

Protest, Politics and Produce: A Resource Account of Anti-GMO Activism

PRE-PUBLISHED VERSION

Activism research is over-reliant on social psychological driven frameworks emphasizing framing or ideological based explanations. The current underdevelopment of resource based accounts requires urgent attention from social movement scholars. Stressing the rationality of social movement actors, resource mobilization theory is used to assess and understand the empirical validity of resource driven social mobilization. Anti-GMO activism in France is selected as a uniquely ripe context for exploring resource mobilization. A resource based examination reveals why, when and how key anti-GMO movement actors differentiated their strategies on the basis of protest, politics and produce. A new framework is proposed to encompass key variables around material, human and network based resources. It is argued that resource mobilization research designs need to move beyond financially driven causal arguments.

Keywords: Resource mobilization; social movements; environmental movements; action repertoires; activism; genetically modified organisms

Social movement theory provides a range of frameworks for studying group behaviour while allowing us to generate questions on how and why social mobilisation takes place. A number of social movement theories have emerged over the past thirty years including resource mobilisation theory (Olson 1965, Tilly 1978), political opportunity structures (Kriesi 2004), social psychology (Mellucci 1985, Touraine 1977) and social networks (Diani and McAdam 2003, Keck and Sikkink 1998). The present contribution seeks to explore the increasingly unpopular theoretical tool of resource mobilization theory from an uncharacteristically qualitative driven perspective on the development of anti-GMO activism. Focusing on

resource mobilization prioritises, in effect, the study of “movement organisations over movements” (Eyerman and Jamison 1991). It concentrates on the rationality of movement groups through emphasizing a range of ‘resources’. Resources are conceptualised both from a classical (labour and capital) and a modern (experience, information, and networks) perspective.

It is often argued that financial resources are key determinants in the strategies employed by social movements. Similar to the ‘financial constraints’ thesis of Grossman and Saurugger (2002, 2006), Richards and Heard refers to the “NGO dilemma” as the recurrent struggle for non-state actors to secure sufficient funding to achieve their most basic objectives (2005: 37). Similarly, Coban argues that “how much democracy you get depends on how much money you have” (2004: 447). However, it is argued here that a comprehensive exploration of theoretical and empirical based literature on social movement research exposes alternative revealing resource categories such as experience, information and networks. All too often, these ‘resource types’ are consigned to separate areas of research. The present contribution seeks to bring key elements together into one resource framework.

Social movements have been structured according to the traditions of individual nation-states (Dryzek *et al.* 2003). In order to allow for a detailed study of resource types, France is, firstly, selected as a single case study based upon its categorization as a strong and passively exclusive state. A strong state makes important political decisions without much recourse to various interests (Kriesi 2004). Although a series of pressures threaten this definition (Cole 2005), France provides an invigorating context for exploring the impact and scope of resource constraints. France is, secondly, chosen as a largely unique country case study on anti-GMO activities in terms of its sustained duration supported by a consistently negative public in contrast to its comparative dwindling importance across Europe (EORG 2005). As revealed below, resource mobilization theory can allow us to understand why,

when and how key anti-GMO movement actors differentiated their strategies on the basis of *protest, politics and produce*.

Understanding Resource Mobilization Theory

Resource Mobilization Theory emerged with Olson's "The Logic of Collective Action", in response to the shortcomings of classical collective behaviour theories. It sought to develop an understanding of what makes collective action possible. Although it does not systematically evaluate different resources, his work introduces the relationship between group size and the effectiveness of the group (Olson 1965). Resource mobilization theory developed further as a distinctive approach to the study of social movements. Obershall (1973) used this theory to identify and define potential resources for individual actors in reacting against the state. Tilly (1978) introduced the importance of internal organisation for social movements. However, this paper emphasises that these fundamental works (particularly Obershall and Tilly) on resource mobilization theory are heavily dependent upon a rather narrow material based understanding of resource mobilization. As a result, it argues that a study of social movements and its constituent parts demands a more systematic assessment of individual resource bases.

Outside such literature, more recent work (Beyers and Kerremans 2007, Fairbrass and Jordan 2002, Ward and Lowe 1998, Webster 2000) on the analysis of resources has emerged. Indeed, such studies have found that organisational resources are crucial to determining the potential agenda of a non-state actor (Fairbrass and Jordan 2002: 150). The group's own resources, including representativeness, internal cohesion, technical expertise, money and ability to mobilise members, may have a crucial effect on its capacity to influence policy. We could also add the importance of the particular issue, the coalition partner and the opposition interest (Beyers and Kerremans 2007, Webster 2000). Particularly for movement actors (in

contrast to business and industry), financial constraints can still largely determine their strategies, priorities and potential influence (Grossman and Saurugger 2002: 511).

Both classic and modern sets of literature have struggled to agree upon what constitutes a resource. The former has tended to concentrate on the explanatory power of organisational (money, workforce, assets) resources (Obershall 1973, Tilly 1978). The latter emphasizes the role of representativeness, legitimacy, expertise and supranational or transnational networks (Beyers and Kerremans 2007, Ward and Lowe 1998). While uniting both literatures, the present contribution attempts to develop a robust holistic categorization of resources. Resources are regrouped into three large conceptual categories: *material*, *human and network*. This classification, firstly, borrows from the theoretical framework developed by Edwards and McCarthy (2004). In terms of *material* and *human* resources, the present contribution concentrates on dealing with the main aspects of the Edwards and McCarthy typology (financial aid, information, organisational capacity, workforce and experience).

The proposed three-fold taxonomy, secondly, adapts the resource types of Edwards and McCarthy (2004). The *network* grouping in the present contribution does not explore the role of ‘social networks’ or ‘social capital’ as separate areas of research. It prioritises, instead, domestic and supranational networks between movement organisations (all too often ignored). This decision particularly reflects the multi-level nature of current research on social movements. Lastly, this three-fold approach rejects the inclusion of ‘culture’ as a resource category. Edwards and McCarthy (2004) essentially incorporate ‘action repertoires / strategy selection’ under the heading of ‘cultural resources’ which is considered as the dependent (rather than independent) variable.

What Constitutes a Resource for Mobilization?

Within the framework set out above, this section lays out in more detail what is meant by the three resource categories material, human and network. In terms of material resources, *organizational capacity* plays an instrumental role in the extent and form of collective mobilization. Larger associations often benefit from majority donors that can include corporations or other private interests with the potential to shape the form of the collective action undertaken (Hicks 2004). Activities undertaken by smaller associations can also be heavily dependent on a privileged (usually more modest) collection of donors (Carmin and Balsler 2002, Dalton *et al.* 2003, Dalton 1994, Zald 2000). The *level of funding* is equally crucial to the continuing existence of civil society groups. Richards and Heard refers to the “NGO dilemma” as the continual struggle for groups to secure sufficient funding to achieve their most basic objectives (2005: 37).

Moreover, both the *access* and *usage of information* by groups is an essential resource to their mobilisation (Lavoux 2003). Allsop *et al.* (2004) conducted a study into the applicability of resource mobilization to health consumer groups. Their findings underlined the importance of gathering information to these groups. As a result, they were able to both maintain help lines and produce pamphlets for the general public, as well as undertaking in-depth research. Indeed, many groups have relied on access to ensure some level of *information ownership* in order to offer expert opinions to decision-makers. Scientific research, attending conferences and publishing findings are crucial to increasing the group’s legitimacy and mobilising potential (Richards and Heard 2005: 32).

Human resources are often explored in terms of understanding the importance of experience. It is argued here that there are essentially two forms of experience that are borne out from recent works: *individual* and *organisational*. Sometimes the experience of individuals becomes the most critical resource for organisations. Igoe (2003) revealed that the lack of experienced individuals in a land rights movement in Tanzania resulted in the future

of member groups hinging on one individual's decision. Controlling all other resources, he/she (and his/her experiences) essentially determined the success/failure of the group. Research into direct action environmentalism in Britain revealed that the movement in Oxford heavily relied upon experienced individuals. Their previous involvement in large national movements offered a wealth of experience that was consequently transferred into local green networks in Oxford (Doherty *et al.* 2003). Rootes (2001) found that local environmental groups in Canterbury have been forced to work within loose networks to compensate for their weaknesses. These networks are crucially moulded around a collection of powerful and experienced individuals in order to sustain collective environmental action.

In addition to personal or individual experiences, the experience of the particular organisation can also represent an essential resource. Dalton (1994) demonstrates that older organisations tend to partake in conventional forms of behaviour (lobbying, consultation), largely due to a legitimacy and knowledge base built up throughout time. The less experienced younger organisations were often found to concentrate on protests and demonstrations. Many organisations decide to concentrate on the national arena because they have already experienced the "habits of action" necessary to operate effectively in the national system. As a result, many environmental organisations either fail or disincline to learn the 'habits of action' at the EU level (Rootes 2005: 26). Networks between local/national Turkish and international organisations in the Bergama anti-mining environmental movement provided access to the experiences of other communities in similar campaigns. Moreover, numerous local networks between different actors combined multiple shared experiences in dealing with the mining issue and local/national authorities (Coban 2004: 452).

With regards to network resources, the paper concentrates, firstly, on two major types of memberships available to associations: *umbrella* and *parenting*. Groups frequently seek to

form and join various umbrella organisations at both the national and European levels. In an EU context, the Commission has often displayed a preference for dealing with European-wide umbrella organisations (Ward and Lowe 1998: 8-9). The growth of MNNPE (Multi-National Non-Profit Enterprises) has created multiple opportunities memberships for smaller associations (Fenwick 2005). These associations can take advantage of the superior resources wielded by the 'parent' group. This includes information and the experience, which are often needed by smaller associations to better exploit political opportunities. Instead of superseding a group's resource base, association with large organisations provides supplementary assets (Beyers and Kerremans 2007: 469-470, Richards and Heard 2005: 24). In both cases, there is always a trade-off between gaining resources while maintaining independence.

Networks (*national* and *transnational*) also allow non-state actors to benefit from / establish new spaces of political activism. They supply participating groups with additional resources, including information, experience, funding and even a different philosophy (Olesen 2005, Keck and Sikkink 1998). In referring to Tarrow's concept of "political exchange", organisations in transnational or domestic networks increase their resource base through a mutual exchange process. These groups seek to participate in these networks to allow them to fight local battles with outside resources (Tarrow 1998: 187-188). A collection of authors (Agrikolansky *et al.* 2005, Farro 2004, Fougier 2002, 2004) have demonstrated that many associations from different countries are active in large-scale globalisation / Global Justice networks. Involvement in umbrella, larger parent organisations, national and transnational networks often increases mobilisation through benefiting from a heightened sense of legitimacy.

Case Selection and Methodology

The particular issue of GMOs is highly emotive among French citizens. France has witnessed the growth of a distinctively vicious societal response to the release of GMOs. Unique from other EU member states, the activities of French activists have turned progressively more aggressive on a national scale. Before 2003, anti-GM campaigns were essentially structured around sub-national resistance based on demonstrations, marches and even sabotage. At a time when similar movements across Europe dwindled, 'les Faucheurs Volontaires' (FV) campaign in 2003 marked a unique period of widespread and radical national level "civil disobedience" (Hayes 2007). The main catalyst for this shift was the lifting of a national moratorium (1999-2003) on the importation of GM maize. The anti-GMO movement has encompassed a wide range of interests including environmental, consumer, counter-globalization, agriculture and specialist. The activities of the anti-GMO movement are therefore indicative of social mobilization in France. Most notably, the 2007 presidential candidate José Bové has been a key figurehead in the mobilisation of anti-GMO protest.

I concentrate on the four most active social movement organizations in the anti-GMO movement: environmental interest group 'Greenpeace-France' (referred below as Greenpeace), trade union 'Confédération Paysanne' (CP), counter-globalization actor 'Association pour la Taxation des Transaction pour l'Aide des Citoyens' (Attac) and specialist group 'Inf'OGM'. Greenpeace was the first environmental association to establish an anti GMO campaign in France. Until the FV campaign in 2003, Greenpeace was recognisably the leader of the anti-GMO movement. The Larzac 'altermondialiste' festival in August 2003 marked a significant transformation in leadership. An axis built upon la CP - Attac emerged as the new leading partnership. Moreover, the controversial issue of GMOs in France prompted the establishment of specialist associations. Inf'OGM specialises in monitoring the GMO debate. Similar to CP, this association multiplied its activities after

participation in the 'Larzac' festival. I examine below the main strategies employed by each association throughout the post FV period of 2004-2011.

A triangulated data collection methodology includes semi-structured interviews with key social movement actors, detailed policy documentary analysis and an examination of newspaper coverage. Document analysis provided the main data collection method for ascertaining the variety of strategies employed by the selected groups. A newspaper archival search outlined the range of actions undertaken by each group throughout the lifetime of the policy area in question. Newspaper articles are often cited as a major resource for research on social movement mobilization and environmental activism (Fillieule 2003). A mixture of both semi-structured interviews (particularly with regards to network resources) and document analysis (especially for ascertaining material resources) was employed in the collection of data on resources.

Anti-GMO Activism: Protest, Politics and Produce

The period (2004-2011) is selected as the main time frame for exploring the strategies of four key movement actors. The year 2004 marked the beginning of widespread national protest in response to the lifting of a national ban on GMOs. It is clear during this phase that the associations strategized on three distinct issues: *protest*, *politics* and *produce*. It is firstly revealed that CP and Attac led a successful expansion of the FV campaign across France. This campaign has encompassed wider interests since 2008 including Greenpeace activists. The initial leadership of Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM in lobbying government was, secondly, usurped by CP and Attac. Thirdly, Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM (in contrast to CP and Attac) have focused their attention on lobbying businesses on the labelling and tracing of their produce.

Protest: Propagating Civil Disobedience

The FV campaign was officially launched at the famous Larzac counter-globalisation rally of August 2003. Activists converged on Larzac to express their dismay at the consequences of current globalisation pressures and the decision of France to lift the moratorium on GMOs. Even though anti-GMO protesters were involved in crop destruction before 2003, the FV campaign marked a distinctive period of widespread and radical “civil disobedience” on a national scale (Hayes 2007). As an emerging movement leader during this period, José Bové (associated officially with both CP and Attac) called on individuals to destroy crops and biotechnology research centres throughout France. Links between CP and Les Verts were evident as the latter actually called for citizens to partake in “la désobéissance civile” (civil disobedience). CP and Attac developed an unambiguous strategy of civil disobedience from early 2004 onwards, firmly rooted in counter-globalisation ideology.

Although Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM were present at Larzac, they had largely avoided involvement in any aggressive actions as part of the FV campaign. There has been a clear distinction between the non-aggressive activities of Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM as opposed to the often aggressive activities of CP and Attac. Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM have focused their attention on lobbying government, especially the Environment Ministry, since the late 1990s. Both groups struggled with the regionalization of lobbying activities (including legal cases) due to the government’s increasingly pro-GMO stance. However, Greenpeace was summoned to court in July 2006 for inciting violence through the publication of a GMO map. Two farmers accused Greenpeace of naming their land as containing GM crops in order to encourage their destruction (Edward 27/07/2006). Greenpeace has indeed modified its initial strategy of relative isolation from CP. Although such actions were not officially sanctioned, Greenpeace members have become increasingly entangled with CP and Attac in their FV actions.

Both Greenpeace and CP have become increasingly embroiled in protest activities since 2008. The new French High Authority on Biotechnology ruled that a proposed new strain of GM maize (MON810) should be prohibited. The European Commission ruled that France was in breach of its official advice on the strain. In 2008, activists from both Greenpeace and CP were arrested for destroying suspected GM crops in South West France. Statements from those arrested underlined the need to “resist Europe’s wish to pollute France” with GM maize (Moreau 13/10/2010). In 2010, the European Commission proposed that MON810 and GM potato from Amflora should be allowed in France. The French Committee for Independent Research for GM fined (1,000 euros) a university professor (Gilles-Éric Séralini) for submitting a Greenpeace sponsored report on GMOs to the committee (CRIIGEN 2011). Moreover, José Bové (currently MEP for the party Europe Ecologie and CP activist) and seven others were found guilty of destroying GM crops in late 2011.

Politics: Lobbying for Moratoria on GMOs

Greenpeace and Inf’OGM were instrumental in lobbying for a first moratorium (1999-2003) on GMOs. Greenpeace was particularly instrumental in 2000 by communicating statistics to the Brussels based office on the location and extent of GMO crops in France. Firstly, Greenpeace attempted to exploit well established links with the Environment Ministry on the GMO dossier. Members were involved in monthly (largely *ad hoc*) meetings with officials. Similarly, CP lobbied connections with the Agriculture Ministry. Its sway with agricultural policy makers was inferior to the less active (on the GMO dossier) FNSEA. Secondly, Greenpeace and Inf’OGM kept in regular contact with Les Verts (and other Left Parties PCF and Lutte Ouvriere). They were particularly involved in the 1999 European Parliament elections with a consistently anti-GMO campaigner and now Green MEP (Daniel Cohn-

Bendit). In contrast, the bulk of CP's lobbying activities were located at the sub-national level of government.

In contrast, CP and Attac played a decisive role in lobbying government to impose a second moratorium (2008+). CP's status as a trade union, of course, ensured a minimum of such political activity. However, three significant factors have propelled the anti-GMO stance of CP and Attac further into national political debate. Firstly, José Bové (closely associated with CP and Attac) decided to stand for the 2007 presidential elections and the European Parliament election in 2009 for Europe Ecologie. He firmly vowed to (re-)instate a moratorium on all GMO activities. Reinforced by a suspended prison sentence for anti-GMO activities, Bové undoubtedly promoted the CP and Attac campaign against the use of biotechnology in food. Secondly, the candidates for the Socialist Party for the presidential elections (2007 Ségolène Royale and 2012 Francois Hollande), had created favourable links with CP (particularly Royale) and a distinctly anti-GMO stance. Thirdly, the uncertainty surrounding a proposed new bill on GMOs created a vacuum for political debate on the issue.

The government's initial decision to omit any precaution principle to a future bill became a key issue. CP and Attac both championed the establishment of a national authority to rule on GMOs independently with a requirement to invoke the precautionary principle in instances of danger to public health. In contrast, Greenpeace focused their attention on decreasing the GMO threshold proposed (0.9%) for labelling a product as genetically modified. A working committee including government representatives and members from the four groups was set up in 2007 and 2008 to discuss the future of GMOs as part of a series of national crisis meetings on the environment (le grenelle de l'environnement). A core conclusion from this committee was the establishment of a French 'High Authority on Biotechnology' (and not decreasing the threshold). In 2008, the authority effectively declared

a second moratorium on GMOs on the basis of the precautionary principle in opposition to the Sarkozy-Fillon government and the European Commission (as briefly explored above).

Produce: Campaigns against Companies

Greenpeace and Inf'OGM have maintained a campaign against retailers in France since 2004. They established a 'black list' of those retailers selling products that contained GMOs. Without undertaking any scientific research, they simply concentrated on those products containing soya or maize. On compiling the list, any retailer that did not guarantee the absence of GMOs in their products was published on their website. This issue was central to their overall agenda on GMOs. From this perspective, Greenpeace was campaigning for a more transparent and regulated process of labelling and tracing GMOs in products. This would prove to be the backbone of their anti-GMO campaign, particularly post 2004. In their view, European regulations and national government should not have established a minimum requirement of 0.9% to be considered genetically modified.

As a result, their campaign uncovered any produce that they considered to contain any trace of GMOs. In 2004, Greenpeace created a website 'Détectives OGM' dedicated to publishing regular updates on the current state of retailers in France. Inf'OGM placed similar research on-line under the heading 'OGM et la santé' (GMOs and health). Greenpeace attacked a well-known meat produce in 2008, *Boeuf de Bazas*, for allegedly containing GMOs. In this way, Greenpeace demonstrated a sophisticated ability to use media and advertising pressure on businesses. They highlighted that European and national law did not govern the existence of GMOs as a foodstuff in animal rearing. Moreover, Greenpeace distributed a guide on the presence of GMOs in produce to consumers throughout France at stores of the supermarket chains *Géant* and *Carrefour*. Carrefour decided in late 2010 to label

300 of its own products 'GMO free' with a green and white sticker in response to the Greenpeace-led campaign (Durand 27/10/2010).

All four groups have, therefore, been involved in a variety of anti-GMO strategies around the themes of protest, politics and produce. It is noticeable how each group has effectively sought to lead civil disobedience activities, lobbying and consumer campaigns. Throughout the duration of this study (2004-2011), the groups in focus have prioritized different strategies at specific times. The following section explores resource based accounts of why each group selected and modified their strategic outlook. A material resource account of this period suggests that shifts in expenditure on GMO activities, peculiarities in organization structure and media output help to explain strategy selection. 'Human' and 'network' accounts of strategy selection are also examined as alternative explanatory frameworks.

A Material Resource Explanation: *Expenditure, Structure and Media Output*

This section moves classic 'material' resource accounts beyond financial capacity to include data on organizational structure and media output. In terms of expenditure firstly, it is evident that CP and Attac increased their investment on GMO activities in line with an expansion in their strategies post 2004. In 2000, neither association decided to invest significantly in anti-GMO activities. CP and Attac only spent 4.5% and 3% respectively of their campaign expenditure in their anti-GMO campaigns (while Greenpeace committed 11%) in the same year (see Table 1). By 2004, both associations formally increased by four times their spending on fully fledged campaigns. After examining figures on other issues, Attac committed the second highest investment to GMO activities. Moreover, this association spent almost the same amount of euros on financial aid to local associations (407,638) as on all 16 campaigns (399,559). In comparison to other issues, CP committed the highest investment for

its GMO activities. These trends of increased spending on their GMO campaigns in both CP and Attac continued into 2011.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

The level of access to local, regional and/or supranational level structures for each group is, secondly, outlined below in table 2. Inf'OGM has only one national office, devoid of any representation at regional or supranational levels. It relies entirely on their office in Montreuil where it prioritizes work on the dissemination of information on GMO issues. This factor accounts for its inability to independently (outside its alliance with Greenpeace) strategize during the regionalisation of GMO activities post 2004. Greenpeace is the only association with well-established representation at all levels. It benefits from the support of larger European and International umbrella organisations that are both active in anti-GMO campaigning. However, the regional and local presence of Greenpeace is less established. After the closure of offices throughout France in 1985, Greenpeace managed to re-open these regional bureaux in 1990. As a result, the strategies of Greenpeace have largely been guided by mother and sister organisations. Moreover, it also struggled to adapt to the strong regional dominance of CP and Attac post 2004.

INSERT TABLE 2

The organisational structure of Attac-France has only recently included European representation to its vast network of regional and local groups. In 2004, Attac-International established Attac-Europe to work specifically on EU issues. Attac-France immediately established regional and local representation via 216 committees throughout France. Initially

envisaged as a federation of locally independent groups, Attac-France has undergone a process of centralisation since 1998. Nevertheless, local Attac organisations have proved extremely active on the GMO dossier (particularly post 2004). Similarly, CP benefits from a well-established network of regional groups. Peasant farmers throughout France are represented in 91 CP regional offices. There is no official CP presence at the supranational or international levels. Both Attac and CP profited from long-term regional and local than supranational subsidiary associations between 2004 and 2011.

All four groups, thirdly, regularly publish a variety of documents on the GMO issue. This activity is crucial for understanding the pursuit of media-related strategies particularly by Inf'OGM and GPF throughout this period. Moreover, the involvement of the association in “defining the problem” through media presence is often generally coupled with mobilisation success (Allsop *et al.* 2004). In order to achieve maximum impact, associations generally attempt to distribute information through all forms of publication: *physical, websites and multimedia* (specifically online audio-visual material¹). The first refers to the distribution of information via magazines, newsletters, fliers, official documents and campaign/policy documents. As demonstrated in Table 3, Inf'OGM is undoubtedly the most active in this form of publication through its specialist newsletters and policy documents. It is the only association to offer monthly newsletters dedicated to events on the GMO issue. Moreover, it has published over one hundred documents on eight different topic areas² on the issue since 2004. Although their number of publications is inferior, CP and Attac have concentrated on releasing books on the GMO campaign.

INSERT TABLE 3

¹ Data on new social media usage (e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.) was excluded due to word limitations.

² The eight topic areas are presented with their relevant number of published documents: ‘perception of GMOs (15), GMOs and world hunger (26), GMOs and patents (10), GMOs and regulations (16), GMOs and the economy (6), GMOs and the environment (19), GMOs and France (30) and GMOs in general (6).

The second form of publication is essentially similar information updated onto official websites for the consultation of members, press and any web-user. *Website* information is, however, distinguishable through its concentration on ‘current events’. Attracting web-users on a regular basis demands that articles are often much shorter and more frequent. Greenpeace maintains the most updated sites in terms of articles on current events related to GMOs. Since 2004, GPF averages one document every two days. Inf’OGM notably offers online versions of their monthly newsletter, while Attac-France provides quarterly news bulletins on their GMO campaign³. *Multimedia* publication highlights that associations are now using on-line videos and even online TV stations to promote their causes. Only Greenpeace and Inf’OGM offer on-line videos on the GMO issue. The former maintains an updated archive of video reports on relevant events, while the latter offers links to external videos promoting anti-GMO activities alongside a small internal video archive.

Alternative Resource Explanations: *Human and Network*

Previous experiences largely determine how well the association can exploit the political process, as well as adapt to changing circumstances within it (Carmin 2003). Table 4 presents data on the variety of campaigns pursued by the four associations between 2004 and 2011. The long-term familiarity with the GMO dossier allowed all four associations to strategize in this area. More substantially, it is argued, firstly, that the wider experience of Greenpeace in other campaigns initially encouraged a more preconceived and systematic approach to undertaking multiple strategies including all issues of protest, politics and produce on the GMO dossier. This experience allowed Greenpeace, secondly, to more efficiently structure

³ CP sporadically updates its ‘GMO campaign’ section on its website. It has focused more on the publication of policy documents (most recent available on-line) and books.

alliances and networks with other non-state and state actors. In contrast, the relative inferior experience of the other three groups led to largely responsive strategies towards the GMO dossier. However, their decision to specialise more closely on the GMO dossier did allow them to respond quicker. This variable was particularly relevant for the ability of CP and Attac to rapidly develop the FV campaign in light of the first moratorium on GMOs.

INSERT TABLE 4

The personal experience and knowledge of individual members can largely determine the strategies employed by a particular organisation (Igoe 2003). As set out in table 5, data on Inf^oOGM underlines the key role of initially Christophe Noisette (1998-2002) and then Eric and Aurélien Bernier (2002+). Qualified in philosophy, Christophe founded and personally maintained the work of Inf^oOGM until 2002. This factor explains the association's relative inactivity pre-2002. Eric Bernier refocused the association to focus specifically on developing philosophical and scientific arguments for opposing GMOs. The inclusion of Aurélien Bernier marked a third phase in the evolution of Inf^oOGM. As a member of both the General Assembly and GMO committee of Attac, Aurélien offered access for Inf^oOGM to the resources of Attac-France. Both Eric and Aurélien Bernier were able to revitalise Inf^oOGM post 2002.

INSERT TABLE 5

In sharp contrast to Greenpeace, CP and Attac have had recourse to a major charismatic figure in the anti-GMO movement, José Bové. He has been the leader (in various formal positions) of CP and remains a member of the '*Collège des fondateurs*' of Attac-France. His

involvement in both CP and Attac-France embodies the often cited “*Confédération Paysanne – Attac axis*” in anti-GMO activities. Famously presented as a simple farmer from the Midi, he has positioned himself as a protector of peasant farmers from the rise of liberal economics and globalisation. From this perspective, Bové finds a natural home in the anti-productivist CP and the counter-globalisation Attac-France. His protest action against McDonalds in Milau typified the militantism that he would bring to the GMO campaign of Attac-France and CP from 2002/3 (Martin 2003).

His leadership essentially allowed these two organisations to move the anti-GMO movement towards direct action ‘civil disobedience’. Lepault (2005) argues that Bové has imposed his personality on the GMO issue to such an extent that a debate on the potential advantages of GMOs is no longer possible in France. In contrast, there is a high turnover in personnel in Greenpeace. According to a former representative on the GMO dossier, this has significantly hampered the emergence of a Greenpeace leader on the issue of GMOs. As a result, individuals (such as Christine Noisette at Inf’OGM or José Bové) do not have the opportunity to develop. He also maintains that it would be very difficult to compete with the high profile (and often illegal) actions of José Bové⁴. As a result, Greenpeace has largely focused on non-protest activities in this area.

Network Resources: Internal vs. External

This category of resource is limited here to two specific perspectives: *internally shared* (between the four associations) and *externally attracted* resources (from other state or non-state actors). Of course, all four groups were at least nominally engaged in joint campaigns as explored above. Nevertheless, there are two distinct instances of benefiting from network resources as being ‘internally shared’ (see Figure 1). Firstly, Inf’OGM remained closely

⁴ Interview with an anonymous Greenpeace-France representative, GMO officer 2008-2011

associated with the Greenpeace-led campaign against retailers in France. Although there was no evidence of formal association between Inf'OGM and Attac, Aurélien Bernier was closely involved with both groups (workforce exchange). Secondly, CP and Attac maintained an intimate alliance through both a shared leader and campaign (FV). Both alliances involved the exchange of information, organisational capacity, experience and ideological resources. It is argued that the decision to ally in such a way encouraged a clear divergence between protest (CP-Attac) and non-protest (Greenpeace-Inf'OGM) strategies. There is recent evidence of an exchange between Greenpeace and CP through the former organisation's decision to publish GMO sites to the benefit of the CP-led FV campaign.

INSERT FIGURE 1

In terms of 'externally attracted' resources, figure 2 reveals that networks with state and non-state actors largely diverge along the Greenpeace/Inf'OGM and CP/Attac axes. As *ad hoc* informal alliances, they all primarily involved the exchange of information and experience only. It is argued that Greenpeace was able to gather together more allies on their lobbying, produce media-related strategies. The initial Greenpeace multiple strategy approach gathered non-state and state supporters from the environmental (AE, FNE, MDRGF, MEDD), consumer (UFC) and specialist (OGM Dangers, Inf'OGM) sectors. CP depended upon a smaller range of agricultural and counter-globalisation organisations. Although Greenpeace did have an informal network with the Environment Ministry (MEDD), CP retained more specifically political-oriented alliances (all except Attac). This allowed CP to pursue mainstream political strategies post 2004. Both categories of network resources highlight the importance (in terms of resources) of Greenpeace to Inf'OGM and CP to Attac. This encouraged a schism between coalitions built upon the non-protest produce-oriented strategies of Greenpeace-Inf'OGM and the protest-political strategies of CP-Attac.

INSERT FIGURE 2

Discussion

The present contribution seeks to further our understanding of the potential and limitations of resource mobilization theory in explaining social movement activities. It is often argued that material resources (particularly financial) are key determinants in the strategies employed by non-state actors. I contend that resource mobilization research designs have been too focused on financially centred explanatory frameworks for social mobilization. I effectively examined the validity of three broad conclusions for social movement actors found within the resource mobilization literature: the inherent ‘resource deficiencies’ of social movements (Grossman and Saurugger 2006), the ‘NGO dilemma’ of being tied to financial resources (Richards and Heard 2005) and finances determine success (Coban 2004).

This study has only confirmed the most basic assumption in all three cases. It is, indeed, necessary to be able to commit some level of financial resources to a given issue in order to ensure mobilization. However, it is evident that Coban (2004), Grossman and Saurugger (2002, 2006) and Richards et al. (2005) are too simplistic or at least narrow in their analysis. Firstly, financial superiority in itself does not guarantee mobilization on a given issue. Secondly, mobilization is equally (and sometimes more) dependent upon other resource factors as explored through the framework developed above. Thirdly, there is no evidence to suggest that poorer resourced movement actors will gravitate towards confrontational behaviour (Dalton *et al.* 2003).

The first set of resource variables labelled ‘material’ provided conclusions on the explanatory value of three categories: the level of funding (Richards and Heard 2005), organizational capacity (Hicks 2004) and the usage of information (Lavoux 2003). Firstly,

Greenpeace dedicated considerably more financial clout to anti-GMO mobilisation than the other associations. However, post-2004, CP and Attac have dedicated more funds as a percentage of overall campaign expenditure. This underlines both the growing dominance of CP and Attac, as well as undermining the importance of financial superiority on the GMO dossier post-2004. Secondly, Greenpeace benefited from a wide range of Greenpeace-International resources. And yet, its inferior regional presence proved crucial to its reduction in campaign strategies. Inversely, CP and Attac extended their strategies post 2004 through exploiting their well-established regional infrastructures. Thirdly, both Greenpeace and Inf^oOGM published more information in a wider variety of formats than the other groups throughout the period 2004-2011. This specialisation in technical media output proved essential to maintaining a well sustained media campaign strategy.

The second set 'human' explored the comparative value of individual (Igoe 2003) and organisational (Dalton 1994) experience. A distinction develops between a higher dependence on 'leaders' for less experienced associations (and vice-versa). As the least experienced association, Inf^oOGM relied heavily upon the work of C. Noisette, A. and E. Bernier. Similarly, José Bové developed as a significant leader for both CP and Attac. In contrast, the most experienced association (Greenpeace) has essentially depersonalised and departmentalised their campaign structure. The third set 'network' examined the relative importance of internally shared (Ward and Lowe 1998) and externally attracted resources (Diani and McAdam 2003). With regards to the former, the network resources of Greenpeace and CP were crucial to the sustained activities of Inf^oOGM and Attac respectively. The latter revealed how these axes encouraged a split in their respective strategies (non-protest vs. protest).

The relationship between resource type and strategy selection is outlined in Table 6 below. Each resource is categorized as less important (I), important (II) or very important

(III) with regards to the decision for a group to select a strategy based upon protest, politics or produce. Material resources were overall the least significant for understanding strategy selection. The level of funding, organizational capacity and information usage proved, nonetheless critical to undertaking a 'produce' driven sustained campaign against retailers (especially for Greenpeace in this case). In contrast, human resources in the form of individual and organizational experience allowed for more successful politics based strategies from CP. As the overall most important type, network based resources were especially critical for maintaining protest activities around the 'internally shared' axis of CP-Attac and 'externally attracted' resources of FV campaign members.

INSERT TABLE 6

Such an understanding of social mobilization from a resource mobilization approach remains in stark opposition to much of the social movement literature (Hicks 2004, Igoe 2003, Marks and McAdam 1996, Rootes 2004). A movement actor's mobilization is usually considered less reactionary to resource availability and more impulsive. The emphasis is placed on the group's self-professed moral imperative to act on a given issue. Leonard (2006) argues that social movement groups in Ireland sought to accumulate the resources needed in order to mobilise a series of anti-incinerator campaigns. Their collective drive to avoid the establishment of large incinerators is a spontaneous grassroots response to wide-spread frustration towards the unforgiving Celtic Tiger driving the Irish economy. A similar view is adopted by Clark (2002) and Clifford (2002) towards social movement groups. In following, a group does not respond to its resource base. Wide-spread dissatisfaction mobilises a group to collect sufficient resources and exploit the appropriate opportunities.

Movement actors are therefore considered, from the perspective of resource mobilization, to be rational actors that respond to their resource capacities. They select from a broad list of action repertoires or strategies based upon resource capabilities. Nonetheless, there are three important limitations and future potential research avenues found with the explanatory value of the resource mobilization framework developed in this paper. It does not, firstly, provide an account of the collective or individual based moral imperatives driving the overall movement. Social psychological approaches to resource mobilization could be capable of significant contributions to understanding ideological reasons for resource based mobilization. The model concentrates, secondly, on individual accounts of resource exploitation. Future research should aim to conduct more resource based research on entire social movements. This approach does not, thirdly, seek to offer non-resource explanations for mobilization activities. The future of resource mobilization may lie in its comparable explanatory value alongside other social movement theoretical approaches.

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