

Greening Novib

*Historicizing the Environmentalization of Novib's Developmental Aid,
1986-1992*



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Abstract

In the second half of the 20th century, the global environmental discourse experienced a major change. From a focus on conservation and preservation until the late 1960s, sustainable development became the norm in the 1970s and 1980s. Hereby, the concept of environment changed as well during this period, environment degenerated from a limited concept, which was mainly related to agriculture and nature itself, to a concept that was completely intertwined with human survival. This study will demonstrate that this change in discourse is reflected in the norms and practices of Novib, a Dutch developmental NGO, within the form of 'environmentalization'. By examining primary sources from the Oxfam Novib Archives situated in the National Archives in the Hague this study will attempt to illustrate this process of environmentalization within Novib's policy through the years 1986 to 1992. The focus of the analysis is on Novib's discourse, norms, and practices of both North-South relations and the related link between environment and development. In doing so, this study not only extends the existing work on environmentalization by applying it to foreign aid but brings in a historicizing factor as well by applying the contemporary theory of environmentalization to a historical case.

Keywords: *Developmental Aid; Environmentalization; Historicization; NGOs; Novib*

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Annabel de Wit

Table of Contents

<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	5
<i>Introduction</i>	6
State of the Art: The Environmentalization of Foreign Aid	7
State of the Art: Studying NGOs	13
Methodology: Historicizing Environmentalization	14
<i>Chapter 1 - Novib until 1988: Overpopulation as a Driver</i>	
<i>Linking Underdeveloped Agriculture with the Environment in Central America's</i>	
<i>Agricultural Policy</i>	17
The North as Developmental Expert	18
Bad Environment, Wrong Development	20
Conclusion: Persisting Malthusianism	23
<i>Chapter 2 - 1988, Novib's Turning Point: Overconsumption Through Development</i>	
<i>A New Environmental Discourse and Decentralization in Novib's Policies</i>	24
A Growing Environmental Self-Awareness	25
Towards Horizontal Cooperation.....	27
Conclusion: A Shifting Dispositive.....	29
<i>Chapter 3 - Novib from 1989 Onwards: Environmental Degradation as a Result of</i>	
<i>Globalization</i>	
<i>A Broadening of Environmental Perspectives</i>	30
Protecting the Human Environment	31
Trade as the Main Driver of Environmental Degradation	33
Conclusion: A New Environmental Worldview.....	35
<i>Conclusion: The Environmentalization of Novib</i>	38
<i>Bibliography</i>	40
Primary Sources.....	40
Secondary Sources	40
Figures	41

List of Abbreviations

Agenda 21	The plan of action to accelerate sustainable development efforts resulting from the United Nations Conference for Environment and Development (UNCED), the Earth Summit
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOVIB/Novib	Netherlands Organization for International Assistance (Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand)
Rio 1992	United Nations Conference for Environment and Development (UNCED), Earth Summit
TFAP	Tropical Forest Action Plan
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference for Environment and Development, Earth Summit, Rio 1992

Introduction

It is the summer of 1992, the streets of Rio de Janeiro are crowded with the 30,000 visitors from some 178 nations visiting the United Nations Conference for Environment and Development (UNCED), better known as the Earth Summit. For 12 days representatives negotiated over a 600-page document, the *Agenda 21* – the plan of action to accelerate sustainable development efforts – resulting in an agreed-upon document needing \$600 billion per year for its implementation without any commitment on the part of the donors.¹ Agenda 21's main vision was that of sustainable development and the encouragement of its gradual fulfillment at the international, national, and local levels.² The Earth Summit, until then, the largest conference in history, was greatly influenced by the 1987 Brundtland report on *Our Common Future* which formulated as its key goal: 'to propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond'.³ And even before the 1987 report, the discussion of the limit to economic growth existed, fueled by the 1973 oil crisis and the 1972 Club of Rome *Limits to Growth* report.⁴ Needless to say, sustainable development as an international endeavor was booming in the second half of the 20th century.⁵ It is, therefore, to be expected that this tremendous attention to environmental aspects of development would also have permeated the discourse, norms, and practices of foreign aid agencies, even more so as states did not openly commit to UNCED's resulting document.

The Netherlands Organization for International Assistance (Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand), NOVIB (hereafter Novib), was a Dutch co-financing and non-governmental development cooperation organization. For more than 60 years it has been a prominent actor in foreign aid and thus also actively provided foreign aid in the years during which sustainable development began to come to the fore. Can a clear trend of environmentalization within Novib's policies of the 80s and 90s, therefore, be determined? Independent scholarly work specifically focused on Novib's work, particularly concerning the environment, has been missing. Various questions, therefore remain unanswered: What explains Novib's actions? What was Novib's mission? And how has this mission changed in the period of the later 1980s and early 1990s? Particularly, how did environmental concerns

¹ Madeley, "Conference Reports, Earth Summit Overlooks Poverty Now.", 300.

² Novacek, "After Rio+20: Preparing for Sustainable Retreat?", 56.

³ World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), "Our Common Future.", 5.

⁴ Binder, "The Energy Crisis, the Environment and the Consumer: A Solomonian Task"; Hall and Day, "Revisiting the Limits to Growth After Peak Oil."

⁵ McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*.

feature in Novib's work? Whereas previous studies have mainly looked at the instrumentalization and effects of 'green' foreign aid,⁶ this thesis aims to provide a more constructivist outlook on Novib's aid, focusing on a possible discourse, norm, and policy shift within the history of the NGO: the historicization of the environmentalization of Novib. The years studied will be the years 1986 to 1992 as this period entails a great part of the previously discussed period in which sustainable development became a prominent component of the international debate surrounding foreign aid. First and foremost, the research will focus on Novib's understanding of the environment and development and whether this view has changed over the years. Secondly, this study will focus on the question of how Novib sees its role within developmental aid, specifically zooming in on its understanding of the North/South divide. Lastly, this thesis will examine to what extent we can speak of the 'environmentalization of Novib', that is to say, to what extent norms, practices, and discourse have been 'environmentalized'.

The main aim of this thesis is thus to answer the question of whether a process of environmentalization can be observed within Novib from the years 1986 to 1992. The principal contributions this study will offer are hereby numerous. Firstly, it will provide an answer to the shortcomings of the securitization of climate change, with its apparent inapplicability to climate policy,⁷ by demonstrating that environmentalization forms a better explanatory theory. Furthermore, this study will be significant for the broadening of the historicizing securitization debate by demonstrating that environmentalization can be historicized as well. Finally, this study will contribute to the existing field of NGO-studies by focusing not on norm creation but rather on the effects that (external) norms have on policy.

State of the Art: the Environmentalization of Foreign Aid

Before discussing the historiography surrounding the concept of environmentalization, to which this study will contribute, a brief overview of the history of global environmental discourse will be provided in the following paragraph. This overview will offer a basis for the academic debate on environmentalization, which is after all inextricably linked with history. It is important to note that there were many differing and conflicting environmental discourses,⁸ in the

⁶ Hicks, *Greening Aid? Understanding the Environmental Impact of Development Assistance*.

⁷ Brown and Grävingholt, *The Securitization of Foreign Aid*, 14.; Peters and Mayhew, "The Securitization of Climate Change: A Developmental Perspective.", 230.

⁸ Dryzek, *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses*.

subsequent part, however, only the dominant discourses will be discussed. ‘Dominant discourses’ refers to those discourses that prevail in policies by the UN and its counterparts.

After the end of World War II and in the early 1950s, the global environmental discourse came to fruition.⁹ Environmental issues, the demographic explosion, soil erosion, the overexploitation of resources, and threats to flora and fauna, were, from this period onwards, seen as highly interconnected.¹⁰ In the 1950s, the growth in the global population and the exploitation of nature by the modern world were considered the major and primary causes of the exhaustion of the global natural resources and thus of environmental degradation.¹¹ Researchers also pointed to economic modernization as the cause of environmental problems, as the American standard of living, the expansion of agriculture to tropical regions and its mechanization, and the excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides all contributed to environmental damage.¹² These views resulted in two general perspectives of environmental policy, preservation, protecting nature from human influences, and conservationism, protecting nature for the benefit of humans.¹³ The latter form of environmental policy amounted primarily to colonial protection of nature so that colonizing countries could continue to use the resources of Southern countries in the name of environmental protection.¹⁴

In the 1960s, as a result of decolonization, the dominant environmental policy of colonial protection of nature increasingly degenerated into conservation for development.¹⁵ It became a matter of, Cold War related, security for the Western world to pursue scientific environmental management to prevent communist and authoritarian rule in the South.¹⁶ In the 1970s, however, the entire world system started to be identified as the root cause of environmental degradation.¹⁷ With the 1972 report *Limits to Growth*, this holistic approach was addressed and therefore remained dominant within the global dominant environmental discourse for a long time. The environmental and academic debate of the 1970s assumed the ability to plan a better future. Studies resulted in clearly formulated value patterns with sharply-defined goals with ‘ecological stability’ as a starting point.¹⁸

⁹ McNeill, *Something New under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*.

¹⁰ Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet*; Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”, 4.

¹¹ Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”, 3.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 7-9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Buelens, *Wat We Toen al Wisten: De Vergeten Groene Geschiedenis van 1972*.

¹⁸ Ibid., 29-30.

Old Malthusian thinking, the idea that population growth will eventually exhaust the earth's resources, also remained dominant in the global environmental discourse in the 1970s.¹⁹ However, the discourse was now focusing more on the global nature of the problem. These discussions came to a head with the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm.²⁰ At this conference, the Global South advocated that 'the environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty', and that the North needed to bear the brunt of environmental protection; after all, they had been the biggest polluters for decades.²¹ The South, on the other hand, had to be given the opportunity to 'catch up' with the North. The compromise between the North and the South set at this conference was that of the doctrine of environment and development, the precursor to sustainable development.²² Governments agreed that the environment and development should go hand in hand and that the industrial world should accept the principle of 'additionality'.²³ Hereby these companies should pay some or all of the incremental costs of environment-related initiatives in the developing world with new development resources.²⁴ Nevertheless, local issues, such as local air and water pollution, and highway and dam construction remained the main focus of Stockholm 1972.

In the 1980s and 1990s, with the work of the Brundtland Commission and Agenda 21 of Rio 1992, sustainable development became the focus of global environmental discourse. Sustainable development was defined by the Brundtland Commission as: 'development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs'.²⁵ Agenda 21 then presented a detailed blueprint divided into four broad areas through which sustainable development could be put into practice. The first area was social and economic development, highlighting international cooperation and assistance, reducing poverty, combatting overconsumption, managing population trends, keeping health concerns in mind, and underlining policymaking for sustainable development.²⁶ Secondly, in the area of conservation and management of resources for development, issues of energy use were addressed, as well as integrated land resource use, deforestation, desertification and drought, mountain ecosystems, agricultural needs and rural development, biodiversity,

¹⁹ Neimark and Mott, *The Environmental Debate: A Documentary History, with Timeline, Glossary, and Appendices*, 116.

²⁰ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*, 57.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

²² *Ibid.*, 59.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

biotechnology, oceans, freshwaters, toxic chemicals, and hazardous and radioactive wastes.²⁷ Thirdly, the area of strengthening the role of major groups underlined the importance of a focus on actors other than governments: women, youth, indigenous peoples, NGOs, business and industry, scientists, communities, workers, trade unions, and farmers.²⁸ And, lastly, the means of implementation was addressed as an area. Within this area the focus was on how international and national support should be organized, including a transfer to the South of financial resources and environment-friendly technology; building capacity through technical assistance, environmental education, and scientific information; creating better environmental databases to bridge the data gaps between nations; and improving international environmental organizations, coordination, and legal processes.²⁹

In the 1980s already, scholars of the Copenhagen School demonstrated that climate issues have become more and more a securitized problem.³⁰ Defining a problem as a security problem results in an increase of attention for the issue concerned as well as in an increase of the resources devoted to it, but, on the flip side, it can also result in greater friction between actors.³¹ The Copenhagen School's securitization theory links climate change to security and sees this 'existential threat' as a socially constructed security issue through speech acts by the political elite.³² A successful securitization process would result in the issue being treated as pressing with exceptional measures to be taken, as characterized by the field of security.³³ From the 2000s onwards, the sociological concept of environmentalization, as coined by the Paris School, existed in parallel with the securitization theory and offered a different perspective on the relationship between the environment and security.³⁴ The process of environmentalization is the reverse of the process of securitization. Environmentalization involves the impact of environmental norms and practices and their integration into other operations and/or policies.³⁵ This process entails the social construction of environmental issues through both the adoption of a generic environmental discourse by differing social groups, as well as 'the more concrete incorporation of environmental justifications to legitimate institutional, political and scientific

²⁷ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Maertens, 'From Blue to Green? Environmentalization and Securitization in UN Peacekeeping Practices', 306.

³¹ Maertens, 'Climatizing the UN Security Council', 640-641.

³² Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, *Security: A new framework for analysis*, 25.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Oels, "From 'Securitization' of Climate Change to 'Climatization' of the Security Field: Comparing Three Theoretical Perspectives.", 185, 197-198.

³⁵ Maertens, 'Climatizing the UN Security Council'.

practices'.³⁶ Ultimately, the process of environmentalization contributes to the process of securitization of the environment.³⁷ Several studies have already successfully analyzed the process of environmentalization within law,³⁸ political science,³⁹ urban studies,⁴⁰ political ecology,⁴¹ cultural anthropology,⁴² and educational sciences.⁴³ As it has not transpired before, this study will delve into the research possibility of analyzing whether environmentalization can also occur within NGOs such as Novib.⁴⁴ Studying development aid in this light is interesting, as the only study that looked at the environmentalization of development aid was limited to an individual country and thus did not specifically have a focus on NGOs.⁴⁵ This study will demonstrate that a process of environmentalization can be observed within NGOs. By doing this, this thesis will broaden the applicability of environmentalization.

By focusing on the process of the historicization of the environmentalization of foreign aid, this study will attempt to offer a resolution for the hiatus in the research field of the (failed) securitization of climate within foreign aid.⁴⁶ As Katie Peters and Leigh Mayhew demonstrated, UK's foreign aid focused on the environment in the period 1998 to 2015 and was not affected by the framing of climate change as a security issue in policy circles, it instead kept its developmental framing.⁴⁷ The study on UK's foreign aid thus showed that securitization could not be correctly applied to foreign (developmental) aid until now. Environmentalization, on the

³⁶ Acselrad, 'The Environmentalization of Social Struggles - the Environmental Justice Movement in Brazil', 103.

³⁷ Maertens, "From Blue to Green? Environmentalization and Securitization in UN Peacekeeping Practices."

³⁸ Boisson de Chazournes, "Environmentalization of the Law Applicable to Fresh Water."

³⁹ Maertens, "Quand Les Casques Bleus Passent Au Vert Environnementalisation Des Activités de Maintien de La Paix de l'ONU"; Maertens, "From Blue to Green? Environmentalization and Securitization in UN Peacekeeping Practices"; Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council."

⁴⁰ Harper, *The Greening of Rural Policy: International Perspectives*; Dierwechter, "The 'Environmentalization' of Growth Policy"; Dierwechter, "The Greening of Internationalism: From Growing Impact Crisis to Stagnated Reconciliation Project"; Levenda and Tretter, "The Environmentalization of Urban Entrepreneurialism: From Technopolis to Start-Up City."

⁴¹ Da S A Teisserenc, "Politicization, Environmentalization, and Territorial Development in Extractive Reserves"; Ficher Teixeira Assis, "Media Justifications: Strategies for Environmentalization of Ethanol Production Through Advertising"; Quimbayo Ruiz, "People and Urban Nature: The Environmentalization of Social Movements in Bogotá"; Orihuela, "The Environmentalization of Mining in Colombia, Chile, and Peru: A Comparative Analysis of Green State Formation."

⁴² Leite Lopes, "On Processes of Conflict 'Environmentalization' and Its Participatory Dilemmas"; Cattellino, "From Green to Green: The Environmentalization of Agriculture."

⁴³ Rodrigues, "The Environmentalization of Physical Education Curricula in Higher Education"; Rodrigues, "Curricular Environmentalization in Physical Education Programs in Brazilian Federal Universities"; Rotta, Batistela, and Ferreira, "Curricular Environmentalization in Higher Education: Training and Sustainability in Graduation Courses."

⁴⁴ Maertens, "Quand Les Casques Bleus Passent Au Vert Environnementalisation Des Activités de Maintien de La Paix de l'ONU"; Maertens, "From Blue to Green? Environmentalization and Securitization in UN Peacekeeping Practices"; Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council."

⁴⁵ Oprsal and Harmáček, "Clean Aid or Dirty Aid? The Environmentalization of Czech Foreign Aid."

⁴⁶ Brown and Grävingsholt, *The Securitization of Foreign Aid*, 14.

⁴⁷ Peters and Mayhew, "The Securitization of Climate Change: A Developmental Perspective.", 230.

other hand, will serve as a more explanatory theory for the role of the environment, and the security issues it brings within aid. This study will demonstrate that environmentalization is a superior theoretical framework to comprehend the role the environment plays within a developmental aid NGO.

What is lacking in both the theory of securitization and the theory of environmentalization is a historical focus, which is what this study will offer. A historical approach shows more of the process of environmentalization which allows for a better understanding of the concept of environmentalization itself. Both the theory of securitization and environmentalization focus greatly on recent history in which they portray these contemporary processes as something new and unique, which, as this study argues, is not the case. By historicizing the theory of environmentalization a greater understanding of the effect of environmental discourse, norms, and practices on the general conduct of NGOs can be generated. A greater understanding of history results in a greater understanding of the present, the institutionalization of norms, after all, happens over the years and often has an origin in a more distant past.⁴⁸ Beatrice de Graaf demonstrated in her work that it is indeed possible to historicize the Copenhagen School's securitization theory.⁴⁹ This study will therefore provide an outlook on the possibility to historicize the Paris School's contemporary theory of environmentalization as well. Indeed, to this day, the theory of environmentalization has not been applied to anything other than very recent history.⁵⁰ After all, sustainable development as a 'hot topic' already emerged in the 70s, it is, therefore, a logical choice to use the theory of environmentalization to analyze discourse, norms, and policy in the 20th century. If the analysis of this earlier period is deemed successful, this study could open up the 'road' to expanding the research on policy norm change even further back. As a lot of research on NGOs has previously been executed focusing on their norms, these studies will be discussed in the upcoming paragraph to further illustrate the significance of this study.

⁴⁸ Elgström, "Norm Negotiations. The Construction of New Norms Regarding Gender and Development in EU Foreign Aid Policy."

⁴⁹ De Graaf, "De Historisering van Veiligheid"; De Graaf and Zwierlein, "Historicizing Security: Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive."

⁵⁰ Acselrad, "The Environmentalization of Social Struggles - the Environmental Justice Movement in Brazil"; Maertens, "Quand Les Casques Bleus Passent Au Vert Environnementalisation Des Activités de Maintien de La Paix de l'ONU"; Oprsal and Harmáček, "Clean Aid or Dirty Aid? The Environmentalization of Czech Foreign Aid"; Maertens, "From Blue to Green? Environmentalization and Securitization in UN Peacekeeping Practices"; Maertens, "Climatizing the UN Security Council."

State of the Art: Studying NGOs

This research will not only contribute to the existing field of securitization and environmentalization theory but will also go one step further by instead of focusing on norm creation, looking at the effect of norms, together with discourse and practices, on NGOs. A growing number of scholars suggest that we may be observing a gradual decline of the state⁵¹ or the evolution of new global trends of ‘governance without government’.⁵² This diminishment of the state in the twentieth century, and the hereby increasing importance of NGOs in humanitarian aid, should not come as a surprise as this period was characterized by world wars, a bipolar world system, decolonization, and civil wars.⁵³ Relief and development NGOs were also subject to change throughout the twentieth century, according to historians such as Matthew Hilton and Kevin O’Sullivan we can even speak of a three-stage process.⁵⁴

In the first stage of this process, up to 1945, organizations focused on emergency humanitarian aid concerning natural disasters and war.⁵⁵ During the second stage, in the 1950s and 1960s, NGOs started going beyond immediate crises, aiding long-term development by sending money and people to assist in small-scale projects. The last stage arrived in the 1980s and 1990s, this stage is characterized by political engagement as NGOs started to participate in policy advocacy, becoming norm creators. In this shift (both stage 2 and 3) of NGO-missions from relief to development, NGOs even began influencing sovereignties with their norms and practices: nongovernmentality. This term, developed by Gregory Mann in his study on NGOs in the West African Sahel Region, is explained as ‘forms of governmental rationality realized through NGOs.’⁵⁶ In addition, Emily Baughan demonstrated, for example, in her study that the NGO ‘Save the Children’ introduced the norm that made the personal political and hereby influenced and created norms on children’s rights worldwide.⁵⁷ Earlier studies focusing on specific NGOs of the twentieth century, analyzed this whole evolution three-stage process, although it may not have been using the same terminologies.⁵⁸ Trends in studying NGOs in the 1990s were mainly based on criticizing them as organizations that were more concerned with

⁵¹ Strange, *The Retreat of the State. The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*.

⁵² Rosenau and Czempiel, *Governance Without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*.

⁵³ Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: “Showered with Kindness?”*, 3.

⁵⁴ Hilton, “International Aid and Development NGOs in Britain and Human Rights since 1945”; O’Sullivan, “A ‘Global Nervous System’: The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945-1985.”

⁵⁵ Adler, “Creating ‘The NGO International’: The Rise of Advocacy for Alternative Development, 1974-1994.”, 306-307.

⁵⁶ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*, 243.

⁵⁷ Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

⁵⁸ Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: “Showered with Kindness?”*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

money flows than with their actual (humanitarian) mission.⁵⁹ Later, more recent studies, such as those of Mann and Baughan, show that a shift has taken place in the way NGOs are being studied, as these studies focused on the norm-creating abilities of NGOs.⁶⁰

While the study of norm creation is important, it is also worthwhile to look at how these norms contribute to environmentalization. As stated, this study will go one step further than previous studies focusing on norms have done. By emphasizing the period in which the transition from stage 2 to 3 takes place (during the late 1980s and early 1990s), a focus can be placed all the more on the politicization of NGOs. In addition, focusing specifically on the role of the environment in this process is certainly not arbitrary. Since the environment is becoming more and more involved in all areas of policy (due to the assumed process of environmentalization), this topic thus functions as a good case to look at the transition from stage 2 to stage 3 in the development of NGOs. Moreover, it has not happened before that Novib as an NGO has been studied extensively and independently, therefore this organization also serves as a suitable and interesting case.

Methodology: Historizing Environmentalization

The methodology of this study is the historicization of environmentalization, this will be executed by tracing back dispositives, the dominant discourse and the shifts herein, within the studied documents. The aim is to not only study the said but also to attempt to read in-between the lines, studying the unsaid. In studying the process of environmentalization, different from securitization, the focus will mainly be on the intrusion of discourse, norms, and practices from climate policy into other policy areas. An indicator of environmentalization is spoken of when these factors are seen reflected in Novib's policy, but also a larger share of policy specifically aimed at the environment is traceable. Environmentalization can be said to occur, for instance, when Novib justifies the increase of their programs in a specific country/area by growing climate issues or when Novib increasingly includes terms derived from climate policy in their discourse within different policy areas.

Studying the historical development of the environmentalization of Novib's foreign aid requires a working definition of security. Following Beatrice de Graaf's previous study,⁶¹ the

⁵⁹ Barrez, "De Val Der Engelen"; De Waal, *Famine Crimes : Politics & the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*.

⁶⁰ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*; Sasson, "Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott"; Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: "Showered with Kindness?"*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

⁶¹ De Graaf and Zwierlein, "Historicizing Security: Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive."

operationalization of this term by Foucault will be used for this purpose: ‘dispositif’.⁶² Foucault explains a dispositive as ‘a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions - in short, the said as much as the unsaid’.⁶³ Dispositive as a concept thus serves as a tool to comprehend and analyze the existing power relations at specific historic periods in time, all the while avoiding overgeneralizing them to fleshed-out overarching structures.⁶⁴ The dispositive has as its main property that it is a social attribute that responds to an urgent need at a given historical moment. Therefore, this concept lends itself well to the study of current and historical security practices, within securitization,⁶⁵ as well as current and historical environmental practices, within environmentalization, since both see themselves as directly responsive to urgent threats and fundamental needs of society. Using the dispositive as a means to historicize environmentalization enables the analysis of the past and the present by displaying both the power relations at play as well as the knowledge both resulting from it and supporting it. Foucault’s term thus permits to focus on embedded *concepts, practices, and emotions* relating to the environment invoked, not primarily in the name of security, but in the name of sustainable development.⁶⁶

Novib’s archives provide a rich source of material that can be used to shed light on trends in its environmentalization from 1986 through 1992. To answer the research questions, a qualitative content analysis of several white papers within the selected period from Oxfam Novib's archive will be conducted. The main focus will be on annual reports, policy plans, meeting transcripts, and evaluation reports, but attention will be paid as well to other sources within the archives that are deemed relevant such as correspondence and promotion materials. The use of these sources provides a good look not only at the creation of Novib's policies but also at their eventual implementation and the presentation of the policies themselves. A disadvantage of using these sources, however, is that the material is very erratic; there is little regularity of material, making it difficult to compare (policy) documents over the years. Especially since Novib's projects arise and proceed very sporadically, it has not been possible to have a focus on one case over the years. In addition, the material used is ultimately one-

⁶² Foucault, *Naissance de La Biopolitique. Cours Au Collège de France. (1978-1979)*.

⁶³ Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh”, 194; De Graaf and Zwierlein, “Historicizing Security: Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive.”

⁶⁴ De Graaf and Zwierlein, “Historicizing Security: Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive.”, 51.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

sided, that is, it is only written from 'within' Novib, even when it concerns policy evaluations. Therefore, it will be even more necessary to read 'between the lines', keeping the dispositive in mind. Since the majority of the sources utilized appeared in Dutch, quotes were translated to English by the author.

When discussing the process of environmentalization of Novib's policy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the focus will be on Novib's understanding of both the North/South divide and of the relation between the environment and (under)development. Three phases can be distinguished in Novib's thinking. First, the period before 1988 where the environment rarely appears in Novib's policies, if the topic does appear it relates to agriculture and negative environmental impacts are mainly seen as a side effect of underdevelopment, caused by the overpopulation of the South. The North is presented as a development expert which the South should take 'by the hand'. 1988 is the turning point, the environment is permanently included as a part of Novib's development policy, and overconsumption as the main cause of environmental degradation starts to become the norm. Also to be seen in this phase is a beginning of awareness of the unequal distribution in both power and economics between North and South. In the final period, from 1989 onwards, Novib's environmentalization is complete. Even deeper integration of the environment into Novib's development policy can be identified and the discussion and perspective on environmental issues broaden further. Overconsumption by the North and an unequal power distribution are now seen as the main drivers of environmental degradation. This thesis will consist of three parts, each corresponding to and addressing each of the stages Novib goes through. These phases will not only be analyzed regarding Novib's understanding of the connection between the environment and (under)development but also its vision of the role it plays as an NGO, particularly its views on the North/South relation.

Chapter 1

Novib until 1988: Overpopulation as a Driver

Linking 'Underdeveloped' Agriculture With the Environment in Central America's Agricultural Policy

In November of 1987 a group of ten Dutch farmers, each of them active in Dutch development cooperation, were given a 'great shock'⁶⁷ by visiting Bolivia during an educational trip organized by Novib. For most of these farmers, it was their first time visiting a 'real Third World country',⁶⁸ introducing them to a developing country was therefore the purpose of this trip. At least, that was the goal for the Dutch delegation, the Bolivians, on the other hand, could mainly learn from their 'expert' colleagues during their three-week visit.⁶⁹ This knowledge exchange was much needed because, according to Novib's report, Bolivian agriculture left much to be desired, especially in its poor handling of the environment as a result of unbridled population growth.⁷⁰

The trip to Bolivia was typical of Novib's Central America policy in the late 1980s, with its major focus on agriculture and the detrimental effects on the environment of overpopulation. Novib's vision of the South, as underdeveloped, unknowledgeable, and therefore harmful to the environment, is reflected in Novib's environmental policy of the time. Novib believed that the North was the expert when it came to development and should therefore serve as an example for the South. The case of Bolivia, which shows Novib's great emphasis on agriculture, food supply, and the expertise of the North, not only perfectly illustrates Novib's environmental dispositive at the time, but also its understanding of the North-South relationship. Novib's educational trip to Bolivia will therefore serve as the main case to be analyzed in this chapter.

The aim of this chapter is to analyze Novib's environmental dispositive during the years 1986-1988. Firstly, by analyzing Novib's understanding of the North-South relationship and how this vision was intertwined with its vision on the relation between the environment and

⁶⁷ Nationaal Archief, Den Haag (hereafter: NA), 2.19.042.86 Inventaris van het archief van de Nederlandse Organisatie voor Internationale Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (NOVIB) (hereafter: 2.19.042.86), box 178-179, folder 179, Verslag Educatieve Reis naar Bolivia, November 1987 & box 180-182, folder 180, NOVIB News vol 6 n.1 May, 16.

⁶⁸ Ibid., box 180-182, folder 180, NOVIB News vol 6 n.1 May, 1988, 16.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

development. And, secondly, by examining Novib's understanding of the environment and its link with underdevelopment during the period 1986 to 1988. Lastly, the findings of this chapter will be linked with and compared to both the historiography and the existing academic debate.

The North as Developmental 'Expert'

Novib's attitude towards modernization and industrialization demonstrates the way the NGO sees the North-South relationship: namely, the North as the developed example for the traditional and therefore still underdeveloped, countries of the South. Specific mentions of the North-South relationship and what Novib's understanding of it was, are mainly missing from the policy documents of the 1986-1988 period. In this period, Novib thus unconsciously assumed and accepted its position as a 'leading and wise' Northern NGO, reminiscent of 'white man's burden'-thinking. Here, again, the lookout on indigenous people that relates to the 'colonial protection of nature' policy,⁷¹ dominant before the decolonization period, can be noticed. This is confirmed in Novib's policy in Central America, where the unbalanced North-South relationship is reflected. Novib regularly focused on 'knowledge exchange', under the heading of 'educational journey', between western farmers and farmers from the aid country.⁷²

'An earthen pot should not talk to an iron one, because then shards will fall'⁷³ was the 'African' proverb used to illustrate the questions Novib asked itself during the 1986 General Study Day, proceeding the trip to Bolivia. During this event participants talked about the need to take into account the culture of the South as 'it is precisely because of "culture" that gender equality is prevented'.⁷⁴ While there was discussion on 'preparing for talks' with the South, little concrete planning was done to initiate Novib's self-reflection and, therefore, this greater awareness is not reflected in Novib's policy documents from 1986 to 1988. During the day diverse questions were treated: 'Who are we and what do we do as a donor? How much cultural imperialism can be found in NGO work? Are we really listening to our partners? Do we respect their way of thinking and expressing themselves?'.⁷⁵ By having this as one of the topics of the study day, Novib showed a certain self-awareness of being a Northern NGO in a position of

⁷¹ Mahrane et al., "From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.", 2.

⁷² NA, 2.19.042.86, box 178-179, folder 179, Verslag Educatieve Reis naar Bolivia, November 1987.

⁷³ Ibid., box 169-170, folder 170, Vijf stellingen ten behoeve van de discussie op de studiedag AB/DB/directie op zaterdag 18 oktober 1986.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Verslag Studiedag Algemeen Bestuur Novib, Utrecht, 18/10/1986, Thema: Ontwikkelingen in Novib's Projectenbeleid (concept), 7.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 3.

power. The goal was therefore set that ‘Novib needs to prepare for the conversation with our organizations overseas in the coming years’,⁷⁶ however, little came to fruition.

The purpose of the trip to Bolivia is named as: ‘the chance to visit a real Third World country’⁷⁷ for the Western farmers, so that they can create awareness in the Netherlands on farming in developmental countries: ‘conscientization efforts’.⁷⁸ For the farmers of the South, on the other hand, it is mainly said that they could learn the detailed knowledge of the Dutch farmers: ‘Dutch potato farmers talked with Bolivian potato farmers, exchanging their detailed knowledge about the knacks of the trade, such as the use of seed-potatoes and fertilizer, or techniques of lifting potatoes’.⁷⁹ Thus, the farmers from the North ‘teach’ their expertise to the less successful, ‘underdeveloped’, farmers from the South. What also stands out in the account of this trip is the way in which Bolivian agriculture is written about, the difficult way of farming with the ox-drawn plow, for example.⁸⁰ Here it is jokingly mentioned that the Dutch farmers missed their, more modern, tractors. One farmer even mentions: ‘how much Bolivian agriculture reminds him of the Dutch situation at the beginning of this century’.⁸¹ This Dutch farmer spoke in particular of this as Bolivian farmers received little support from the government and were thus completely dependent on the market.⁸²

All in all, it is clear that within Novib’s policy there is a path-dependent conviction regarding how agriculture should develop, reminiscent of modernization theory. It is notable furthermore, however, that the concluding paragraph speaks of a similarity in the problems faced by farmers in both countries.⁸³ This could indeed be understood as an endorsement of the fact that Bolivian farmers are indeed not very different from the Dutch and are therefore no less headstrong. However, this final sentence should be interpreted as an additional endorsement of the self-inflicted underdevelopment as a result of bad actions and/or choices by the South.

⁷⁶ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 169-170, folder 170, Vijf stellingen ten behoeve van de discussie op de studiedag AB/DB/directie op zaterdag 18 oktober 1986.

⁷⁷ Ibid., box 180-182, folder 180, NOVIB News vol 6 n.1 May 1988, 16.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 18.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

Bad Environment, Wrong Development

In the period 1986 to 1988, Novib saw environmental problems primarily as a feature of underdevelopment or ‘wrong’ development. The South is overpopulated so many energy sources and a great food supply are needed. These energy sources, in the form of firewood, are polluting so the environment is deteriorating rapidly. In addition, agriculture is often ‘wrongly’ practiced, using the incorrect techniques, as a result of a lack of expertise. Novib advocates therefore to commit to the traditionalization of agriculture, to reverse back to the traditional developmental path: small-scale agriculture. In the future, however, according to Novib, a move should be made toward greater industrialization, the ‘right’ development: industrialization, by, for example, making use of fossil fuels. When Novib spoke of industrialization and modernization, however, not a word was said about its environmental effects. In general, Novib's view of the environment seems to be similar to that of the late 1940s and 1950s,⁸⁴ however, a shift is noticeable toward the general discourse of the 1960s and 1970s where the emphasis was on conservation for development.⁸⁵ Some of Novib’s thought, particularly the condescending lookout on Southern farmers, is also related to the colonial protection of nature policy stream that was dominant just before the period of decolonization.⁸⁶

Looking in general at how Novib treated the environment from 1986 to 1988, one of the things that stand out is that the environment is only very rarely spoken on. In almost all policy documents, the environment is not mentioned; if it is mentioned, it is only a special point of interest, in the same list as women’s emancipation and education,⁸⁷ and it is not reflected in the actual policies. An example of this can be found in the 1987 annual report, where ‘environment and development’ is mentioned as a preferred theme for policy initiatives taken, however, this theme does not appear again, not in the annual report nor in the project outlines of that year.⁸⁸ Environment and ecology are described more broadly as special areas of concern in the 1987 Central America Regional Policy with a focus on energy supply and agriculture.⁸⁹ This tendency, to focus on agriculture and/or energy when speaking of the environment, is noticeable in every report speaking of the environment. In a 1986 annual review of a project

⁸⁴ Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet*; Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”

⁸⁵ Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”, 7-9.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁷ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 174-175, folder 175, Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika, 10.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, box 178-179, folder 179, Jaarverslag 1987.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, box 174-175, folder 175, Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika, 10.

under the heading: 'Environment in Malaysia', for example, the main goal is committed to: 'the interests of small farmers, fishermen and plantation workers'.⁹⁰ It is striking, however, that although Novib consistently named the environment as one of its special areas of interest, the subject is not addressed in every aid country discussed.⁹¹ This lack of environmental policy is remarkable as it demonstrates that Novib sees the environment as a secondary, or even tertiary, policy goal. The countries in whose policy documents an environmental focus lacks, are mostly countries in conflict, thus demonstrating that Novib does not see the environment as an aspect that may be related to conflict but rather as a completely independent concern. When the environment as a subject is addressed, however, it is mainly the energy supply of countries that is discussed, and thus it is mainly about combating deforestation. Similarly, the effects of environmental problems are also primarily framed as a danger to food production,⁹² again illustrating the extent to which the environment is linked to agriculture.

In its policy documents concerning Central America, Novib repeatedly stated that environmental problems are only a consequence of a population that is growing too fast: 'The environment is under great pressure partly due to the rapidly growing population.'⁹³ Looking at Novib's more specific policy plans, it also emerges that environmental problems arise because countries have an undeveloped energy supply, resulting in large-scale logging and thus erosion and deforestation: 'Logging for firewood, extensive livestock farming and colonization have led to a degeneration of the natural environment, manifested in reduced soil fertility, deforestation and erosion.'⁹⁴

Interestingly, Novib's solutions to environmental problems focused on the traditionalization of certain aspects of agriculture, for example by the promotion of agroforestry: 'In the traditional pattern of subsistence farming, trees already played an important role, for example, as a source of shade for coffee, as a source of firewood, and as a producer of various kinds of fruits'.⁹⁵ Here the emphasis was not on greater industrialization but rather on a return to earlier techniques of agriculture, even including an emphasis on wood as an energy source. The emphasis here seemed to be on preservation, typical of the 1950s-

⁹⁰ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 178-179, folder 179, Novib Overzicht 1986, 2.

⁹¹ Ibid., box 174-175, folder 175, Bijlage Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika: Samenvatting Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatamala, Honduras, Nicaragua.

⁹² Ibid., box 180-182, folder 180, Verslag Educatieve Reis naar Bolivia, November 1987, 3.

⁹³ Ibid., box 174-175, folder 175, Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika, 10.

⁹⁴ Ibid., Bijlage Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika, 10.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

thinking about environmental protection.⁹⁶ The traditionalization of agriculture, however, would only have been for a short period, later on, a shift would be made to the modernization of agriculture. Thus, a change was taking place from preservation of nature to conservation for development, just as this shift took place in the general global environmental discourse.⁹⁷ This envisioned transition to a more modern implementation of agriculture is reflected in the focus on transferring knowledge of new agricultural technologies, an example of which is the knowledge transfer from Dutch farmers to Bolivian farmers. When focusing on modernization, Novib named, among others, fossil fuel and dams as alternatives to firewood as sources of energy: ‘Energy is a major problem, in which the completion of the El Cajón Dam has brought some relief. Despite this, wood is still widely used as a fuel, resulting in progressive erosion and environmental degradation’⁹⁸ and ‘In El Salvador, energy poses a problem. Fossil fuels have to be imported (...) Firewood still constitutes a major source of energy, which is a serious drain on the environment.’⁹⁹ Novib saw environmental problems, in terms of energy supply, only as a problem of deforestation and erosion, and not as a problem of the emissions resulting from this more ‘modern’ energy supply.

Another aspect Novib framed as detrimental to the environment, separate from population growth and the resulting overuse of wood as an energy source, is a shortage of knowledge and expertise among farmers in developing countries. This trail of thought is very similar to the underlying beliefs of the ‘colonial protection of nature’-policy dating from before decolonization,¹⁰⁰ as the somewhat condescending view of indigenous people is demonstrated. This was already reflected in the major focus on knowledge exchange between farmers of the South and the North. But apart from this Novib also talked several times about the misuse of more modern agricultural methods such as fertilizer: ‘Whether the use of fertilizer by small farmers is really profitable always remains the big question. Administering the wrong composition or the wrong amount can ruin the soil in the long run, for example salinization of the soil. This in turn can lead to environmental problems, for example erosion and lower food production.’¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 174-175, folder 175, Bijlage Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika: Samenvatting Guatamala, 3.

⁹⁹ Ibid., Bijlage Regiobeleid Midden-Amerika: Samenvatting El Salvador, 3

¹⁰⁰ Mahrane et al., “From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972.”, 2.

¹⁰¹ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 180-182, folder 180, Verslag Educatieve Reis naar Bolivia, November 1987, 3.

Conclusion: Persisting Malthusianism

By seeing the cause of environmental problems as rooted in overpopulation, Novib adhered to the Malthusian idea, which was also espoused in the global environmental discourse from the end of World War II until the early 1970s.¹⁰² Novib thus remained stuck in an older, no longer dominant, idea about the causes of climate change. It is, however, notable that Novib did not focus on short projects but had long-term development goals in mind. This is consistent with the role that most NGOs were to play in the 1980s and 1990s according to UNCED's Agenda 21.¹⁰³ Novib also adhered to the idea that environmental problems are interconnected, similar to the dominant environmental discourse in the period after World War II.¹⁰⁴ Novib's view however on the North-South divide, with the North as the developmental expert and the South as the unknowledgeable receiver of help, clashed with the at the time dominant discourse. Novib's understanding of the South resembled more the dominant environmental discourse of the 1940s and 1950s, with its focus on (colonial) protectionism,¹⁰⁵ than the environmental discourse of the 1980s, which focused more on the North as the main culprit of environmental degradation and therefore the main 'bearer of the burden' to solve it.¹⁰⁶

Historicizing environmentalization has demonstrated that Novib remained stuck, for a fairly long period, in older norms and practices belonging to the outdated global environmental discourse, that of the 1940s and 1950s. Studies that position NGOs as norm creators are thus proven partly wrong.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, Novib is not a creator of norms here, but rather adopts them and even in this there is a delay. When comparing the findings in this chapter to other studies on NGOs, some similar findings can, however, be identified. For instance, Mann's nongovernmentality can be found in Novib's policy from 1986 to 1988.¹⁰⁸ Since Novib applies Western development norms one-to-one in the South, little was left of the autonomy of the Southern population and their own organizations.

¹⁰² Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet*; Mahrane et al., "From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972."

¹⁰³ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*.

¹⁰⁴ Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet*; Mahrane et al., "From Nature to Biosphere, The Political Invention of the Global Environment, 1945-1972."

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*.

¹⁰⁷ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*; Sasson, "Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott"; Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: "Showered with Kindness?"*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

¹⁰⁸ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*.

Chapter 2

1988, Novib's Turning Point: Overconsumption Through Development

A New Environmental Discourse and Decentralization in Novib's Policies

The year 1988 is the turning point for Novib's environmentalization. Novib displayed a new, increased 'partner-like' behavior towards the global South, which accelerated Novib's more integrated understanding of the environment, and its environmentalization. This is mostly shown by Novib's integration of the term 'sustainable', which was at the time mainly known as a term related to the dominant global environmental discourse of the 1987 Brundtland report. In Novib's new understanding of the environment, overconsumption became the root cause of environmental degradation. The public debate provided the impetus for Novib's turning point, both in its view of the North-South relationship as well as in its understanding of environmental issues. In addition, the subjects of the environment and the North-South relationship were, from this point in time onwards, becoming more and more intertwined. Hence, a new thinking, and thus a new dispositive, came to exist within Novib.

By the end of 1987, the public debate surrounding the effectiveness and significance of Dutch development policy was hugely topical, therefore, it dominated Novib's 1988 annual plan. The main focus of the discussion cited by Novib was the criticism of the work of NGOs, they were said to be inspired but naive, their projects so small that they were mere 'pinpricks'.¹⁰⁹ Novib responded to this ongoing discussion by stating that the debate should not be limited to financial controls, bureaucracy and evaluation, but should rather focus on the dimensions of poverty.¹¹⁰ Hereby drawing on the environmental dimension: 'poverty reduction is directly related to issues of peace and environment'.¹¹¹ Novib then cited the North-South relationship arguing for more equality between the two: 'development cooperation means sharing power between North and South, between the elites and the poorest'.¹¹² Novib continued by setting out a subsequent annual plan of large-scale decentralization, for 'the strengthening of the poor's own organizations or those in the country concerned that work directly with or support them, is most effective and sustainable'.¹¹³ This quote perfectly demonstrates Novib's new

¹⁰⁹ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 185-186, folder 186, Jaarplan 1988, 2.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

understanding of the North-South divide and its subsequent result of environmentalization, using the word ‘sustainable’ as a description for cooperation.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze Novib’s environmental dispositive during the year 1988. In this chapter Novib’s 1988 turning point will be analyzed firstly by focusing on the change in Novib’s understanding of the North-South relationship and how this change resulted in a further environmentalization. In the second part, the focus will be on the shift in Novib’s understanding of the environment and its link with underdevelopment change. Since Novib's turning point occurred primarily within the discourse surrounding new policy development, the focus in answering these questions will be on policy documents rather than a specific project. Ultimately, the findings of this twofold analysis will be both connected and compared to the historiography of the global environmental discourse and the ongoing academic debate.

Towards Horizontal Cooperation

Novib’s project policy was characterized until the early 1980s by ‘the relationship of ‘giver-recipient’, Novib was the banker, the partner organization overseas was the more or less dependent client’.¹¹⁴ According to Novib, seminars in 1981 and 1982 already formulated ‘the desire for a qualitatively different and more equal attitude (from banker to partner)’.¹¹⁵ Here Novib emphasized that the reality had certainly not changed because: ‘it asked and takes time to eradicate old patterns and expectations back and forth. Novib's transition from banker to partner is a recurring process in the relationship with individual partners, new relationships always start at the donor-recipient level’.¹¹⁶ Novib argued that ‘the growing knowledge and experience of the partner organizations gives every reason to consider whether more tasks, responsibilities and powers cannot be transferred to them’.¹¹⁷ The process of decentralization would thus be a ‘logical’ next step in the development of the relationship between Novib and its partners.¹¹⁸

What is striking about Novib's 1988 decentralization policy is that there is a lot of self-reflection, the critical review of how Novib's relationship with its partners was in the previous

¹¹⁴ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 180-182, folder 180, “Decentralisatie” Bestuursnota, juli 1988, 6.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 2.

decades is new and for the first time Novib expressed its intention to change this relationship through policy. The attitude towards the South that Novib had, albeit concealed, from 1986 to 1988 had changed enormously as far as this paper is concerned.¹¹⁹ From an understanding of the relationship as one of giver and receiver where the North is the expert and the South still has much to learn, there had been a shift whereby North and South are partners of each other in a more horizontal collaboration. Novib's dispositive had changed, another example hereof: 'people in the Third World are engaged in solving their own problems under their own steam. What Novib also tries to demonstrate is that the poverty there is partly caused by our own wealth over here'.¹²⁰ Alongside this, Novib's tone on the North-South relationship had also become more vehement. For example, Novib's president named the North-centric nature of Novib's development assistance: 'it is a Dutch discussion about our contribution to developments elsewhere, about our control of the spending of our money, according to our standards. In none of the press publications of recent months (...) have I seen spokesmen from the South speaking. I think we have ourselves to blame for that as well'.¹²¹ The North and South were even more equalized in that it was stated by the general secretary that the North often lags behind the South as well: 'the South smiles because the North has divided the world into a "first, second and third world" or simply into "North-South". However, the result of international developments has punished this tendency to superior division'.¹²²

The shift in Novib's understanding of the North-South divide and its handling of it is profound. However, this change can only be seen in policy documents and is not yet detectable in the actual project policy that Novib pursues. As Novib's dispositive concerning the North-South division was changing, it influenced Novib's outlook on the environment as well. Novib's changing dispositive of the environment, in relation to (under)development, will, therefore, in the following be discussed.

A Growing Environmental Self-Awareness

The theme of the environment was given a more prominent place in Novib's policy in 1988, although in the execution of Novib's environmental policy, some paternalization of the South

¹¹⁹ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 180-182, folder 180, "Decentralisatie" Bestuursnota, juli 1988.

¹²⁰ Ibid., Novib News vol 6 n.1, may 1988, 6-7.

¹²¹ Ibid., box 183-184, folder 183, Inleiding door voorzitter Novib: waarnemingen over Novib, Symposium 'de toekomst van ontwikkelingsorganisaties', 9-12-1988.

¹²² Ibid., Afscheidsrede Algemeen Secretaris Sjef Theunis 'en het Zuiden glimlacht', Symposium 'de toekomst van ontwikkelingsorganisaties', 9-12-1988.

can still be found. While Novib's outlook on the North-South divide changed in policy, it did not change in practice. However, a certain Northern self-reflection can be found in Novib's tenure as the focus was laid more and more upon overconsumption as the main cause of environmental degradation.

From 1988 onwards 'environment' formed a standard theme designation in Novib's project lists.¹²³ The projects that were subsequently marked with an 'environmental icon' are almost all related to agriculture and energy supply. Just as in the 1986-1988 period, projects that focused on soil erosion, deforestation, desertification, and small-scale agriculture were seen as 'environmental projects'. The project in Rwanda shows that there has been little change in Novib's understanding of the environment. In this country, there was a growing shortage of wood for energy use and Novib offered reforestation as a solution so that more wood will be available for the energy supply, not exactly environmentally friendly. Overpopulation was put forward as the indirect cause of a deteriorating environment: 'population growth is causing an increasingly acute shortage of wood'.¹²⁴ Evidently, Novib adhered to the general environmental discourse from the 1940s and 1950s, in which too large a world population is the main cause of environmental degradation.¹²⁵ Novib also stated that: 'the project includes training of farmers around reforestation and how to use wood as economically as possible'.¹²⁶ The same dealings can be observed here as during the 1986 'educational trip' to Bolivia, with Northern 'experts' teaching the 'less educated' farmers of the South the techniques of the trade. Novib's understanding of the relationship between environment and underdevelopment thus seems unchanged in comparison to the period before 1988. However, a new aspect of Novib's understanding of the environment is the integration of public health projects, such as water purification and health care, in environmental development assistance. But, once again, Novib patronized the Southern population concerned. For example, the description of a project around river purification in Nicaragua states: 'In addition, the aim is to make the urban population more environmentally conscious. Matagalpa residents are simply washing their clothes in the river, dumping their waste into it and discharging sewage into it untreated'.¹²⁷

The constant patronization of the South within Novib's environmental policy, however, and Novib's view of environmental degradation as caused by overpopulation had reached its

¹²³ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 183-184, folder 183, Novib Projectenlijst.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹²⁵ Neimark and Mott, *The Environmental Debate: A Documentary History, with Timeline, Glossary, and Appendices*.

¹²⁶ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 183-184, folder 183, Novib Projectenlijst, 31.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 21.

turning point in the year 1988. For, regardless of Novib's actual policies in the South, a discourse shift took place within Novib's communications. Indeed, what seeps through time and again in Novib's publications is a certain self-reflection on the part of the North regarding their (principal) role in the degradation of the global environment.

In 1988, for example, a national week of action was conducted by Novib in the Netherlands with the main theme of critical consumption, because: 'in numerous ways we are connected to the Third World through our daily consumption patterns. And not always in the most beneficial way (...) creating a better world by changing his or her lifestyle'.¹²⁸ Suddenly, the cause of environmental degradation laid not with overpopulation in the South, but with the North with its overconsumption: 'Today we can learn a lot from the Third World. Just think of the environment, of our devouring production and consumption methods'.¹²⁹ This view, that the North is to blame for environmental problems and therefore should bear the burden, falls in line with the global environmental discourse that was dominant at the time. The previous Malthusian view on the source of environmental issues is disappearing within Novib's discourse, making room for an environmental discourse that focuses more on sustainable development with the North as the main culprit for environmental degradation.¹³⁰ Novib drew its new understanding even more broadly, by marking it as an integral part of Novib's existence. In an interview with Novib's general secretary stated that part of Novib's foundation is the thought that: 'nowadays we can learn a lot from the Third World. Just think of the environment, of our devouring production and consumption methods'.¹³¹ The at-the-time dominant global environmental discourse also shone through in the Novib-organized symposium on 'Poverty, Deforestation and Desertification'.¹³² During this event, the 1987 Brundtland report formed a central topic, which demonstrates Novib's engagement with this crucial part of the international environmental discourse. However, there was only one non-Northern speaker, Dr. Shiva Vandana, present who would act 'as a representative of the Third World'.¹³³ The latter especially demonstrates Novib's desire to adopt a broader view of the environment, however, there was still a long road to go for Novib to reach proportional representation.

¹²⁸ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 180-182, folder 180, Novib/Gast aan Tafel nieuws, juni 1988, 9.

¹²⁹ Ibid., box 183-184, folder 184, Novib regionaal jaarnaal december 1988, jaargang 3 nr. 4, 8-9.

¹³⁰ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*.

¹³¹ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 183-184, folder 184, Novib regionaal jaarnaal december 1988, jaargang 3 nr. 4, 'Te Gast', 8-9.

¹³² Ibid., box 180-182, folder 182, Novib News vol 6 n. 2, september 1988, Symposium Poverty, Deforestation and Desertification, 3.

¹³³ Ibid.

Conclusion: A Shifting Dispositive

The environment came to play a central role in Novib's policy, although there was still often an outdated view of the environment in its relation to underdevelopment as well as a narrow view of what the environment is. This idea heavily relates to the way Novib viewed the North-South divide. The North became more aware of its role in environmental degradation, not overpopulation through underdevelopment but overconsumption through development became the cause of environmental problems. In 1988, the vision of the link between the environment and development existed simultaneously with a newer concept, belonging to the global environmental discourse that became dominant in 1972 with the Stockholm conference and in 1987 with the Brundtland report.¹³⁴ This understanding seeped into Novib's policy in 1988, with Novib's announcement in its Annual Plan for 1989 that the environment sector would receive 'further attention'.¹³⁵ In all likelihood Novib's new understanding of the environment in its connection with development would resonate further in the upcoming year, making 1988 the turning point for Novib's environmental dispositive.

The adaption of the historicization of environmentalization in this chapter shows that NGOs, such as Novib, are not merely norm creators, as stated by the majority of studies,¹³⁶ but also norm adopters. The fact that Novib gradually adopted the norms as produced by the global environmental discourse, demonstrates this. Nongovernmentality, as coined by Mann,¹³⁷ can however still be observed in Novib's patronizing actions in the South, Novib is still 'governing' its projects. However, the discourse surrounding Novib's projects had changed. Whether this change in discourse will also result in a change in Novib's 'degree of' nongovernmentality, will be examined in the succeeding chapter.

¹³⁴ Buelens, *Wat We Toen al Wisten: De Vergeten Groene Geschiedenis van 1972*.

¹³⁵ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 183-184, folder 183, Novib Jaarplan 1989, 4.

¹³⁶ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*; Sasson, "Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott"; Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: "Showered with Kindness?"*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

¹³⁷ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*.

Chapter 3

Novib from 1989 onwards: Environmental Degradation as a Result of Globalization

A Broadening of Environmental Perspectives

From the year 1989, not only had Novib's understanding of the environment broadened tremendously but the subject of the environment also became more and more embedded in all of Novib's policies. From this period onwards, the environment was considered not as 'only nature', which needed to be preserved and conserved, but rather as being inseparably related to human beings. A change in Novib's environmental dispositive can be signaled as the physical environment of humankind was now put at the center of Novib's environmental policy. The overconsumption of the North and the poor governance of the elite of the South were seen from this period onwards as the main causes of environmental degradation. Whereas environmental degradation was first regarded as a technical problem, due to population growth and harmful agriculture, it was now considered a political problem: the unequal distribution of global political and economic power.¹³⁸

In the process, Novib's dispositive concerning the North-South relationship also became more complicated; there was no longer a simple North-South division in which the North was rich and powerful and the South poor and powerless, but the narrative changed to that of the global elite and the global poor. In the North, the 'new poor' also suffered from environmental pollution, and in the South, the elite were big polluters as well: 'it is sad to see how governments from the South often care little about the misery of their own people [...] and bring about large-scale environmental degradation through negative development projects'.¹³⁹ A theme that would take center is the entry of the South into the global market. The unequal distribution of power, both political and economic, would mainly encourage poverty and environmental degradation, as these reinforce each other.¹⁴⁰ Drawing on Novib's campaign 'Stop the Logging'

¹³⁸ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 202-205, folder 202, Discussienota ontwikkeling & milieu: Novib, mei 1991, 16.

¹³⁹ Ibid., box 191-192, folder 191, De armoede en milieucrisis in het zuiden maakt een nieuwe aanpak voor ontwikkelingsamenwerking noodzakelijk' NOVIB/GAT visie op een milieu- en ontwikkelingsbeleid voor de jaren negentig. Paper voor de InZicht 1990 manifestatie, 3-4 maart 1990, Brabanthallen te 's Hertogenbosch, 2.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., box 187-188, folder 188, TWN-conferentie 'third world alternatives: a south-north confrontation on ecological survival', Welkomstrede door Max van den Berg, Algemeen Secretaris van Novib, 'De verbondenheid van de Armoede- en Milieucrisis met de Ontwikkeling die we nastreven', 11-10-1989, 1.

(‘Kappen met Kappen’), this chapter will aim to illustrate how Novib’s dispositive concerning the environment in relation to (under)development can be defined in the years 1989 to 1992. In doing this, Novib’s understanding of the North-South divide in this period will also be analyzed.

Protecting the Human Environment

In 1990 from October 28 to November 4, Novib organized the ‘Stop the Logging’ (‘Kappen met Kappen’) campaign for the second time. This campaign targeted the logging of tropical hardwoods for the Northern market in both Sarawak, Malaysia, and the Amazon. The campaign, of which the main themes were environment and development, had as its primary goal the protection of people living in the rainforest from commercial logging by large companies. For three consecutive years, in 1989, 1990, and 1991, Novib’s campaign was a great success. It was succeeded by the larger-scale ‘Heart for Wood’ (‘Hart voor Hout’) campaign.¹⁴¹ The ‘Stop the Logging’ campaigns were not only one of the most successful campaigns Novib had ever carried out but are also a good representation of both Novib’s understanding of the environment and North-South relations during this period. Novib’s centrality to the ‘poor of the world’ and their autonomy emerges from these campaigns as well as Novib’s new focus on the protection of the ‘human environment’ instead of the environment in its entirety.

What is evident in Novib’s Stop the Logging campaign is that not the North, as before, but the South was now seen as an expert in its own aid and development as: ‘the export of the Western economic development approach partly caused the environmental crisis in the South.’¹⁴² A trend can be distinguished in Novib’s communication on the campaigns in which the promotion consists mainly of information pieces and interviews with local inhabitants of the jungle about what burden they suffer from logging.¹⁴³ This included slogans that especially emphasize the autonomy of these groups: ‘Our land and our trees back!’ and ‘They will not give up the fight!’.¹⁴⁴ The thought that prevailed in Novib’s thinking is that the South itself possesses the best knowledge to help its own development, however this requires the (financial) help of the North. As the campaign poster states: ‘Help the inhabitants of the Tropical

¹⁴¹ Oxfam Novib. “Geschiedenis van Oxfam Novib: Kappen met Kappen.” Oxfam Novib, <https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/geschiedenis-oxfam-novib/kappen-met-kappen-2>.

¹⁴² NA, 2.19.042.86, box 191-192, folder 191, De armoede en milieucrisis in het zuiden maakt een nieuwe aanpak voor ontwikkelings samenwerking noodzakelijk’ NOVIB/GAT visie op een milieu- en ontwikkelingsbeleid voor de jaren negentig. Paper voor de InZicht 1990 manifestatie, 3-4 maart 1990, Brabanthallen te ’s Hertogenbosch, 2.

¹⁴³ Ibid., box 199-201, folder 199, Novib catalogus 1991/1992: ‘Winkelen in de Derde Wereld’, 14, 24, 44, 52.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 14, 24.

Rainforest!’ Other campaign documents also mentioned similar messages: ‘In their own strength. But ... with your support (...) In many parts of the Third World, people are organizing. Struggling for work and better incomes, for democracy, and for the preservation of the environment. They [indigenous people] recognize that they must change their situation themselves.’¹⁴⁵ The focus on individual actors that can be seen in the campaign also manifested itself in the broader understanding of the environment within Novib. New groups were identified as especially vulnerable to environmental issues. For example, gender policy and environmental policy were increasingly intertwined as women were highlighted as the major burden bearers of environmental degradation: ‘women in the South are often the first and hardest hit by environmental degradation’.¹⁴⁶ As a result, women were named as a policy priority within Novib's environmental policy.¹⁴⁷

Not only in verbatim but also in images, the South was put in the spotlight. As each of the campaigns focused on the local inhabitants of the rainforests who bear the brunt of the large-scale logging, the campaign posters depict a single small figure, arms spread, in front of a large digger (figure 1). This choice of image illustrates all the more the powerlessness of poor minorities in the face of big money. But it also underscores both the autonomy of the local population and the centrality of the South in solving the problem. It becomes clear that human life was the focus of this environmental campaign and not nature per se, as it plays only a small role in the campaign image. This tendency, limiting development policies around the environment to the physical environment of people, was also reflected in the definition of environment newly adopted by Novib, which also said to limit itself to the aspects of the environment that touch upon human existence.¹⁴⁸ It was therefore stated: ‘Environment is more than nature alone. It includes nature, but also semi-natural landscapes, urban and industrial areas’.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 189-190, folder 190, “Op eigen kracht. Maar... met uw steun”.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., box 202-205, folder 202, Discussienota Ontwikkeling & Milieu: Novib, mei 1991, 10.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 34.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., box 202-205, folder 202, Discussienota Ontwikkeling & Milieu: Novib, mei 1991, 4.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

Kappen met kappen.



Help de bewoners van het Tropisch Regenwoud.

Figure 1: Poster of the 1991 'Stop the Logging' Campaign published in Novib Regionaal Journaal, September 1991. It reads: 'Stop the logging. Help the inhabitants of the Tropical Rainforest.'

Trade as the Main Driver of Environmental Degradation

From 1989 onwards, Novib's policy focused more and more on the detrimental effects globalization has on the environment, signaling a change in Novib's dispositive. The 'Stop the Logging' campaigns consistently made the link between global trade and environmental degradation. In bridging the gap between the world's rich and the world's poor, as a result of globalization, Novib saw an irreplaceable role for NGOs: 'in particular, regarding the impacts on the poorest and the environment, engaging the NGO channel in the developing world should be mandatory'.¹⁵⁰ Specifically, therefore, Novib saw and positioned itself as the 'spokesperson of the South',¹⁵¹ at both the national and international levels. Time and again, Novib appointed that the environment and poverty go hand in hand and that one must therefore focus on sustainable development.

The blame for environmental degradation shifted from the small, underdeveloped farmer who farms in the wrong way to the elite of the world, those in the North and the South who have more resources and who participate unrestrained in the capitalist world market. In this way, the subject of economic development was influenced by environmental issues, it

¹⁵⁰ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 185-186, folder 185, Memorandum van aandachtspunten vanuit Novib voor de opstelling van verkiezingsprogramma's.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., box 199-201, folder 200, Meerjarenplan NOVIB 1992-1995 'Samen werken aan een leefbare wereld', 3.

environmentalized. In the 'Stop the Logging' campaign, Novib identified three different groups of main culprits, other than 'undeveloped' small farmers, for the logging of tropical hardwoods, namely: local large landowners, gold miners, and commercial logging companies conducting business with the North.¹⁵² These groups inflict damage with which compared to the logging done by local, landless farmers equals to nothing.¹⁵³ Novib, therefore, stated in its policy document on development and environment: 'first and foremost, environmental pollution is primarily the result of the single-minded pursuit of economic growth and excessive consumption'.¹⁵⁴ This new dispositive concerning the cause of environmental degradation was therefore expressed in Novib's campaign in which the Dutch citizen was addressed on its consumption behavior: 'and huge areas [of forest], hardly expressible in soccer fields, are being wiped out by commercial logging companies. For our doorposts and terrace floors'.¹⁵⁵

Novib's (international) lobbying policy also became environmentalized, as environmental protection and sustainable development became the main topic. Novib's 'Stop the Logging' campaign targeted the political realm as well: 'the campaign is also aimed at influencing this government standpoint: prohibition on imports of tropical hardwood and a critical assessment of government support to international forestry projects'.¹⁵⁶ Here, particular emphasis was placed on engaging the poorest groups in the South, which Novib saw as its main function. Novib focused within its political lobbying in the campaign, both at the international and national level, on a reconsideration of the World Bank's Tropical Forest Action Plan (TFAP).¹⁵⁷ TFAP was an international development framework that was supposed to provide answers to the deforestation crisis but in reality, it encouraged the opening up of primary forests and the increase in logging, partly through exports.¹⁵⁸ In addition, the TFAP offered little financial support to the local population, and these populations were hardly involved in the drafting of tropical forest plans. Novib advocated broad support for the South's initiated People's Charter which enshrines the rights of the original inhabitants of the rainforest.¹⁵⁹ In its lobbying practices, Novib also focused on the Uruguay Round of the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and on the World Bank. In both, Novib emphasized that too little attention is

¹⁵² NA, 2.19.042.86, Novib Regionaal Journaal, september 1991, jaargang 6 nr. 3, 5.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., box 202-205, folder 202, Discussienota Ontwikkeling & Milieu: Novib, mei 1991, 16.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., box 199-201, folder 200, Novib Regionaal Journaal, september 1991, jaargang 6 nr. 3, 5.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., box 193-194, folder 194, Novib News, October/November 1990, volume 8 nr. 5, 5.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., box 199-201, folder 200, Meerjarenplan NOVIB 1992-1995: 'Samen werken aan een leefbare wereld', 15.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

paid to the voice of the South, there is too little transparency and the level of democracy is low.¹⁶⁰ Concerning the World Bank, Novib, along with other NGOs, positioned itself as a controlling force within the Bank's projects by putting forward the 'NGO Early Warning System'.¹⁶¹ This system gave Novib and other development NGOs the power to control the World Bank in its duties. With regard to the GATT,¹⁶² Novib particularly denounced the protectionism of Western countries, partly for this reason Novib questioned in several documents the entry of the South into the world market.¹⁶³

Time and again Novib argued the importance of focusing on sustainable development. A memorandum containing Novib's points of attention for drawing up election programs for political parties, therefore, states as an absolute condition: 'structural poverty reduction and sustainable development must go hand in hand'.¹⁶⁴ According to Novib, sustainable development entailed: 'limiting economic activities to the limits of the environment and focusing on the use of renewable raw materials'.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion: A New Environmental Worldview

Novib's environmental policy in the years 1989 to 1992 was very much in line with the dominant global environmental discourse. Consistently, the self-reliance of the South, with the financial support of the North, was emphasized. As Speth and Haas demonstrated, the focus on capacity-building of the South through financial and technological transfers constituted one of the four focus areas of Rio 1992's main policy document on sustainable development: Agenda 21.¹⁶⁶ The focus on individual groups of actors, such as indigenous groups and women, within sustainable development policies, is also a key component of this same document.¹⁶⁷ Finally,

¹⁶⁰ NA, 2.19.042.86, box 195-198, folder 196, Verslag 32^e Vergadering Algemeen Bestuur, 26 januari 1991, 2.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., box 193-194, folder 194, Visie van NGOs op het sociale en milieu aspect in projecten en programma's van de Wereldbank: 'Milieu, door de bank genomen' – uitgave Novib en IUCN-ledencontact, augustus 1990, 12.

¹⁶² Ibid., box 195-198, folder 196, Novib news feb/march 1991, volume 9 no.1, 2.

¹⁶³ Ibid., box 187-188, folder 188, TWN-conferentie 'third world alternatives: a south-north confrontation on ecological survival', Welkomstrede door Max van den Berg, Algemeen Secretaris van Novib, 'De verbondenheid van de Armoede- en Milieucrisis met de Ontwikkeling die we nastreven', 11-10-1989, 1; box 191-192, folder 191, De armoede en milieucrisis in het zuiden maakt een nieuwe aanpak voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking noodzakelijk', NOVIB/GAT visie op een milieu- en ontwikkelingsbeleid voor de jaren negentig. Paper voor de InZicht 1990 manifestatie, 3-4 maart 1990, Brabanthallen te 's Hertogenbosch, 4.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., box 185-186, folder 185, memorandum van aandachtspunten vanuit Novib voor de opstelling van verkiezingsprogramma's.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.

¹⁶⁶ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*, 70-71.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

Novib's vision shift in looking at the environment was very much in line with that associated with sustainable development, putting people and the fulfillment of their needs at the center.

Novib's dispositive held the North, but more specifically the world's rich both in the South and in the North, responsible for environmental degradation in the South. The world market was framed as the main problem here, it played a major role in environmental problems and therefore the entry of the South should be questioned. The North should assist the South in its sustainable development, but the South should only be given the (financial) means to do so and should retain its autonomy. Novib's new dispositive fitted into the then-dominant global environmental discourse. First, the focus on sustainable development, similar to the concept in Agenda 21,¹⁶⁸ was reflected in Novib's policy. Novib emphasized, as did the Agenda,¹⁶⁹ the help that the North must offer the South, but also emphasized the adjustments that the North itself must make to its (consumption) behavior.

There was no question of nongovernmentality, which Mann suggests in his study,¹⁷⁰ at Novib during this period, at least not to such a high degree. Novib put great emphasis on the self-government of the poor, development aid was left to them as much as possible. Only on a secular level did Novib present itself as an independent government, by acting as a spokesperson. This new role of a lobbying actor fits well with the last and third stage NGOs went through according to both Hilton and O'Sullivan, the politicization of NGOs.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, and once again, historicizing environmentalization shows us that NGOs, such as Novib, do not solely contribute to norm creation but also adopt norms, such as the norm of sustainable development, as started by the Brundtland Report and accelerated by Rio 1992. Whereas previous studies, primarily demonstrated that NGOs are norm creators,¹⁷² this chapter demonstrated that NGOs also can be heavily influenced by norms 'outside' themselves. The environmentalization of Novib was a process set in motion by external processes. Only after these outside norms had become entrenched in Novib's practices and norms did Novib begin to influence other institutions. Historicizing environmentalization thus demonstrates the

¹⁶⁸ Speth and Haas, *Global Environmental Governance*.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*.

¹⁷¹ Hilton, "International Aid and Development NGOs in Britain and Human Rights since 1945"; O'Sullivan, "A 'Global Nervous System': The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945-1985."

¹⁷² Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*; Sasson, "Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott"; Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: "Showered with Kindness?"*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

possibility that, before the norm-creating function that NGOs perform, the NGO in question has already gone through a process of norm adoption.

Conclusion

The Environmentalization of Novib

This study provided an insight into Novib's process of environmentalization during the period of 1986 to 1992. Historicizing environmentalization showed us that Novib's 'dispositive', that is to say, Novib's dominant discourse concerning the environment and the shifts herein, shifted from being 'stuck' in the dominant environmental discourse of the 1940s and 1950s to adopting more and more of the discourse and norms of the environmental discourse dominant in the 1980s and 1990s. This thesis demonstrated that the concept of environmentalization substitutes a better framework to comprehend the prominence of the environment within a developmental aid NGO than securitization, as it showed a clear process where the theory of securitization did not.¹⁷³ Furthermore, while studies in the past primarily positioned NGOs, such as Novib, as norm creators,¹⁷⁴ this study demonstrated that NGOs can be norm adopters as well.

The 1980s and 1990s, with their numerous groundbreaking changes in the global environmental discourse, was a significant period for the global environmental discourse. The process of environmentalization that Novib went through, which has been enormously evident, reflected these shifts. Whereas during the years 1986 to 1988 Novib barely devoted any attention to environmental issues in its policies, this completely changed in 1988. From 1989 onwards, the environment dominated all of Novib's policy documents, it went from an afterthought to being the main issue. This study demonstrated as well that how Novib understood the North-South divide went hand in hand with the way in which Novib viewed the environment. For example, where Novib initially saw the South as overpopulated, and therefore underdeveloped and as a result damaging to the environment, later on, the dispositive changed into one in which Novib started to see the South as an example of how to deal with the environment. The North and the elite of the world, with their overconsumption, were now seen as the greatest cause of environmental degradation. As Novib's view of the North-South relation shifted, Novib's view of the environment thus shifted as well.

¹⁷³ Peters and Mayhew, "The Securitization of Climate Change: A Developmental Perspective."

¹⁷⁴ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*; Sasson, "Milking the Third World? Humanitarianism, Capitalism, and the Moral Economy of the Nestlé Boycott"; Wieters, *The NGO CARE and Food Aid from America, 1945-1980: "Showered with Kindness?"*; Baughan, *Saving the Children: Humanitarianism, Internationalism and the British Empire, 1915-1970*.

This study demonstrated that Novib mainly adopted the dispositives of the dominant global discourse, albeit these were in cases outdated, and, only later on, started influencing other institutions and governments with these newly adopted dispositives, fulfilling its ‘NGO-function’ as a norm creator. However, this thesis did demonstrate that Novib showed forms of Mann’s nongovernmentality.¹⁷⁵ In the period 1986 to 1988 Novib acted more as it imposed western development norms upon the South, acting government-like and thus demonstrating nongovernmentality. Later on, nevertheless, Novib ‘shed’ this nongovernmentality by decentralizing its policies and leaving the South to its autonomy. However, a certain politicization of Novib can be observed, as Novib started to function more and more as a lobbying partner for the South in global politics. This further illustrates the process of Novib as an NGO shifting from stage 2 to stage 3 within the three-stage process of NGO-change,¹⁷⁶ shifting from functioning merely as an aiding actor to acting as a political actor as well.

This study demonstrates it is possible to historicize environmentalization, similar to how securitization can be historicized.¹⁷⁷ New avenues for future research are therefore possible, for example, on the subject of the application of the concept of environmentalization to other historical cases. Furthermore, as this study has provided a possible answer to the shortcomings of the securitization of climate change within developmental aid, environmentalization theory can, in future studies, be applied even more broadly. In doing this, it can be further examined whether environmentalization forms a better explanation for the growing role the environment has come to play within developmental aid. Lastly, since this study has demonstrated that NGOs are not merely norm creators, but norm adopters as well, this study provided the impetus for upcoming research to also take the effects outside norms have on NGOs into account as well.

¹⁷⁵ Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*.

¹⁷⁶ Hilton, “International Aid and Development NGOs in Britain and Human Rights since 1945”; O’Sullivan, “A ‘Global Nervous System’: The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945-1985.”

¹⁷⁷ De Graaf, “De Historisering van Veiligheid”; De Graaf and Zwierlein, “Historicizing Security: Entering the Conspiracy Dispositive.”

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Figures

Front Page Image

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Figure 1

Retrieved from: Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, 2.19.042.86 Inventaris van het archief van de Nederlandse Organisatie voor Internationale Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (NOVIB), box 199-201, folder 200, Novib regionaal journal september 1991, jaargang 6, nr. 3, 6.



PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.

Name: Annabel Eva de Wit

Student number: 5135540

Date and signature: 15-06-2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping letters that appear to be 'AE' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.