



Chapter 25 Politics, Environment, and Sustainability



“It’s A Small World After All”

Outline

Environmental Policy

- A. Developing environmental policy involves identifying a problem and its causes, developing and implementing a solution, and monitoring the policy.
- B. According to social scientists, public policy in democracy develops in four stages
 1. Recognition: identify problem
 2. Formulation: identify causes of problem and develop solution to deal with it
 3. Implementation: put the solution into effect
 4. Control: monitor progress and adaptive management

Dealing with Environmental Problems in Democracies: Some Difficulties

- A. Democracy is a government in which people elect others to govern and can express their individual beliefs and opinions.
- B. Democracies are not efficient at dealing with environmental problems because elections are held every few years and politicians focus on short-term, isolated problems and raising money for reelection.
- C. Special-interest groups such as profit-making organizations and non-governmental organizations compete to influence environmental policy.
- D. Environmental principles that guide us in making environmental policy:
 1. Our understanding of nature and the consequences of our actions are limited.
 2. Try to be able to reverse decisions and actions.
 3. When an action threatens the environment, take measures to decrease/control the action.
 4. Prevent a problem rather than trying to fix its negative results.
 5. Environmental problems demand integrated solutions.
 6. Supporting the environmental justice principle means that no group bears an unfair burden of harmful environmental risks.
- E. Individual responsibility for environmental policy:
 1. Individuals and groups must pressure officials to solve problems.
 2. Pressure must come from grassroots organizations.
 3. Be involved in developing environmentally sustainable communities.

Environmental Policy in the United States

- A. Environmental leaders are needed to provide vision, focus, resources, and support to others. The United States is powerful and needs leadership in environmental policy, technology, and in finding solutions to current problems. Each person can:
 1. Lead by example,
 2. Work within existing systems to improve the environment,
 3. Run for a local office, and
 4. Work for better environmental solutions.
- B. Reform of the election financing system in the United States could reduce the influence of special-interest money in elections in the United States. One suggestion is to let the citizens alone finance election campaigns.
- C. Businesses and governments need to shift from top-down hierarchical organizations to more flexible networks with adaptive management strategies.
- D. Environmental policy in the United States is complex, controversial, and lengthy.
 1. The three branches of the federal government are the legislative, executive, and judicial.
 2. The major function of the federal government is to develop and implement policy, which produces laws, regulations, and funding.
 3. The policy life cycle includes recognition, formulation, implementation, and control.
 4. There is a complex interaction among lobbyists and individuals act to influence environmental policy.
 5. There are several steps that must be followed for a bill that is introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives to become a law—citizens and lobbyist influence this process.

Chapter 25
Politics, Environment, and Sustainability

“It’s A Small World After All”

- E. The US has set aside more public land than any other nation.
 - 1. The public land is in national forests, resource lands, parks, wildlife refuges, and protected wilderness areas.
 - 2. The national forests and the resource lands are used for logging, mining, grazing, oil and gas extraction, recreation, etc.
 - 3. The National Wildlife Refuges protect habitats and breeding areas for waterfowl and big game. One may hunt, trap, fish, mine, log, graze, and farm these lands.
- F. Some federal public lands have more restricted use.
 - 1. The National Park Service allows camping, hiking, sport fishing, and boating but not hunting, mining or oil/gas drilling.
 - 2. The National Wilderness Preservation System lands are even more restricted in use; they mostly support recreational activities.
- G. There is a continuing controversy over management of public lands in reference to the resources the lands contain: oil, natural gas, timber, mineral and biological resources. There are four principles that biologists and environmental economists advocate:
 - 1. The primary goal should be protecting biodiversity, wildlife habitats, and the ecological functioning of public land ecosystems.
 - 2. Subsidies/tax breaks should go to NO one who takes resources from public lands.
 - 3. Fair compensation should come to the American people from use of these lands.
 - 4. Users/extractors on public land should pay for the environmental damage they cause.

Environmental Law and Laws

- A. Environmental law defines reasonable environmental behavior and attempts to balance competing social and private interests. It includes statutory laws, administrative laws, and common laws.
- B. Environmental lawsuits are expensive, require proof of suffering, and are difficult to win
 - 1. Plaintiffs must establish they have legal standing in a particular court.
 - 2. Bringing lawsuits are expensive, especially for individuals (class action suits are often a preferred tactic)
 - 3. Public interest law firms cannot recover attorney fees unless Congress authorizes it in laws the firms are seeking to have enforced.
 - 4. To stop a nuisance or to collect damages from nuisance or negligence plaintiffs must establish they have been harmed and that the defendant caused harm.
 - 5. Statutes of limitations determine how long a plaintiff can take to sue after an event occurs.
 - 6. The court or courts may take years to reach a decision.
- C. Oftentimes, arbitration or mediation is used to avoid cost lawsuits
- D. U.S. environmental laws:
 - 1. Set standards for pollution levels.
 - 2. Screen new substances for safety.
 - 3. Encourage resource conservation.
 - 4. Require evaluations of the environmental impact of an activity proposed by a federal agency.
 - 5. Protect ecosystems from harm.

Environmental Groups and their Opponents

- A. Environmental groups have educated the public, businesses, and political leaders, spearheaded environmental action, and helped pass/strengthen laws.
- B. Global public policy networks (GPPNs) have formed in recent year in response to rapidly changing conditions in a globalized world—the groups focus on particular environmental problems and bring together governs, the private sector ,international organization and NGOs
- C. Grassroots environmental groups monitor environmental activities, work with individuals and communities to oppose harmful projects, work to pass/strengthen environmental laws, and work to find solutions to environmental problems.
- D. Student environmental groups make changes in their schools and local communities to make them more sustainable, usually saving money in the process.
- E. Environmental groups have helped in many ways but have been counterbalanced by an organized movement to undermine the effort.
- F. There is an organized and well-financed anti-environmental movement in the United States

Chapter 25 Politics, Environment, and Sustainability

“It’s A Small World After All”

Global Environmental Policy

- A. The earth’s natural capital, its environmental security, is as important as military and economic security.
- B. The world faces a number of simultaneous environmental threats that can undermine the economics, political, and military security and stability of various nations and the international community.
- C. Problems like rapid population growth, growing health problems a, environmental degradation, and terrorism are all serious threats
- D. Environmental security has a high priority in many countries although some developing countries see this as an elitist ploy by developed countries to control the world’s resources
- E. International environmental organizations gather and evaluate environmental data, help develop environmental treaties, and provide funds and loans for sustainable economic development.
- F. Earth summits and international environmental treaties play important roles in dealing with global environmental problems, but most environmental treaties are not effectively monitored and enforced.
- F. Everyone needs to work together to find and implement innovative solutions to environmental, economic, and social problems.

Summary

1. In this century, we have increased concern about human activities and the harmful effects on biodiversity, shifted from local to regional and global concerns, focused on climate change, become aware of pollution in developing countries, increased concern about trace amounts of some chemicals, and are starting to rely more on our international community to deal with environmental problems.
2. Democracies are governments in which people elect officials and representatives who pass laws, develop budgets, and formulate regulations. Democracies are designed to deal mostly with short-term, isolated problems and are not always efficient when dealing with environmental problems.
3. Environmental policy in the United States is made through: persuasion of lawmakers that an environmental problem exists, influence on how the laws are written, finding funds to implement and enforce each law, drawing up regulations for implementing each law by the appropriate government department, and the enforcement of these regulations.
4. Environmental policy in the US is made through: persuasions of lawmakers that an environmental problem exists influence on how the laws are written, finding funds to implement and enforce each law, drawing up regulations for implementing each law by the appropriate government department, and the enforcement of these regulations.
5. Environmental groups range from small grassroots groups to major global organizations. Their roles include monitoring environmental activities, working to pass and strengthen environmental law, and working with corporations to find solutions to problems. Opponents of these groups include some corporate leaders, some corporations, and some citizens.
6. There are currently environmental protection agencies in 115 countries, over 500 international environmental treaties and agreements, UNEP to negotiate and monitor international environmental treaties, Rio Earth Summit, and Johannesburg Earth Summit. These can be improved by monitoring and evaluating effectiveness.

Objectives

1. Summarize the basis of a constitutional democracy. Evaluate the position of special-interest groups. Distinguish between profit-making organizations and nonprofits, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Explain how governmental structure drives a reactive rather than a proactive stance.

Chapter 25
Politics, Environment, and Sustainability

“It’s A Small World After All”

2. Briefly describe how environmental policy is made in the United States. Distinguish the roles played by the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches. List five approaches that legislation uses to protect the environment. Give one example of legislation for each method.
3. Name five general principles for setting environmental regulations. Give one example of legislation using each strategy. Summarize how the courts are used to implement or weaken environmental regulations.
4. Describe how environmental policy can be influenced by individuals exercising their democratic responsibilities, leadership skills, and career choices.
5. Summarize the struggle between the Greens and the Browns. Be sure to distinguish between national and grass roots environmental groups. Be sure to list the strategies that are being used by the current Wise-Use Movement.
6. Explain the importance of critical thinking and distinguishing between pioneer science and consensus science in evaluation of claims by environmental and anti-environmental groups.
7. Summarize a strategy to bring about election finance reform. List three strategies to improve bureaucracies. List four strategies to give ordinary citizens a stronger role in governance. List three linkages between crime and environmental quality.
8. Summarize the results of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Describe the development of the ecojustice movement. Suggest ways to improve global environmental protection.

Key Terms (Terms are listed in the same font style as they appear in the text.)

<p>administrative laws (p. 603) <i>arbitration</i> (p. 603) <i>case law</i> (p. 603) <i>case laws</i> (p. 597) <i>civil suits</i> (p. 603) <i>class action suit</i> (p. 603) common law (p. 603) <i>constitutional democracy</i> (p. 593) <i>conventions</i> (p. 611) defendant (p. 603) democracy (p. 593) <i>economic security</i> (p. 609) <i>environmental justice principle</i> (p. 595) <i>legal standing</i> (p. 603) <i>legislative branch</i> (p. 597) lobbying (p. 598) <i>mainline groups</i> (p. 606) <i>mediation</i> (p. 604) <i>military security</i> (p. 609) <i>multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)</i>(p. 611) <i>National Forest System</i> (p. 600) <i>National Park System</i> (p. 601) <i>National Resource Lands</i> (p. 600) <i>National Wildlife Refuges</i> (p. 600) <i>negligence</i> (p.603) <i>nongovernment organizations (NGOs)</i> (p. 594) <i>norms</i> (p. 603) <i>nuisance</i> (p. 603)</p>	<p>environmental law (p. 602) environmental policy (p. 593) <i>executive branch</i> (p. 597) <i>funding</i> (p. 598) <i>global public policy networks (GPPNs)</i> (p. 605) <i>global sustainability movement</i> (p. 606) <i>grassroots groups</i> (p. 606) <i>green job market</i> (p. 596) <i>human rights principle</i> (p. 595) <i>humility principle</i> (p. 594) <i>injunction</i> (p. 603) <i>integrative principle</i> (p. 595) <i>judicial branch</i> (p. 597) plaintiff (p. 603) <i>policy</i> (p. 598) <i>policy life cycle</i> (p. 593) politics (p. 592) <i>polluter pays principle</i> (p. 595) <i>precautionary principle</i> (p. 595) <i>precedents</i> (p. 597) <i>prevention principle</i> (p. 595) <i>profit-making organizations</i> (p. 594) <i>public participation principle</i> (p. 595) <i>regulations</i> (p. 598) <i>reversibility principle</i> (p. 594) <i>special-interest groups</i> (p. 594) <i>statutes of limitations</i> (p. 603) statutory laws (p. 603)</p>
---	--