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Environmental Movement Interventions in Tourism and Energy Development in the North Atlantic Connecting the Social Movement Societies and Players and Arenas Perspectives

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## **Environmental Movement Interventions in Tourism and Energy Development in the North Atlantic. Connecting the Social Movement Societies and Players and Arenas Perspectives**

*Mark C.J. Stoddart, Alice Mattoni and Elahe Nezhadhossein*

Environmental movements act as opponents and allies of the energy sector and tourism sector. Despite recent price declines, the energy sector continues to pursue offshore oil exploration and extraction in the North Atlantic region. At the same time, coastal environments and communities across the North Atlantic region are incorporated into tourism development as key “attractors” that draw visitors and generate income (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). While these forms of development often share socio-ecological space, they less often share cultural or political space, in the sense of being connected in cultural imaginaries or political discourse. However, these forms of development share multiple contact points that involve both positive and negative impacts (Stoddart 2017). This includes direct contact points, such as threats posed by new energy projects to existing tourism landscapes, or conversely, the ways in which funding from the energy sector may help support tourism development. This also includes indirect contact points, such as the carbon intensity of tourism-oriented air, car, or boat travel, the ways in which global climate change impacts coastal tourism environments, or conversely, the ways in which energy sector infrastructure facilitates tourism development.

We investigate environmental movement engagement in issues related to energy and tourism development in Norway and Iceland by bridging the social movement societies (SMSoc) and the players and arenas perspectives. While there are differences in terms of their social and political contexts, they are both advanced Western democracies that appear to fit the SMSoc model of a professionalized social movement sector as well as the normalization of social movement engagement in politics. Our analysis answers the following questions: Which arenas do movements engage with as they intervene in issues related to offshore oil and tourism development? Who are the other key players that movements engage with? What forms of conflict and collaboration do environmental movements adopt in relation to other players in these arenas? Our analysis highlights the potential for integrating the SMSoc and players and arenas approaches as a framework for examining social movements in a cross-national context. Strongly linked to the US research context, the broader applicability of the SMSoc perspective has been questioned, which has led to refinements of the model (Quaranta 2016; Ramos and Rodgers 2015). Noting the limitations of the SMSoc perspective, we show how it can be fruitfully integrated with the players and arenas framework in order to help us better understand how SMSoc dynamics play out in specific social contexts (Jasper and Duyvendak 2015).

The article is structured as follows. First, we discuss the SMSoc and players and arenas perspectives and their resonance with literature on environmental movement mobilizing on oil

extraction and tourism development. Second, we describe our research design and multi-method approach to data collection and analysis. Third, we provide an explanation of the political and cultural context in which movement players are rooted in each country. Fourth, we discuss the arenas, players, and interactions between players in Norway and Iceland. Finally, we conclude by summarizing the main findings and propose further lines of investigation.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### *Social Movement Society*

The SMSoc perspective is a framework for looking at the institutionalization of grassroots mobilizations since the 1960s protest cycle (Earl and Kimport 2009; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Rucht and Neidhardt 2002; Soule and Earl 2005; Tarrow 2011). The SMSoc framework was articulated through the 1998 edited volume, *The Social Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century*. In their introduction, David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow (1998) set out four interrelated elements that characterize the social movement society. First, protest is more frequent and addresses a broader range of issues. Second, governments and other state agencies, such as the police, respond to protest in a predictable manner as a routine part of political life. Third, social movement organizations are increasingly institutionalized and integrated into everyday political life. Fourth, trends toward institutionalization mean that social movement organizations are mainstreamed and

de-radical- ized. The overall effect, they argue, is that social movements move “from the edges of political legitimacy, where [they have] warranted special responses from the state and separate analytical treatment from social analysts, to become something more akin to interest groups and political parties” (Meyer and Tarrow 1998: 4). For Meyer and Tarrow, the SMSoc evolved because of the dual influences of the expansion of edu- cation across the general public as well as the expansion and cultural omnipresence of mass media since the 1960s protest cycle. However, Tarrow (2011) observes that the ability to participate meaningfully in movements requires increasingly complex skills to navigate both online and offline social networks and spaces of protest. As a result, the SMSoc may also “be increasing the participation gap between rich and poor, between the well networked and the relatively isolated, and between those with fulltime occupations and those with disposable income and free time” (Tarrow 2011: 35).

Dieter Rucht and Friedhelm Neidhardt (2002) evaluate the SMSoc perspective and agree with its fundamental claims that the social movement society exists and that it is characterized by a diverse prolif- eration of social movements that have become “stabilized” in the politi- cal and social institutions of modern societies. Extending Meyer and Tarrow’s analysis, they argue that the SMSoc emerged and stabilized due to a range of micro-level, meso-level, and macro-level factors that are inherent to the process of modernization. These include processes of social differentiation and individualization, increasing distance between governments and publics, and the proliferation of mass media and new political

opportunities. As Rucht and Neidhardt argue, the emergence and expansion of a “‘movement society’ is likely to the extent that particular expressions of these variables arise together and mutually reinforce each other” (Rucht and Neidhardt 2002: 13).

Sarah Soule and Jennifer Earl (2005) use media data from the *New York Times* for the period 1960–1986 to assess the core claims of the SMSoc. Contra SMSoc expectations, they find fewer protests over time. However, protests are better attended, more likely to be linked to social movement organizations, and less likely to be policed through arrests or violence. They also find a decline in the number of social movement organizations, but at the same time, movement organizations become larger and more institutionalized. They also find a diversification of protest issues, but many of these issues are episodic or localized and lack the “staying power” to become long-term movements. Elsewhere, research by Jennifer Earl and Katrina Kimport on pop culture “fan activism” further explores the SMSoc notion of “perpetual movement mobilization” (Earl and Kimport 2009: 223). Recent advances in information and communication technologies, including the increased use of social media platforms, facilitate the diffusion of protest tactics into the “non-political terrain” of popular culture, so that the toolkit of social movement protest expands beyond the realm of traditional social movement campaigns and is taken up by informal networks of individuals or small groups. This empirical research adds nuance and complexity to the SMSoc perspective.

The SMSoc perspective largely developed through US-based research, and it has rarely been assessed in other social contexts. An

edited volume examines the SMSoc perspective by applying it to a range of Canadian social movement cases, including environmental and women's movements, with notable results (Ramos and Rodgers 2015). In the Canadian context, it is more accurate to speak of SMSoc in the plural rather than in the singular, as the trajectories and key characteristics described by the SMSoc perspective appear at different times for different movements even within the same country. Mario Quaranta (2016) similarly tests the main claims of the SMSoc perspective in the Western European context. Drawing on multiple waves of the European Values Survey from 1981 to 2009 from twelve countries, Quaranta asks whether the SMSoc model has diffused transnationally. He finds some support for the notion that the SMSoc are diffusing transnationally, with observable patterns of increasing levels of protest, particularly those that use "moderate" tactics, as well as the institutionalization of protest (Quaranta 2016: 252). However, there is also a great deal of heterogeneity in how well the different macro-trends asserted by the SMSoc are reflected in different countries across Europe.

Within the SMSoc perspective, there is debate over whether the institutionalization of social movement actors has a mainstreaming or tempering influence that makes movements less critical and less attuned to grassroots concerns or whether institutionalization has increased political efficacy in terms of movement outcomes (Corrigall-Brown 2012; Diani 2015; Ramos and Rodgers 2015; Rucht and Neidhardt 2002). For example, drawing on data from social movement activists, Corrigall-Brown (2012)

argues that institutionalization was a “partial success” in terms of advancing social movement goals but came at the cost of the “cooptation of more revolutionary ideas and causes” (Corrigan-Brown 2012: 133). By contrast, Dominique Mason’s (2015) study of the Quebec women’s movement finds that rather than having a de-radicalizing effect, the institutionalization of the movement had the opposite effect and increased the politicization and impact of the movement. As Marco Giugni and Florence Passy (1998) argue, movements adopt a range of strategies in relation to state and other actors, which range from conflict to collaboration. For example, social movements cooperate with state actors as a source of information through consultation, movements can be integrated into committees or other government agencies as collaboration partners, and movements can implement tasks that are delegated by the state. However, as Giugni and Passy note, social movements are rarely fully cooperative and retain their capacity for protest and opposition, which remains essential for addressing inherent power imbalances in state-social movement relationships. As movements become more institutionalized, approaching state actors through “conflictual collaboration” is particularly useful for engaging with other players. As our results show, the concept of conflictual collaboration is important to understanding how movement institutionalization proceeds in different social contexts.

### *Players and Arenas*

While the SMSoc perspective identifies several macro-trends in social movement mobilization and political engagement, it risks

being over- generalizing in its claims. In this article, we propose to look at the validity of the social movement society perspective through a different angle than the ones previously discussed by employing the “players and arenas” conceptual toolkit to better understand how SMSoc dynamics play out, starting from the interactions among social actors and between them and the context in which they act (Jasper and Duyvendak 2015; McGarry et al. 2016). We do this because the SMSoc perspective argues that social movement actors became more and more institutionalized in past decades, hence leaving the margins of institutional political arenas and becoming more legitimate actors in the eyes of policymakers. This also means that social movement actors enter in a diverse range of interactions with several other actors: with its emphasis on interactions among different types of actors, the players and arenas conceptual tool- kit is a suitable heuristic to grasp the quality of such interactions. As James Jasper notes, this approach gives “equal and symmetric weight to protestors and to the other players whom they engage, and by focusing equally on players and the arenas in which they interact” (Jasper 2015: 9). This perspective highlights that movements engage with political arenas and players but also engage in dynamic interaction with players that include corporations and other opponents, counter-movements, the news media, and bystander publics (Amenta et al. 2015; Balsiger 2015; Han and Strolovitch 2015).

Encounters among players take place in a variety of social arenas, which include street protests or public demonstrations, courtroom trails, public input processes or consultations led by

government or corporations, or media interviews. Jasper describes arenas as follows: “An arena is a bundle of rules and resources that allow or encourage certain kinds of interactions to proceed, with something at stake. Play- ers within an arena monitor each others’ actions, although that capac- ity is not always equally distributed” (Jasper 2015: 14). The power of different players shifts within different arenas, so that social movement organizations that succeed at mobilizing large numbers of people in arenas of public protest, for example, may yet find themselves margin- alized from the media or policy-making arenas. An application of this perspective is a re-examination of factionalization in the 1960s US civil rights movement, which demonstrates how different movement factions made strategic use of the features of varied social, political, and media arenas (Polletta and Kretschmer 2015). Another example focuses on how the dynamic interplay of action and debate within the Brazilian student movement created new tensions and “subdivisions” within political arenas and produced new relationships of collaboration and conflict (Mische 2015). This perspective also sheds light on how both the Occupy Movement and the Tea Party—despite dramatic ideological differences—engaged in similar processes of strategic alliance- building to grow these movements and gain visibility in public arenas in order to reach bystander publics (Han and Strolovitch 2015). By enriching the SMSoc perspective through the players and arenas perspective, we see that the four main assertions of the SMSoc perspective might be true, but not in general terms. While in a number of social and political arenas movement organizations

and participants might have become established players with legitimacy and standing, in others they might have evolved otherwise.

Environmental movement players engage with the energy sector and nature-based tourism in a variety of arenas and using different strategies, not always following the direction of institutionalization and de-radicalization that the SMSoc perspective leads us to expect. For example, Berit Kristoffersen and Brigit Dale (2014) examine conflict over whether to open the LoVeSe (Lofoten, Vesterålen, and Senja) region of Norway to oil exploration and development. While narratives about the socio-economic importance of oil are prevalent in Norway, in Lofoten, an alternative place identity focuses on fisheries as the basis of the regional economy and collective identity. This helps mobilize opposition against the prospect of new oil development by networks of local and national environmental organizations. In Canada, most of the research on social movement mobilization around oil has focused on the Alberta oil sands. Opposition to the oil sands by Indigenous groups and environmental organizations focuses on local impacts of water pollution, harm to fish and wildlife populations, and downstream environmental health impacts on Indigenous communities (Davidson and Gismondi 2011; Thomas-Muller 2014). Social movement opposition has also been grounded in the contribution of the oil sands to global climate change and Canada's relatively high per capita carbon footprint (Stoddart et al. 2016).

There is also a significant body of research on alignments

of tourism and outdoor recreation with environmentalism, though this focuses more on environmentalism as a worldview rather than particular environmental players. John Urry and Jonas Larsen (2011) note that tourist destinations are increasingly marketed to appeal to an environmentalist “tourist gaze” and use notions of sustainability to draw visitors.

Evidence on the contributions of tourism to environmental sustainability is mixed. The veneer of ecotourism can mask negative impacts, including tourism revenues that flow to a small group of owners and operators based outside host communities as well as waste issues and enclosures of beaches and other communal spaces for tourists’ benefit (Carrier and Macleod 2005; Gould 1999; Laudati 2010; Meletis and Campbell 2009). Other researchers suggest the pitfalls of tourism can be avoided if development is consciously managed for social and environmental sustainability. In these circumstances, tourism can contribute to community wellbeing and the protection of local environments or wildlife (Bulbeck 2005; Gurung and Seeland 2008; Weinberg et al. 2002). As our previous research demonstrates (Stoddart and Nezhadhossein 2016), environmental movements and tourism operators share similar discourses about the potential for nature-based tourism to serve as a sustainable development pathway and site of environmental education. However, we find little evidence of inter-organizational network ties across environmental and tourism players. Exceptions are occasional and tend to focus on specific, episodic controversies over new resource extraction projects, as well as collaboration on

specific ecotourism initiatives. By contrast, Nancy McGehee's (2002) analysis of Earthwatch demonstrates that social network ties formed during pro-environmental tourist travel translates into higher levels of later social movement participation.

Contact points between oil extraction and tourism development emerge around conflict over new energy exploration or extraction. The threat of energy extraction can provoke tourism to "threatened" environments that visitors should view before they are transformed by energy production. Environmental movement mobilization around energy extraction may align with tourism interests in contested areas and boost the tourism economy of these regions. This is demonstrated by the oil development controversies in Ecuador examined by Patricia Widener (2011) and in Belize examined by Kenneth Gould (2017).

Based on the literature presented here, we expect social movement players to participate in different arenas related to both energy extraction and tourism development and to engage with other players from the energy and tourism sectors, as well as with government players. Furthermore, we expect movement players to be less institutionalized in some arenas, like those related to the issue of energy exploration and extraction, where mobilization by local and grassroots organizations is notable. We also expect to see more conflictual engagement within arenas related to the energy sector, while we would expect more collaborative strategies across environmental movement players and tourism players, as well as environmentalism-tourism alignments that are used strategically to defend against energy development.

## **Methodology**

We examine social movement activity in Norway and Iceland by using a multiple-method research design. Data collection includes an online survey, field observation, interviews, and netnography, or treating the internet as a field site. This can be defined as a quant-QUAL research design, where the quantitative component was sequenced first but was nested within a qualitative-dominant research design (Hesse-Biber 2010).

The first phase was a preliminary online survey of participants from the oil sector, tourism, social movement organizations, and government agencies. A sampling frame of key organizations was built up through a series of online keyword searches. The response was only 6 percent for Norwegian organizations (four participants out of sixty-three target organizations) and 9 percent for Icelandic organizations (six participants out of seventy target organizations). As such, we stress that the survey results are only suggestive and are referenced in support of our qualitative analysis. Survey data were collected through the Opinio survey platform. Questions focused on participants' views of the social and environmental impacts of the tourism and oil sectors. The questions most applicable for our analysis focused on sectoral-level ties of collaboration and conflict across the oil sector, tourism, social movements, and governments at varying socio-political scales, including local, national, and international. While the low response rates limit the utility of findings, results

from this phase were also useful in informing subsequent field work.

The second phase involved fieldwork carried out by the first author. Table 1 summarizes the dates, location, and relevance of fieldwork sites. During the fieldwork, twenty-one interviews were carried out with participants representing organizations from government, tourism, energy, and ENGO sectors. The first series of questions asked about perceived positive and negative social or environmental impacts of the tourism sector. The second series of questions asked about perceived positive and negative social or environmental impacts of the oil sector. Additional questions prompted participants to talk about their sense of the connections (or lack thereof) across the two sectors. Another series of

**Table 1:** Summary of fieldwork

|               | <b>Dates</b>                       | <b>Locations</b>                             | <b>Relevance of site</b>  |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Norway</b> | August–September 2016<br>(5 weeks) | Lofoten Islands<br><br>Stavanger<br><br>Oslo | Important nature-based tourism region. Also subject of controversy over whether to open up closed regions to oil exploration and development.<br><br>The major hub for the Norwegian oil sector.<br><br>Capital city where many government agencies and ENGO offices are located. |

|                |                           |           |   |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| <b>Iceland</b> | October 2016<br>(4 weeks) | Reykjavik | Main gateway into the country, disproportionately affected by the current tourism boom, where government, corporate, and NGO offices are located.   |
|                |                           | Akureyri  | Largest hub outside Reykjavik, hub for nature-based tourism, including whale watching operations. Closer center to the Dragon field, off the northeast coast, where oil exploration has been carried out. |

questions asked about relationships of collaboration and conflict within and across the oil and tourism sectors, as well as with governments and environmental movements. Environmental movement participants were also asked about the kinds of tactics and strategies they use to intervene in either tourism-related or oil-related issues. Interviews lasted between thirty minutes and ninety minutes, averaging approximately forty-five minutes. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and imported to NVivo qualitative analysis software for analysis.

The third phase of our data collection and analysis involved qualitative netnography (Small and Harris 2014). We honed in on specific oil development controversies within our case studies and looked at movement-produced content on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter from the period between 2016 and 2017. Notes were produced by the third author, using a structured protocol that included prompts about environmental movement intervention around tourism and oil-related issues: Who are the key

environmental movement actors involved? What alliances are there between environmental groups and other actors? What

**Table 2:** Summary of netnography data

|                | <b>Keywords</b>    | <b>Twitter hits<br/>(number of<br/>relevant posts)</b> | <b>Facebook hits<br/>(number of<br/>relevant posts)</b> | <b>YouTube hits<br/>(number of<br/>relevant posts)</b> |
|----------------|--------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Norway</b>  | Lofoten<br>AND oil | 247  | 259   | 114  |
| <b>Iceland</b> | Iceland<br>AND oil | 461  | 79  | 49   |

are the main claims being made by environmental movements? Table 2 summarizes the data from this phase of analysis.

All the qualitative data, including field notes, interview transcripts, and netnography notes, were manually coded and analyzed with NVivo software for qualitative analysis, using a common semi-structured coding scheme. Drawing on the players and arenas framework, we coded all mentions of organizational actors from various sectors (social movement, energy sector, tourism sector, government, and others) and coded for instances of collaborative and conflictual relationships within and across different arenas. Qualitative comparison tables were used to make comparisons across the different data sources. These tables link

analytical dimensions (as rows) with the different data sources (as columns) for each study region. Preliminary analysis was shared for feedback with project collaborators who have regional area expertise on Iceland and Norway, which helped serve as a face validity check on our results.

### **The Social-Political Context of the Study Regions**

Norway and Iceland are established democracies with low population densities within the broader North Atlantic region (although there are significant differences in total populations; Norway’s population is over five million while Iceland’s population is less than five hundred thousand). However, they also offer different arenas for environmental movement intervention related to energy and tourism development. Table 3 summarizes the cases in terms of the relative importance of the offshore oil and tourism sectors as well as visibility and activity of environmental movements.

**Table 3:** Context of study regions

|                | <b>Offshore oil</b> | <b>Tourism</b> | <b>Environmental Movements</b> |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Norway</b>  | +                   | ▣              | +                              |
| <b>Iceland</b> | ▣                   | +              | ▣                              |

Oil was discovered on the Norwegian Continental Shelf in the 1960s and has been in production since the 1970s. There has

been a high level of state control over the oil sector, embodied in Norway's "ten oil commandments" that focus on leveraging the oil economy to support generous social welfare programs (Bryden 2015). Through its oil wealth fund, the country has been able to mitigate some effects of oil dependency. As such, the country is viewed by some as a best-practices case of oil development, though others remain critical of the sector's influence on Norwegian politics (Dale 2016; Kristoffersen and Dale 2014). By contrast, the tourism sector is less developed and less significant to Norway's political economy. Nature-based tourism is important to specific regions, including the Lofoten Islands, a set of islands above the Arctic Circle in the northern reaches of the North Sea. While oil governance is a national political priority and receives a great deal of attention, tourism governance is more localized, and issues of tourism management are dealt with at the municipal level. In terms of environmental movements, there is a range of local organizations, national organizations, and national chapters of international organizations. These operate within a political context of an open society wherein social movements are seen as having legitimacy and access to government.

Iceland is not currently an oil producer. However, work on offshore

oil exploration commenced in the northeast corner of the country (the Dragon Field) before the recent price downturn and volatility made new Arctic oil frontiers less desirable. Public and political discourse about oil development in the Icelandic offshore has cooled, while most exploratory licenses have now lapsed.

Conversely, Iceland is experiencing a fast-growing tourism boom, which was shaped by media imagery circulated around the Eyjafjallajökull volcano eruption of 2010, as well as promotional campaigns by Icelandair (Lund et al. 2017). Icelandic tourism is based on nature-oriented experiences, such as whale and puffin watching, the northern lights, glaciers, hiking, and geothermal pools, including the iconic Blue Lagoon (Huijbens 2016). Iceland is a

case where tourism has quickly become a major economic driver in terms of revenues and employment. However, tourism governance has been slower to take shape, often reacting to problems as they have emerged. The need for improved tourism governance is recognized by the national government, and steps are being taken to move in this direction. In terms of social movements, the 2008 economic crisis in the country provoked a large, largely grassroots protest cycle (the IceSave protests) focused on anti-austerity, government accountability, and democratization (Castells 2012; Hallgrimsdottir and Brunet-Jailly 2015). This has largely dissipated, though episodic grassroots mobilization occurs around a range of issues.

We focus on environmental movement players' interventions into arenas related to oil and tourism across these cases. As this overview indicates, these movement players are entangled within different social contexts and configurations of oil extraction and tourism development.

## **Results**

### *The Relevance of Different Arenas of Environmental Movement Engagement*

As a first step, we examine the arenas related to energy and tourism development where environmental movements intervene. Our preliminary survey data suggest that movements are more likely to mobilize in oil-related arenas and come into conflict with oil sector or government players, while engagement in tourism-related arenas may be more supportive or collaborative. This view is supported by our other data sources.

In Norway, the oil sector is rarely subject to ongoing critique and opposition. Rather, the prospect of new oil exploration and development prompts social movement mobilization. There is a dominant discourse of the “Norwegian fairy tale,” which views the oil sector as the core of Norwegian social wellbeing and the country’s social welfare programs. According to this view, aggressive government action in the early days of the Norwegian oil sector, which included creating the “Ten Oil Commandments,” led to a sector that is more environmentally and socially responsible than in much of the rest of the world. Environmental movements intervene in specific arenas and disrupt this positive view when new oil frontiers are set to expand. Within our data, two regions are particularly significant: discussions about opening the closed area in the

LoVeSe region (which includes Lofoten Islands), and discussion about extending oil frontiers further into the Arctic. Mobilization related to oil frontier expansion is grounded in

preserving tourism economies or promoting tourism as a sustainable alternative, though this is more visible in the case of LoVeSe, where there is already a vibrant tourism economy. Intervention in oil-related arenas more often focuses on protecting the ecological wellbeing of regional fisheries (also see Kristoffersen and Dale 2014). In the case of Arctic oil development, mobilization is based on protecting the fragile ecology of the Arctic from resource extraction. Environmental movement players adopt the strategy Bronislaw Szerszynski (2007) calls ecological irony, which is to highlight the gap between professed pro-environmental beliefs and demonstrably anti-environmental behavior. Movement players use arenas, including public rallies and protests, and media coverage to point to the ecological irony of Norway's claims to uphold the 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement, while simultaneously working to expand oil frontiers into ecologically sensitive regions like LoVeSe and the Arctic. Mobilization in oil arenas echoes notions of "climate cosmopolitanism" (Beck 2010) by delocalizing these conflicts and repositioning debate over oil development in relation to international political arenas, such as UN climate change Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings. A recent example of this is the Lofoten Declaration for a Managed Decline of Fossil Fuel Production, which was launched in the summer of 2017. This declaration targets the national political arena by calling on the Norwegian government to maintain the LoVeSe area as closed for oil exploration. However, the declaration goes beyond this to call on wealthy nations (including Norway) to take an ambitious leadership role in winding down fossil fuel extraction

and leading renewable energy transitions to address climate change.

In Norway, social movements intervene against attempts to extend oil frontiers that would impact established fisheries and tourism-based communities. Iceland provides a contrasting example. While exploratory work has been ongoing in the Dragon Field region, in the northeast of the country, debate over Icelandic oil within political and public arenas has cooled in the wake of declining global oil prices. While there was some visibility for this issue around the 2016 and 2017 elections, the main debates in the national political arena focus on other issues. It is perhaps unsurprising to find that environmental organizations were not especially active in oil-related arenas during our data collection, even though they were active earlier in media arenas, where they opposed oil exploration.

However, Iceland has been going through a tourism boom, with rapidly growing numbers drawn by a group of nature-based attractors that includes geothermal pools, whales, puffins, hiking, glaciers, mountainous volcanic landscapes, and the rugged coastline and black sand beaches (Lund et al. 2017). Environmental movements are more engaged in arenas related to the tourism boom, which takes several forms. Movements work to ensure the preservation of Icelandic nature, which serves as a major tourism attractor. This includes a campaign within the national political arena to expand and strengthen the national park system. Environmental movement organizations also engage in improving the sustainability of tourism business practices, such as lowering

the environmental footprint of boat tours and other operations. Other arenas where we see collaboration between environmental groups and the tourism sector include work on whale watching and environmental education as well as opposition to Icelandic whaling. As a prominent example, the environmental group IceWhale is supported by several whale watching operators. IceWhale serves as a critical voice that opposes the Icelandic whaling industry in the national public arena but also in the publicly visible arena of Reykjavik harbor. They maintain an information booth close to several boat tour operators and provide information to tourists on whales and whaling. By operating in the tourism arena of the harbor, they ask for public support on the whaling issue that can be translated into the national political arena.

While there is limited critical attention to potential oil development,

there has been intervention in national political arenas based on the impacts of new renewable energy infrastructure (hydro-electric and geothermal), which is framed in terms of impacts on the wilderness experience of visitors. While oil-related arenas are sites of conflict in other parts of the North Atlantic region, in Iceland, mobilization has recently focused more on expanding renewable energy infrastructure and the impacts of this on flows of tourists drawn by Iceland's wilderness values.

### *The Presence of Different Players*

The second dimension of our analysis looks at the different players involved in environmental movement action. Norway has

a constellation of environmental movement players that include a mix of national organizations, such as Bellona and Nature and Youth, as well as national chapters of international organizations, such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth (Naturvernforbundet), and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature.

Local, grassroots-oriented organizations, such as Oil Free Lofoten, also participate in conflict over oil development around Lofoten. These local organizations get support from larger groups located in Oslo, closer to the political and economic center of the country (also see Kristoffersen and Dale 2014). If we think in terms of social movement ecologies—or the range of different organizations and roles—the Norwegian case demonstrates a rich environmental movement ecology that mixes local, national, and international organizations, more moderate and radical groups, and more institutionalized and grassroots organizations. These players mostly engage with national political arenas, as oil development is seen as the subject of national politics.

The network of environmental movement players in Iceland is less developed than in Norway. While there is a vibrant recent history of grassroots protest against austerity and around issues of democracy and government accountability, this does not necessarily translate into a strong set of environmental movement players. Rather, a few national organizations are main players, including Landvernd (Icelandic Environmental Association), Icelandic Nature Conservation Association, Saving Iceland, and IceWhale. These organizations focus on wilderness and wildlife protection. They engage in arenas oriented more around tourism development

or the potential impacts of expanding renewable energy infrastructure than around debates over oil exploration and extraction.

### *The Roles of Environmental Movement Players*

The final dimension of our analysis focuses on different roles that environmental movement players adopt in relation to others. Our preliminary survey data, though suggestive, shows environmentalism–tourism alignments around issues related to tourism and oil in contrast with government–oil sector alignments.

In the Norwegian case, environmental movement players come into conflict with the oil sector and government, particularly around the expansion of oil frontiers into the Arctic or closed regions like LoVeSe. However, collaboration across environmental and oil players also takes place, particularly around renewable energy development and transitions. Interactions between environmental and oil sector players are characterized by a mix of conflict and collaboration, depending on the specific issue at hand and arena for engagement. Environmentalist players also connect with tourism sector interests in conflict over opening the LoVeSe closed area to oil development. Environmentalist players enjoy an institutionalized presence in Norwegian political arenas. There

is a political norm of an open society for social movements, wherein movement players receive access to government arenas and are able to present their claims. In this context, we see ties between environmentalist players and the oil sector and government that exemplify Giugni and Passy's (1998) concept of

“conflictual collaboration” as a way for more institutionalized social movements to strategically engage with government and opponents based on specific issues and arenas.

In the Icelandic case, we see collaborative relationships among environmental players and the tourism sector. While there is currently less engagement around issues of oil exploration and potential development, there has been conflict with the broader energy sector around potential impacts of renewable infrastructure development. We see less contact across environmental movement players and players from other sectors in the Icelandic case. The contact that does emerge is more often oriented around sustainability, wilderness, and wildlife issues connected to tourism development.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

We examined when and how social movements intervene in offshore oil and tourism as modes of development for coastal societies. Consistent with other research, our results show that the SMSoc model is not readily exportable for cross-national research beyond its US origins (Quaranta 2016; Ramos and Rodgers 2015). This is an issue with much social movement theory, which is built from US case studies then applied elsewhere and treated as generalizable. As a culturally, economically, and militarily dominant world power, the United States is an exceptional case, rather than a typical case. However, this does not mean that we should abandon the SMSoc model, as we see characteristics associated with the SMSoc to varying degrees in our

results. Rather, we highlight the need to further refine the SMSoc perspective. Engaging with the conceptual framework of the players and arenas approach is one way to increase the applicability of the SMSoc for cross-national research. Four main insights come from working across the SMSoc and the players and arenas approaches.

First, as in other evaluations of the SMSoc, we argue that SMSoc are plural, not singular (Quaranta 2016; Ramos and Rodgers 2015). Table 4 summarizes the answers to our research questions and highlights the variability of how social movements intervene in different arenas and engage with other players. Through this analysis of environmental

**Table 4: Synthesis of case studies**

|                | <b>Which arenas do movements engage with as they intervene in issues related to offshore oil and tourism development?</b>   | <b>Who are the other key players that movements engage with?</b>                             | <b>What forms of conflict and collaboration do environmental movements adopt in relation to other players in these arenas?</b>   | <b>Type of social movement society</b>  |
|----------------|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Norway</b>  | Mobilization against oil development based on localized and global climate risks of extending oil frontiers.  | Local, national, & international environmental players, from grassroots to professionalized. | Environmental players use strategies of conflictual collaboration with oil sector, depending on issue.<br>Institutionalized presence in political arena.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalized &amp; multi-level social movement society:</li> <li>• Rich social movement ecology of local, national, international arenas &amp; players.</li> <li>• High degree of movement institutionalization.</li> <li>• Strategies of conflictual collaboration.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Iceland</b> | Engagement in issues related to tourism boom, ensuring ecological integrity of Icelandic nature.<br>Mobilization around impacts of renewable energy infrastructure. | Few key national organizations as major players.   | Environmental players have less contact with other sectors on oil development issues.<br>Collaborative contact around tourism & sustainability, conflictual contact around renewable energy impacts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National &amp; episodic social movement society:</li> <li>• National arenas and players.</li> <li>• Project-driven collaboration or conflict with other players.</li> </ul>  |

movement engagement in arenas related to offshore oil and tourism development, we identify two forms that SMSoc may take, both of which differ from the ideal type described by US-based SMSoc research. Norway is an “institutionalized and multi-level” social movement society that has a mix of professionalized and grassroots local, national, and international organization. Environmental movement players are institutionalized within the political sphere, and they pursue strategies of conflictual collaboration with other players in oil sector and political arenas. Iceland, by contrast, is a “national and episodic social movement society” where social movement players operate at a national scale (although a significantly smaller national scale than Norway) and engage in project-specific collaboration or opposition within tourism or energy development arenas.

Second, SMSoc are not characterized by a linear trajectory toward the institutionalization of social movement organizations. Environmental movements are more institutionalized in Norway, which provides a closer fit with the social movement society perspective (Earl and Kimport 2009; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Rucht and Neidhardt 2002; Soule and Earl 2005; Tarrow 2011). Yet, this case demonstrates a social movement ecology characterized by a diverse mix of players that includes local, grassroots, more professionalized national organizations, and chapters of international organizations. The diversification of social movements, not just their institutionalization, may be a more accurate description of SMSoc.

Third, a point of debate within the SMSoc literature is

whether movement institutionalization leads to de-radicalization or whether it increases the political efficacy of movements (Mason 2015; Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Again, if we look at the Norwegian case as a good fit to the SMSoc model, we see that highly institutionalized movement organizations adopt strategies of both conflict and collaboration, depending on the specific arenas and other players they are engaging with. This suggests that the institutionalization of movements can be used to open space for political efficacy. It also highlights the ongoing significance of Giugni and Passy's (1998) concept of conflictual collaboration as a movement strategy in analyses of the possibilities and limitations of institutionalization. The Norwegian case similarly exemplifies Mario Diani's arguments that "social movements are not necessarily anti- or extrainstitutional," but that there are "complex relations between social movements and institutional politics" (Diani 2015: 203).

Finally, by drawing on the players and arenas framework, we avoid the tendency toward the over-generalizing claims of the SMSoc perspective

and retain a focus on how SMSoc dynamics play out differently in specific arenas of social movement activity (Jasper and Duyvendak 2015; McGarry et al. 2016). While the players and arenas approach brings an analytical specificity to the SMSoc perspective, the SMSoc perspective remains valuable for its attention to longer-term, macro-trends in relationships between social movements, states, and other players in Western democratic societies. These macro-trends shape the context of many arenas that

social movement players act within. Both the SMSoc and players and arenas perspectives offer valuable insights and key concepts. Engaging across these perspectives is even more productive for cross-national social movements research.

There are limitations and qualifications of this study. We looked at movement players' intervention in different arenas related to both oil development and tourism development. Further research on a broader range of countries would shed additional insight into the different nuances within social movement societies according to the issues at stake. Also, while we provided an overview of the context of the case study regions in relation to oil and tourism arenas, our data collection and analysis was not longitudinal. Thus, it misses the evolution and transformation of social movement society dynamics over the past decades in our study regions. Adding a longitudinal dimension to cross-national social movements research would advance our understanding of how the macro-trends identified by the SMSoc perspective intersect with the specificity of movement players and arenas as they evolve over time.

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