Policy Networks and Complex Interactions in the European Union:
Environmental Policy in Spain

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Abstract

This paper addresses governance and decision-making in the European Union. It takes a multi-level governance perspective; that is, it assumes that governing authority is diffused across levels (supranational, national and subnational) within the European Union. Units within this emerging structure increasingly share resources, interests and influence over policy decisions. Similar to what Grodzins recognized in his "marble cake" conceptualization of the American federal system, the emerging decision-making structure in the EU is fragmented and characterized by "many overlapping governments [and I would argue non-governmental actors] involved in many overlapping functions" and by multiple points of access to decision-making processes (1966: 25). *Policy network analysis* is a realistic tool for analyzing the complexity of interactions within the multi-level structure of the EU.

This study 1) establishes policy network analysis as a tool within the multi-level governance framework; 2) provides preliminary empirical evidence within the structure of policy network analysis through an investigation of environmental policy in Spain and 3) discusses the theoretical implications of this evidence.

INTRODUCTION

Whether through the peaceful process of bargaining and legislation or the violent process of armed conflict, decision-making authority is becoming more diffused, residing in entities both above and below the central state. While in the most extreme cases states may implode and new states may be formed, more commonly authority is reallocated within and above the boundaries of the existing nation-state. France, Italy, Spain and Belgium are but four European examples in which sub-national governments have been created and/or reformed, and competences transferred downward to these regional and local authorities, since the 1970s.[1] Even in Britain, where the centralism of the state generally has been maintained, there is evidence that sub-national entities may be playing a more important decision-making role, particularly within the scope of European Union (EU) initiatives (Marks 1993).[2] At the same time, these states are relinquishing decision-making authority in many policy areas upward to EU institutions.

Studies of multi-level governance (Constantelos 1995, Hooghe 1995, Marks 1993, Marks, Hooghe and Blank 1996) recognize this trend and provide an alternative conceptualization to the neorealist view of the unitary state and intergovernmental bargaining (Mann 1993, Moravcsik 1991, 1993, Waltz 1979). Adherents to the former perspective have worked toward explanations for why governing authority may be diffused over several levels and for the consequences of this multi-level structure for decision-making both within the state and within wider territorial entities, particularly the European Union.

Evidence presented in the multi-level governance studies as well as the literature on decentralization of the state points to a redistribution of authority among levels of government in the European arena. For a variety of reasons, formal and informal decision-making power has been diffused both downward from the center to subnational levels of government and upward to European Union institutions.[3] The central state may not be the only or even the primary actor in many areas of decision-making; the state apparatus shares formal decision-making authority and resources with entities both above and below it. Decision-making authority regarding almost all aspects of governance is diffuse, residing in a variety of both public and private actors at the supranational, national and subnational levels.

We can discern three major sets of empirical and methodological questions emerging from this new conceptualization of governance and decision-making at multi-levels across the European Union. First, how do we provide systematic evidence regarding the diffusion of authority across levels? Second, if authority is indeed diffused, what are the factors that have led to this redistribution? Third, what difference does this diffusion of authority make for policy and decision-making?

Many of the studies cited above provide convincing evidence that at least formal authority has been redistributed across levels in the European arena and/or pinpoint reasons for this redistribution of authority. Several also show that governmental and non-governmental actors across the supranational, national, and subnational levels at least attempt to influence decision-making processes. But what are the patterns of interaction among these actors, and what difference, if any, does this interaction make in determining decision outcomes? This paper will address primarily these questions.

The distribution of formal governmental authority across the EU-central state-substate levels provides a basis for the analysis of interactions in the EU arena. A wider distribution of authority to already existing governmental entities, as well as the creation of new entities (such as the Autonomous Communities in Spain), are likely to result in more complex interactions among these actors in policy making than neorealist frameworks would imply. We would expect that the redistribution of authority across the European arena generally and the shifting of authority across levels, as evidenced in the multi-level governance literature, affects the relative influence of specific units within the structure. If authority has been redistributed,

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then we would expect specific interactions among actors across all three levels to be characterized by patterns of bargaining and exchange. Different policy outcomes would reflect the interest and influence of a variety of actors, not just those associated with the central state. Central state preferences would at times prevail, but increasingly decision outcomes would represent the interests and influence of supranational and/or subnational actors and compromises among the preferences of these various actors.

"LOOKING INSIDE THE MARBLE CAKE:" POLICY NETWORK ANALYSIS

The multi-level governance perspective contains elements similar to Morton Grodzins' analysis of the American federal system as a "marble cake." Using Grodzin's analogy, the emerging decision-making structure in the European Union is fragmented and characterized by "many overlapping governments [and I would also argue non-governmental actors] involved in many overlapping functions" and by "multiple cracks" or points of access to decision-making processes (1966: 25). Since authority in terms of governing capacity is shared among the supranational, national and subnational entities within the marble cake, we would expect interactions among actors at all levels to be characterized by bargaining, exchange, and negotiated policy outcomes.

I contend that policy network analysis is a realistic tool for analyzing the complexity of interactions among the units within the multi-level or marble cake structure. It enables us to describe and explain empirically the formal and informal interactions within this framework and will allow empirical research that will confirm or deny this conceptualization of governance in the European arena.

Policy network analysts have used this approach primarily to study policy making processes within states. Heclo introduced the concept of "webs of influence" or "issue networks" in US decision-making processes, and other analysts subsequently developed this approach, comparing policy networks within European states and the US (Heclo 1978, Marsh and Rhodes 1992, Smith 1993, Marin and Mayntz, eds. 1991). More recently, this approach is beginning to enter into discussions on the European Union (Bomberg 1994, Peterson 1995a, 1995b).

While there are definitional and methodological debates within the policy network approach, the basic premises may be summarized as follows:

> Policy networks are new forms of political governance which reflect a changed relationship between state and society...Policy networks typically deal with policy problems which involve complex political, economic and technical tasks and resource interdependencies, and therefore presuppose a significant amount of expertise and other specialized and dispersed policy resources. Policy networks are mechanisms of political resource mobilization in situations where the capacity for decision making, program formulation and implementation is widely distributed or dispersed among private and public actors (Marin and Mayntz: 41).

In a system within which authority is dispersed among various levels, policy networks would be characterized by both a formal hierarchy of authority as well as formal and informal interactions among autonomous but interdependent actors with divergent and mutually contingent interests (Ibid.: 18).

Critics point out several weaknesses in policy network analysis, the most important being that: 1) it is largely a descriptive model with few theoretical implications; 2) it underestimates the difficulty of delineating policy networks, particularly within the European Union; and 3) it suffers from lack of definitional clarity (Kassim: 15).

I am not claiming here that policy network analysis is a theory (or even a proto-theory) in and of itself.[4] Rather, I contend that this approach may be used as an analytical tool within the larger conceptual framework of multi-level governance. I am utilizing policy network analysis here as a means to disaggregate the complex maze of interactions across the "marble cake." As I will demonstrate below, several studies in the policy network framework provide sufficiently specific definitions to be able to delineate policy networks. I am not denying the difficulty of identifying and analyzing such networks; this is a necessary challenge when studying a complex system.

Kenis and Schneider argue that policy networks are relatively new phenomena that have emerged in response to increasing dispersion of resources and the authority and capacity for action among governmental and non-governmental actors:

> Increasingly unable to mobilize all necessary policy resources within their own realm, governments consequently become dependent upon the cooperation and joint resource mobilization of policy actors outside their hierarchical control. Policy networks should therefore be understood as those webs of relatively stable and ongoing relationships which mobilize dispersed resources so that collective (or parallel) action can be orchestrated toward the solution of a common policy problem (pp. 34-36).

We would expect that policy networks are based on the formal structures of authority and division of formal governmental competences across levels, as specified in EU treaties, state laws, court decisions, and autonomy statutes. Within the policy domains involved in governance, for example environment, agriculture, and economic development, policy network analysis allows a more complete multi-territorial mapping of the governmental *and* non-governmental actors involved in the actual making and implementation of policy, that is, both formal and informal interactions and negotiation.

If the multi-level governance conceptualization is correct and authority is distributed across multiple levels in the European arena, we would expect at a minimum that these governmental actors at all levels, utilizing their formal competences, would be involved in the decision-making process as negotiating partners. This alone would paint a different picture than that of the realist unitary state. Further, the formal redistribution of authority within the EU-state-subnational governmental structure would provide the opportunity for non-governmental, societal actors to enter into the decision-making process at all levels. That is, policy making and the evolution of the entire system are determined by negotiation and bargaining among many governmental and societal actors possessing a variety of resources.

RESEARCH DESIGN: POLICY NETWORKS WITHIN THE MULTI-LEVEL FRAMEWORK

Formal, institutional arrangements likely provide the general structure around which policy networks form. Within the multi-level governance framework, several studies show shared competences for specific policy domains within categorizations of governmental functions such as monetary policy, economic development, agriculture, and education.[5] . The formal distribution of authority for policy domains such as these provide a good starting point for the identification of policy networks. These networks are characterized, however, by "predominantly informal, decentralized and horizontal" relationships among both private and public actors (Marin and Mayntz 1991: 15). Delineating policy networks thus requires the analysis of interactions and bargaining of all actors, both public and private, formal and informal.

Another important aspect of most policy network analyses is the contention, found also in Marks' multi-level governance argument, that policy making involves both the formulation

and implementation of policy (Marks 1993). Unlike neorealist analyses, which tend to focus on big states making big decisions, the former view dictates the consideration of all actors involved in the various stages of policy making. The rationale here is that, in reality, those people and groups in charge of carrying out a policy have as much or more influence over its actual impact as those who initiate and legislate the policy. Moreover, the "formulators" and "implementors" may or may not be the same actors.

The research design presented here allows: 1) a mapping of the formation of policy networks in the European arena by comparing the actors involved in policy making *across time*; and 2) structured comparisons of the interactions and influence of these actors *across states* and *across policy domains*.

The general steps in this research design are the following:

1) Select a sample of policy domains from established lists of governmental functions. We could, for example, choose one or two specific policy domains from each general category specified in Lindberg's analysis, for example defense and foreign trade under external relations functions, regional development, agriculture development, and/or monetary policy under economic functions, and environmental protection and public health policy under public protection (1971: 60);

2) For each of these functions, identify the main public and private actors at the EU, national and subnational levels who have the potential to interact in order to affect policy outcomes (that is, actors who have formal decision-making authority, information or other resources relevant to the function, and/or an interest or stake in some aspect of the function);

3) Within each policy domain under study, identify a sample of actual decision outcomes ("decision events" in the policy network literature);

4) For each decision event, determine: a) the actors within the network who were involved in the policy decision; b) these actors' preferences regarding the decision; c) the interactions of these actors relevant to the policy decision (i.e. who attempted to influence whom); d) the decision outcome;

5) For each decision event, compare the decision outcome to initial preferences in order to determine the relative influence of the various actors involved in the policy decision.

Comparisons could be structured both across states and across time, as well as across policy domains. Ideally, this research would be a way to answer the "so what" question: how does the *potential* for interaction across the three levels (as shown in the formal distribution of competences) actually affect policy making? Moreover, if policy networks are forming across

levels where they did not previously exist, then this in itself is further evidence of the redistribution of authority.

If the multi-level governance conceptualization of the European polity is correct, we would expect that policy networks, involving increasing numbers of governmental and non-governmental actors, would emerge over time around the policy domains under study. We would expect the following patterns of interaction inside the networks of the multi-level structure:

1) In the majority of policy domains examined, actors at all levels of the system participate in decision-making processes;

2) Interactions among actors would be characterized by bargaining and exchange, rather than dominance or coercion by the center;

3) We would see shifting coalitions of actors, depending upon the issue area and/or decision event;

4) Policy networks are not discrete; that is, they would overlap in terms of both actors and decisions. There would be linkages, for example, between actors involved in environmental and agricultural policies, since the effects of many decisions regarding these areas cannot in reality be separated;

5) We would expect negotiated outcomes and bargaining arrangements to a greater degree in policy domains in which legal/formal authority is more diffused and/or where there is ambiguity regarding competences;

6) Policy outcomes in the EU are determined by a variety of actors. On some issues, central government positions will prevail; other decisions will be determined primarily by supranational and/or subnational actors, while others will reflect compromise among various positions.

Comparisons of decision outcomes across policy networks, across time, and across states would enable us to confirm or deny the expectations outlined above. Confirmation of these expectations would provide further empirical support for the multi-level governance conceptualization. The implications of this evidence for countering neorealist assumptions are discussed in the final section of this paper. In the section below, I present preliminary empirical evidence in the context of the research design using three decision events in one policy domain, environmental policy, in Spain.

PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN SPAIN

The research design introduced above provides for the identification and structured comparison of policy networks across time, states, and policy domains. This type of extensive comparison is not possible here. I will, however, present preliminary evidence within the structure of policy networks through an analysis of environmental policy in Spain. First, I outline the general development and evolution of environmental policy in the European arena, focusing on the EU and Spain. Second, I identify the general network of actors at all levels who have the potential to influence environmental policy making. Third, I choose three specific environmental decision events in Spain, pinpoint the main actors involved in each decision, and analyze their preferences, the dynamics of interaction among them, and the decision outcome.

DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN THE EU ARENA: FORMATION OF A POLICY NETWORK

Environmental policy intersects with a variety of other policy domains. Decisions made regarding economic development and industrial and agricultural production directly effect the environment. In turn, these other policy areas are affected by decisions regulating environmental standards. This preliminary study is concerned primarily with environmental policy, but this policy network cannot be studied without considering the linkages with other policy areas, and I will discuss these connections where appropriate.

The Treaty of Rome made no reference to environmental policy. Despite the lack of a specific treaty basis, however, the Community approved programs and legislation dealing with environmental issues beginning in the early 1970s. The legal basis of Community legislation in the period from the founding of the EU through the passage of the SEA lay in Articles 100 and 235 of the EEC/EC Treaty. Article 100 allows the EC to issue directives "as directly affect the establishment or functioning of the common market," and Article 235 permits "appropriate measures" to "attain in the course of the operation of the common market, one of the objectives of the Community" (Nugent 1994: 270). For the most part, the economic link necessary to invoke Article 100 was easy to show, since environmental regulations usually have a direct impact on commercial activities and industrial production. In areas in which no direct link with the common market could be demonstrated, such as with the protection of wild birds or other endangered species, Article 235 was used. Even in the period before

environmental policy became an official EU policy, the European Court of Justice generally supported the expansion of EU powers into the environmental policy domain (Wurzel 1993: 182).

The heads of state and government in the EC member states first acknowledged in 1972 at the Paris Summit that rising standards of living could not be sustained in the face of deteriorating environmental conditions. The Commission proposed and the Council approved the "First Environmental Action Program" in 1973. Four more programs have been approved since then, spanning the period until the year 2000. These Action Programs are not legally binding, but rather set the agenda for European environmental policy and provide the political basis for subsequent legal agreements. They set forth policy objectives, principles, and priorities of the EU and also suggest implementation measures for environmental policy (Ibid.: 179).

Each Environmental Action Program provides a more complete framework for collective action at the European level than the one preceding it. The Fifth program, "Toward Sustainability," is the most ambitious. It draws upon the principles set forth in the EC Treaty, as amended by the Single European Act (SEA) and the Treaty on European Union (TEU), and specifies several major innovations in EU environmental policy. One of the most important is the Program's change from a focus on traditional environmental elements, or "receptors" of pollution (air, water, atmospheric pollution) to a focus on the sources of pollution. The Program identifies five main target areas for an EU-level approach: industry, energy, transport, agriculture, and tourism. This change of focus indicates that the EU actors recognize the need for further integration of environmental policy with other established EU policies. Indeed, the program recommends a more "holistic" approach based on addressing the behavioral patterns of producers, consumers, governments and citizens, and also on ensuring that all EU policies are assessed in terms of their environmental impact. The Program also explicitly recognizes the shared responsibilities of various levels of government: European, national, regional and local (Nugent 1994: 288, Wurzel 1993: 190).

Pressures for collective action in environmental policy originated from sources at all levels both inside and outside the EU arena. International fora such as the 1972 United Nations' conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm drew attention to the effects of

transnational environmental pollution. This conference, in particular, was organized after intense lobbying by environmental groups and the Scandinavian governments. The latter in particular were suffering the effects of acid rain caused primarily by emissions originating in the UK and Germany. Prior to the early 1970s, conservation and resource-management efforts were initiated and carried out primarily by high-level civil servants and experts and were largely unimportant to the general public. This changed as the student movements in the 1960s generated mobilization of environmental groups that criticized such issues as exploitation of the environment for economic gain. "Doomsday" prophesies of diminishing resources began to be supported by scientific evidence and became widely considered by the general public (Wurzel 180).

Public opinion increasingly supports EU environmental action. High-profile environmental crises such as the Chernobyl disaster and ongoing problems such as global warming and acid rain heighten public awareness and concern about the environment. Eurobarometer data confirm that a majority of Europeans consider environmental protection a very high priority. Moreover, member state citizens tend to support collective action at the EU, as opposed to the national, level.[6] Efforts such as the EU's bathing water directive, for example, tend to be very popular with the general public. Pressure from the Commission, environmental interest groups, and the general public (supported by wide press coverage), led the British and German governments to implement this policy after initial resistance.[7]

Collective environmental policy at the EU level was not given a separate, official legal structure in the European framework until the passage of the Single European Act. The SEA (in force since 1987), incorporated a "common environmental policy" into the European Economic Community Treaty. Environment is the only EU policy that is specified to be a component of all other common policies.[8]

The 1985 intergovernmental conference and the subsequent SEA offered the logical opportunity to introduce environmental policy into the EC Treaty. Even state and industry leaders and other actors who did not necessarily share the "green" concerns of the public and environmental interest groups recognized the need to coordinate member states' environmental measures in the context of completing the internal market. Differing anti-pollution

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requirements across states, for example, would result in varying costs of operation for companies and would thus distort the market (The Industrial Society 1990: 2).

The Treaty on European Union strengthens somewhat the formal decision-making capacity for environmental policy at the European level. Environmental policy is specified as a common task, and "sustainable and non-inflationary growth respecting the environment" is now the stated goal. The Maastricht Treaty places environmental legislation largely under qualified majority voting procedures, and for the first time provides the threat of a penalty payment for member state non-compliance with environmental directives.[9]

Evidence that EU actors are taking seriously the integration of environmental considerations in other policy areas and that non-governmental groups have played a role in influencing the environmental policy agenda is provided by the explicit environmental requirements introduced in both the reform of the Structural Funds and the introduction of the Cohesion Fund (Lenschow 1995). Mazey and Richardson provide a convincing analysis that non-governmental groups, in particular environmental interests, played a direct and significant role in the reform of these funds to include environmental provisions (1994). Specifically, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), and the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), along with various other international, European, national and local groups lobbied various Directorates-General of the European Commission (particularly DGXI-Environmental Policy), convened summit meetings, and issued joint policy statements and expert reports that were subsequently incorporated into the reform of the Fund regulations. Notably, these groups succeeded in gaining a role for themselves as official participants in environmental policy setting processes through consultation.

Implementation is an integral part of the policy process and must be considered in any analysis of policy and decision-making. This is particularly evident in the case of environmental policy. The general agenda and goals for European environmental policy are set by the Commission and the Council of Ministers, embodied in the Environmental Action Programs and the treaty provisions. As indicated in Mazey and Richardson's research, non-governmental groups enter this agenda-setting process through informal lobbying and formal requests for consultation. These "big" decisions and agreements, however, are only part of

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the process. After legislation based on these agreements are produced through the EU decision-making procedures, these measures must then be implemented on the ground. The actual implementation is carried out by governments at the national and subnational levels and is influenced by societal actors at all levels. The European Commission has several tools available by which it can monitor and enforce EU legislation, primarily recourse to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and, with Maastricht, fines for non-implementation. Policy decisions are increasingly taken collectively at the EU level. At the same time, authority for implementation is dispersed among many actors at the state and substate levels.

EU environmental legislation is primarily in the form of directives. These laws are not directly enforceable but require states to subsequently transpose the substantive standard of the directive into national law. EU legislation since the early 1970s covers the areas of water and air pollution, disposal of chemicals, waste treatment, and protection of species and natural resources. Other policy instruments, such as community financial incentives for joint projects, information campaigns and collection of environmental data support the legislation (Nugent 1994: 288).

The EU holds member state central governments responsible for implementation of EU law; that is, in a case of non-transposition of an EU directive, the Commission would bring a member state before the ECJ. This arrangement is based on the principles of EU non-interference in the internal organization of the state, as well as the member states' international responsibility for their treaty obligations. Because of the redistribution of authority within member states, however, either exclusive or shared competence to implement various policies, including those in environment, may be in the hands of governmental levels below the central state apparatus. This situation establishes in many cases a direct link, which has not been recognized formally, between the EU and subnational levels of government in member states. That the EU has attempted to strengthen this link informally is evidenced by provisions in the reform of the Structural Funds. While maintaining the official policy of respect for the internal composition of states, the new provisions specify that central governments are obliged to include documentation in development plans that they have associated their "competent environmental authorities" at all levels in various stages of programming (Commission 1993).

The structure of competences in Spain, for example (which will be discussed in more detail below), effectively eliminates central government influence over policy in some domains. When the EU passes a directive in many areas, there is no space for the state to transpose. This is because the only governmental discretion left is how to implement the norm, not what the norm should be. Since the region has been given competence in the area of "how," with the Spanish constitution only leaving the central state with the basic law discretion of "what," the central state has no legislative discretion left since the "what" has been determined in Brussels (Parejo Alfonso 1994).

EU enforcement of environmental policy is difficult because authority is diffuse. Uneven implementation across member states is due to differing legal regimes, economic concerns, degrees of public concern, and level of political interest within these states (Dinan 1994: 393). Lack of information regarding the condition of the environment and implementation (for example pollution levels, compliance with nature protection measures) and the Commission's reliance on member state governments to provide such data exacerbates the problem. In response to the information deficit, the Commission proposed and the Council approved in 1990 the establishment of the European Environment Agency (EEA) to collect cross-national data and publish at regular intervals uniform statistics regarding implementation, environmental quality, and nature protection measures (Commission 1990: 43).

The EEA's first major report criticizes EU environmental policies as inadequate to meet growing problems associated with population increase, transport use and energy consumption, and suggests the need for stronger rules and better enforcement. Commission reports have also cited enforcement problems ranging from delayed transposal of EC measures to non-submission of required reports, to failure to conform to standards established in EU legislation. By the end of 1992, for example, the Commission had begun proceedings against eleven member states (all but Denmark) for failure to implement the environmental impact assessment directive in full (Dinan 1994: 393-394).

DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN SPAIN

The governing structures in Spain are a product of a constitutional compromise reached by various competing actors during the transition to democracy.[10] The system is necessarily flexible, ambiguous, and still evolving through legislation and court decisions. The authority

for governmental functions is legally divided among central, regional, and local levels of government. The constitution assigns authority over environmental matters both to the central government and to the autonomous regions.[11] The ambiguous wording in the constitution regarding environmental policy has been interpreted and expanded subsequently in the regional autonomy statutes, as well as in several Constitutional Court decisions. In general, the division of authority is as follows. The central state has the power to pass "basic" legislation. The Constitutional Court has determined that basic legislation does not mean a framework law (as in most other substantive areas) that dictates standards of uniformity to the Autonomous Communities. Rather, it should set the ordering of certain minimum standards that must be respected in all cases. The regions then have the right to promulgate secondary legislation, as long as this legislation does not contradict the basic law (minimums) of the state. The Autonomous Community governments thus have the formal authority to set environmental standards for their region that are more stringent than those passed by the state. In several cases, such as in Andalusia, the general regional legislation on environmental protection is more strict than the central state law (Ballester et al. 1994).

The Autonomous Communities generally have implementation authority for environmental legislation passed at the EU, state, or regional level. Legislation also has established environment as one of the competences listed for local government. The local level (particularly municipalities) may exercise legislative authority, but only within the confines of state and regional legislation (Council of Europe 1993).

There are a variety of governmental and non-governmental actors at all levels within Spain that are responsible for, and/or interested in, various aspects of environmental legislation. Indeed, Aguilar-Fernández argues that administrative disorganization and dispersion of responsibilities is a major factor behind the fact that Spain has one of the highest rates of non-fulfillment of EU environmental laws (1994: 105). At the national level, the State Department for Environment and Housing is charged with coordinating environmental policy among various agencies of the central government. The National Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICONA), which is a division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food (MAPA) manages Spanish national parks. The Ministry of Environment, Transport and Public Works (MOPTMA) is the main organization responsible for environmental

protection. The Ministry of Industry (MINER) also has sectoral responsibilities for protecting the environment. The Service for the Protection of Nature (SERONA) is part of the Civil Guard (the feared police in their tri-corner hats under the Franco regime) and is responsible for the direct enforcement of environmental regulations. Other ministries and agencies charged with agriculture, industry and tourism of course have an interest in influencing environmental legislation.

At the regional level, the government usually has a Department of the Environment that is directly responsible for all environmental issues in the autonomous community, as well as agriculture, industry, business, and tourism departments that have sectoral responsibility for some aspects of the environment and/or an interest in influencing legislation.

The national government has made limited attempts to involve officially societal environmental actors in policy. In 1993, for example, Madrid announced the creation of an advisory body on the environment which allows the participation of environmentalist groups. Likewise, regional councils of the environment allow participation, in an advisory capacity only, of environmental and industrial groups (Ibid.: 107). On an informal basis, private environmental groups and other interested bodies, such as the Spanish Ornithological Society, the Small Farmers Union, the Spanish Branch of the Worldwide Fund for Nature, the National Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, and the Ecological and Pacifist Association of Andalusia lobby at the national, regional and local levels.

Informal links also exist between the regional and EU levels. Many of the Spanish autonomous communities have established "information" offices in Brussels, in order to stay abreast of EU legislation and programs in all policy areas, including the environment. These offices also lobby the EU informally and have frequent contact with the various Directorates General of the European Commission.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY NETWORK

In general, the environmental policy network consists of the actors that are formally responsible for, and/or have the potential to influence, environmental policy across the EU. This network is illustrated in Figure 1, below. At the supranational level are the EU institutions and agencies that are responsible for formulating, approving, implementing and interpreting legislation, the various environmental, agricultural, and industrial interest groups

with a stake in environmental policy, as well as other entities such as the regional information offices. The actors involved at the national level include the main branches of government, the various agencies and institutions involved directly or indirectly in environmental policy, and national-level interest groups. At the subnational level are both regional and local governments and the societal actors that attempt to influence these public entities. This illustration is not all-inclusive but rather identifies the major actors involved in the general policy network. Other players may enter the game depending on the specific decision event.

Figure 1: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY NETWORK: EU-SPAIN
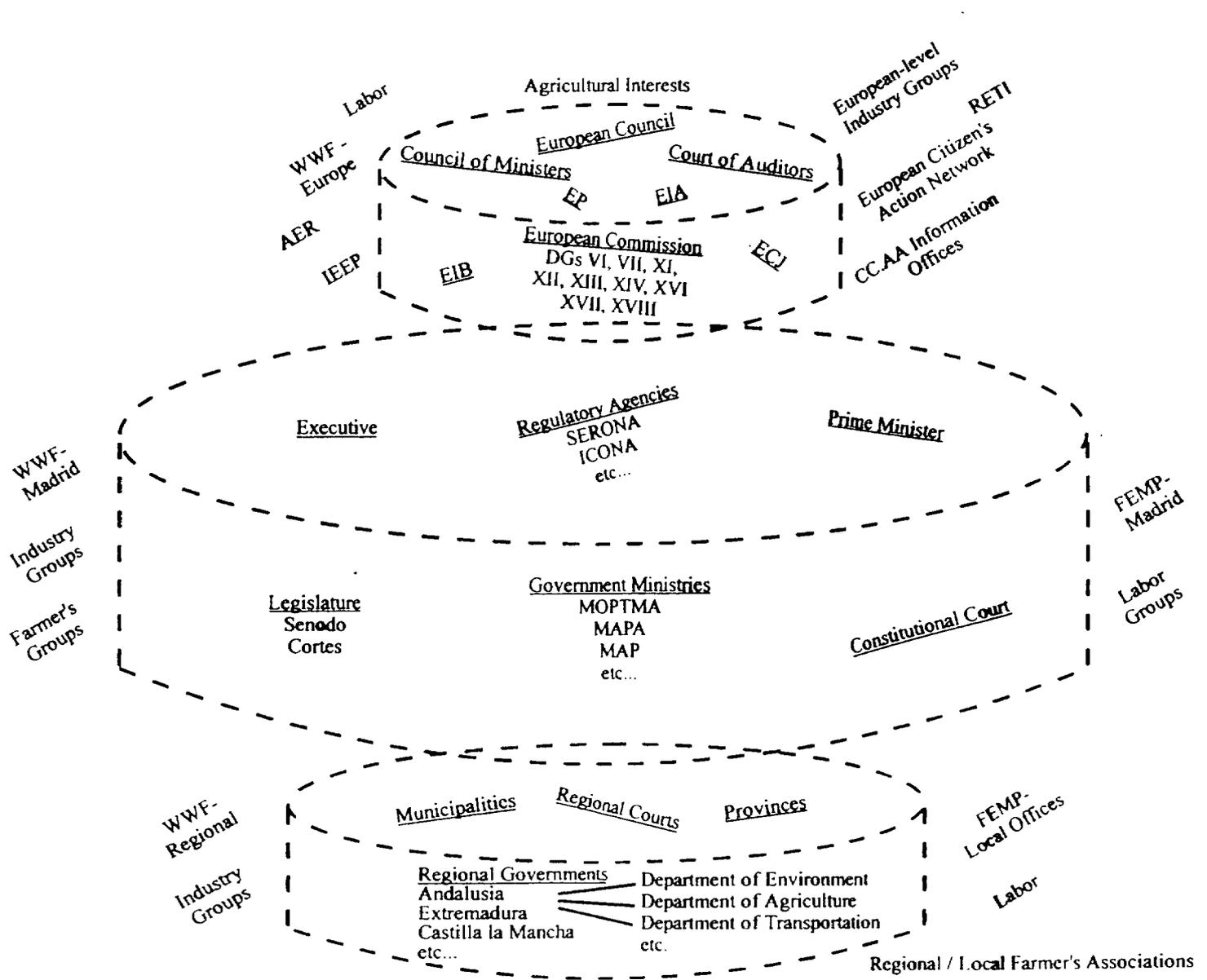
INTERACTIONS WITHIN THE POLICY NETWORK: DECISION EVENTS

In the preceding sections, I have established the evolution generally of environmental policy in the EU arena and have delineated the actors that are potentially involved in decision-making. The following sub-sections present an analysis of three specific decision events, all related to the environmental difficulties of water distribution in Spain.

The Doñana Park Compromise: Converging and Competing Interests across Levels

The case of policy making regarding the Doñana Park wildlife area is a good illustration of the complex interaction of actors around a specific set of issues.[12] An examination of this microcosm of environmental policy shows fragmented decision-making authority across the international, European, central state, and sub-central levels. It also allows an analysis of the inevitable linkages (conflictual and cooperative) among policy domains.

Doñana National Park is located in the autonomous region of Andalusia, in the south of Spain, and for most of its history has been relatively isolated geographically from the economic development and industrialization taking part in the rest of the country. Doñana is a unique ecosystem, consisting of marshy wetlands, scrubland, and mobile dunes, and is host to more species of migratory and local birds than any other location in Europe. The park has been designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, part of the system of European Parks by the EU (under the 1992 Habitats Directive), and a National Park by the Spanish central government. The park proper is under the jurisdiction of the National Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICONA). The area immediately surrounding the park (the officially-designated *entorno*) is regulated by the Andalusian regional government's Environment Department.[13]

The wetlands, one of the most important features of the park, have been threatened for several years with drying out. A major cause of this degradation is the severe drought that plagued Spain for most of the period between 1987 and 1996; even if not faced with other difficulties, some of the marshlands would be threatened because of the lack of rain. This problem is aggravated by the development of agriculture and tourism in the nearby areas. Strawberry and rice growers drain local waters to irrigate their crops, and the communities at nearby beaches and the pilgrimage town of El Rocio are engaging in tourism promotion.

These tourism programs bring a growing number of visitors to these areas, with accompanying increases in water usage and pollution.

Several linkages and conflicting interests among policy domains are apparent in this case. EU structural and agricultural policies have encouraged the development strategies being carried out in the area. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) gives incentives (in the form of subsidies) for farmers to grow crops such as rice and sugar beets that are higher yield than traditional crops but also require irrigation and increased usage of pesticides. Irrigation schemes, supported in many cases by EU structural funds, have changed the structure of agriculture and the condition of the countryside in much of Spain. The regional development funds also provide monies for the promotion of tourism, particularly in poorer regions. The central and regional governments have obtained EU funds through the CAP and the structural funds to aid farmers and businesses in the development of these projects in the area around Doñana.

The tension between environmental and economic development policies intensified in 1990. Developers proposed to build a large condominium complex on one of the beaches just outside the National Park. The project threatened to deplete further the already strained water resources in the wetlands. Scientists associated with the Park, international, European, and national, regional and local environmental groups in Spain and environmental officials from the EU's Directorate General XI (Environment) joined forces to oppose the development proposal. The controversy arose at a time when the European Commission had been criticizing Spain for being one of the worst violators of environmental laws and when focus in the EU Environmental Action Plan was shifting to sustainable development. This green protest prompted the Andalusian government to suspend the continuation of the project, which in turn resulted in violent protests from project supporters angry at the potential loss of jobs and profits from construction and tourism activity. In 1991 the EU opened an official investigation against the Spanish government for violation of environmental norms regarding Doñana.

Local politicians and labor interests pressured the national and regional governments to continue the development project, while scientists and other members of the university community and environmental interest groups joined DGXI officials in protesting it. Both the Madrid and Seville governments at the time were controlled by the Spanish Socialist Party

(PSOE) and found themselves confronted with the dilemma of these groups in their traditional constituency pitted against each other. Matters were complicated further by the divergence of interests and ambiguous division of competences within both the central and regional governments. For example, the interests of two central state entities that share enforcement power in water policy diverged. The Ministry of Environment, Transport, and Public Works (MOPTMA) tends to have close links with industry and chambers of commerce and is therefore more pro-business and development, and the Service for the Protection of Nature (SERONA) tends to be more green. Further, priorities diverged between the European Commission Directorate Generals for the environment (DGXI) and regional policy (DGXVI).

The governments in Madrid and Seville reached an agreement with EU officials to appoint a committee of international economic and environmental experts to study the problem of economic development in the environs of Doñana. Andalusian regional president Manuel Chaves selected and headed the expert committee. The committee attempted to include the major conflicting viewpoints of all parties involved and ultimately recommended that the EU fund sustainable development activity in the territory around the nature preserve.

The Andalusian Parliament approved a Regional Sustainable Development Plan based on the expert committee report. This plan contained more specific recommendations than those of the report but did not include any laws for implementation of this plan. The central government (MAPA and the Prime Minister's office) then presented the Andalusian plan to EU officials. The European Commission agreed to special financing through the structural funds of sustainable economic development projects in the Doñana region, designed to replace both the planned condominiums as well as intensive rice and strawberry cultivation, which could be phased out or reduced. This money was promised outside Spain's already-negotiated allocation of funds under the 1994-99 Community Support Framework. This compromise solution, then, illustrates the culmination of pressures from a variety of competing and converging governmental and non-governmental interests within the environmental policy network across all levels: international, European, central government, regional and local.

This case cannot be considered a simple aggregation of interests at the central state level, which was then carried to the inter-state bargaining table. Policy discussions were initiated at levels above and below the central state: the EU (specifically DGXI officials in the

Commission), and local economic and environmental interests. The policy network emerged around the formal divisions of governmental authority for Doñana and its environs (with responsibility resting with central government ministries and regional and local governments). The network was not, however, limited to these formal governmental structures but rather expanded to include both formal and informal input from non-governmental groups (environmental groups, national and international experts, labor, agricultural and business interests). Governmental and non-governmental actors at all levels, all possessing information and political resources, were then involved in the bargaining process. The policy recommendation came directly from a group of Spanish and international experts and was subsequently developed by the regional government. Per the formal structure of EU-state relations, it was presented at the EU level by the central state. The central government negotiated the final compromise with the supranational European Commission.

The implementation of the policy also requires a commitment from all levels: the European Commission committed funds and will monitor the use of these funds; the central and regional governments also committed accompanying funds and assistance; the local government, farmers and businesses must cooperate in applying for funds and must utilize these funds per the specifications set forth by the Commission. Environmental interest groups at all levels will monitor independently the projects' effect on the park.

Environmentalists have already disputed the greenness of the economic development in the territory surrounding Doñana that has been initiated under ERDF funds. The plan for condominiums has been stopped, but a proposed highway across part of the Doñana environs near the park has prompted new conflict among competing interests. Environmental groups, led by the Ecological and Pacifist Association of Andalusia (CEPA), organized public protests against a project approved by the Andalusian regional government and supported by the central MOPTA to build a new highway from Cádiz to Huelva, that would run near the park. The environmental faction, supported by labor interests in Seville, argue that the highway would harm the environment, particularly the ecosystem of Doñana. They claim that environmental groups were excluded from the environmental impact assessment of the proposed highway, and that it will benefit primarily the chemical industry in Huelva and intensive export-oriented agriculture in the area.

CEPA has filed a protest document directly before the European Commission, asking that the regional development funds for the project be rescinded. The protest argues that funding the highway is a direct contradiction to the goals of sustainable development set forth by the EU's Fifth Environmental Action Program, as well as the Andalusian government's Plan for Sustainable Regional Development (CEPA 1994). Interest groups are not included in the formal decision-making procedures in the European Union, but this case illustrates that the EU structure affords an additional level through which subnational groups may legitimize their claims directly. The ERDF funds have not been rescinded, but the objections raised by the environmental coalition resulted in the postponement of the project pending further study.

Habitat Protection versus Agriculture: Unlikely Alliances

The case of the EU's program to implement environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) policy in Spain is linked also to water shortage problems and involves basically the same policy network as that involved in the Doñana case: the European Commission, environmental and agricultural ministries at the central, regional, and local levels, and environmental, industry (in this case construction) and agricultural interest groups. Alliances of actors involved in this policy decision are different than those that formed in the Doñana case, however. These cases demonstrate that actors within the same policy network are likely to coalesce in different ways depending upon the policy event or decision.

The central government had coordinated a large irrigation project that would include several regions and be supported in part through EU structural funds. In addition to the obvious rationale of increasing farm incomes with higher-yield crops, the project was also designed to boost the Spanish economy by providing a significant number of construction jobs (Coordinadora Extremeña 1992).

Conservationists, headed by the Spanish Ornithological Society (SEO) predictably opposed the project. Massive irrigation schemes have changed the structure of farming, as well as the environment. These changes threaten the habitat of many species, most notably Spain's large variety of migratory and local birds. In case of the Doñana Park environs, high-yield crop farmers opposed environmental efforts to limit their access to water resources. Somewhat surprisingly, in this case (involving large areas in the regions of Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura) farmers joined forces with the environmental groups.

The reason for this support is that many (particularly small) farmers have already had experience with irrigation schemes on a smaller scale and have been dissatisfied with the results. Many farmers borrowed money in order to pay for local irrigation schemes, hoping that better yields would increase their incomes. Instead, yields of crops such as sugar beets and cereals are still comparatively lower than in other EU states, and the prices of these crops are dropping due to reforms in the Common Agricultural Policy. The Small Farmers' Union, representing over 50,000 farmers, argues that many of them would like to see incentives to return to more traditional methods of farming, rather than spend the funds necessary (even with EU and state assistance) for additional irrigation ("The birds" 1993).

Environmental groups and their allies see the EU as both a partial cause of the problems at the local level (encouraging irrigation through structural funds support) as well as a possible solution. The SEO, along with regional and local environmental groups and farmers' associations, have developed plans to take advantage of an EU program that designates lands as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). Under this program, farmers would receive payments partially funded by the EU for managing their land in "traditional" ways that are less harmful to the environment. The environmental coalition managed to convince the regional governments of Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura that this scheme is advantageous; in turn, the regional governments have taken these requests to the national level. The Spanish delegation negotiated these plans with the Commission, which approved areas in the two regions for funding. This is only a partial victory for the environmentalists and farmers, however; the central government continues to pursue funding for irrigation schemes, in addition to the ESAs designations (Ibid.).

As with the Doñana case, the interactions outlined here do not conform to a model of interest aggregation by the central government. Local societal interests responded to a situation that was, in part, created by incentives provided by EU structural funds. The environmental interests and the farm interests who supported them then developed plans for receiving funding under an alternative EU program that met their needs. The interest groups had the expertise necessary to develop plans under the alternative EU funding scheme; because of these information resources, they were able to convince the regional and national governments to pursue negotiations with the European Commission for the creation of ESAs.

22

The Transfer of Water: Dueling Regional Governments

Policy making prompted by the water shortages in Spain illustrate the conflicts, difficulties, and complexities resulting from redistribution of authority. This decision area also demonstrates that subnational interests at the same level, in this case regional governments, may well conflict. The fact that the regional governments share authority with the central government over the management of water resources makes distribution of scarce resources and ordering of preferences more difficult than if this authority had remained centralized. The EU is important here in providing possible solutions to conflicts among governmental actors at different levels within member states. This case also points up the EU's role as an independent actor in the European arena.

The constitutional division of competences regarding Spain's water resources, as in most other substantive areas, grants overlapping authority to both the central and regional governments and is vague enough to be open to interpretation.[14] The central government appears to have the authority to regulate the flow of water among regions, but the regional governments may have exclusive competency over reservoirs and dams located in their territory. This ambiguous division was not a problem until water shortages occurred in Spain because of the severe drought discussed above. The water shortage reached crisis proportions particularly in regions that depend heavily on irrigation and water for tourist complexes in the generally dryer climate of the south. Leaders of these regional governments lobbied the central government to develop a "water for everyone" plan, which would alleviate the problems in the dryer areas by transferring water from reservoirs in the relatively wetter north. The central government approved the plan in principle and began indicating possible areas of transfer.

This proposed policy decision resulted in a high-profile conflict among three Autonomous Communities on the giving and receiving ends of the water transfer, embodied in the Socialist presidents of the three regional governments, Castilla-la Mancha, Valencia and Murcia.[15] The president of Castilla-La Mancha, supported by nearly every regional and local governmental and social entity in the Autonomous Community and the vast majority of the region's citizens, vehemently opposed the transfer. He argued before the central Minister of Public Works, Transport and the Environment, the Delegated Commission for Economic

Affairs (composed of central and regional officials as an advisory body), and PSOE Prime Minister Felipe González that Castilla-La Mancha could not afford to transfer water because of their own shortages in many villages. He claimed the right of the region under the constitution to regulate its own reservoirs and vowed to transfer "not even a drop of water" to other regions. The presidents of the regions slated to receive water from Castilla-La Mancha's reservoir, Valencia and Murcia, supported by their publics, argued for "water, solidarity, and justice" (Mardones 1994: 15). Castilla-La Mancha lost the *guerra del agua* when the central government decided to go ahead with the transfer. This autonomous community threatened to take the central government to the Spanish Constitutional Court for a decision regarding water resource competences. Nature temporarily solved the problem, however, as large amounts of rain finally fell last fall.

This conflict prompted Spanish leaders at both central and subnational levels to look to the EU for a more long-term solution to the water shortage and distribution problems. Madrid made the revision of European water policy a primary goal during Spain's tenure in the EU presidency in 1995, claiming that more attention must be paid to water availability in addition to the water quality concerns of the northern states. At Spain's prodding, EU environmental ministers held a Council of Ministers meeting in Seville in late October 1995 and agreed to create a new framework water resource directive that would take into account southern states' concerns regarding ground water supplies and water scarcity (European Report 1995). Spain also argued that the Cohesion Funds should be used to address the regional drought problems by financing the construction of water-related infrastructure, such as purification plants (Sáinz Bengoechea 1994).

This case demonstrates the complex nature of the multi-level framework and the shifting, evolving nature of the redistribution of authority. Diffusion of competences to lower levels resulted in the inability of the Spanish central government to solve a problem of distributing a scarce resource, water, to its population. This dilemma prompted the central government to turn to the supranational level for help in solving its difficulties in water distribution through funding and programs to improve infrastructure and ground water supplies. Pressures for re-centralization occurred as regional entities, previously given formal authority for regulating and distributing water supplies, were unable to find a solution to the

water shortage crisis. That governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as the general public, view the EU as a legitimate means of alleviating the problem provides support for the argument that authority has been redistributed upward as well as downward.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY NETWORKS IN SPAIN: CONCLUSIONS

This preliminary analysis of the environmental policy network allows us to draw several conclusions that generally confirm the expectations of the research design set forth, as well as the conceptual framework of the multi-level governance approach.

Environmental policy has developed in the EU arena as a reaction to the worsening of environmental problems, as well as public perception of those problems. A collective approach was made logical first by the fact that the causes and effects of environmental degradation and pollution cross state boundaries and second by the existing supranational EU framework. EU institutions provided a legitimate forum for action. Further, collective policies already taken by the European Union (such as regional development and agriculture) affected the environment; in turn, attempts to regulate the environment would have implications for these collective policies.

In the general context of the redistribution of authority and multi-level governance, entities at the supranational, central, and subcentral levels share formal power for environmental decision making. Increasingly, non-governmental groups, recognizing that authority is dispersed, are attempting to influence policy at all levels. These groups enter into the process in part because the formal structure gives them the opportunity to do so; they subsequently attempt to redefine this structure in their favor to allow a greater degree of input into decision processes.

Decisions regarding setting the broad environmental agenda at the European level, initiation and formation of specific policies, and implementation on the ground are a product of interaction and bargaining of both governmental and non-governmental actors at all levels. This interaction is dynamic and varies across policy decisions. An array of independent (and interdependent) actors form alliances based on the their particular interests in the policy decision. Conflict and cooperation among actors occurs both between and within levels. Governmental and non-governmental actors bring with them to this negotiating process varying

degrees of authority and resources. Decision outcomes usually represent a negotiated compromise among competing and converging interests.

Further research, implementing this type of comparison across selected policy domains such as agriculture, trade, health, welfare, and public safety, and across selected states, will allow the building of an empirical base to further test these expectations. Given the evidence presented here, it is possible at this point to evaluate the theoretical implications of this research.

REDISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORITY AND POLICY NETWORKS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY

The multi-level governance perspective is offered as an alternative to neo-realist analyses of governance in the European Union. In this section, I evaluate neo-realist assumptions in light of the evidence presented in the current study.

Neorealist frameworks of decision-making in the European Union (and elsewhere) have the advantage of parsimony. Simplifying assumptions are applied (the state as a unitary actor; big decisions by big states matter most; intergovernmental bargaining drives the process; the state apparatus aggregates competing domestic interests) that allow relatively straightforward empirical research. The decisions to examine are limited primarily to the major treaty agreements or non-agreements. If specific policies are studied (for example the Common Agricultural Policy or Competition Policy), neorealists tend to limit the actors under consideration to member states and EU institutions (and modifications such as neoliberalism assume that the former are more important).[16]

Adherents to the neorealist school have introduced modifications in an attempt to incorporate competing evidence, such as the apparent independent action of the European Commission. Sandholtz and Zysman, for example, base their analysis on structural realist tenets; that is, changes in the international system, specifically relative US decline and Japanese ascent, posed challenges and opportunities that triggered the 1992 process of completing the internal market. In the context of this structural change, however, they also add a consideration of the domestic political context of member states, the role of the Commission as a policy entrepreneur, and the mobilization of business interests. This convergence of factors, then, explains the Single European Act (1989).

Moravcsik's "liberal intergovernmentalism" specifies integration as a process of international conflict and cooperation in the context of a two-level or two-stage game. In the first stage, state policy emerges as central political institutions aggregate conflicting pressures from various societal groups. Retaining the assumption of the primacy of the state, in the second stage the state carries these aggregated interests to the EU bargaining table (1993).

Despite the sometimes heated debate among the adherents to neorealism and modifications such as neoliberal institutionalism (Baldwin 1993), a reliance on shared basic assumptions (primacy of the state as an egoistic, rational, unitary actor) allows these theorists to claim the "high ground" of parsimony. In the neorealist view, other perspectives may expand and improve upon the basic realist structure but are not truly challenges to the theory. We may add a liberal theory of interest aggregation to explain how states arrive at the interests that they carry to the bargaining table (Moravcsik 1993); consider institutions or regimes as constraining state actions (Gilpin 1987, Pollack 1995); or admit that some supranational actors at times may act independently (Sandholtz and Zysman 1989). Even with these modifications, however, the basic structure of the theory still remains intact and rivals all others in its explanatory power. In holding up the basic assumptions as given and indisputable, it is relatively easy for realists to reject other perspectives as reductionist and to argue that their models of state interactions are sufficient to explain the workings of the international system. In this view, there is no truly viable alternative for explaining the "big picture" of state behavior and governance.

But it is precisely the core assumptions of neorealism, shared by institutionalism and other modifications, that the current analysis calls into question. The disadvantage of neorealist frameworks lies in their rigidity and their inability to conceive of or capture a reality that is much more complex than these analysts would care to admit. Reality in an interdependent and changing world is messier than these parsimonious models imply. While neorealist analyses explain situations in which big states make big decisions (foreign policy for the most part conforms to this model, for example), they do not tell the whole story of decision-making and governance in the European Union.

The challenge for those who wish to present a more complete view of the complexity of governance is to first develop an alternative conceptualization, then to present empirical

evidence to confirm this conceptualization or at a minimum to falsify other perspectives. The advantage of the multi-level governance framework is that it provides an alternative conceptual perspective that begins to capture the complexity of interactions among actors in the "real" world. Policy network analysis may be used as an analytical tool within the framework of this conceptualization to build an empirical base to analyze interactions within this complex system.

If we see 1) actors at the supranational, national and subnational levels in the EU possessing formal and informal authority, each controlling a variety of resources and bargaining over policy outcomes and 2) that these policy outcomes at times reflect preferences other than those of the central state and/or compromises among preferences, then at a minimum we will have pointed up deficiencies in the neorealist framework. The notion of the "state" as a unitary actor is shown as fundamentally flawed. The realist concepts of the state and intergovernmental bargaining are also called into question if we can show that the creation of agendas, decision processes and outcomes are directly affected by non-governmental, societal actors at all levels. The evidence presented in this paper indicates the emergence of an array of actors, public and private, varying in their roles and authority, that increasingly collaborate and compete within a complex web to define policy outcomes and order preferences.

As we have seen, Moravcsik and others have allowed for the possibility of competing interests at the domestic level of analysis. The interactions of these actors are neatly incorporated into the neorealist framework, however. The central state first serves to aggregate these competing interests, then bargains with other states based on these aggregated positions. The state is no longer a "black box," but it retains primacy in the analysis, and a focus on intergovernmental bargaining remains justified.

Reality is more complex than the aggregated interests thesis implies. What we see is many actors at various levels in the European arena pursuing their own interests. Because of the redistribution of formal authority, actors at levels above and below the central state apparatus have the capacity to act at least somewhat independently. These actors are linked together in the policy process through their possession of formal, institutional capacity for making decisions, as well as resources (for example monetary authority, public support, and information). Rather than the state as gatekeeper and sole link between domestic actors and

EU institutions or other states, a complex network of linkages among actors at all levels exists, with actors' goals and preferences both diverging and converging. Under this arrangement, central state preferences many times will not prevail.

Another aspect of this more complex picture that neorealist conceptualizations do not capture, and that the current analysis only begins to address, is the role of societal, non-governmental actors in this multi-level structure. The redistribution of authority to levels above and below the central state and the creation of new governmental entities (such as regional and local governments) results in a growing number of legitimate points of pressure and lobbying for non-governmental actors. Such groups are proliferating, and their activities are increasing at these levels above and below the state; for example the many "Euro-groups" that lobby the European Commission and local environmental, business, and agricultural interest groups (Mazey and Richardson 1993, Andersen and Eliassen 1991, Constantelos 1995). These groups enter the governmental decision-making process through both formal and informal channels of consultation.

The proliferation and increasing activities of these societal groups support the conceptualization of redistribution of authority and multi-level governance: These groups recognize that in order to voice their preferences and attempt to influence policy, they must lobby *all* centers of power, not just the central state. Further, in a synergistic relationship, the formation of these groups around governmental actors at all levels also reinforces and is a factor in driving the redistribution process, as levels above and below the central state are able to legitimate themselves through the support of these groups and gain more information resources through these groups' expertise. As governmental units increasingly rely on these interests, the latter gain the ability to influence decisions and affect policy outcomes.

The redistribution of authority, influenced by a variety of political, economic and social pressures, results in a complex multi-level configuration of actors across the supranational, central state, and substate (regional and local) levels who are involved in decision-making. Policy network analysis shows that a variety of interdependent governmental and non-governmental actors across this multi-level structure, possessing varying degrees of authority and resources, bargain and negotiate with each other in an attempt to achieve their particular

policy goals. Actors converge and diverge in their preferences and interactions depending upon the policy issue.

The research presented here challenges neorealist theories of power distribution and decision-making by calling into question their ability to explain the complex dynamics of governance in the EU arena. This is a starting point for developing alternative approaches that better capture these processes and patterns of governance in Europe.

ENDNOTES

1. For a detailed treatment of decentralizing reforms in major European states, see Assembly of European Regions (1989), Bukowski (1996): 53-132, Engel and Van Ginderachter (1993), and Norton (1994).

2. Decentralization has become an election issue in Britain this year, with the Labour Party promising to devolve power to Scotland and Wales (Online: http://labourwin97.org.uk).

3. For analyses of decentralization and regionalism in Europe, see, for example, Hebbert and Machin (1984), Hueglin (1986), Keating, ed. (1996), Rudolph and Thompson (1989), and Sharpe (1988, 1993). Studies that focus more explicitly on the supranational (EU)-subnational dimension include Leonardi and Nanetti, eds. (1990), Leonardi, ed. (1993), Keating and Jones, eds. (1985), Jones and Keating (1995), Kellas (1991), and Petschen (1992).

4. I consider the policy network approach, for my purposes, to be an analytical framework for analysis rather than a "theory." I believe, however, that critics are too quick to dismiss the theoretical underpinnings of this approach. At least some policy network analysts identify and discuss the theoretical origins and implications of this framework. Kenis and Schneider, for example, point to the influence of theories of information and communication (Krippendorff's cybernetics, for example) on the assumptions of policy network analysis:

> The core of this perspective [policy networks] is a *decentralized concept of social organization and governance*: society is no longer exclusively controlled by a central intelligence (e.g. the State); rather, controlling devices are dispersed and intelligence is distributed among a multiplicity of action (or "processing") units. The coordination of these action units is no longer the result of "central steering or some kind of "prestabilized harmony" but emerges through the purposeful interactions of individual actors, who themselves are enabled for parallel action by exchanging information and other relevant resources (1991: 26).

Policy network analysts do not generally concern themselves with how governance came to be dispersed. Rather, they tend to take this dispersion as a given, with the goal of identifying and classifying networks and studying how they work.

5. There have been many efforts to develop standardized lists of governmental functions, and the difficulties of doing so have been recognized (see Frenkel 1987). Notably, Leon Lindberg compiled a comprehensive list of functions with which he proposed to measure collective decision making in the European Community. His catalog of functions contains several categories: external relations, political-constitutional, social-cultural and economic (Lindberg 1971). Several studies (for example Bukowski 1996, Engel and Van Ginderachter 1993) show the formal division of competences among actors across such policy domains.

6. A 1991 Eurobarometer opinion poll indicated that 69 percent of those surveyed believe that environmental policy should be decided jointly with the EU, as opposed to 28 percent in favor of policy decisions at the national level (Eurobarometer...1991: no. 36).

7. It is important to note that Britain and Germany were following different rationales for non-implementation of the bathing water directive. The British central government opposed EU "interference" and claimed the right to interpret the policy in ways that effectively blocked implementation. In Germany it was the Länder, not the federal government, that resisted this directive. The Länder feared that the implementation of the bathing water directive by the central government would diminish their competence in this area. Pressure from the Commission, interest groups, and the general public seemed to prompt implementation in both of these cases (Wurzel 1993: 187).

8. The Single European Act and Amended EEC Treaty, Article 130r(2) states that:

> Community policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection, taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the Community. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damange should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay. Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of other Community policies.

9. See the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht), Articles 2, 3, 130s and 171.

10. The dynamics, causes and consequences of the transition to democracy in Spain have been treated extensively and compared to the process in other Southern European States, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. See O'Donnell Schmitter and Whitehead (eds.) 1986, Diamond Linz and Lipset (eds.) 1989, Di Palma 1990, Karl and Schmitter 1991.

11. Article 149.1.23 provides the state exclusive competence for basic legislation regarding protection of the environment "without prejudice" to Autonomous Community authority to take additional protective measures. Article 148.1.9 grants the Autonomous Communities the right to "manage" environmental protection.

12. Unless otherwise indicated, the data presented below regarding Doñana was obtained from 1) Ballester, et al., interview; 2) a series of discussions with colleagues at the Institute for Regional Development at the University of Seville, especially Professor James J. Friedberg, also with the College of Law, West Virginia University.

13. For a detailed discussion regarding the jurisdiction over "natural protected spaces" and other environmental concerns, see Pérez Moreno 1992.

14. Article 149.22 of the Spanish Constitution grants exclusive power to central government to regulate "hydraulic devices concerning waters flowing through more than one Autonomous Community." Article 148.10 allows devolution to a single region of authority over waters wholly within that region (and this authority has been devolved to most Autonomous Communities). Article 45.2 mandates that "public authorities shall watch over the rational use of all natural resources," without specifying whether this creates a right or an obligation of the central government to act regarding regional resources in cases where regional officials fail to protect these resources.

15. In this particular case, regional and local ties proved to be stronger than any interest in party unity. This would indicate support for the argument that the redistribution of formal authority in Spain has resulted in the formation of regional and local bases of support. Even though a specifically regional party may not exist or receive strong support in a particular Autonomous Community, regional members or branches of national parties will in most cases represent regional over national interests.

16. See for example Moravcsik 1993 and Pollack 1995.

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