Struggling for the environment : a profile of recent environmental protests in Spain

**STRUGGLING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: A PROFILE OF
RECENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTESTS IN SPAIN**

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Introduction[*]

This paper analyses environmental protest events reported in *El País* from 1988-1997. My objective is to provide a preliminary overview of the basic features of protests on the environment in Spain with special attention to the evolving features of the Spanish environmental movement and environmental politics in general.

The last decade has been particularly interesting for the study of environmental protests in Spain. Economic and consumption growth have significantly intensified the pressure on the environment, its biodiversity, and the capacity for natural resource renewal. The Spanish landscape has experienced a transformation that, although initiated three decades ago, now affects almost the entire country. For instance, the development of the main state road system and other communication infrastructure has experienced unprecedented growth. Although (especially in the 1990s) most road projects in theory took account of their environmental impact, few were actually substantially modified or disregarded for environmental reasons (on the application of the Environmental Impact Assessment directive, see, for instance, Escobar 1994). Landscape alteration has been also produced by large-scale agricultural change (in accordance European Union policies), causing the abandonment of traditional production methods/crops in certain areas in favour of intensive production in new irrigated land. The transformation of agriculture is linked to the severe problem of soil erosion in some areas. Along with the expansion of the tourist industry in coastal areas, it is also linked to water deficits in other places. In the industrial terrain, high levels of unemployment have made it problematic to undertake a profound re-conversion of outdated polluting industry, or to threaten economic returns of industrial ecological dumping from northern members of the EU by introducing, effectively, more restrictive environmental standards.

Obviously, the existence of objective conditions for environmental protests does not mean that they will automatically occur. The generation and the basic features of protests are mediated and shaped by the prevailing environmental paradigm in the cultural and socio-political context and the extent to which specific political opportunities allow alternative conceptions to reach the political arena.

Broadly speaking, environmental deterioration has been widely seen (by citizens, politicians and policymakers) as the pay off for wealth, for catching up with Europe. This has reduced the opportunities for environmental promoters (usually environmental groups) to win the support of other actors and to go beyond the local level when defining environmental problems. The amount and nature of environmental protest is also related to the political opportunities for participation offered by the policy context.

In the course of the last decade, the characteristics of environmental policy contexts have changed significantly. This period covers (almost) the process of Spain's integration into the European Community in 1986. This process has been the major stimulus for the institutionalisation of environmental policy (Font 1996). Progress on the incorporation of environmental issues into other policies has been especially decisive since Maastricht (1992), as in the case of the Common Agriculture Policy, the reform of the regional structural funds, or the creation of new cohesion founds (with a clear environmental character). The need to put environmental measures into practise has also been on many occasions the main source of conflicts (as exemplified by the policy attempts to manage the problem of waste of all types). But, in general terms, the formal incorporation of the environment into the State policy agenda (a process in which environmental protests have played an important role) is related to the opening up of formal and informal environmental arenas to the participation of diverse sector involved in the environmental policy process. That is, there has been a more favourable context for environmental demands, coinciding with the first steps in the process of organisational consolidation of the Spanish environmental movement (Jiménez 1999a). In the 1990s, environmentalists are widely recognised, at least formally, as legitimate interlocutors in new emerging policy arenas, in which other actors (such as industry or trade unions) are just beginning to seek a voice as representatives of environmental policy interests.

The following analysis is divided in four sections. The first introduces the data used in the subsequent media event analysis. The study of environmental protest has been divided in three sections. First, the paper deals with the issues that have proved most conflictive during these ten years, to consider questions such as the extent to which protests reflect global environmental awareness or are driven by localism or NIMBY ("not in my back yard") type of motivations; the role played by the definition of environmental risk; the extent to which they reflect a process towards the greening of sectoral policies, or the introduction of new issues within the demands associated with the environment, etc. The focus then shifts to the main features of the political repertoire of protesters and the scenarios of conflicts to tackle the questions of radicalness and violence, the thesis of the conventionalisation of the environmental movement's repertoire, whether or not there is any evidence of temporal trends that could be associated with the above-mentioned changes in the formal and informal opportunities for participation in environmental policy arenas; the level of Europeanisation of these conflicts, etc. In the last section, the actors are introduced into the analysis. Here special attention is paid to the main features of the organisational network of protests, and the features of the principal environmental movement organisations (EMOS). The thesis of the institutionalisation of environmental movement (associated with organisational centralisation and repertoire conventionalisation) is confronted with the information provided by the data on protest events (PEs). When the data allow, issues such as the level of protest professionalisation (in the sense of Jordan and Maloney 1996) are also addressed.

1. The data: the evolution of environmental protests in *El País* from 1988 to 1997[*].

A major concern in this paper is the quality of the data, the extent to which the data used provides a reliable source of meaningful information about the nature of environmental protest and the evolving features of the environmental movement in Spain. In this sense this

paper is basically exploratory in character, although the explorations concern the data used more than the actual object examined.

Validity problems associated with the analysis of PEs reported in newspaper are widely recognised in the literature on social movements. The risk of working with unreliable data increases in the case of single case studies of the type presented here. This is only compensated for by the amount of valuable information supplied (and the uncertainty regarding the quality of the information obtained by alternative methods the cost of which is higher).

The analysis starts from the assumption that *El País's* selection bias has shown "systematicity" over time. Accordingly, knowledge of the basic features of such a bias and its variations over the period under study is crucial for the correct interpretation of our data. One way of facing the problem of bias is simply to be aware of it, and to attempt to identify – for instance, through interviews with environmental journalists – the main features of the media bias in reporting environmental information (and more specifically environmental protests), and changes in the location and/or treatment of environmental reports that might influence the "systematicity" of the selection bias. Interviews with environmental journalists provide very useful information on the nature of press bias, which enable us to "qualify" the interpretation of the data, but not to "quantify" this bias[1].

Fillieule's study (1997) demonstrates the limited resonance of local conflicts, and consequently the greater selectivity of the national press. These problems associated with the selection bias can be expected to be specially acute with respect to the case study here, due to the local character of many environmental protests and the political decentralisation of Spain.

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[1] Of course there are alternative (or at least complementary) strategies to "correct" media selection bias, such as using different newspapers or resorting to an extra-media data source such as police records (see for instance Hug and Wisler 1998). Two environmental journalists working in the National section of *El País* since the early 1990s, and a local correspondent, were interviewed.

The selection bias of *El País*[2] seems to be similar to that of the rest of the national press (unequal territorial coverage, over-representation of conflicts accompanied by violence/public order problems, environmental accidents and issues involving risks, environmental topics, etc). Additionally, changes in the structure of the newspaper and in the staff could have had a temporary impact on the nature of the bias of coverage of protests (interviews with environmental journalist of *El País* 1999 and Fernández 1995).

These considerations quite convincingly cast doubt on the wisdom of using *El País* reports on environmental protests to measure the volume of environmental protests events in Spain[3], but leave the door open for the examination of other relevant features from which to compose an overview of the changing nature of environmental protests. These, in fact, are at the heart of this paper.

The data-base used here is composed of a sample of 761 protests events reported in the national pages of the daily edition of *El País* . A Protest Event is defined as "a collective, public action of non-state actors with the expressed purpose of critique or dissent together with societal and/or political demands related to the environment in a broad sense" (Rucht 1998, p.1). These PEs can be grouped in 395 different campaigns or cases of conflicts[4]. The PE-case distinction is introduced as an attempt to reduce the selectivity bias of the newspaper.

[2] According to the *Oficina de la Justificación de la Difusión* and the *Estudio General de Medios* (see *El País* 25 May 1997) it is the both the largest selling newspaper in the country and the one with the largest readership. The media event analysis has been carried out only for the daily issue of the sections of "Politics" (España) and "Society" (Sociedad) of the national edition. *El País* is considered the most prestigious and "serious" national daily newspaper in Spain. Although it has been criticised for its close support for the Socialist governments (in office from 1982 to 1996), it is the reference point within the Spanish printed media. With a liberal, centre-left orientation, it first appeared in 1976. As far as environmental information is concerned, it was probably the first newspaper in Spain to include the heading "Ecology" within its Society section, imitating the French *Le Monde* (Fernández 1995, p.114). The newspaper's early interest in the environment can be attributed to the journalist B. Varillas, himself an environmental activist and a pioneer of environmental journalism in Spain, the favourable context during the transition, and while the socialist were in the opposition. His departure from the paper in the mid-1980s left a vacuum that to some extent lasted until the early 1990s, if not beyond.

[3] For an assessment of the impact of the selection bias on the data used here see Jiménez (1999b). I leave aside the question of the relationships between the selection bias and the interactions between the media agenda and the political agenda as well as the social movements' strategies for agenda control (on this issue see Sampedro 1997) .

[4] A case may comprise one or more PEs and may, or not, be defined as a campaign. For those cases lasting more than one year, each year has been codified.

Moreover, it has been considered analytically advantageous to examine certain aspects of the environmental protests in which the extension, rather than the intensity, of environmental conflicts is considered.

As Figure 1 shows, the curve representing the annual number of cases reported is smoother than that for PEs. Both lines indicate that the year 1990 was the peak in PEs for the whole period, but the evolution of the cases suggests a more homogenous trend over time with a mild increase from 1991.

FIGURE 1. *Annual evolution of environmental protests in Spain 1988-1997 (by Protest Events and Cases of Conflicts)*
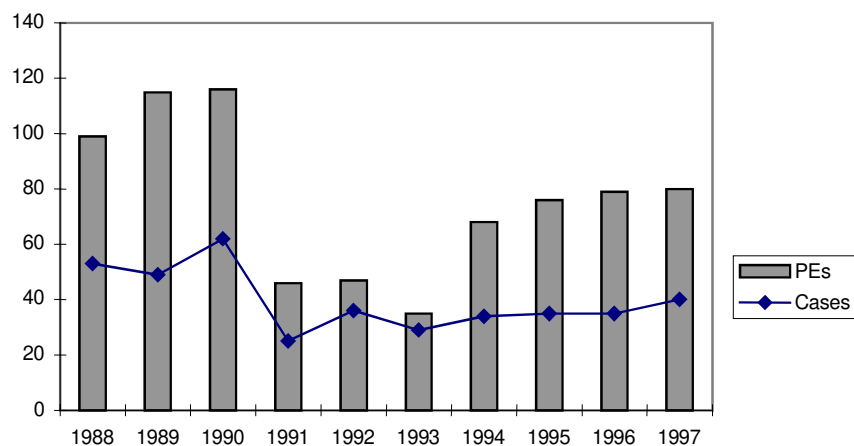
The decreasing level of protest activity reported in the early 1990s might well reflect the greater incorporation of environmental concerns into decision-making processes and the greater space for consensual strategies in the policy process (either due to policy makers' previous experiences of social resistance, European pressures, or the genuine conviction of decision-makers). The economic crisis and budget cuts may also have affected many plans with the potential of facing environmental resistance, as in the case of water infrastructure and industrial waste facilities. The decline in the number of PEs in 1991-1993 might reflect a drop in the intensity of protest, but could also be linked to changes in the structure of *El País* and the media

relevance of issues such as forest-fires or droughts, which generate fewer PEs (as defined here)[5].

FIGURE 2. *Comparing the evolution of the volume of mobilisation (by total number of participants and by an index of mobilisation)*
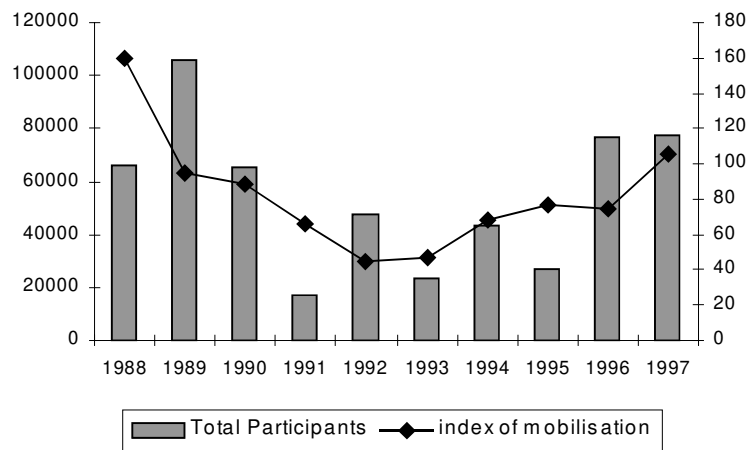
The number of participants (in non-conventional forms of protests) is a third indicator of the evolution of the volume of protests. Columns in Figure 2 show the annual volume of participants in PEs registered in *El País*. In terms of the total number of participants, 1989, rather than 1990, is the peak in the curve. Although 1997 is also a year with a large number of participants, the upward trend in environmental mobilisation shown in Figure 1 by the number of PEs is not as clearly visible now. This data might indicate a change in the type of protests (for instance, towards conventionalisation). The line in the graph represents the annual value of an index of mobilisation based on the number of protests and the median of participants per

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[5]The coincidence in time of the existence of the local section "Cities" (from summer 1990 to December 1993) and a substantial decrease in the number of PEs registered in the national section of *El País*, in a period of expansion of environmental information (according to the sources cited above) and intense activity by EMOs, suggests that the two developments were linked; that is, that the decrease in reported incidents can be explained, among other factors, by the fact that news was then covered in the "Cities" section and not, as previously, in the National section.

year[6]. This line suggests a decreasing capacity of mobilisation until 1993, and from then on, a quite stable pattern of recuperation.

In sum, a tentative assessment of the general evolution of protests over the environment in Spain suggests that the level of mobilisations has dropped in the 1990s. This can be explained in function of the reasons behind the protest peak in the late 1980s (until 1990). The three broad dimensions behind protests identified in the introduction should be mentioned. The temporal coincidence of many development projects is especially high due to the first plans of regional development (supported by European structural founds). Numerous waste facilities are also projected (and contested) coinciding with the first attempts to put a management waste policy into practise. Additionally, it could be argued that the avalanche of environmentally negative projects was also prompted by the imminent approval of new (restrictive) environmental legislation. This was quite clearly the case of the new Coastal Law in 1988 that provoked an upsurge in applications for house building licenses and multiple re-classification of lands, especially in coastal tourists areas. Equally, the nuclear accident in Vandellós revived the antinuclear mobilisations. All these mobilising factors lost certain force in the 1990s, and thereby help to explain moderation in the level of protests.

An alternative explanation can be offered for the moderate level of protest in the 1990s. In this sense, the changes in the policy context mentioned above (leaving aside a possible reduction in the number of environmentally aggressive projects, as most plausible projects had already been implemented or been postponed), towards the progressive institutionalisation of the environment might have favoured the conventionalisation and the reduction of the volume of protests.

These are, of course, rather broad and highly speculative hypotheses to explain a temporal trend based on data (number of annual events reported in *El País*) whose validity in this case can only be assumed with reservations. However, the analysis presented in the next three sections provides additional information about this and other features of the changing

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[6] For missing value cases, the median number of participants in similar events has been used. The mobilisation index is a rough measure of both variables (number of events and number of participants); it is

nature of environmental protest in Spain, and a more solid base from which to launch a similar interpretative hypothesis.

3. Issues

Currently almost every policy issue has a potential environmental dimension. Many decision-making processes within diverse policy areas are susceptible to being "disrupted" by conflicts framed in environmental terms. In fact, as the process of integrating the environment into the sectoral policies progresses, environmental policies become more diverse and, consequently, generate their own "politics". Any attempt to identify the common features and differences in protests that fall under the category of environmental mobilisations becomes a more complex and difficult task (especially if such an attempt is based on media-reported analysis of a relatively small sample of PEs).

However, the continuous presence in many of the protests of certain environmental organisations which, in turn, also maintain a certain level of interaction among them, provides the necessary cohesion to our object of analysis[7]. To a certain degree, this is due to the limited advances in the greening of other policies in Spain and the predominance of sectoral approaches to environmental problems.

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calculated as the square root of the number of PEs times the median number of participants in PEs during that year.

[7] This temporal and spatial continuity of a network of actors is one of the central features defining a social movement. According to the conceptualisation proposed by Diani (1992) *"a social movement is a "network of informal interactions between a plurality of groups and/or organisations engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities".*

Table 1 shows the proportional distribution of PEs and cases/campaigns of conflicts according to the policy issues to which the main demand of the protests refers[8].

Table 1. *Environmental Protests by issue*

Policy domain/issue claim	PEs (%)	Cases (%)
Nature conservation	11.8	17.5
Territorial planning	24.2	18.2
Industrial/environmental quality	20.9	23.5
Nuclear	14.6	13.7
Water	11.4	8.6
Urban ecology	8.0	6.8
Other issues	9.1	11.6
Total	100.00	100.00
Roads	9.4	5.1
Waste	22.0	17.6

It is interesting to note that in Spain, the EU country with the greatest biological diversity, issues related to nature conservation are of relatively little significance, with less than 12% of the total PEs. This, of course, reflects the relative maturity of conservation policy and the existence of formal and informal channels to reduce potential protests. In fact, the percentage increases notably when protests are aggregated into cases, indicating both a great variety of issues and the limited intensity of conflicts. Additionally, the territorial planning dimension of conservation policy has been a clear feature of this policy in Spain, where nature protection has evolved from the more urgent measures of protection of enclaves of the greatest ecological value to a broader strategy for the conservation of biodiversity. In this sense, by the end of the 1980s traditional conservation organisations have already redefined their agendas to

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[8] Although policy domains are still defined quite broadly here, this criteria is judged appropriate to observe the different nature of the mobilisation according to the demand (see for instance Kriesi et al. 1995). *Conservation* policy includes demands related to biological diversity and habitat conservation as well as protecting hunted animals, etc. *Territorial planning* issues refer to communication infrastructure, mining, housing and tourist projects, protection of the coastal public domain, and rejection of other installations (high voltage lines, military installations, etc. *Industrial/environmental quality* (and energy) issues include those demands related to emissions standards , industrial risks, waste management, etc. *Nuclear* issues refer to nuclear plants, wastes, and weapons, radioactivity, etc. *Water* issues include conflicts around water infrastructure and water resource management. *Urban ecology* issues involve complaints associated with air quality, car traffic, noise, domestic waste. Below, *Roads* are subtracted from territorial planning and *Waste* from industrial, urban ecology and nuclear categories.

incorporate this broader concern about territory planning, not only promoting the protection of natural areas of interests but also the promotion of compatible economic activities and natural protection in other areas (from the promotion of traditional cattle raising based on seasonal migration [*trashumancia*], to extensive crops, rural tourism, etc).

Nuclear protests that, as in many other contexts, were the original stimulus for many ecological organisations in Spain, account for just over 14% of PEs , in a decreasing trend from 1989, after the accident of Vandellós I in Tarragona, (and the eventual closure of this nuclear plant) and the failure of popular legislative initiative in 1991[9]. Since then, nuclear protests have focused on opposition to possible allocations of nuclear waste cemeteries and the campaign against French nuclear testing in Mururoa.

A particularly interesting issue for a southern country such as Spain is the problematic character of issues related to water management (leaving aside the issue of water quality and the pollution of rivers). The drought in the early 1990s provoked the so-called *guerras del agua* (water wars), conflicts that were not always articulated as environmental protests but definitively contributed to questioning traditional policy approaches. Despite the realisation of some highly contested infrastructures (such as the Itoiz dam in Navarra), the mid-1990s saw a questioning of the previous dominant policy orientation towards the satisfaction of increasing water demand (of new irrigated land and massive housing developments carried out without any water previsions in critical zones such as the Mediterranean coast). The opening of this debate has not only led to the assessment of the environmental impact of certain infrastructures but the introduction of environmental concerns (in this case related to the sustainable use of limited water resources) in agricultural policy or in tourist infrastructure developments.

The highest levels of protests come under the categories of territorial planning and environmental quality. As mentioned above, in the first case protests often incorporated traditional conservation concerns, that is, a road or development is challenged because of its immediate impact on a natural area, but not the transport or housing model behind it. In the

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[9] Curiously, peaks in environmental protests in Spain seems to depend on the activity of the anti-nuclear mobilisations (see data on environmental mobilisation from 1977 to 1993 in Jiménez 1999a).

cases of road construction, for instance, given the Spaniards' unquestioned preference for private transport, environmentalists have encountered a hostile terrain in which to extend their protests. These obstacles not only affect the mobilisation of citizens or alliances with policy relevant actors, but also the strategies of authorities, in the sense of limiting the access of environmental demands to decision-making procedures (see Jiménez and Rootes 1998, and Flam 1994). In fact, in 12% of cases, the protesters' complaints refer also to this sort of obstacle, and particularly the deficient implementation of participation procedures such as those established for the EIA, access to information, etc. EMOs have faced an equally adverse context in the industrial terrain. The high level of unemployment and the usual support of the administration for industrial interests has limited the opportunities for protests. Only when industrial activities have affected other economic activities, where the environmental risk has been demonstrated by an accident, have protests found a wider expression.

Issues related to waste facilities and waste treatment are probably the other dominant category, accounting for 22% of all environmental protests. The end of the 1980s coincided with the first attempts of the administration to control waste dumping through the promotion of waste facilities, which have faced a generalised popular opposition.

Discussion of the health impact of substances such as the dioxins produced by waste incinerators reflects the greater attention given to health risks in everyday life. Sometimes, these are as subtle as the risk represented by the continual exposure to electromagnetic fields created by high voltage lines, the carcinogenic substances found in PVC drinking water bottles, the risk of babies' teat and dummies made of this material, or the effects of transgenic food, to mention the main new concerns that seem to show a diversification of the issues and policy arenas, at least, according to the reported protests[10].

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[10] Apart from this trend concerning new issues and the diversification of demands, it is not possible to identify any other clear trend in the evolution of environmental protests in terms of distinct issues. This is due to the short period and the limited numbers of events which make the data very sensitive to particular conflicts or policy events (such as the approval of a plan or a very intensive conflict, or one which received greater media attention). In fact, the evolution of anti-nuclear protests or protests over water policy are determined by the accident mentioned, or discussion of the National Hydrologic Plan.

As can be deduced from this evidence, the scope of the underlying problem is usually defined as local by protesters: in 64% of the cases, and 72% of the events. Only in 16% of the cases (and 11% of the events) are problems and complaints considered to be national in scope; and international in just 13% of cases (and 11% of PEs). In these cases, when the underlying problem is considered international, it is seldom ascribed to the EU or European space. In all, these data suggest two major (and broad) features of the territorial definition of issues producing environmental protests: first, the local scope prevailed in the definition of the problem at stake, and produced more intensive protests; second, that administrative and political territorial divisions are irrelevant for the definition of the problems, while geography is the most important factor (in fact, many of the problems defined as international refer to the Mediterranean area). Despite the adverse socio-political environment for the generalisation from the local to the decision-making centres, that is, to link local problems to a wider regional, national and international policies, the limited number of cases (and PEs) that are defined as having a regional or state dimension is still a little surprising. An additional factor contributing to this exacerbated localism could well be linked to the limited political importance of the environment and the limited institutionalisation of specific regional and national policy arenas and national environmental politics[11]. In fact the consolidation of a sort of environmental national policy arena from 1994 with the creation of a State Secretary for the Environment coincided with a clear increase in the number of cases that are defined as national problems (with an average of 25% of cases from 1994 to 1997, 15.5% of PEs indicating the scant intensity of conflicts defined state-wise)[12].

Figure 3 shows the total number of participants in unconventional events by issue. The waste category includes participants in unconventional protests that are also included in nuclear, industrial and urban ecology issues. As in the case of the total number of events (and

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[11] The scant relevance of the environment in national politics might be emphasised by the selection bias of the media: the anonymous character of the voices that speak for the environment (the scant visibility of green parties and limited interest of parties and public elected officials, etc.) and the frequent prevalence of personalities (the who) rather than the issue (the what) in the media's political coverage (Fernández 1995).

[12] In 1997, the first whole year after the creation of the Ministry of the Environment in 1996, the attribution of a national scope to claims increased to 32% of cases.

other dimensions of the protest), the volume of participants varies according to the nature of the issue at stake.
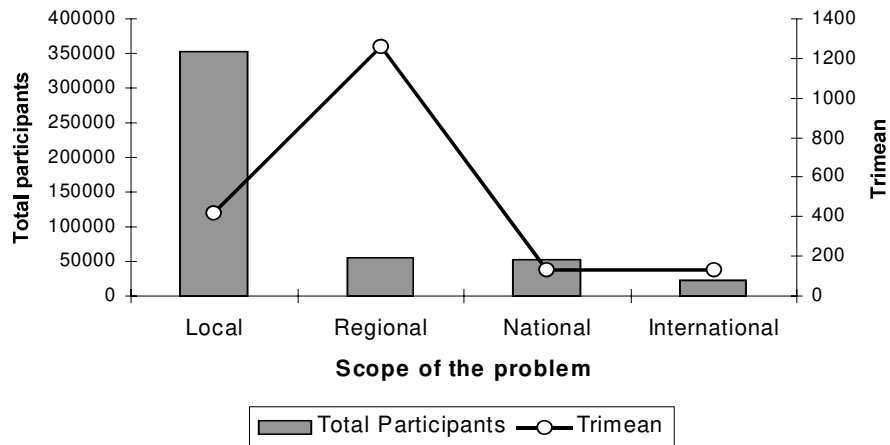
FIGURE 3. *Total number of participants in unconventional events by issue in Spain.*
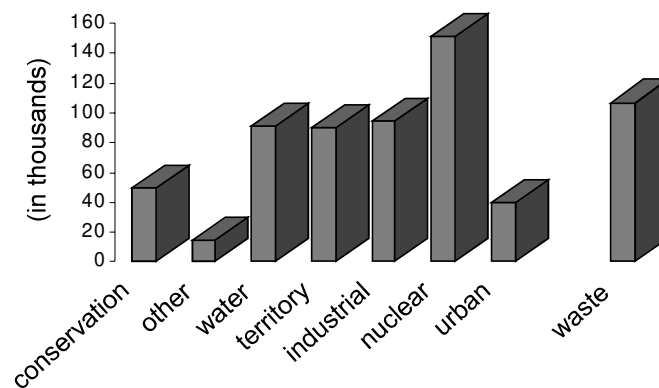
The graph clearly shows the greater mobilising capacity of nuclear issues. Almost 30% of the people participating in protests events registered by *El País* over the past decade were mobilised by issues involving nuclear energy, waste or weapons. In clear contrast, conservation issues only mobilised 10% of environmental protesters. The volume of mobilisations over urban ecology issues is relatively small and basically consisted of protest against urban waste facilities[13]. In fact, waste and water are the categories, apart from nuclear, that show the greatest potential for mobilisation in Spain.

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[13] Even though the problems of traffic or noise are so evident in Spanish cities, they are almost not registered in the sample. The main reason for this is the scant resonance that this sort of protest has in national pages. Reports of neighbours' complaints against the noisy Spanish nights are rather common in the local sections, but their infra-local nature (usually protesters are residents of a particular street) and the fact that they are seldom organised collectively (protests consist of individual complaints to the police or local authorities) make them quite diffuse. Although the problems related to traffic in cities have received the attention of environmental organisations, the truth is that their actions have not captured the interest of the national pages.

FIGURE 4. *Total and average (trimean) number of participants in PEs in Spain (1988-97), according to the definition of the scope of the problem.*

The territorial scope of the underlying problem may also expected to be an important factor determining the mobilising potential of people. Figure 4 shows the total number of participants in the protest sample according to the territorial scope that protesters gave to the underlying problem. The points in the line indicate the value of the trimean (a centrality measure sensitive to the spread of the values[14]).

Obviously, in accordance with previous data on the total number of events and cases, demands presented at local grievances account for 73% of the mobilised, with an average (trimean) of 420 individuals by PEs. In contrast, mobilisations around national or international problems had an average of 130 participants, while the regional definition of a problem, which is the least frequent (only 6 % of events), is nonetheless the type of protest with the largest average of participants, more than one thousand protesters. Although highly speculative, this data could be interpreted as indicating an interesting feature of Spanish environmental protests which is related to the political and administrative context and the role played by EMOs in environmental protests. The data suggest that although the understanding of environmental

problems rarely goes beyond localism, when it does, the autonomous communities context shows greater mobilisational capacity than more global contexts. The reduced average in state-wide or international issues suggests a quite different scenario for unconventional protest when they are thought to be more global, in which environmental activists played a central role in the "protests business" (in the sense of Grant and Maloney 1996).

4. Arenas of protests and repertoires of action

However, not all protests are unconventional, nor are all the diverse protest scenarios characterised by the same territorial scope of the environmental demands. To complete the characterisation of the contexts of protests about the environment, this section examines the data on the features of the action repertoire and the level of the different arenas in which such protests take place.

Table 2 shows the percentages of the action of the PEs according to the way in which protesters made their critique or expressed their political or societal demands.[15]

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[14] Trimean=(q1+2*median* q3)/4

[15] The categorisation follows the typology of Kriesi et al. (1995, p.267-8) based on the criteria of radicalness of the protests. However, some variations have been introduced to adapt the categories to the specificity of the data, of the protests about environmental issues, as well as of the Spanish administrative and legal context. Conventional forms are divided into five categories reflecting the diverse nature of the channel through which the complaint is presented. Judicial actions are those based on administrative and criminal lawsuits and complaints to (environmental) prosecutors and judges; a different type has been established for those formal complaints addressed to the (environmental) police or competent authorities. Administrative actions refer to the resort to established procedures for citizens' participation in the administrative phase of the decision-making process (usually in written form and through public information such as in the Environmental Impact Assessment). In contrast with previous forms, political types are those actions aimed at influencing the purely political phase of the policy process. This category includes letters, petitions, etc, but excludes lobbying or participation in advisory committees, etc. Media/public directed actions are those actions addressing the general public through press conferences or leafleting, etc. Unconventional actions are divided into four categories; direct democratic (official and unofficial referendums, popular legislative initiatives or similar forms of participation in town councils, etc.); demonstrative (including demonstration marches, public gatherings, indoor assemblies, etc.); confrontational (including strikes, occupations, blockages, boycotts, etc.); and violent forms of protests (attacks on property, arson, bombing, personal injures, etc).

Table 2. *Distribution of protest events by type of action in Spain, 1988-1997*

Type of Action				Conventional
Total conventional		45.8		100%
Judicial	9.9			21.6
Formal complaints and appeals	5.5			12.0
Political	23.2			50.6
Media/public directed	5.1			11.1
Administrative	2.1			4.3
				Unconventional
Total unconventional		54.2		100%
Direct-democratic	1.7			3.1
Demonstrative	31.9			58.8
Confrontational	16.1			29.7
Violent	4.6			8.4
Total	100%		100%	

Taking as a distant reference point the data Kriesi et. al. (1995) provide on new social movements (NSM) in four western European countries, the features of the prevailing forms of environmental protests in Spain seem moderately unconventional, with 54% of the actions adopting unconventional forms. This comparison is highly tentative given the different period of time covered by both sets of data, and the a priori greater conventionalisation of environmental movements' repertoire within the NSM sector. In fact, in the case of the EMOs, unconventional events represent a relatively small part of their daily or routine activities, which are rarely reported in newspapers (due to their scant attractiveness for the media) or have been excluded from the definition of PE used in the sample (as in the case of lobbying activities, participation in advisory committees, etc., and other similar activities that have a limited protests component). Media bias might explain the scant representation of strategies of protest adopting the form of administrative actions, despite the comparatively great importance of administrative procedures in state-citizen interaction in Spain. Similarly, media selection bias has certainly influenced the low percentage of complaints (such as watchdog activities of groups in interaction with police or competent authorities), compared to judicial actions which are more costly (but more noticeable). The low percentage of media/public directed PEs is in part due to the scant interest of the national press in certain protest activities intended to inform

the public (leafleting and the like), but it also indicates a feature of the Spanish EMOs and the media interaction articulated through personal contacts and press releases and the marginal role played by press conferences (international organisations, and in particular Greenpeace, aside[16]).

In terms of radicalness, and again in contrast with Kriesi et al.'s data, the evidence seems to show a quite moderate scenario with very rare resort to violent strategies. The participation of the terrorist group, ETA, in the conflict over the route of a highway connecting Navarra and Euskadi, accounts for the majority of violent acts in the sample. This is, however, an atypical case within the whole set of environmental conflicts and it is certainly so in the case of protests over roads constructions. The involvement of ETA also explains the unusually wide coverage of this case in the national press[17].

In relation to their annual evolution, the data barely show any clear trend. A slight increase in political and media-directed forms of action as well as a decreasing percentage of confrontational (and violent type of action) is the only meaningful variation over time. Both trends can be interpreted in light of changes taking place in the environmental policy domain, such as environmental issues acquiring certain public relevance, the completion of the process of upgrading of the environmental administration, and a modest policy change towards a more consensual and open style. However, in such a short span of time, the data do not provide enough evidence to identify a trend towards the integration of environmental protests into the conventional channels established by liberal democracies. In fact, variations in type of action over time might well depend on the predominance of certain issues over others in the annual total number of protests.

Direct democracy channels are seldom explored due to the restrictive definition of these forms of democratic participation. There is no information about direct participation of environmental organisations in local councils where referendums and direct participation in

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[16] This is due to the limited communicative skills of EMOs as well as the subordinated or underdeveloped character of environmental information.

[17] The violent dimension of protests does not only depends on the type of action but also on the actual development of the events. In fact, in the course of almost 10% of the unconventional events (those classified as violent aside) there are violent incidents caused by police repression.

sessions is probably greater than reflected in the sample. It is true that many of the local cases of protests have in the local council sessions a recurrent scenario of protests, usually through disruption, but as in the case of neighbourhood associations, EMOs have also started to formally participate in local activities through the presentation of motions (in many cases with the support of political parties). The information is also very limited at the level of autonomous communities where EMOs have been pioneers in exploring this channel of participation.

Also in the terrain of new forms and broad action repertoire of environmental protests, protesters have started to call on the consumer to boycott goods or companies in support of their campaigns. Greenpeace and the WWF have resorted to boycotts and ecological labelling in the 1990s (as the successful boycott of firms bottling mineral water in PVC plastic or the promotion of the dolphin safe label on Spanish tuna tins by the WWF).

Variations in the repertoire of protests, the type of arena or authority addressed, can be seen as depending, among other possible factors, on the nature of the issue (or the specific configuration of political opportunities offered by the policy arena) and the target of the protests. The three following figures show the distribution of actions within diverse issue categories.

FIGURE 5. *Repertoire of actions by issue in environmental protest in Spain (1988-97)*
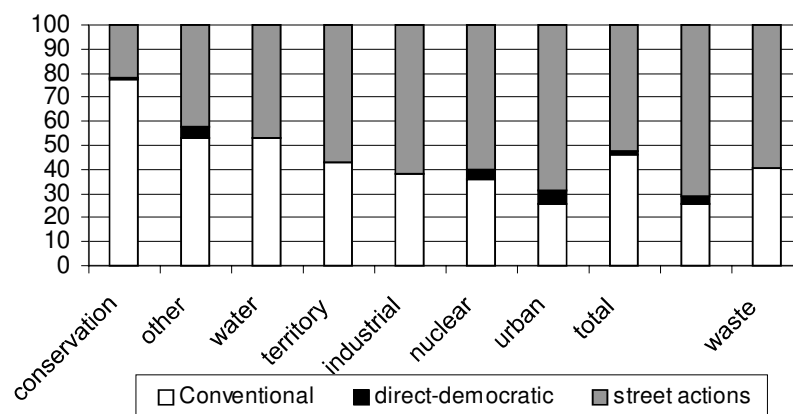
In Figure 5, as expected, and confirming evidence shown in the previous section, protests taking place within the conservation field are relatively more conventional than in any other issue category. This is of course related to the greater maturity of the policy issue as well as the greater degree of professionalisation of conservation groups and their preference for interacting with authorities as lobbies and experts. In fact, the interaction between conservation organisations and the state's nature administration dates from decades ago. Water and territory (especially if the mentioned anomalous case of Leizaran is left aside) are also relatively more conventional, due to the numerous instruments and mechanisms for participation contemplated in the set of norms dealing with territorial planning and nature protection, some of which, despite their limitations, have proved quite effective (in particular those referred to coasts, soil, water, protected natural spaces, etc.).

Figure 6 shows the percentage of the different conventional channels according to the issue at stake. It reflects to a certain extent the diverse opportunities that the legislative and administrative framework offers for different demands.

FIGURE 6. *Conventional forms of action in environmental protests by issue in Spain (1988-1997).*
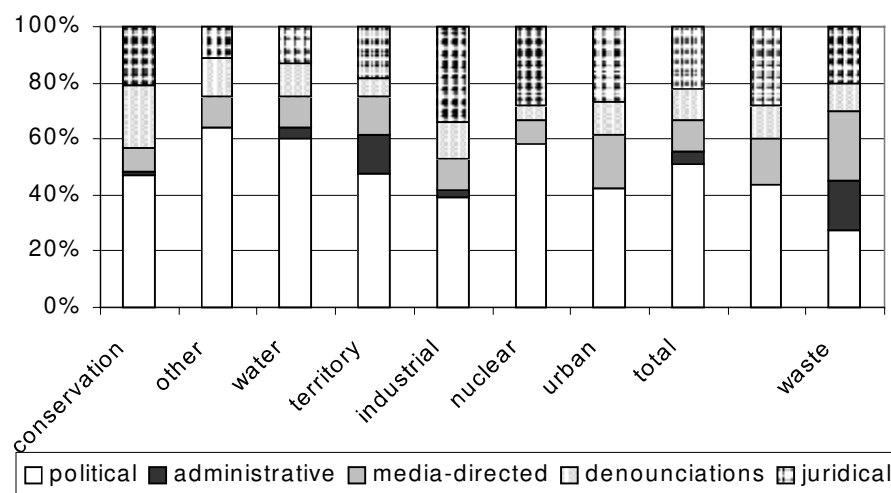

As mentioned above, administrative conventional actions, such as, for instance, participation in public information procedures in the process of environmental impact studies, are concentrated on space-related issues, especially in the case of roads and dams. This is not only because of the existence of a provision for citizens' participation in this terrain (norms concerning the establishment of industries also contemplate public participation mechanisms) but also because of the political controversy (and public visibility) of these administrative procedures. Similarly, the higher proportion of judicial actions in the field of industrial policy issues can also be linked to the earlier introduction of environmental crimes related to waste disposal and pollution. However the greater or lesser resort to judicial means can also be valued as an indicator of the relative level of conflict in each area as well as a first (rough) way of assessing the efficacy of alternative conventional type of action in those areas. In this sense, industry, nuclear issues and urban ecology (and waste) are most the conflictive areas[18]. As indicated previously, these issues show high levels of unconventional forms of protests. However the closure of the legal and administrative system or its inefficacy in dealing with

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[18] The high level of complaints on conservation issues could be considered an indicator of confidence in the police or the competent authorities to satisfy demands (since 1988, the nature police has proved a quite effective channel for complaints regarding environmental infraction).

certain types of demands, while favouring the resort to conflictive scenarios (in the judicial sphere or through unconventional strategies), is not necessarily conducive to violent protests.

Apart from the atypical case of terrorist violence in Leizarán mentioned above, the prevailing demonstrative character of unconventional PEs concerning nuclear issues is surprising. In contrast to the more confrontational profile of antinuclear protests in other European countries, the Spanish antinuclear movement is quite moderate. For instance, according to the data used by Duyvendak (1996, p.173), French antinuclear protests adopt violent forms in 20% of PEs compared to 7% in protests on other ecology issues. As is shown below, the prevailing organisational role of environmental organisations in the antinuclear sector might explain this moderation.

FIGURE 7. *The radicalness of unconventional form of protests according to the policy issue or nature of the demand.*
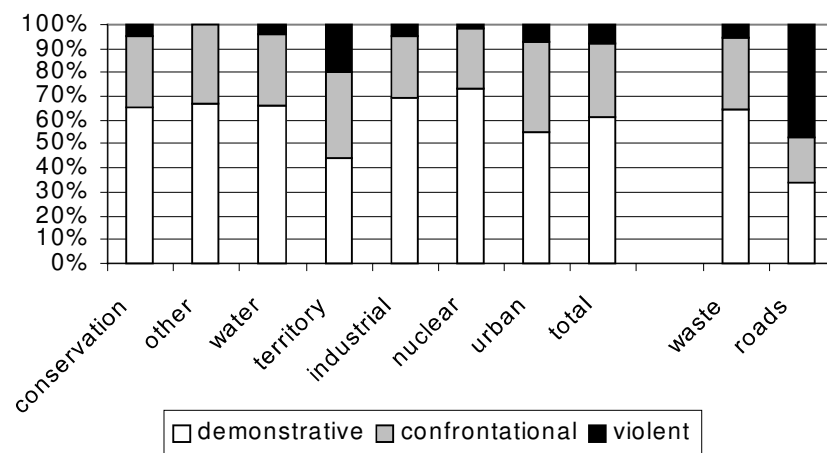
It seems that the nature of the demand and the characteristics of the policy area in which those demands are allocated are important factors determining the level of unconventional protests, as well as the choice of conventional channels. However, the policy issue does not seem to explain the degree of radicalness so well and especially as far as violence is concerned.

I will return to this issue in the next section, but first, the examination of the repertoire of action can be completed with variations in the action repertoire according to the scope of the underlying problem, the target and level of the arenas in which demands are addressed, and the nature of the target.

As the scope of the problem goes beyond the local, the probability of radical protests or violence decreases. In fact, violent forms correspond to local problems in 97% of cases (and the other 3% are regional), decreasing in the case of confrontational and demonstrative strategies to 78% and 71% respectively.

The state and the government are the main target of the protests in almost 75% of cases (80% of protests), while companies are the second most frequent target (19% of cases, 16% of PEs). The form of the protests is influenced by the nature of the target. This relation is quite obvious in some cases: for instance, members of parliaments are always targeted by direct democratic forms of actions (because the rules make it so). Although the interesting point here is the limited role played by members of parliaments in conducting environmental demands. In fact, in the sample, members of parliament are only targeted by political and direct-democratic types of action. Judicial action and formal complaints are mainly directed at the administration and companies, and media directed forms are only targeted at the administration or the government. Another interesting feature is that, as the form gains in radicalness, the public administration and the government lose their status of main target in favour of other actors, especially companies. In fact, only in 11.3% of cases are companies targeted through political types of action, in favour of more confrontational means such as judicial action (in 21%, that is, more than twice the percentage of total judicial actions) or unconventional forms in 59% (of which 30% have a confrontational character: occupations, blockages, etc.).

State and governmental actors usually combine their status of being targets of the protests with that of being the addressed actor. The subordination of environmental competencies within sectoral departments has accentuated this double role played by the

administration, as on many occasions the same department is both the main developer as well as the alleged defender of environmental interests.[19]

Despite the clear localism in the definition of the problems, protesters usually act in regional, national and international arenas. This is obvious in the case of conventional means, since powers are distributed across the diverse administrative levels[20], hence, to a certain extent, the territorial level of the scenario of PEs also depends on the related administrative and judicial framework. A quite particular protest action, in this sense, consists of presenting formal complaints to the European Commission and petitions to the European Parliament. As mentioned in the introduction, EU environmental policy has been the motor behind the advance of nature protection and pollution mitigation in Spain. Spanish pro-environmental actors have sought in the EU arena institutional support and allies for their demands. Despite the frequent resort to this channel, the sample of PEs used here indicates a decreasing trend.

Figure 8 shows the evolution of complaints addressed to the EU institutions, which account for less that 4% of the total PEs registered (7% of the cases).

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[19] However, this distinction between target and addressed actors has not been contemplated in the preliminary codification of protest events.

[20] For instance, EIA declarations are usually produced by the environmental authorities of the autonomous communities but in some cases this responsibility is held by state environmental administration. (Similarly, legal proceedings can move from local courts to high courts).

FIGURE 8. *Evolution of complaints/petitions to the EU in environmental protests in Spain (1988-1997)*
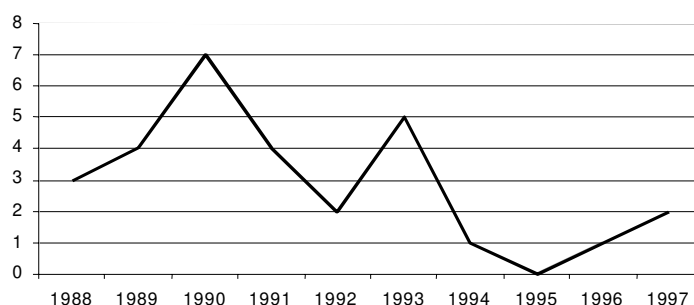
This evidence can be interpreted as indicating a more selective use of the EU by EMOs (the main protesters in this case), as well as the development of alternative or informal channels of interaction between Spanish EMOs and the Commission. It also might be caused by the general decrease in complaints against the Spanish administration (most of complaints are linked to deficient compliance with EIA directives) due to improved (at least formally) compliance with EU norms. In any event, there are other symptoms indicating changes in the protesters-EU relationship, as the latter has also become a target of (and not only addressed by) the Spanish environmental movement as shown by the case of the Itoiz dam or the campaign against transgenic food.

Non-conventional actions related to local problems can also transcend local scenarios following a strategy of gaining public relevance or visibility. In fact, this strategy is adopted in 10% of the unconventional protests (usually in Madrid or the capitals of the Autonomous Communities). But as I show in the next section, the local character of environmental protests is also, and to a greater extent, altered by the frequent presence of actors with a broader territorial scope of action.
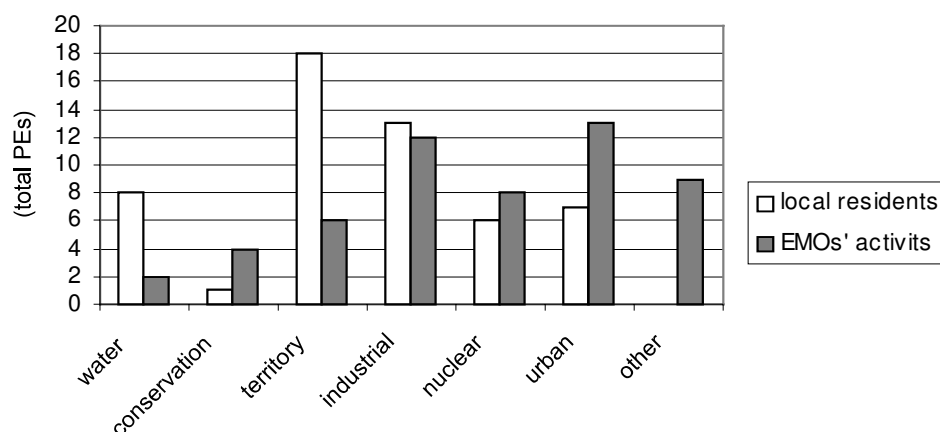
5. Actors

In this section the organisational panorama of the environmental protests is examined. This shows that the scene is dominated by environmental organisations[21]. Local residents usually react against a threat on (or demand an improvement in) the environment on which the quality of their lives and their economic activities are based. It has already been pointed out that citizens (usually residents)' mobilisation in Spain clearly has a local (and NIMBY) character, despite the EMOs' efforts to globalise the terms of local conflicts. Jordan and Maloney's (1996) hypothesis of the professionalisation of environmental protesters suggests a scenario of increasing activist mobilisation to the detriment of mass participation by citizens. In this sense, Figure 9 compares PEs participated in (and carried out) mainly by local residents with those PEs in which EMO activists are the sole protagonists.

The data reveal the varying role of EMO activists depending on the issue at stake. They seem to represent citizens in those fields or contexts that are not propitious for the mobilisation of ordinary people due to their diffuse environmental impact (as in cases involving alternative industrial technologies, reduction of emission levels), global or distant problems (the rain forest, depletion of the ozone layer, etc.) or against overall life style (use of the car, consumption behaviour, etc). Whether these data suggest an organisational extension of the "protest business", or a quite adverse mobilisations context, is difficult to say, but in any case both could be closely interrelated in the Spanish case.

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[21] The focus on the organisational character of protest to some extent implies neglecting the individual dimension which is a fundamental feature of many protests (especially unconventional forms). Little is known about mobilisation dynamics from this micro-perspective; a deficit that media event analysis does not seem to be able to correct. Equally, little is known about the importance of the local context, the role of pre-existing organisational structures (for instance, the role played by religious institutions in rural areas seems to be critical in some of the local conflicts of the sample), the discourses (the contents of mobilising frames), or the relation with formal (on many occasions exogenous) environmental organisations.

FIGURE 9. *The professionalisation of environmental protests by issue in Spain*


Some features of the actors involved in protests have already been mentioned. In this section detailed attention is paid to the main organisational character of protests about the environment in Spain. While the main targets of protests are the public administration and the government (followed by companies), the main organisers are EMOs. As already mentioned, around 70% of PEs count amount their main organisers (or public supporters) at least one EMO. Figure 10 compares the evolution of PEs in terms of the criteria of EMO participation[22].

The straighter line drawn by PEs counting with EMOs among the (cited) organisers can be linked to the EMOs role in providing stability and continuity to the environmental movement. The (slight) increase of the proportional presence of EMOs in the total amount of protest events since the early 1990s might also be interpreted as indicating a trend towards a greater organisational role for EMOs within environmental protests (however, the temporal scope is too limited to confirm such a trend).

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[22] The shaded area represents those events in which no EMO has been coded as initiating/organising the event, and include events without any information about the organisers (missing values).

FIGURE 10. *Evolution of protest events organised by environmental organisations in Spain (1988-97)*
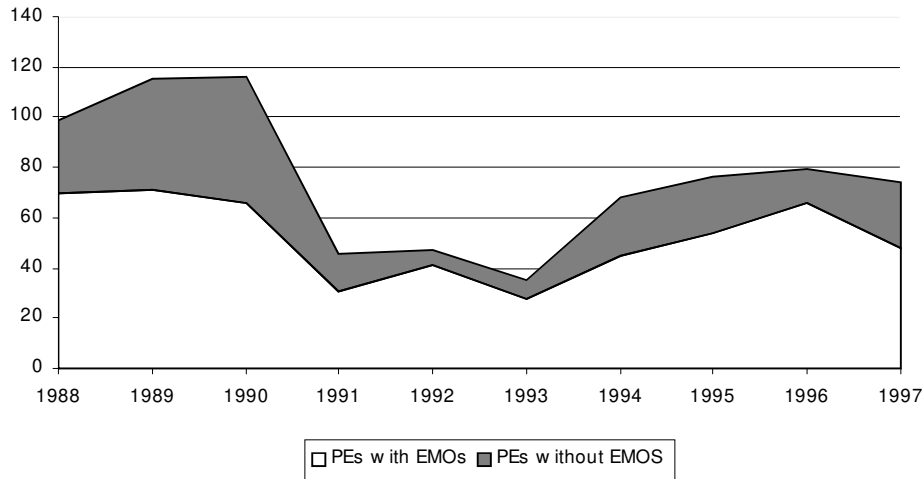
In the previous section it was pointed out that neither the limited opportunities offered by formal mechanisms nor the nature of the issue at stake satisfactorily explain the resort to violent forms of actions. Table 8.3. compares the action repertoire of PEs in which EMOs are present and those in which, at least according to the information contained in newspaper reports, they do not figure among the organisers.

Table 3. *Political Repertoire in Protest Events with and without Environmental Organisations*

Type of Action	Total (%)	(1) With EMOs	(2) Without EMOs	Difference (1-2)
Judicial	9.9	-	-0.1	**+0.1**
Complaints and denunciations	5.5	+1.1	-2.5	**+3.6**
Political	23.2	+2.5	-5.7	**+8.2**
Media/public directed	5.1	+0.6	-1.3	**+1.9**
Administrative	2.1	+0.8	-1.7	**+2.5**
Direct-democratic	1.7	+0.2	-0.4	**+0.6**
Demonstrative	31.9	-0.5	+1.0	**-1.5**
Confrontational	16.1	-1.1	+2.3	**-3.4**
Violent	4.6	-3.8	+13.8	**-17.4**
Total	100.0			

It can be seen that PEs with EMOs participation tend to be more conventional and less radical than those in which they do not participate.

A remarkable feature of the organisation of protests is the large number of different organisers. At least 150 different EMOs participated in the little more than 400 events with environmental organisers, only 150 of which had more than one organisation. The data reveals the wide and fragmented organisational spectrum of the Spanish environmental movement. However the fragmentation reflected in the sample is not as extreme as the data might suggest. In fact, a small number of state-wide organisation participate in 68% of the events with EMOs involvement (that means 48% of all PEs in the sample), regional EMOs (in over half the occasions regional umbrella organisations) participate in 30% of the PEs, while local EMOs are present in only 26% of the cases. Although the proportion of PEs with two or more EMOs is rather modest (18% of EMOs' protests and 12% of the total sample), state-wide EMOs appear in 77% of cases while regional or local organisation are involved only in around 30% in both cases. These data suggest a movement network centralised at state level, but with local groups retaining their organisational control at the local level.

Before analysing the features of the EMOs in relation to the environmental protests, it is important to consider the main features of the organisational network behind protests.

Organisational networks of protests

Table 4 (and annexed Figure 16) show very roughly the organisational network of environmental protests in Spain during the period under study. Network analysis has been carried out using Ucinet IV (see Bogartti, et. al. 1992)[23], of 42 different organisations[24]. The network is basically integrated by EMOs (formally state, regional and local EMOs umbrella, organisations and ad hoc groups), by the major political parties, three trade unions (one of them agrarian), and other NGOs (such as the State Organisation of Consumers or the State Confederation of Neighbours' Associations). The assortment of actors illustrate well the range of organisation, apart from formal environmental ones, that (although not very often) have joined the environmental movement in their demands. From a general perspective, various possible factors could explain the broadening of EMOs' potential allies seen in the few last years. The most consolidated approach to ecology is that undertaken by the United Left (IU), a party which has politically assumed, especially in the 1990s, the green flag and has established frequent interaction with part of the environmental movement. Trade unions have incorporated the green issue later (more credibly in the case of the leftist Comisiones Obreras, CC.OO) (AAVV 1995, p.92). Cooperation with other sectoral trade unions such as those related to the fishing sector have been sporadic (for instance, in the case of Spanish fishermen against the use of illegal fishing methods in the Mediterranean area or in the Bay of Biscay, see Tarrow 1995). A clear factor, but not the only one, behind this incipient broadening of the environmental organisational network reflected in the data was the creation of the Advisory Council for the Environment (CAMA).During its first year of existence (1994-5), the CAMA generated

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[23] I am indebted to Remo Fernández for his kind help with this program and his very useful advice on interpretation of the data.

[24] These cases have been selected from the PE data. More specifically, those organisations that appeared at least twice in a sub-sample of 150 PEs (with two or more organisations codified) have been used for the network analysis.

intense coordination, not only among EMOs, but also with other social agents in the Council (see Jiménez 1999a).

Table 4. *Environmental Protest organisational network in Spain*

Organisation	Degree	Closeness	Betweeness	% of total PEs
CODA	75	59	211	8,4
AEDENAT	65	53	91	7
ADENA-WWF	63	53	143	5
GREENPEACE	50	50	248	14
IU-LV	39	53	236	4,5
CC.OO	39	55	115	2,8
SEO-Birdlife	38	47	11	3.2
FAT	28	46	2	2.1
UGT	20	44	13	1.2
PP	14	45	95	1,3
PSOE	9	40	1	0,7
ADENEX	5	45	12	1
ARCA	4	37	180	1,7
Nerva	4	35	0	2,5
CEPA	4	35	0	1
Vandellós	3	35	3	1
ADDA	3	38	0	1
Itoiz	2	34	0	2,8
Lurraldea	1	35	0	3.2

The organisations listed in the table are those with higher frequencies in the 150 sub-sample. This has been ordered according to the value of the *degree*, *betweeness* and *closeness* properties respectively. The value of the degree index refers to the local centrality of the actor, that is, indicates the times that one organisation appears linked to the rest. The closeness refers to the centrality of certain organisation in relation to the others, while the betweeness value indicates the centrality of an organisation in relation to clusters of groups or their mediator position , that is their situation in central nodes of the networks (it also reflects to a certain extent the range of interactions).

According to these criteria, four main state-wide EMOs (CODA, AEDENAT, and the national branches of Greenpeace and WWF) are the pillars of this network. Other state EMOs in this sample are not as crucial, for example SEO-Birdlife or ADDA (an animal rights' organisation with a reduced role within the environmental movement), which shared their condition of being quite specialised, and FAT or Federation of Friends of Earth (which during this decade has lost relevance and, as the low value of betweeness suggests, quite often appears within the same group of organisations ([for instance collective petitions presented by national EMOs]). But the position and nature of the four main EMOs is not the same. CODA, as an umbrella organisation is the most central EMO, while Greenpeace (in accordance with its protesting style) has a lesser total weight in the net (as we will see below, of the four EMOs, Greenpeace is the one that tends more frequently to work alone), but this relation is quite diverse (or more properly, it occupied a central node in the net). This is the main difference with AEDENAT, which tends to work always with the same groups (the CODA, AEDENAT, IU and CC.OO. clique).

Political parties and trade unions only participate, respectively, in 7% and 3% of the total PEs, in the whole data set, but when they get engaged, they usually participate with the largest EMO central organisations, gaining quite a lot relevance in the network. The United Left (IU) and CC.OO. show a quite similar record. In fact, although the level of involvement of the trade union is lower (see percentages in the right hand column), CC.OO. tends to appear with IU (they are the most frequently paired relationship in the network). Less greened parties such as the Socialist Party (PSOE) or the centre-right Popular Party (PP) occupy more marginal positions in the network. The PP's higher level of betweeness (variety of interactions) takes its position in the net closer to that of the IU, as both have usually shared the condition of opposition parties.

The remaining organisations represent two types of EMOs: formal regional EMOs (ARCA, ADENEX and CEPA) and ad hoc groups. ARCA illustrates very well the activities of local organisations, as it is very active in diverse local protests campaigns coordinated with other local or state-wide groups. In the case of ad hoc groups, despite their intense work and their relatively strong presence in the PEs sample, they are usually at the edges of the network, linked to the regional or state-wide groups but usually carrying out protest activities alone.

Environmental movement organisations

Most of the codified environmental groups are usually coordinated through regional and state-wide umbrella organisations. The decade under study coincides with diverse experiences of movement coordination. The most important has been through the CODA (Coordinating Committee of Environmental Organisation) that, together with AEDENAT and the main regional environmental groups and umbrella organisations, has recently founded *Ecologistas en Acción*, a state-wide federation of 300 local groups. Although it is too early to assess the success of this experience, it has simplified considerably the symbols and abbreviation landscape of the Spanish environmental movement[25].

The trend towards movement centralisation is also discernible in the following three figures. FIGURE 11 shows the percentage evolution of different EMOs in PEs with only one environmental organisation codified. While variations in the level of local EMOs over time produces a line similar to the evolution of total PEs (see Figure 8.1 and 8.2), EMOs operating with a wider territorial scope do not seem to be affected by changes in the total volume of protests. The percentages of both type of EMOs increased moderately until 1992, to follow, from that moment onwards, divergent trends, with the increase in one related to the decrease in the other. This possible relationship might indicate the existence of competition among state EMOs and those based at the autonomous communities level.

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[25] A complex of networks has been established through overlapping single-issue networks (such as the energy commission of the Coordinating Committee of Environmental Organisations (CODA), previously the State Anti-nuclear Committee, which includes organisations which are not members of CODA); different regional networks and state-wide organisations such as CODA (more than 100 organisations) or the Iberian Council for the Defence of Nature (CIDN), comprising 9 regional organisations from Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar. In short, the environmental movement in the 1990s has consolidated its organisational base mainly around CODA and CIDN at the state and autonomous community level, and the two state branches of Greenpeace and WWF. The current crystallisation of interactions has enabled it to reduce the level of internal conflict, especially in relation to different views concerning the organisational model, relations between EMOs and the administration and political parties.

FIGURE 11. *Evolution of the scope of action of environmental organisations taking part in protests with one organisations in Spain, 1988-97*
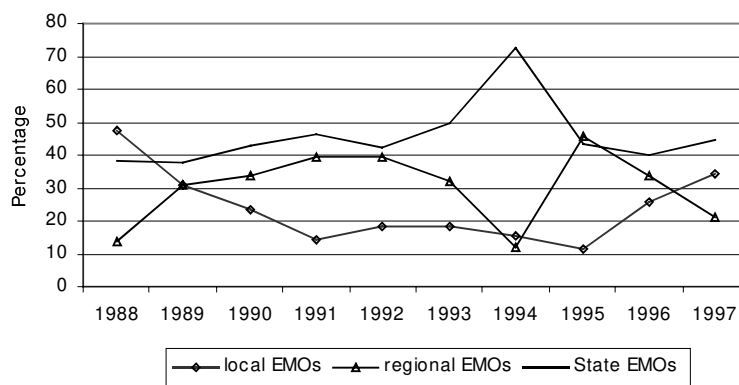
However, this competition might only be true in terms of media space: the peak in 1994 could well reflect the almost exclusive media coverage of state EMOs represented in the CAMA, whose creation that year gave state EMOs an unprecedented level of political prominence (and media coverage) and can be interpreted as the political and media recognition of EMOs such as CODA as legitimate interlocutors on the environment (along with Greenpeace and the WWF). Figure 12 supports this interpretation about the particular prominence of state EMOs during 1994. It shows the evolution of EMO participation in PEs (now also including those events with more than one organiser or initiating group) according to the territorial organisational scope. As can be seen, the 1994 peak in the evolution of EMOs has disappeared, suggesting a political (or mass media) context, in which individual state organisations achieved greater prominence and were able to gain media coverage through PEs (usually conventional) organised alone. The graph confirms the importance and continuity of state-level organisations in organising protests. This importance of state-wide EMOs in the sample corrects the image of localism previously given by the data on the scope of the problems. Here the key question is to what extent this localism is due to limited opportunities or the capacity of these EMOs to raise protests to global (state) terms and to what extent this limited capacity is over dimensioned or reinforced by the selection bias of newspapers reports (which are more prone to report on local episodes of protests and specific problems).

FIGURE 12. *Evolution of scope of action of environmental groups in environmental protests in Spain, 1988-97.*
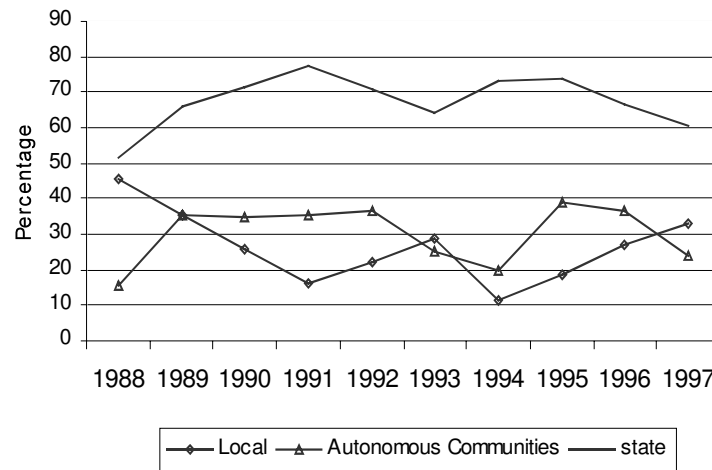

Figure 13 offers some information about the evolution of coordination among EMOs. This graph compares the total evolution of protests with two or more EMOs among the organisers according to their territorial scope of action. The general trend shows a moderate increase in the general level of coordination to which, as can be seen, state-wide EMOs contributed the most.

FIGURE 13. *Evolution of Protest Events with two or more environmental groups in Spain, 1988-97*
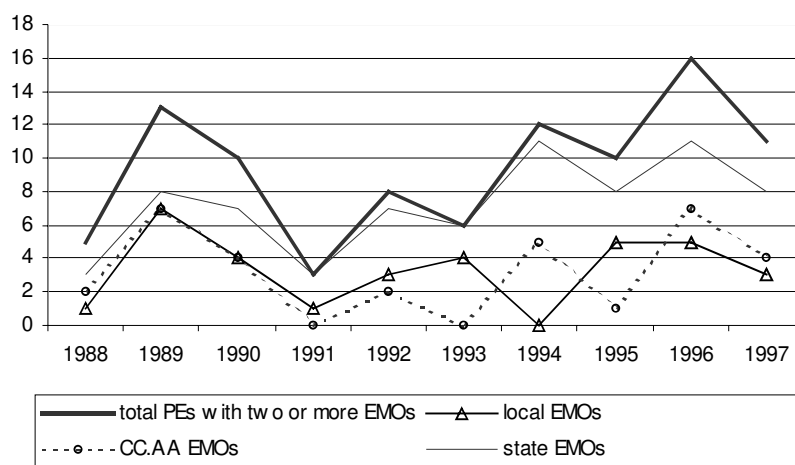

Among state EMOs, we have seen four that occupy a central position in the organisational networks of environmental protests. The same four are also the organisation with the greatest presence in the PEs sample: Greenpeace, with 20% of the PEs with EMO participation, WWF with 7%, CODA with 10% and AEDENAT with 11% of protests. They can be taken as representing four types of state level EMOs in Spain. If fact, they can be classified in each of the four categories of social movement's organisations defined by Diani and Donati 1996 (cited in Diani, 1997). ADENA-WWF is close to the public interest-lobbying type. The state-wide umbrella organisation CODA is close to the participatory advocacy group. AEDENAT represents the Spanish counterpart of the mass protest organisation, and Greenpeace, as expected, is characterised as the professional protest organisation[26]. They also reflect the process of specialisation and labour division among EMOs. In fact, a brief comparison of their main fields of action and most frequent form of protests, provides a clear

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[26] The public interest lobby type corresponds to an EMO managed by professional staff, with weak participatory inclinations and emphasis on traditional pressure tactics; a mass protest organisation combines participatory styles of action with a strong inclination for disruptive protest typical of the classic movement organisation; the professional protest organisation type combines professionalism and confrontational tactics (the protest business described by Jordan and Maloney 1996); and the participatory advocacy group type is characterised by participatory aspirations in the internal structure and focus on a lobbying in a more conventional repertoire of actions (Diani 1997, p.3).

picture. Figure 14 represents the two issue areas in which each of the four organisations most frequently act, as indicator of specialisation.

This graph reflects quite clearly each organisation's speciality. According to the sample, AEDENAT concentrates 40% of their protests events on nuclear issues, while 40% percent of PEs of Greenpeace concern industrial and environmental quality issues. This reflects the importance of the creation of Greenpeace-Spain in 1984 to cover and stimulate the environmental movement's incorporation of environmental quality issues among their goals. The overlaps usually imply collaboration and division of labour by specific cases or themes. Certain overlapping in the specialities can also be observed in the case of the Spanish branch of WFF and CODA; however this is in part due to the broad character of the categories "conservation" (WWF is specialist, for instance, in forestry issues and CODA in hunting or species protection), in the field of infrastructure, with CODA paying greater attention to water policy.

FIGURE 14. *Comparing two main fields of action among more representative state-wide environmental organisations*
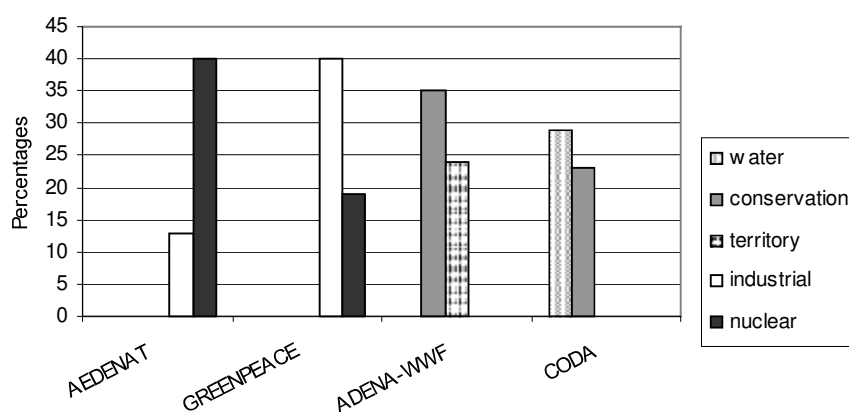
As has already been highlighted for the whole sample of PEs, the specialisation of the organisations might influence their repertoire of action. This is confirmed to a certain extent by the analysis of the more usual forms of action of these four organisations. However, as the data also indicates, the type of organisation (its ideology) also influences the selection of the form of protest chosen to advance its demands. Figure 15 compares the extent to which each of the four organisations resorts to the different type of protests.

FIGURE 15. *Comparative repertoire of action of most representative state-wide environmental organisations*
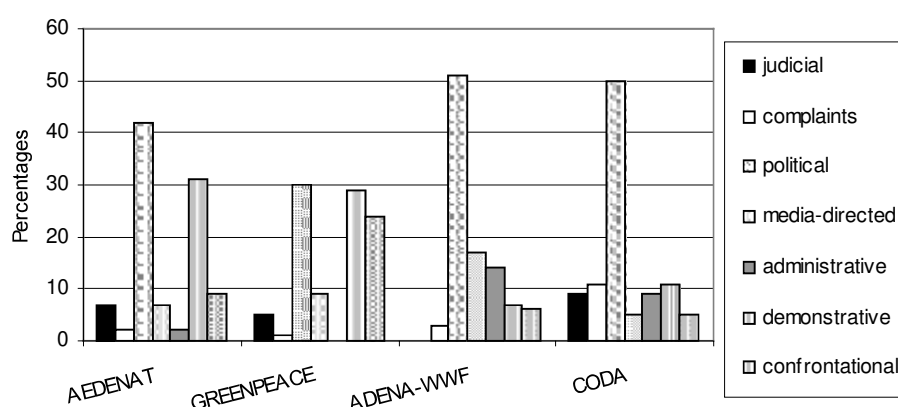
In accordance with the common nature of Spanish EMOs, there is no record of violent protests involving any of these EMOs. Again as expected, due to their specialities, AEDENAT and Greenpeace show a more unconventional profile than the other two organisations which focus above all on nature conservation and territorial planning, fields in which, as already explained, the system offers some, albeit precarious, formal channels for influence.

However, AEDENAT (which is closer to the mass protest organisation) and Greenpeace also differ from each other in this respect: Greenpeace resorts less to political types of protests and unconventional actions tending towards confrontation. The dislike of

Greenpeace for political approaches and lobbying is patent, as is the peculiarity of their protests (usually "theatrical" confrontations performed by professionalised activists). The importance of media-directed events also points to their professionalised character. The median of participants in Greenpeace's actions is inferior to the median in events counting with the participation of AEDENAT (confirming the participatory vocation of AEDENAT)[27]. The fact that in 35% of the unconventional PEs performed by Greenpeace activists are arrested (although the use of force is not common) is probably related to this [28].

The profiles of CODA and WWF are closer to conventional organisations which concentrate their efforts in established channels, but the data reveals the distinct features of each of these two organisations. While WWF is a professionalised international EMO (the public interest lobby) , CODA is an umbrella organisation that very loosely co-ordinates and supports a wide variety of local and regional and state groups (including AEDENAT) with different degrees of radicalism. This explains certain similarities between them, such as the conventional character of their action (in the case of CODA, unconventional protests are realised by its organisation members) as well as differences (for instances, the media orientation of WWF, and the greater level of conflict introduced by CODA in conventional scenarios through formal complaints and legal actions, and the importance of the local autonomy of group members of CODA).

The four organisations differ also in the target of their actions. Although in general terms the administration and the government receive the greatest criticism and demands, CODA and ADENA relatively more often address their demands to the members of the government than ADENAT or Greenpeace do (suggesting a more personal or closer relation with the authorities). But the real difference here is the greater attention given to companies by Greenpeace: while other organisations seldom target firms, Greenpeace selected them in 30% of their protests.

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[27] However, Greenpeace has modified its strategies in the 1990s to include lobbying and other regular forms of protest in its repertoire.

[28] There is no evidence of a different police policy when other organisations resort to confrontational forms of protest of the type used by Greenpeace.

The different style and nature of these four organisation are also reflected in their relations with other organisations. The four organisations frequently interact with them, depending on the issues. In general, the relations seem "poorer" in the case of Greenpeace. Almost 70% of their actions are performed alone, compared for instance with 30% of the PEs in which AEDENAT initiated protest actions alone. This of course is largely a reflection of the different protest styles of the two organisations. Greenpeace, above all in the 1990s, has developed an extensive network of interaction within the environmental movement and in the other in the other NSM sectors with the exclusion (as in the case of WWF) of political parties. In this sense, AEDENAT is the organisation which is most open to joint initiatives with political parties, particularly the IU.

As far as temporal changes, the decade under study has seen the consolidation of new EMOs created during the 1980s and an advance in the slow process of the movement's regional and state organisation. Apart from the successful implantation of GREENPEACE, a large part of the most active EMOs were born, and reached their maturity, during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Many of these groups have come to occupy the organisational space left by old EMOs (many of them with a clear conservationist orientation) which have either lost their organisational strength or their combativeness. The evolution of AEDENAT (and to a certain extent, that of CODA also) illustrates very well this organisational replacement, since many of the most active experiences have been integrated in (or promoted by) AEDENAT. These groups and similar experiences have frequently adopted confrontational strategies similar to those typically employed by GREENPEACE but usually with a clear vocation for participatory methods. Hence, although the confrontational tactics adopting the form of "eco-happening" performed by a core of activists are not new in the organisational history of the Spanish environmental movement, it can be said that there was a change, in this sense, by the turn of the decade.

These trends are difficult to discern in the data (again, because of their limited temporal scope and the size of the sample). The clearest evidence suggested by the previous analysis is that of the prevailing (and increasing) presence of EMOs in the organisational panorama of environmental protests, and among then, CODA, AEDENAT and GREENPEACE (to a lesser extent more stable or less visible in the case WWF or SEO-Birdlife). The network analysis

suggests also the stability of the support of IU and the incorporation of other social actors or allies (especially as the environment is finding a certain identity within national politics)[29].

The data also indicate a trend towards the centralisation of the ecological movement, reflecting an ongoing process that has recently been crystallised in *Ecologistas en Acción*, a federal organisational initiative of EMOs unification (based on local autonomy) without precedents in the history of the Spanish environmental movement, and which is certainly based on previous years of co-ordination of CODA, AEDENAT and regional umbrella organisations. This process (in the general context depicted above) leads to the question of the institutionalisation trends in the environmental movement which will be addressed in the next section.

Conclusions

In previous sections the nature of environmental conflicts in Spain from 1988 to 1997 have been examined. The quantitative approach used, based on an analysis of PEs reported in the national pages of *El País*, has proved to be a very useful source of information in providing evidence about the issues, actors and the types of protests surrounding environmental conflicts in Spain. However, the amount of evidence generated has been less than expected, as far as temporal trends are concerned (this may respond to a stable reality and/or the short time span covered, as well as the quality of the data)[30].

The evidence provided by the PEs analysis (and the organisations network analysis) has been related to some of the major theses on the nature of environmental mobilisation. Two

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[29] These networks will also increasingly incorporate business organisations (such as those associated with the recycling industry which already appear in the data base as environmental protesters).

[30] Studies using media event analysis have been of an overwhelmingly comparative or historical-longitudinal character. This has meant that their usefulness for single case studies has not been fully explored. For instance, after carrying out a comprehensive reading of the reports relating to the 395 cases in which the entire set of PEs can be grouped, in 25% of the cases, the newspaper provides information about the result of the protests.

interrelated theses seem especially relevant in this sense: the influence of the political context (political opportunities), and the thesis on the institutionalisation of environmental movements. As far as the first is concerned, the evidence comparing type of protests and policy issues points to the influence of the policy context (rather, or better, than the general structure of political opportunities) in the involvement of citizens and EMOs in the environmental policy process. In contrast, there is little quantitative evidence that can be used to tackle an issue that is receiving increasing attention, the Europeanisation of environmental conflicts. This, of course, is because the data is designed to analyse PEs (and not the Europeanisation of conflicts). Moreover, in Spain, probably due to its relatively undeveloped environmental policy, the European dimension has rarely become the target of PEs, and instead has acted as a mediator, potential ally or recipient of complaints and lobbying tactics (the latter not codified here).

Additionally, media reports do not provide much information about whether or not a PE is part of an international campaign -hence this dimension of Europeanisation cannot be grasped properly by our data either. Despite this, the evolution of complaints addressed to European institutions suggests a change in the European dimension of environmental protests, in which, probably, relations between EMOs and Eurocrats have to some extent been institutionalised, and the EU itself has become increasingly targeted, and not only addressed by protesters.

The Europeanisation thesis is inserted in the broader question of the local-global prism through which environmental issues are often treated. Here again, the focus on PEs (reported in newspapers) inevitably bias the perspective in favour of the local (that is, the nearest and most noticeable).

Evidence here underlines the local as the scope defining more frequently and more intensively environmental conflicts. This localism quite often takes the form of nimby-types of protest (around water, waste and other infrastructure) mobilising the greatest number of participants. The local definition of problems does not restrict protest politics to the local level. As I have indicated, organisers and targeted actors are most often at the regional and state

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This suggests the possibilities that media reports offer for the quantitative analysis of conflicts.

level. This means that environmental protests remain particular and local when they move to regional or national arenas and seldom become general or global (state) level protests. Moreover, when this happens, and problems are generalised and/or defined globally (for instance, when protests against an incinerator become protests against incineration and in favour of a change in industrial policy), environmental activists replace citizens in mobilisations[31]. This, of course, reveals a mobilisational context that is not very propitious for general or global environmental appeals. It is precisely into this context that the question of the organisational features of environmental protests can be inserted.
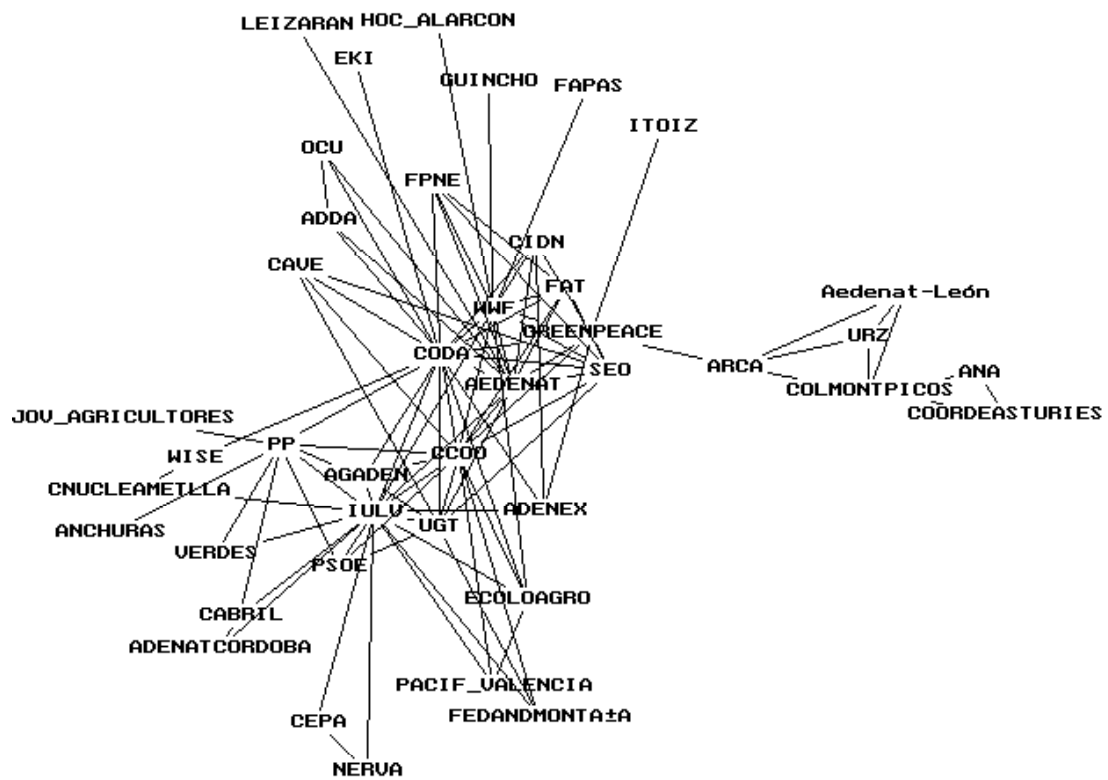
Network analysis suggests a quite compact organisational network dominated by EMOs (although the presence -apart from political parties- of other organisations, from trade unions or neighbours to business, indicate an incipient broadening of the network).

Additionally, the evidence with respect to the organisational base of the environmental movement suggests a panorama of consolidation that is increasingly dominated at the state level by a small number of organisations. Besides a trend towards movement centralisation, a division of work and specialisation among state-wide organisations is also discernible. Besides this, the extent to which this organisational trend is towards the institutionalised type of movement organisation or the protest business model is not clear. If we take as a reference point the four EMOs most represented in the sample (according to their percentage weight in the sample of PEs and their position in the organisational network), it has been shown how each of them corresponds quite easily to each of the four organisational models proposed by Diani (1997) . This can be seen as indicating an organisational variety in which neither the thesis of institutionalisation nor the picture proposed by the protest business model of Jordan and Maloney (1996) cover entirely the most significant organisational panorama in Spain. The recent creation of *Ecologistas en Acción* (in which CODA and AEDENAT have taken part) might signify the organisational answer of the Spanish environmental movement to the question of how to expand their social base (and be consistent with their participatory philosophy) and promote, effectively, change in environmental policy.

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[31] On the global-local question see Rootes 1997.

Annex.

FIGURE 16. *The network of the environmental protests in Spain*

Environmental Organisations (EMOs)	
State-wide	ADDA -animal rights (Asociación Defensa Derechos Animales)
	Aedenat (Asociación Ecologista Defensa Naturaleza)
	CIDN (Consejo Ibérico Defensa Naturaleza)
	CODA (Coordinadora Organizaciones Defensa Ambiental)
	FAT (Federación Amigos de la Tiera)
	FPNE (Fondo Patrimonio Natural Europeo)
	Greenpeace
	Seo-Birdlife (Sociedad Española Ornitología)
	WISE
	WWF-Adena
Regional/local	ADENEX (Extremadura)
	Aedenat-Córdoba (Andalucía)
	AGADEN (Andalucía)
	ANA (Asturias)
	ARCA (Cantabria)
	CEPA (Andalucía)
	Colmontpicos (Colectivo Montañeros Defensa Picos Europa)
	Cnucleametlla (Colectivo antinuclear L'ametlla, Catalunya)
	Ecoloagro (Acció Ecologista Agro, Valencia)
	EKI (Euskadi)
	FAPAS (Asturias)
	Coordinadora Ecoloxista Asturies
	El Guincho (Canarias)
	Aedenat-León
	URZ (León)
Ad hoc Groups	Anchuras (military training camp in La Mancha)
	Cabril (Nuclear landfill in Andalucia)
	Hoc_Alarcón (Road Madrid-Valencia)
	Itoiz (dump in Navarra)
	Lurraldea (road Navarra-Euskadi)
	Nerva (hazardous waste landfill in Andalucia)
	Vandellós (nuclear plant in Catalunya)
Political Parties	PSOE
	PP
	IU-LV
	Los Verdes
Trade Unions	CC.OO
	Jóvenes Agricultores (agrarian)
	UGT
Other NGOs	CAVE (residents) (Confederación Asociaciones Vecinos España)
	Fedamonta (Federación Montaña Andalucía)
	OCU (Consumers)
	PACIF_Valencia (Pacifist)

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