while simultaneously trying to manage the growth in the Greenpeace organisation have become a large and complex task. This chapter will analyse what role information technologies have played in helping Greenpeace satisfy its corporate information needs.

An efficient administration is the foundation for a healthy and effective Greenpeace organisation. Previous neglect in this area of management precipitated the organisation's financial dilemmas in 1987. Facing collapse through bankruptcy and under pressure from the parent company to contribute more as an active member of the international network, the Australian Board of Directors acknowledged the need to develop a more capable administration. This has been achieved under the guidance of the Administrative Director/Company Secretary, H. P. Singh. Since 1988 Greenpeace has successfully tightened-up its financial and personnel management practices.

As support for Greenpeace has grown, so too have the demands on the company Greenpeace Australia Limited. Most noticeably, the quantity of information that must be processed has increased dramatically. Greenpeace now has offices in all Australian states, employs almost three times the number of staff it did in 1987, and is responsible for managing over $2.3 million in operating revenue. Although information technologies have played a major role in accommodating the demands that this growth has incurred, the administrative infrastructure is not technologically sophisticated. This is a result of a policy decision to make the administration efficient, yet simple. Back in 1988 when the
restructuring process began, the then Chairperson of the Australian Board, Gerard Craddock, issued a timely warning.

There is a natural tendency amongst all organisations of a significant size to allow the administrative goals to take on a life of their own, divorced from the original rationale for the creation of the organisation. This is often simply a result of the enormity of the task of administering a large corporation. It is useful at such times as this to realise that all the slickness of the modern corporation is utterly worthless unless it increases the organisation's ability to realise its goals.151

As a company that is registered under the New South Wales Companies Code, Greenpeace Australia Limited has a legal obligation to fulfil various fiduciary responsibilities. These are defined clearly in the company's Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association. For example, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Companies Code, auditors must be employed on an annual basis to verify that the company has satisfied all its financial and taxation obligations. This can include checking whether Greenpeace has made the correct provisions for pay-roll tax, disclosed all sources of revenue and maintained accurate records of its operating expenses. The administration must also provide information to the Australian Board of Directors and the parent company Greenpeace International Limited. One reason for this is to monitor how effectively finances are being used to further Greenpeace goals. The administration, therefore, must have a system of financial management that can ensure ready access to diverse packages of financial information on request.

Greenpeace's information needs in relation to financial management are very similar to those of a commercial company. Because of this, Greenpeace has not experienced any problems in finding a computer software program designed specifically for this type of application. In early 1989, following discussions with the company's accounting consultant, Chris Browne, Singh established an internal accounting department. As a

result, two full-time staff members now operate a finance and accounting software package run from a microcomputer. Financial data from ten separate cost centres is coded and entered into this program on a monthly basis. One of the advantages of this computerised system is that the accounting staff can now produce income and expense statements and profit and loss accounts with minimal effort. This system is also used to extract and collate packages of financial information for campaigners and management to use in budgeting.

In a very real sense the decision to utilise computer technology for financial management was forced on Greenpeace. The quantity of information and number of financial transactions that had to be processed increased dramatically over the three year period from 1987. Revenue jumped from $460,000 to $2.3 million and expenses rose from $406,000 to $2.1 million. Tracking where the revenue came from and how it was spent became an increasingly complicated task. Evidence of this is the fact that auditing fees over this same period tripled to $30,000.\(^{152}\) Both Singh and Browne maintain that adopting a computerised system was necessary in order to satisfy the company's diverse fiscal responsibilities. Certainly without this system it would be an extremely cumbersome and time consuming task to extract and collate financial information for campaigners, the Board of Directors and Greenpeace International.

Although in theory the option exists, operating a manual book-keeping system is no longer considered to be a feasible proposition. Apart from providing an inferior service in terms of flexibility and speed of processing, it would be an expensive system to maintain. Greenpeace's accountant, Vicki Cuskelley, estimates that without the software program at least an additional three full-time staff would be needed. Further, these positions would involve mundane and highly repetitive procedural work. Even assuming that Greenpeace was prepared to accept a less flexible and more expensive system,

\(^{152}\) Howarth and Howarth, *op.cit.*, p.5.
Cuskelly suggests that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find people with what are
now considered obsolete manual book-keeping skills.153

The abundance of high quality commercial software programs has made the transition to
an internal computerised finance and accounting system relatively straightforward.
Greenpeace also benefits from the expertise of Chris Browne. Browne, who has a long
history of involvement with Greenpeace (first as its accountant and now its financial
consultant), is familiar with the organisation's information needs as a company
registered in New South Wales, and a company with financial obligations to Greenpeace
International. Browne now acts as a troubleshooter and is contracted to solve any
operating problems with the system.

In August 1990, Singh opted to extend the function of computer technology in the
administration and decided to install a software program to computerise personnel
records. Greenpeace presently accrues an annual wages bill in excess of $1 million and
employs close to forty full-time staff around Australia. Singh expects that this program
will enable him to manage employee information (such as annual leave entitlement and
wages) far more efficiently than the manual system allowed. Similarly, Greenpeace is
also currently investigating the option of installing modems in the branch offices to create
a national communications network. The aim is to connect the microcomputers at the
Greenpeace offices in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Brisbane, Perth and
Canberra. At present Greenpeace uses Australia Post, couriers, telephone and facsimile
to send and receive information within Australia. In 1989 Greenpeace paid $36,000 in
telephone bills and $50,000 for postage and couriers. While computer networking would
not totally replace the existing methods of communication, the substantial cost
advantages suggest that it is likely to be implemented in the future.

153 Personal communication, 14th April 1990.
As a company with clearly defined statutory obligations, Greenpeace has opted to utilise computer and telecommunication technologies for reasons of efficiency. Finding the appropriate software programs and incorporating them into the administrative infrastructure have been relatively painless and straightforward tasks. Moves to computerise personnel records and current discussions on possible networking in the immediate future reflect the willingness to use this technology when there are definite cost advantages. This investment also confirms that, like any commercial company, Greenpeace has certain information needs that must be processed in the most practical and efficient manner. In this field of management, Greenpeace could have jeopardised its operation by not taking advantage of the huge range of software programs that are available on the market. However, as the next section seeks to demonstrate, the market does not always offer products attuned to Greenpeace's information needs.
8 INFORMATION DISSEMINATION: DIRECT MAIL

Cautious experimentation and investment in computer technology have enabled Greenpeace to develop a sophisticated direct mail program. This facility provides a cost effective technique of disseminating critical environmental information to a large, carefully selected audience. It also provides a highly successful fundraising tool. The direct mail program is the most innovative application of computer technology within Greenpeace. It has been developed over a five year period and now fulfils an integral function for the Greenpeace organisation.

8.1 HISTORY

Until 1985 volunteers packed, sealed, and addressed by hand all mailings sent to the then 3,000 national Greenpeace supporters. The information on these supporters was recorded onto cards and stored in a 'shoe box' at the Adelaide office. This was a very labour intensive procedure and it relied totally on the goodwill of dedicated volunteers. As the organisation continued to grow during the latter half of the 1980s, so too did the logistical problems of generating an accurate mailing list. The importance and value of maintaining regular contact with supporters demanded a more reliable, capable and secure arrangement. In late 1985 Cheryl McEgan and Geoffrey Hill began to explore alternatives that would make this process less arduous and ensure accuracy. It was agreed that the best option was to transfer these records onto a computer driven data base system.

Rather than contract a commercial service company to assume responsibility for this function, McEgan and Hill negotiated an arrangement with another not-for-profit
organisation that shared similar information needs. From 1985 to 1988 Community Aid Abroad (CAA) leased Greenpeace access to a computer software program that generated accurate mailing lists. These lists were then forwarded directly to a mailing house in Adelaide for nationwide distribution of Greenpeace material. Hill, who has responsibility for co-ordinating the direct mail program, believes that Greenpeace was particularly fortunate to obtain the services of CAA. The reason being that,

...this service, although limited in terms of sophistication, was the ethically satisfactory product that is so difficult to find with a computer bureau. They had a real feeling for the importance of our work and I believe took as much care with our file as they did with their own. Their charges were very reasonable and their honesty and integrity beyond question.\(^{154}\)

By early 1988 both Greenpeace and CAA were growing at an increasing rate. As a consequence, CAA was no longer able to provide the service and attention that Greenpeace desired. This created a problem for Greenpeace. Although Hill had a clear idea of what service was required, there was a lack of computer service companies with expertise in designing the appropriate software programs. Hill experienced great difficulty trying to find a company that offered specialised assistance for a not-for-profit organisation. Only after extensive searching and considerable deliberation was the company, Adelaide Business Bureau eventually contracted. This company, like CAA, offered a basic data base program run from a microcomputer.

Compared to the convivial experience with CAA, this new commercial association was not only more expensive, but proved to be far more problematic. Barely six months after Greenpeace had entered into this arrangement, the accuracy of the mailing lists rapidly deteriorated. The reason for this was the resignation of the company's programmer, Wesley Brown. Despite earlier assurances, Adelaide Business Bureau failed to provide the adequate back-up expertise it claimed to have. This situation left Greenpeace with

very few options. With a national membership of around 10,000 supporters, Hill was reluctant to abandon this project and revert to the antiquated card system. Faced with the realisation that there was no other computer service company to turn to, Hill recommended that the organisation make a commitment to develop its own 'in-house' program.

In late 1988 a menu driven, fundraising software package was purchased. Hill also managed to regain the services of Wesley Brown who was then operating as an independent consultant. In the ensuing twelve months staff in the Adelaide office worked closely with Brown to customise and de-bug the system. Active involvement in modifying the program to cater specifically for Greenpeace needs provided Hill with familiarity and understanding of the system. The expertise of the Adelaide office was then enhanced considerably with the appointment of Mark Carter. Carter has computer fundraising experience gained from previous employment with CAA. In addition to Hill and Carter, three high speed data processors are employed to enter information into the system at computer work stations in the Adelaide office.

As the quantity of information which needs to be processed has increased, Hill has needed to upgrade the computer hardware. In February 1990, Greenpeace purchased additional hardware so that it could store electronically all the membership information the organisation had accumulated. While the system currently runs from microcomputers linked to a high speed central processing unit Hill has purchased hardware that permits an easy transfer to a more powerful mainframe if so required in the future.155

It is interesting that Hill, who has played a key role in the development of this facility, had no experience with computers prior to 1985. However, he had run the direct mail

155 Greenpeace currently run a 25mhz 386 with a 330 megabyte hard rive, Novell ELS2 network with three intelligent AT terminals and a streaming tape back-up system. There is an upgrade path for the software through Foxbase to a Unix operating system.
program out of the shoe box years before. As a result, Hill was aware of what the program needed to do and insisted on maintaining an active involvement in its design and implementation. Hill has been especially conscious of avoiding any dependence on expensive expertise. The menu driven system is 'user friendly' and problems with the program are usually handled directly by Hill and Carter. Hill stresses that he would not necessarily recommend the development of an 'in-house' direct mail facility. In Greenpeace's case, the decision was influenced by the lack of alternatives. If he had been able to find a computer bureau that offered the appropriate service, at a reasonable price, Hill claims it is quite possible that this option may have been taken.

There are numerous criteria for evaluating whether this investment in a technological infrastructure has been a success. As mentioned above, one consideration is the extent to which a technological infrastructure renders the organisation vulnerable in terms of creating a dependence on outside expertise. Other criteria are the benefits and capabilities that this direct mail program offers to Greenpeace. Analysis of the way in which direct mail is used, and how its performance is assessed within the organisation, suggests that this facility has been most helpful in the area of fundraising.

8.2 FUNDRAISING

All environmental organisations face a decision as to how they will fund their campaign efforts. In the United States there is a growing trend, particularly amongst the larger organisations, to accept corporate sponsorship. For example, in 1988 the National Wildlife Federation had an annual budget of $63 million. Less than $14 million of this came from individual supporters. The balance was provided by corporations such as Du Pont and Ciba Geigy.\(^\text{156}\) Similarly, in 1989 The World Wildlife Fund/Conservation

Foundation willingly accepted grants from multi-national corporations like Chevron, Exxon, Mobil and Phillip Morris.\textsuperscript{157}

In Australia there is far less corporate sponsorship of environmental organisations. The most noticeable exception is the World Wide Fund for Nature which freely admits that it accepts donations from companies such as CRA, Coles Myer, Elders IXL and Western Mining Corporation.\textsuperscript{158} Other environmental organisations are less open about corporate sponsorship. In the lead-up to the 1987 Federal election it was revealed that TWS had accepted $250,000 of free advertising on Channel Nine from the Bond Corporation. The ACF had previously rejected the offer for 'ideological' reasons.\textsuperscript{159} In the same year it was also discovered that TWS had accepted $70,000 from a Canberra based company, Richard Farmer and Associates Pty Ltd. A report in \textit{The Eye} confirmed that this company had recorded significant operating losses over the previous three years, and suggested that,

\begin{quote}
The magnitude of the losses may well prompt the Liberal Party to ask whether Richard Farmer was really passing on the $70,000 from another source rather than drawing on his own company's funds.\textsuperscript{160}
\end{quote}

Apart from corporate support, another source of funding is the government. Of all the environmental organisations in Australia, the ACF is the single largest recipient of federal government funding. In 1989 the ACF was allocated $167,000 from the federal government. However, the executive director of the ACF, Phillip Toyne, has frequently emphasised that this allocation represents a small fraction of the ACF's total annual budget (which was $3 million in 1989) and that it 'is not vital in terms of the capacity of the Foundation to survive and thrive.'\textsuperscript{161}

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\textsuperscript{157} Cockburn, A. 'The green racket', \textit{New Statesman and Society}, Vol.3, April 1990, p.22.  \\
\textsuperscript{158} 'Know your environment group', \textit{op.cit.}, p.14.  \\
\textsuperscript{159} Doyle,'Environmental Movement Power Brokers', \textit{op.cit.}, p.15.  \\
\textsuperscript{160} 'The Greenies' Friend', \textit{The Eye}, Summer 1988/89, pp.9-10.  \\
\end{flushleft}
Greenpeace eschews both these funding options and relies totally on the financial support of concerned individuals. As stipulated in its Memorandum of Association, the company is not permitted to accept any funds from government or corporate sources. In the United States Greenpeace has actually protested to oppose corporate sponsorship because it considers this as an attempt by corporations to buy legitimacy.\(^{162}\) This international policy has direct implications for Greenpeace fundraising activities as it has only one source of revenue, the public. Accordingly, Greenpeace has developed techniques that allow it to generate sufficient operating revenue from this one source. It is in this domain of Greenpeace activity that the direct mail facility has proven to be most beneficial.

The development of the direct mail facility provides Greenpeace with a capacity to maintain a comprehensive and accurate record of information about its supporters. All the information is coded and entered directly into formatted electronic files at the three computer work stations in Adelaide. The data base program enables Greenpeace to optimise the value of the information it has stored on these files. A donor file records the personal information of any individual who has made a financial contribution to Greenpeace. Coded entries indicate how and when an individual first became involved with the organisation. Transaction files build a financial profile, enabling Hill and his staff to immediately determine the donor history of every individual supporter. This includes a record of the consistency and size of each donation.

The program automatically searches for the highest donation made in the last eighteen months and categorises supporters accordingly. Unlike the antiquated card system, it is possible to ascertain immediately which supporters are most valuable to the organisation in terms of fundraising. The capacity to code, enter and store information in a central

\(^{162}\) Pell, \textit{op.cit.}, p.24.
data base has considerably increased the value of this information. Not only can Greenpeace maintain a more comprehensive and complete record of supporter information, but it can access and package this information in different ways. By running various commands the data processors can search through the data base using pre-defined parameters to obtain specific information.

Executing this type of search command can locate and retrieve information that enables Greenpeace to direct its appeals to a receptive audience. It is possible to determine which particular supporters have demonstrated a tendency to donate to specific campaigns. It is a relatively simple task, for example, to find out which five thousand supporters are most likely to contribute to campaign efforts to protect the Antarctic from industrial exploitation. Prior to the introduction of computer technology, this task would have required the mobilisation of numerous volunteers and hours of monotonous work. Not only is the data base far quicker, it also guarantees greater accuracy.

The direct mail program has proven to be a powerful technique to raise campaign funds. All revenue generated from mailings is channelled directly into the respective campaigns. The facility is self-funding and in 1989 direct mailing raised $400,000 in gross revenue, with an operating cost of $96,000. For Greenpeace, this represents an extremely cost effective means of generating financial support. Despite its obvious value as a mechanism to obtain campaign funds, when compared to Greenpeace programs run in Europe and the United States, direct mail is used sparingly in Australia. In the twelve month period from February 1989 to January 1990, Greenpeace Australia conducted five separate mailings. Four of these were related directly to specific campaigns (ocean ecology, atmosphere, toxics and the Antarctic). The other, classified as a generic mailing, was more general and outlined all Greenpeace objectives in 1990. The decision to restrict mailings to five packages a year is based on an awareness of the risks of reducing the effectiveness of this technique through excessive use.
Direct mail enables Greenpeace to distribute succinct information packages designed to encourage personal involvement in environmental activism and attract financial support. Each campaign mailing outlines why the campaign is being conducted and the demands, strategies, goals and objectives of Greenpeace activity. For a direct mail appeal to achieve the optimum impact, Greenpeace must be able to mobilise this facility quickly and capitalise on media attention that has already focused public concern on a particular issue. For example, one reason why the ocean ecology mailing in February 1989 was so successful (raising over $94,000 at a cost of less than $10,000) was that Greenpeace had recently exposed the impacts of Japanese and Taiwanese driftnet fishing operations in the South Pacific region.

Launching a successful direct mail appeal requires timing and judgement. In order to minimise the costs of using the postal system to distribute information to a large audience, Greenpeace takes advantage of a 'bulk pre-sorted mail discount'. Australia Post only offers this discount if 30,000 or more items are sent. Further, these items must be organised into postcode order. The incentive to use this concession is that it reduces the postal cost of each package by 35%. Unfortunately, this category of mail takes longer than usual to be delivered and may take over a week to reach certain parts of Australia. Given that the time at which individuals receive the mailings can influence the revenue that is raised, this delay in delivery can reduce the effectiveness of the mailings. For this reason campaigners collaborate with Hill and his staff in Adelaide to ensure each mailing has the optimum impact.

Direct mail is an effective technique to extract campaign funds from Greenpeace's established donor base. An ability to identify and target consistent contributors has enabled Greenpeace to direct its appeals to the most receptive audience. With less successful results, direct mail is also used to expand the size of the supporter base and
attract new members. It is in the field of co-ordinated fundraising and recruitment drives that Greenpeace is attempting to utilise computer technology in an innovative fashion.

8.3 PROSPECTING

Greenpeace has a vested interest in expanding and diversifying its support base. In terms of fundraising, the capacity to extract financial support from the same donor base is limited. For this reason Greenpeace actively searches for names and addresses of individuals who may be willing to establish some form of financial affiliation and involvement with the organisation. Given that most of the other large environmental organisations have similar intentions, information of this nature is of considerable value. The value is also a reflection of how difficult it is to obtain.

Greenpeace could purchase the names and addresses of individuals from companies that collate and sell specialised mailing lists. These companies sell names and addresses that have been compiled from market research and the identification of particular consumer profiles. Greenpeace has chosen not to pursue this option because, at present, there is a lack of quality lists relevant to the needs of environmental organisations.

Greenpeace has experimented with and investigated alternative ways of obtaining this type of information. Since 1985, on an annual basis, Greenpeace has swapped portions of its mailing list with Community Aid Abroad. This arrangement has developed as a result of the historical relationship between these two organisations. The assumption in the past has been that supporters of each organisation are likely to be sympathetic to the goals of the other. To some extent this has proven to be the case. For example, in September 1989 Greenpeace sent a mailing to approximately 30,000 supporters of CAA. Close to 1,000 of these individuals responded, generating $29,000 in revenue for the
atmosphere/energy campaign.\textsuperscript{163} This practice is currently being reviewed given the limited success of this exchange (only a 3.3\% response).

In January 1990, McAllister instigated informal discussions with some of the other large environmental organisations (such as the ACF) aimed at investigating the possibility of exchanging portions of their mailing lists.\textsuperscript{164} This option has not been pursued. One reason for this is that the organisations offer broadly similar services and therefore compete for support from the same resource base. It also became apparent that Greenpeace possessed a far more sophisticated and effective direct mail system than any other environmental organisation. Given that Greenpeace has made a considerable investment in constructing this facility it was decided that it would not benefit from sharing membership information with other environmental organisations.

Another way of obtaining information about potential supporters has been to ask existing members to provide it. Each mailing asks supporters to suggest the name and address of a friend who may be interested in contributing to Greenpeace. Members have responded well to this request and during 1989 approximately 33\% of those people who made a donation to Greenpeace also supplied the name and address of a friend. These names are cross referenced and entered onto the data base. When Greenpeace makes initial contact with these people an explanation is offered as to how Greenpeace obtained their name and address. This practice was introduced with pleasing results in 1989 and close to 13\% of those people who were contacted by Greenpeace for the first time responded.\textsuperscript{165}

Greenpeace also acquires information about potential supporters through co-ordinating direct mail with the canvassing operation. Canvassing involves soliciting support from the public through direct contact and as discussed in chapter two, has only developed as

\textsuperscript{163} Hill, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{164} McAllister, 'Greenpeace Australia Year End Report 1989', \textit{op.cit.}, p.2.
\textsuperscript{165} Hill, \textit{op.cit.}, p.8.
a nationally co-ordinated activity since 1988. In this short time it has been very successful for fundraising purposes. In 1989 canvassing in six Australian cities (Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne, Wollongong and Hobart) raised $920,000 in gross revenue, at a cost of $600,000.166

Compared to direct mail, canvassing is a more expensive activity. The cost to gross income ratio for canvassing operations during 1989 was 65% compared to 24% for direct mail. One reason for this is that canvassing is labour intensive and requires the payment of wages. The canvassing operation is considered valuable because it provides personal contact with the public. Trained canvassers can provide feedback to the organisation and clarify questions that people may have about campaigns. In terms of expanding the support base, the canvassing operation provides a source of names and addresses of individuals who may respond to future direct mailings. Canvassers record this information and forward it to Adelaide where it is entered into the central data base.

Expanding the size of the support base and attracting new members represent an important challenge. Greenpeace currently acquires the names and addresses of potential supporters from existing members and the canvassing operation. While Greenpeace has no aversion to buying mailing lists, none of sufficient quality are available. Names and addresses of individuals willing to make a financial commitment to protect the environment are difficult to obtain. Therefore, the information on supporters that Greenpeace has collected and stored on its data base is one of the organisation's most valuable assets. It is an asset that Greenpeace not only owns, but one that it is determined to protect.

166 ibid., p.17.
8.4 OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION

The information that Greenpeace has accumulated holds a significant commercial value. On its data base, Greenpeace has the names and addresses of over 54,000 Australians who are prepared to make a regular financial commitment to preserve the ecosystem. The names and addresses of a further 25,000 individuals who have at some stage made a donation are also stored on this data base. Eager to generate profits from environmental concern, companies have begun marketing products which cater specifically for the environmentally conscious consumer. Obviously these companies could tailor particularly effective marketing strategies if they had access to the names and addresses of people most likely to buy these products.

In Australia, the Greenpeace mailing list represents the greatest single reservoir of accurate information of this nature. If it chose to, Greenpeace could sell this information like any other commodity. Alternatively, Greenpeace could negotiate special arrangements whereby it granted access on the condition that this information could not be resold or distributed. However, once Greenpeace lost total control over the information, there could be no assurances that it would not be resold or distributed.

Greenpeace has exercised its right to deny access to this information. This right is established through the concept of ownership. The costs of producing an accurate mailing list vastly exceed the costs of copying it. Greenpeace has had to purchase computer hardware, employ staff and contract the services of a programming consultant in order to produce this information. The information can therefore be classified as 'proprietary information', with restricted availability. However, the software program that enables Hill to process supporter information is not owned by Greenpeace and is protected by copyright. Although Greenpeace has purchased the right to use this
software, it can not sell this program to anybody else. Only the programmer, who has copyright ownership of the software, can do this. Conversely, Brown only owns the program, not the information that it processes.

Despite the obvious commercial value of the mailing list, Greenpeace has a developed a policy not to sell this information. Opinions expressed at the Annual General Meeting in May 1990 confirm that this policy will not be changed. One reason for this is that Greenpeace only 'owns' this information to the extent that individuals have voluntarily provided it. Greenpeace must assume that this information has been given in confidence and that it has a responsibility to ensure confidentiality. Accordingly, the security of the data base system is taken very seriously. Unauthorised access is prevented by the need to enter passwords to gain entry. There is also restricted access to certain menus and functions within the program.

It is important that Greenpeace demonstrates an ability to be trusted totally with personal information. If it can secure this reputation and guarantee confidentiality, then it may become feasible to ask supporters for more detailed information in the future. Confidence that Greenpeace is not going to sell this information to other organisations is likely to increase the prospects of supporters providing additional information.

The automatic pledge payment system is an example of a Greenpeace initiative to use the data base in a more innovative fashion. The intention is to introduce a more convenient way for supporters to send, and for Greenpeace to collect, membership fees and campaign donations. The idea is to obtain a member's bank account or credit card number and automatically debit their accounts on a regular basis. As Hill revealed in his 1989/90 fundraising report, Greenpeace is eager to have the system operational yet has experienced problems.
We initiated an automatic payment system offering automatic debiting from cheque accounts and credit card accounts in 1987, called 'Friends of the Future'. As this was an unknown area for Australian banks, they needed to be educated. We had great difficulty getting reliable information or co-operation from the banks for quite some time.\(^{167}\)

It is certain that this initiative would be jeopardised even further if supporters feared that there was a remote possibility that Greenpeace could not guarantee confidentiality. For this reason, Greenpeace responded angrily to claims made in July 1990 that it had sold its mailing list to the Australian Labor Party. The issue arose after the opposition's spokesperson on the environment, Senator Fred Chaney, leaked a transcript of a speech made by the ALP's assistant national secretary Gary Gray to the media. At a direct mail symposium Gray had claimed that in order to target new donors for fundraising, the ALP had purchased Greenpeace's mailing list.\(^{168}\)

Greenpeace feared that this claim, although totally false, could damage the organisation's reputation if its supporters thought that their names were being supplied for party political fundraising purposes. In an attempt to minimise any damage, Greenpeace's National Liaison officer, Rick Humphries, immediately issued a press release denying Gray's claim and demanded an explanation from the ALP;

Greenpeace totally reject any suggestions that the organisation has been involved in mailing list swaps with political parties. Under no circumstances would Greenpeace entertain compromising its political independence by handing its membership list over to a political party of any persuasion. It is a fundamental principle within Greenpeace that under no circumstances do we indulge in such political brokerage.\(^{169}\)

\(^{168}\) Seccombe, M. 'Greens angered by ALP fund claim', Sydney Morning Herald, 7th July 1990, p.9.
\(^{169}\) Humphries, R. 'Greenpeace's Political Neutrality Guaranteed', Media Release, 6th July 1990.
Gray later conceded that perhaps his comments had been 'taken out of context' (although a tape recording of his speech confirms otherwise) and issued a press release confirming that the ALP had, in fact, never been given access to Greenpeace's mailing list.\textsuperscript{170}

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There is little doubt that computer and telecommunication technologies have had a significant impact on Greenpeace. Tracing the development of the technological infrastructure indicates that although Greenpeace has invested cautiously, it has also demonstrated a willingness to experiment with new techniques of processing information. As a result, the administration is more capable of ensuring efficient management of the company's financial and human resources. The direct mail facility, which serves as a tool to target then disseminate information to a receptive audience, performs a valuable contribution in terms of fundraising. Finally, an electronic mail service has integrated the geographically isolated Australian operation more comprehensively into Greenpeace's global information network. This has provided campaigners with access to a vast new reserve of knowledge and expertise.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{170} Gray, G. 'Comments Made by G. Gray at the 14th Pan Pacific Direct Mail Symposium', Letter to Greenpeace, 29th June 1990.}
9 CONCLUSION

This thesis has concentrated on analysing the activities of Greenpeace in Australia since 1988. Historically, this was a significant year for both the Greenpeace organisation and the Australian environmental movement. While Greenpeace was bankrupt and in imminent danger of collapse, the environmental movement began attracting an unprecedented level of public support. Three years later, in 1990, Greenpeace has an operating revenue in excess of $3.2 million, over 54,000 financial members, and is recognised as one of more powerful environmental organisations operating in Australia. One could quite rightly assume that Greenpeace has benefited from this windfall of public support. While this is undoubtedly true, it remains an incomplete explanation of Greenpeace's transition.

The success that Greenpeace has achieved is also a result of initiatives, investment decisions and change that originated from within the organisation. Of especial importance was the acute and sensitive restructuring of the total Greenpeace operation in Australia. As a result, Greenpeace now has far more secure and sophisticated techniques of processing information. Part One of this thesis concentrated on why this capability is so essential for Greenpeace. It was suggested that as a pressure group and actor within the environmental movement, information is Greenpeace's most fundamental strategic resource. Astute techniques of using and packaging information provide Greenpeace with political power and influence. Part Two identified the various techniques that Greenpeace has developed in order to manage information effectively. Emphasis was placed on determining the role that computer and telecommunications technologies played in relation to satisfying Greenpeace's diverse information needs.
One could argue that the transition Greenpeace has experienced indicates that a social movement organisation can play a very active role in sustaining the phenomenon of popular environmental concern. Studies that analysed the fate of environmental organisations in the late 1960s suggested that the strength of these organisations was ultimately regulated by external economic circumstances. Environmental concern was portrayed as a transitory condition and, as with any other social issue, intense public support would wane. It would be premature to suggest that the same thing will not happen when this second wave of widespread environmental concern subsides. It is certainly possible to detect a media-led backlash and more vocal demands within government for 'less pandering' to environmental interest groups and more 'economic rationalism.'

However, over the last three years Greenpeace has pursued a style of activism that enables it to mobilise public discontent and to function effectively as an 'issue entrepreneur'. Greenpeace has developed new, and more aggressive techniques of marketing its service. It has a technological infrastructure designed to acquire and disseminate critical environmental information. Greenpeace also specialises in captivating the media's attention, has a well established fundraising program, and a tight administration. Further, Greenpeace has managed to do this at the same time that an increasing number of middle class Australians (the social movements' traditional source of support) are feeling the financial pinch of the federal government's three year emphasis on tight monetary policy.

Ultimately, the fate of Greenpeace will be determined by its ability to break the centralised control of information by state and corporate bureaucracies. This control helps government and industry placate widespread environmental concern through strategies of palliative reform and token appeasement. As an 'information services organisation', the challenge that Greenpeace faces is to obstruct this political process of
'accommodation.' Accordingly, the search for more flexible and secure techniques of utilising the value of information will remain critically important for the continued success of Greenpeace.
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