

TOWARD A NEW ECOLOGICAL MAJORITY
SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

presented to EARTHJUSTICE
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SUMMARY

This research is based on a 2,500 person, 600-item social values survey fielded by Roper for Environics every four years since 1992. To create this Road Map, American Environics conducted a psychographic segmentation based on environmentalist identity, the value Ecological Concern, and a set of demographic variables strongly correlated with being part of the Ecological Base.

A. Research Findings

1. **Americans are increasingly oriented toward survival values (e.g., *Ecological Fatalism, Anomie and Aimlessness, Acceptance of Violence*) and away from fulfillment values (e.g., *Ecological Concern, Civic Engagement, Introspection and Empathy*).**

This trend is particularly pronounced among young Americans — who are also increasingly indifferent to environmental issues — and who are driving the evolution of social values. This move toward survival values appears to have benefited anti-environmentalists politically, who are able to tie their agenda up with a “moral values” (e.g., same-sex marriage, abortion) agenda in ways that blunt the impact of environmental politics.

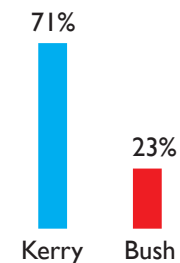
2. **Environmental groups are not fully activating the Ecological Base.**

National environmental organizations report growing membership bases but still have translated only a small minority of the Ecological Base into dues-paying members. For ten percent of the population (roughly 22 million Americans when you exclude Americans under 20), *Ecological Concern* is the value most central to who they are and what they care about. And yet, of the Ecological Base, only 40 percent have reported making a donation to an environmental group — local, state, or national — in the last five years. And the true number is almost certainly less as people consistently tend to over-report their charitable contributions.

3. **There is incoherent behavior within the Ecological Base.**

One-fourth of the Ecological Base voted for President Bush in 2004, despite unprecedented environmentalist efforts to unseat him. This voting behavior indicates that other values, concerns, and identities are trumping *Ecological Concern* and environmentalist identity.

Voting Behavior of the Ecological Base, 2004
Presidential Election



Source: American Environics, ~2,500 respondents

4. The Ecological Base is nearly 90 percent white, mostly college-educated, higher-income, and over 35.

Individuals in the Base are also mostly urban and suburban and thus distant from the areas of their concern where many local land use battles play out politically. And much of the dues-paying membership of environmental organizations is over the age of 50. This lack of diversity at all levels may be one factor contributing to the rejection of environmentalism by some psychographic segments.

5. The environment remains a relatively low priority for most Americans.

Just ten percent of the population (and 15 percent of voters) are in the Ecological Base. Constructing an ecological majority will thus require appeals to *non*-environmentalist values, concerns, and identities. Building an ecological majority will require appeals to values other than *Ecological Concern* and environmentalist identity.

- Few Americans strongly identify as environmentalists.

Even 30 percent of the Base does not identify as environmentalist.

- Except for the Ecological Base, every psychographic segment, including those closest to the Ecological Base holds values more strongly than Ecological Concern.

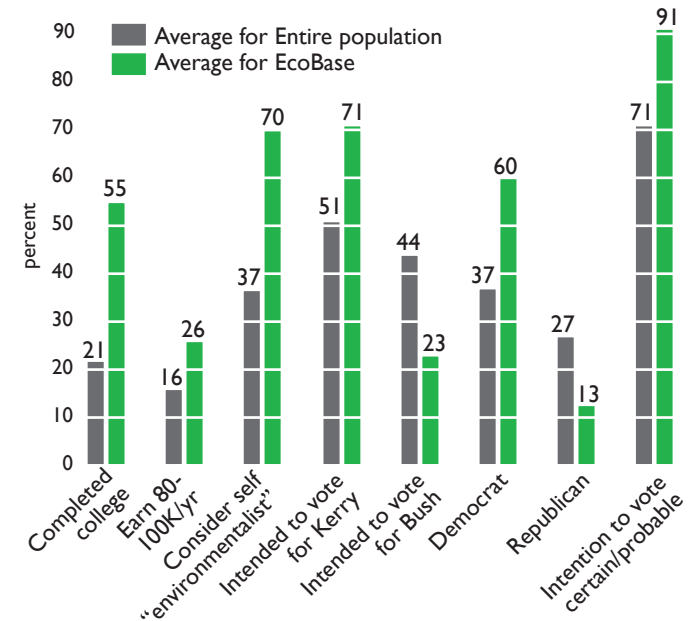
Because voters do not vote on every issue separately, they are forced to prioritize their concerns and values when voting for candidates. Even ballot initiatives on the environment force voters to prioritize their *Ecological Concern* against other concerns, such as taxes and economic growth. These choices explain why voters can express high support for environmental issues in the abstract while seeming to vote against those concerns in the concrete. For instance, the largest segment of our study, which consists of 22 percent of the population, are less likely to hold the value *Ecological Concern* than any other value.

B. Recommendations

1. Recognize that people contain cognitive and emotional multitudes.

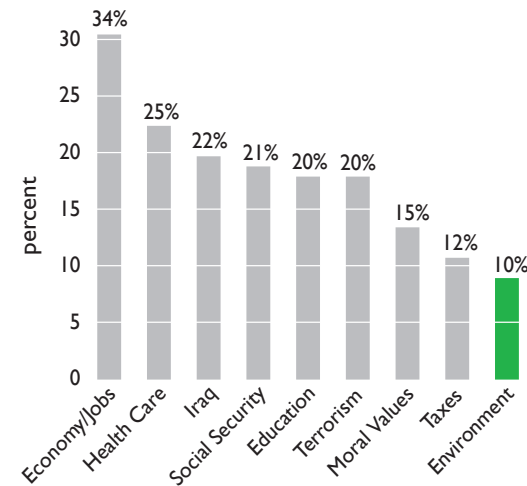
For example, at their most optimistic and empowered, the Murky Middles are entrepreneurial and motivated by big challenges. At their most discouraged, Murky Middles tend toward hopelessness and resentment and are reactionary in the politics, much like the Anti-Authoritarian Materialists and the Cruel Worlders. Environmentalists must thus create

Characteristics of the Environmental Base



Source: American Environics, ~2,500 respondents

"Most Important Issue Personally" to Americans



Source: Nicholas Hart Research Institute, Hart/Pub Op Strategies, Aug. 25-28, 2005

Strategic Initiatives that appeal to personal aspirations but also achieve ecological outcomes. Achieving this will require that environmentalists rethink what counts and what doesn't as an environmental issue and agenda.

2. Create Strategic Initiatives that inspire a sense of optimism among survival-oriented Americans in the short-term — and that result in rising financial security over the long-term.

A new ecological agenda must address individual aspirations for rising prosperity and security through a new social contract appropriate for our increasingly global, post-industrial, and knowledge-based economy. There is a strong correlation between rising optimism, expectations, financial security and *Ecological Concern*. This connection is seen both in the American Environics data and other social values research, including the University of Michigan's World Values Survey, not just in the United States but also worldwide. In order to increase the intensity with which people hold the value *Ecological Concern*, environmentalists and their allies must advance Strategic Initiatives that increase optimism and security in the future. This must happen both in the political debate those Initiatives create, as well as through the social outcomes those policies achieve. Environmentalists may find solid ground in recruiting knowledge and service workers, from Postmodern Idealists to Reserved Rationalists, around a vision for a new social contract that creates greater opportunities in our new economy.

3. Develop strategies that will more deeply engage fulfillment-oriented young Americans who don't consider themselves environmentalists.

Even Postmodern Idealists, who hold *Ecological Concern* more strongly than any other segment than the Base, are not looking to join their parents' environmental group. Half of all Postmodern Idealists are under the age of 35 — and 85 percent are under 55. While they hold the value *Ecological Concern* more strongly than all Americans except the Base, Postmodern Idealists hold the value tenth out of their top ten values. Only half identify as environmentalists. Environmental organizations either will have to figure out how to increase the strength that Postmodern Idealists hold *Ecological Concern*, increase the group's environmentalist identity, or — more promisingly — appeal to values other than *Ecological Concern* and identities other than environmentalist ones.

4. Channel green consumerism into political action.

The Ecological Base, and other eco-leaning segments, far more frequently and intensely express their ecological values through consumption than politics. While at most they vote and make a yearly contribution to an environmental group, they spend large amounts of time and money buying fuel-efficient cars, clothes, vacations, and furnishings with the environment in mind. And yet, beyond voting and donating, there are vanishingly few ways to engage in an ecological

politics. Contrast this to the evangelical churches. Evangelicals and green consumers alike get a sense of purpose, belonging, and status from their churches, their books, their communities, and their rituals. But the former have more effectively mobilized politically than the latter. In 2004, ecologically-minded activists flew into Ohio from places like New York, while evangelicals native to the state quietly, and more successfully, mobilized through their churches. In the 1970s and '80s, many evangelical leaders embraced moral values politics as an important church ritual. Lacking churches in the traditional sense, environmentalists must find new sites, rituals, and practices, including but not limited to consumption, that can become “pre-political” bases for action. They must create Strategic Initiatives centrally connected to how people live their lives, construct their identities, build their communities, and find their purpose in life.

5. Create Strategic Initiatives that activate values that are more strongly held than Ecological Concern — and that create new non-environmentalist ecological identities.

Environmentalists must overcome the notion that more frequent or more emphatic descriptions of the ecological crisis and environmental problems will increase the strength with which Americans hold the value *Ecological Concern*. Indeed, there is good empirical research that shows that the more that people believe ecological apocalypse is inevitable, the more strongly they feel fatalistic. The challenge for environmentalists is to create and advance an agenda that speaks to non-ecological values and non-environmentalist identities while achieving their social and ecological outcomes.

ROAD MAP TOWARD A NEW ECOLOGICAL MAJORITY

OVERVIEW

I. A Public Opinion Paradox

American environmentalists today face a paradox. On the one hand, the environmental agenda of conservation and pollution reduction is wildly popular. On the other, environmental protections continue to be rolled back in Washington. What explains this apparent disconnect?

In the spring of 2005, thanks in part to a generous grant from the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Earthjustice contracted with American Environics to answer this question. American Environics conducted a values-based, psychographic segmentation of the electorate to identify the values shared by

America's Ecological Base and Constituencies of Opportunity. In addition, we conducted an analysis of current environmentalist narratives, frames, and cognitive models. This is a summary of that work.

II. Values Segmentation

Anti-environmental politicians have succeeded in appealing to a set of concerns, identities and values that are more important to the majority of Americans than *Ecological Concern* or environmentalism. And while this may strike many environmentalists as a depressing sign of their marginal status, it also reveals opportunities for them to create a politics that creates the conditions for the emergence of a new ecological majority that has neither *Ecological Concern* nor environmentalism at its center, and yet would be able to achieve strong action on global warming, habitat loss, species extinction, and pollution control.

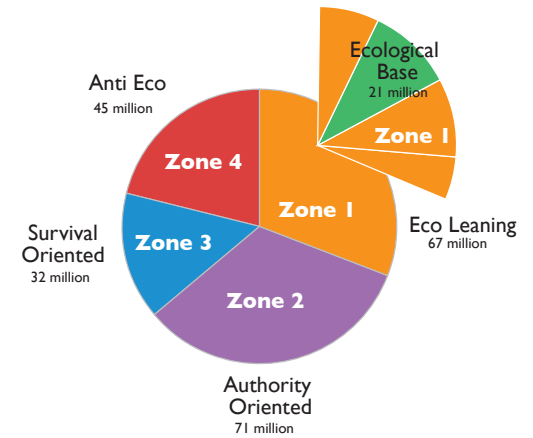
The social values research points to bad news and good news facing environmental organizations. The good news is that a large minority of Americans — about 31 percent of the population — which encompasses the Ecological Base and segments that hold similar worldviews — are fulfillment oriented. The values that comprise the worldviews of these Americans could potentially be connected to the values and worldviews of other Americans through new politics, practices, institutions, and identities in ways that build support for stronger political, corporate, and consumer action on behalf of the environment.

The bad news is that more appeals to the value *Ecological Concern* and environmentalist identity will not be sufficient to create an ecological majority. Looking at the segments as placed on the socio-cultural map, the segments nearest to the Ecological Base and the most likely to support strong ecological action (Postmodern Idealists, Compassionate Caretakers and Reserved Rationalists, represented as Zone 1 on the map)—add up to less than one-third of the population, even when combined with the Base.

Environmental groups must appeal to other segments to gain broad, strong public support — either those segments in Zone 2 (Murky Middles, Cruel Worlders) who hold more survival oriented values and who are struggling to stay afloat in modern America, or those in Zone 3 (Dutiful Devouts, Achieving Assimilators) who hold more traditional values than the Base. The segments in Zone 4 (Anti-Authoritarian Materialists, Proud Traditionalists and the Anti-Ecological Base) are the farthest away from the Base at a values level.

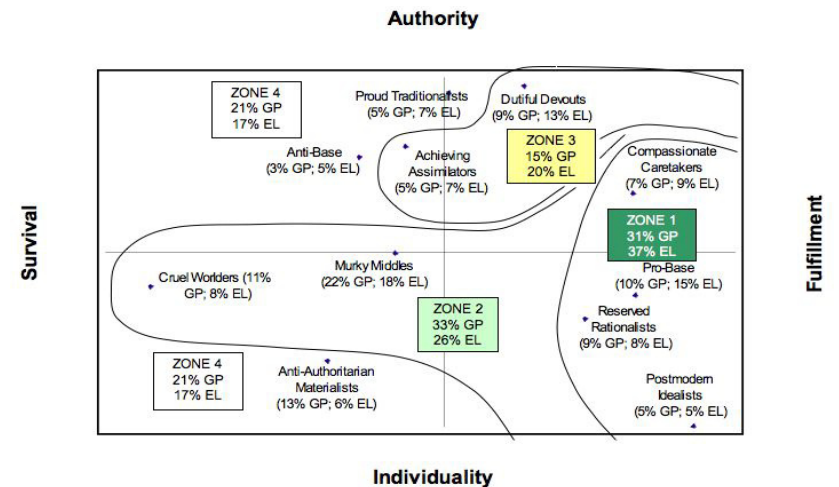
The values analysis also shows that neither the Ecological Base nor Zone 1 are

The Ecological Base and the Zones



*These figures calculated from adults over the age of 20
Source: American Environics, ~2,500 respondents

Ecological Segmentation, USA Values 2004



GP=General Population
EL= Electorate

*Note that the above maps is a 2-dimensional representation of multi-dimensional space. As a result, some segments may appear closer together or farther apart than they actually are.

as coherent as one might hope. Most ominously, *Ecological Fatalism* and other survival values are increasing, especially among young Americans. This research thus challenges the extent to which the environmental community can achieve its ecological, social, and political objectives focused narrowly on *Ecological Concern*, environmental issues, and environmentalist identities.

III. Challenges

Challenge One: Low-Level Activation of the Ecological Base

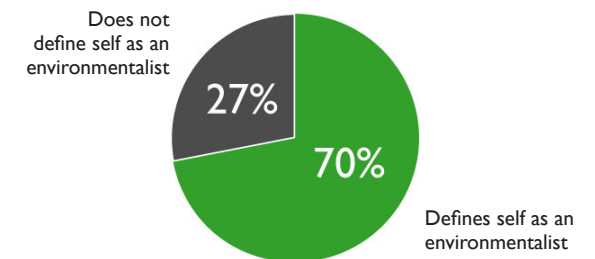
After the labor movement, the environmental movement is the largest and most influential progressive social movement in the United States. They invest strategically in direct mail, online marketing, major donor fundraising, and other activities. To this extent, the glass is half-full. But when you consider that for ten percent of the population, *Ecological Concern* is the value most central to who they are and what they care about, those numbers do not seem so high after all. Ten percent of the U.S. population is roughly 30 million people and roughly 22 million when you exclude Americans under 20.¹

Just as most Americans who strongly identify as environmentalists do not donate money to environmental organizations, many Americans who strongly hold the value *Ecological Concern* do not identify as environmentalists. Given the strong homogeneity of the movement, this is not surprising. The Ecological Base is nearly 90 percent white, mostly college-educated, higher income, and over age 35. This lack of diversity may be contributing to psychographic segments from different backgrounds actively rejecting the environmentalist identity. In the case of the Reserved Rationalists, where *Ecological Concern* is the second most strongly held value, just seven percent identify as environmentalists (6 or 7 on a 7-point scale with 7 being a “very strong environmentalist”). This appears to be consistent with this more working class group’s orientation to politics and their rejection of the New Agism that clings to environmentalist identity, not to mention their high levels of ethnic and racial diversity.

But Reserved Rationalists in particular beg the question of whether one might create a non-environmentalist identity through a local, “pre-political” institution and set of practices that tie together *Ecological Concern* with this group’s *Emotional Control*, *Aversion to Complexity* and *Parochialism*. Pre-political institutions, following the model of religious institutions, should be sources of community and identity that bring individuals with similar values together. They can take the shape of book groups, community gardens, art communities and parenting groups – and they can take the shape of the communities themselves, rather than trying to attract individuals to a mostly white, middle-upper class and middle aged movement that feels very removed from the reality of many Americans.

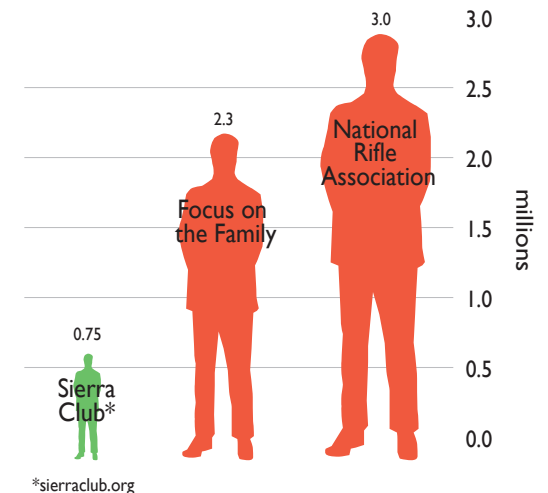
In other words, rather than trying to make the environmentalist identity all things to all people,

Ecological Base’s Self-Identified Environmentalism



Source: American Envirovics, ~2,500 respondents

Number of Members



might it not make more sense to create several distinct identities, organizations, and practices that activate different people in different ways to advocate an ecological agenda? If this works for Reserved Rationalists, might it not also work for even harder-to-reach segments as well? Could we create separate organizations, brands, identities, and practices for each segment?

Challenge Two: Incoherent Behavior within the Base

Within the Ecological Base there is political divergence alongside values convergence. Nearly one-quarter of the Ecological Base voted in 2004 for a president whom environmental leaders repeatedly declared to be the worst anti-environmental politician of the last 40 years. Plainly, for one out of four members of the Ecological Base, some factor, whether party loyalty, personal appeal, or some other issue, trumped environmentalist identity and *Ecological Concern*, even though *Ecological Concern* is the Base’s most strongly held value. This raises the question: if Republicans within the Ecological Base are an asset, how does this asset get translated into political advantage? Creating real and actionable solutions to this challenge of political incoherence requires grappling with the apparent disconnect between the values, worldview, and identity of the Base and the political behavior of one out of four of its members.

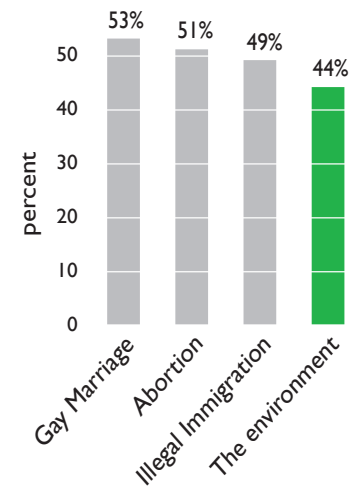
The Base’s incoherent political behavior is matched by its incoherent environmentalist identity. Just 70 percent of the Ecological Base considers itself “environmentalist” (6 or 7 on a 7-point scale) and just 19 percent identify as strongly environmentalist (7 out of 7).²

Finally, it is worth noting that political behavior and environmentalist identity become even more incoherent when we look at the political behavior and identities of the other segments in Zone 1. Postmodern Idealists, Reserved Rationalists, and Compassionate Caretakers voted for President Bush at 24, 35, and 41 percent, respectively. And only half of Postmodern Idealists, and minorities of Reserved Rationalists and Compassionate Caretakers, identify as environmentalists.

It is often said that political diversity is one of the environmental community’s greatest strengths. But incoherent political behavior within the Ecological Base appears to offer all the disadvantages of political diversity with none of the benefits. If the Republicans within the Base were voting against anti-environmentalist Republicans, then such diversity would potentially be a major asset, indicating to Republican candidates that *Ecological Concern* or environmentalist identity were powerful enough for partisans to change their behavior based on the issues. But it appears that the opposite is in fact the case.

Challenge Three: The Return to Survival Values

The Priorities of Self-identified Environmentalists*



“If you disagreed with a candidate on just that issue, would you still consider voting for that candidate, or would you not vote for that candidate based on that issue alone?”

*Respondents shown here are individuals who scored themselves between 8-10 on a 10 pt. scale as to whether or not they considered themselves environmentalists.

Source: Duke University/Nicholas Institute 2005

Another challenge for environmentalists is the fact that American youth are increasingly orienting more toward survival values, such as *Ecological Fatalism*, than fulfillment values, such as *Ecological Concern*. The turn away from fulfillment values poses two direct challenges and an indirect challenge. The direct challenge is that if older members of the Ecological Base aren't replaced by younger newcomers, the Ecological Base will shrink.

The second direct challenge to environmentalism is that the percentage of Americans who agree with statement, "Most of the people actively involved in environmental groups are extremists, not reasonable people," rose from 32 to 44 percent of the population between 1992 and 2004. The fact that a minority of Americans agrees with this statement is cold comfort. If trends continue, then a majority of Americans will agree with this statement by 2010. The values data cannot, of course, tell us *why* increasing numbers of Americans agree with this statement, and any facile supposition would likely be wrong. Rising agreement with this statement may or may not be a direct reflection on environmental groups. It may be that the growth of Americans who agree with this statement, and hold the value of *Ecological Fatalism*, is strongly correlated to the rise of other survival values, including *Patriarchy*, *Acceptance of Violence* and *Pursuit of Intensity*.

There is a growing body of sociological research that strongly indicates that survival values rise during moments of rising economic insecurity, while fulfillment or "self-expression" values, such as *Ecological Concern*, rise in during moments of rising economic prosperity. The 1990s and early 2000s were characterized by robust economic growth but the benefits of this growth were unequally distributed. Meanwhile, personal debt has skyrocketed, creating a situation of increasing economic anxiety. If the values that underlie environmentalism depend on rising prosperity, economic security and expectations for the future, then does it still make sense to distinguish an agenda for economic prosperity from an agenda for environmental protection?

The indirect challenge is that the move toward survival values by younger Americans appears to have benefited anti-environmentalists politically. They have successfully mobilized public concern around so-called moral values issues (e.g., same-sex marriage and abortion) partly in reaction to the perceived rise of survival values, manifested in thrill seeking and hedonism among young Americans. Witness the political benefit anti-environmental legislators have gained from publicly excoriating violent video game makers and seeking constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage and flag burning.

Challenge Four: The Environment as a Relatively Low Priority

In the abstract, there is nothing incompatible with supporting environmental protections while opposing violent video games and flag burning. And yet everyone knows that the public's positions

on these moral values issues cluster in coherent ways. Legislators who hold unpopular anti-environmental positions with their constituents (including swing voters) on global warming and the Endangered Species Act continue to win re-election because they hold popular positions on other issues, such as moral values concerns.

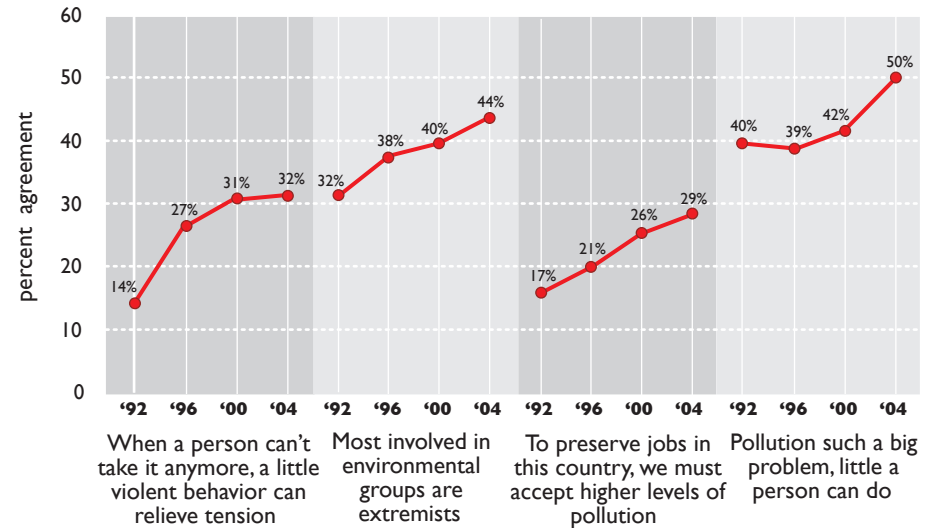
To understand the challenges of low levels of *Ecological Concern*, consider the case of postmaterialist evangelicals. Like most Americans, the evangelical laity and leadership increasingly support action on global warming. And yet moral values concerns continue to matter far more to both materialist and postmaterialist evangelicals than do environmental issues like global warming. Richard Czik, the executive director of the American Association of Evangelicals, has spoken out on global warming and organized evangelical ministers to lobby for the McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act. But Czik readily admits that for him, “the rights of the unborn” outweigh global warming. It is for that reason, he explains, that he voted for President George W. Bush in 2004.

As the chart shows, the environment is the thirteenth highest concern for American voters and global warming the sixteenth.

Given the low salience of environmental issues, also reflected in the weakly-held value, *Ecological Concern*, legislators in mostly conservative districts understand perfectly well that, as long as they stay “on the right side” of issues like abortion and same sex marriage, they can continue to vote “the wrong way” on things like global warming and species protection.

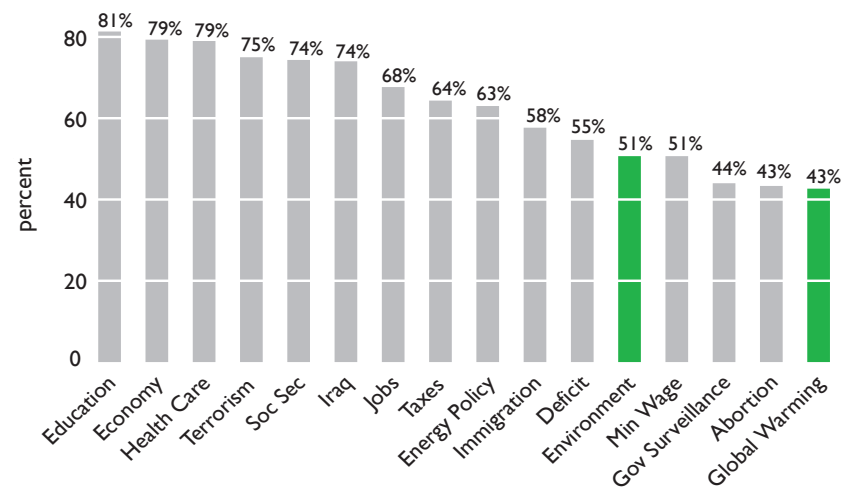
There is a related but distinct challenge associated with low support for environmental issues. It is a fairly straightforward exercise to ask a poll question in such a way so as to demonstrate high public (and evangelical) support for action on global warming. The problem is that voters don’t, for the most part, vote on issues directly but rather must select representatives who more or less represent their position on a range of issues. As long as *Ecological Concern* remains strongly held by a minority of voters, and as long as environmentalist issues only matter *strongly* to a minority of voters, these environmental issues cannot be expected to outweigh the far more salient issues of jobs, health care, Iraq, terrorism, schools, gun safety, or same-sex marriage.

The Move Towards Environmental Fatalism



Source: American Envirionics, ~2,500 respondents

Percentage of Americans who say Issue is “Very Important”



Source: Pew Research Ctr., 1501 adults, June 14-19, 2006

United States 1992-2004 Socio-Cultural Trends



* Occupy same x/y coordinates
 Source: American Environics, ~2,500 respondents

The challenges described above are true not only for hard-to-reach segments but also for segments within the (broadly defined Zone 1) environmentalist base. The values segmentation finds that 99 percent of Compassionate Caretakers (S6) identify as religious and 50 percent as very religious. *Ecological Concern* is the fifth most strongly held value – which is relatively high – but *Religiosity* is even higher at the third most strongly held value. In the abstract this might seem fine. Again, there’s nothing preventing a Compassionate Caretaker from being anti-abortion, anti-same sex marriage and pro-environment. But voters do not vote on every issue separately and in the abstract. Rather, they are forced to prioritize their concerns when voting for political representatives and when forming their identities. When the mostly Democratic (37 percent Democratic identification and 54 percent Kerry voters) Compassionate Caretaker voters are forced to choose between “the rights of the unborn” and global warming — as they are often forced to do when behaving politically — their loyalties are, at best, divided. At worst, they go with the issue that everyone agrees is far more viscerally felt.

It’s worth underscoring that, except for the Ecological Base, each of the segments within Zone 1 hold values more strongly than *Ecological Concern*, and two of the four hold other fulfillment values more strongly than *Ecological Concern*. The Compassionate Caretakers hold *Everyday Ethics*, *Personal Control* and *Culture Sampling* more strongly than *Ecological Concern*, and *Postmodern Idealists* hold *Culture Sampling*, *Flexible Families*, *Personal Creativity*, *Meaningful Moments*, *Religion à la Carte*, *Flexible Gender Identity*, *Introspection and Empathy*, *Rejection of Authority* and *Global Consciousness* more strongly than *Ecological Concern*.

Things are even more challenging with other strongly religious segments. Thirty percent of the Achieving Assimilators (48 percent of whom identify as “very religious”) strongly identify as environmentalists (6 or 7 on a 7-point scale) and 19 percent report having given money to an environmental organization. Yet, somewhat counter-intuitively, Achieving Assimilators are low on *Ecological Concern* and higher than average on *Ecological Fatalism*, which indicates that they are concerned about environmental problems but cynical that much can be done about them. (The difference between these two attitudes — concern versus hopefulness — is often lost in the ways we traditionally imagine environmental attitudes.) The very conservative and traditional Dutiful Devouts, who hold *Ecological Concern* just barely above average, are thus even harder to reach with environmentalist appeals.

IV. Overcoming these Challenges

Given these challenges, Earthjustice and other environmental organizations that are seeking to grow their membership and diversify their memberships demographically must engage in strategies that do some or all of the following tasks, which may or may not be compatible with one another:

1. Bridge social values other than *Ecological Concern* to the environmentalist agenda, identity,

Case Study: Murky Middles

Largest COO, 22% pop, 18 % electorate

Top Ten Values

Crude Materialism
Advertising as Stimulus
Social Mobility
Search for Roots
Adaptive Navigation
Fatalism
Living Virtually
Active Government
Personal Challenge
Reverse Sexism

Bottom Ten Values

Ecological Concern
Religiosity
Personal Control
Skepticism Towards Advertising
Emotional Control
Everyday Ethics
Rejection of Authority
Meaningful Moments
Propriety
Traditional Gender Identity

or institutions through marketing and/or politics;

2. Change what it means to be an environmentalist;
3. Create and grow non-environmentalist identities that advance the environmentalist agenda;
4. Create a more expansive agenda that includes the existing environmentalist agenda but that appeals to non-environmentalists who aren't attracted to the existing environmentalist agenda or identity.

The above strategies all involve changing what it means to be an environmentalist or developing new, post-environmentalist and/or non-environmentalist identities that help grow an ecological majority and/or advance an ecological agenda. Traditionally environmentalists have imagined their political challenge as growing their movement to include more and more people who identify as environmentalists. But could environmentalists also “let non-environmentalists be non-environmentalists,” so to speak, and find ways to tie those non-environmentalist identities to particular practices that advance an ecological agenda?

Strategic Initiatives created with the purpose of building an Ecological Majority might be policies and campaigns as well as whole new institutions, brands, and identities. The “product” that environmental organizations sell is the sense of having contributed to making social change — a kind of empowerment. Members “buy” empowerment from environmental organizations. But we know that *Ecological Concern* motivates a whole range of decisions beyond whether to contribute to an environmental group, from what kind of food and car to buy to where to live to who to vote for to who to marry. Environmentalists sell other literal products (e.g., books, calendars, tote bags, etc.). Might there not be other “products” and services environmental groups can sell that, regardless of whether they turned a profit for environmental groups, serve as ways to strengthen environmentalist (and perhaps non-environmentalist) identities and practices that advance an environmental agenda?

One exercise for thinking about growing the Ecological Base is to consider what kinds of strategies might more deeply engage Postmodern Idealists in an ecological politics. Half of Postmodern Idealists are under the age of 35, and 85 percent are under 55. This group holds the value *Ecological Concern* more strongly than any other segment except the Base. Half identify as environmentalist and 37 report giving money to environmentalist causes. This is a well-educated group that will make increasing amounts of money in the future. These Americans very well could be major funders of environmental organizations and issues in the future.

At the same time, it's clear that individuals in this group aren't looking to support their parents'

environmental or other liberal political causes. They strongly hold the value *Ecological Concern*, but the value comes in tenth out of ten core values. Environmental organizations either will have to figure out how to increase the strength of Postmodern Idealists' *Ecological Concern*, increase the group's environmentalist identity, or find ways to appeal to the other values held by this group. The latter would require rethinking what counts and what doesn't as an environmental issue and practice.

Might environmental groups appeal to fulfillment values other than *Ecological Concern*? The supermarket chain Whole Foods, and magazines like *Utne Reader* (circulation 200,000) and *Yoga Journal* (tripled to 300,000 since 1998) have notably succeeded not simply in appealing to *Ecological Concern* but rather to a whole range of fulfillment values that comprise the broader ecological worldview. If environmental advocacy groups are selling empowerment through membership contributions, what might it look like for them to offer post-materialist "things" like belonging or status, which are strongly associated with a fulfillment orientation?

Given how much of our identities and worldviews are tied up in our work, how might attitudes around work be mobilized to advance an ecological agenda? If economic security is key to growing the value of *Ecological Concern* in the culture, then how might we appeal to "creative class" workers like Postmodern Idealists around a new social contract for the post-industrial era's information economy? Given how strongly this group holds *Global Consciousness*, might it not make sense to weave together demands for global prosperity with *Ecological Concern*? Given how strongly Postmodern Idealists hold the values of *Personal Creativity*, *Meaningful Moments* and *Introspection and Empathy*, how might we create new practices and institutions that connect first at the personal level and then, only later, turn these relationships into political action?

At their most optimistic and empowered, the Murky Middles are entrepreneurial and motivated by big challenges. At their most discouraged, Murky Middles tend toward hopelessness and resentment and are reactionary in their politics, much like the Anti-Authoritarian Materialists and the Cruel Worlders. Can we create a Strategic Initiative that appeals to the aspirational, positive attitudes these Americans hold in a way that builds public support for ecological issues? Could we craft Strategic Initiatives that bind certain values together through their policy proposals and their larger narratives? Could we tell a story about America that begins with *Entrepreneurialism*, *American Dream*, *Work Ethic* and *Duty* and ends with *Spiritual Quest*, *Social Mobility* and *Ecological Concern*? Could such policy proposals, narratives and political fights unite such diverse groups as Reserved Rationalists, Achieving Assimilators, Compassionate Caretakers and Dutiful Devouts with the Ecological Base?

APPENDIX

The Ecological Base

(10% of the population, 15% of electorate)

Demographics

61% Female
38% Male

89% White
5% African-American
4% Hispanic/Latino

82% Over 35
42% Over 55

78% Some College or More
55% College Grad or More

37% Professional
17% Retired
26% Over \$80K
57% Over \$50K

43% Older Suburb
12% New England

Politics

82% Likely Voter
46% Great Deal Attn to Politics

60% Democrat (45% Strong)
13% Republican
19% Independent

71% Kerry
23% Bush
6% Nader

64% Liberal
70% Environmentalist (19% Strong)

40% Environmental \$
23% Liberal \$
8% Conservative \$

CORE VALUES

Ecological Concern
Personal Control
Civic Engagement
Religion à la Carte
Introspection & Empathy
Flexible Families
Skepticism Towards Advertising
Culture Sampling
Global Consciousness
Brand Apathy
Ethical Consumerism
Rejection of Authority
More Power for Media

Importance of Spontaneity
Personal Creativity
Everyday Ethics
Discriminating Consumerism
Meaningful Moments
Flexible Gender Identity
Deconsumption
Rejection of Order
Strategic Consumption
Racial Fusion
Largesse Oblige
Social Responsibility

With a strong orientation towards individuality and fulfillment values, America's Ecological Base is found squarely in the lower right Idealism and Autonomy quadrant. Representing 10 percent of the U.S. population and 15 percent of the electorate, the Base is comfortable, suburban, well educated and middle aged. With relative wealth and high socio-economic status comes a strong focus on quality of life and personal fulfillment.

Consumption: Different, Not Less

Notwithstanding the Toyota Prius, recycling bins, organic produce and unbleached, high thread count cotton linens that decorate their lives and signal their ecological orientation, this group's wealth and status correlate strongly with **high overall levels of consumption**. Their consumption, however, serves largely postmaterial and fulfillment needs. As such this group scores high on values such as Brand Apathy, Ethical Consumerism, Discriminating Consumerism and Strategic Consumption.

All of these attitudes towards consumption serve to differentiate this group's personal consumption preferences and patterns from those that many in this group would define as the crass, "wasteful," consumption that characterizes mainstream American consumer culture, and suggests that in bringing **thoughtfulness, ethical considerations and ostensible indifference to advertising** and other marketing to their consumption they inoculate their own consumption from the disparaging gaze they cast upon consumption by others. Correspondingly, this group scores low on values such as *Importance of Brand*, *Confidence in Advertising*, *Crude Materialism*, *Joy of Consumption*, *Ostentatious Consumption*, *Buying on Impulse* and *Advertising as Stimulus*.

Make no mistake, however - this group consumes with gusto. They just consume in service of different aspirations than do many Americans. As such, they score high on *Personal Control*, *Culture Sampling*, *Importance of Spontaneity* and *Personal Creativity*, values that reflect **fulfillment focused, inner-directed aspirations** as opposed to the outer directed, status-oriented focus that characterizes the aspirations and consumption of many other Americans.

Self-Actualizing and Nontraditional

Liberal and progressive in general worldview, the Ecological Base dismisses traditional American cultural norms (rejecting values such as *Traditional Gender Identity*, *Traditional Family*, *Obedience to Authority*, *Patriarchy*, *Religiosity* and *National Pride*) in favor of a more flexible and individualized orientation (embracing values such as *Culture Sampling*, *Religion à la Carte*, *Flexible Families*, *Flexible Gender Identity*, *Rejection of Authority* and *Rejection of Order*). This group associates personal discovery and expression closely with happiness and well-being and as such strongly embrace values such as *Religion à la Carte*, *Introspection and Empathy*, *Culture Sampling* and *Personal Creativity*.

Educated, civically engaged and liberal, this group scores high on values such as *Global Consciousness*, *Largesse Oblige* and *Social Responsibility*. And, of course, they are highest of all on *Ecological Concern*, which they hold nearly four times the level of the average American. While strongly self-identified as Democrats (69 percent) and liberals (64 percent), this group rejects some liberal Democratic orthodoxies (low on *Active Government* and *Multiculturalism*, average on *Acknowledgement of Racism*). They score high on *Racial Fusion* but one suspects that this is more a function of their strong orientation towards individuality and flexibility than a strong feeling about the role of race in American society.

While it may seem disheartening that the Base rejects *Active Government*, particularly given Earthjustice's role in holding government agencies accountable, this value is actually a survival value most likely to be held by those economically struggling and looking to government for direct assistance. The Base also rejects *More Power for Politics*, and this reflects skepticism towards the political process and its ineffectiveness in many areas, including ecological protections. Yet the Base's distrust of the political process is what leads to its strong emphasis on the importance of activism and personal involvement in political matters (high on the values *Civic Engagement* and *Social Responsibility*). The Ecological Base wants a highly functioning and protective government, but believes we all must play a part to achieve that.

Ecological Republicans

A significant percentage of the Ecological Base identifies as Republican (17 percent) and 23 percent intended to vote for George W. Bush in the months leading up to the 2004 election. It is important to note, however, that **this group looks much more like the country club Republicans of an earlier era than the “hook and bullet”** or evangelical constituency that some environmentalists imagine their Republicans supporters and members to be. Suburban, well educated, and wealthy, Republicans in the Ecological Base are strongly fulfillment oriented, firmly located in the upper right Authenticity and Responsibility quadrant, and probably no more comfortable with a gun or a fishing rod (unless it is a fly fishing rod) in their hand than are the lower right quadrant liberals who make up the rest of the Ecological Base.

High on *Religion à la Carte* and low on *Religiosity*, high on *Personal Control*, *Personal Creativity* and *Personal Expression* and low on *Parochialism*, Republicans in the Ecological Base embrace choice and flexibility to a point. However they reject many of the individualistic and non-traditional perspectives of the lower right quadrant including *Flexible Families*, *Flexible Gender Identity*, *Racial Fusion* and *Culture Sampling*, and concern for social justice (low on *Largesse Oblige* and *Social Responsibility*) that the rest of the Ecological Base shares with their fellow travelers in the lower right quadrant.

Our identification of this group as the Ecological Base is verified by several other sources. They have many common characteristics with the “Cultural Creatives”: these are educated thinkers who pay as much attention to their inner lives as their outer lives, in that their reality includes “heart and mind, personal and public, and individual and community. They are more likely to be concerned with environmental degradation and are committed to social justice both in values and actions, in that they are more likely to volunteer and reject racial and ethnic prejudices. The size of the Ecological Base (10 percent of the population) is verified by research by the League of Conservation Voters identifying between 14 and 32 percent of potential environmental activists in seven different states (see Endnotes for figures). Combining the Ecological Base with the ecologists of the other nine segments will get the activist base to similar figures.

25 CORE VALUES OF THE ECOLOGICAL BASE

Ecological Concern A tendency to believe that today's environmental problems are a result of industrial and personal disregard for the environment. These people feel that the trend towards environmental destruction is unacceptable and reject the notion that job protection or economic advancement should be allowed at the expense of environmental protection.

Personal Control Striving to organize and control the direction of one's future, even when it feels that there are forces beyond one's immediate control.

Religion à la Carte A selective, personal, adaptive and eclectic approach to the adoption of religious beliefs. Spiritually questing, seeking personal fulfillment through learning about other faiths.

Flexible Families Willingness to accept non-traditional definitions of "family," such as common law and same-sex marriages. The belief that "family" should be defined by emotional links rather than by legal formalities or institutions. The belief that society should be open to new definitions of what constitutes a "family."

Skepticism of Advertising Distrust that advertising messages are truthful or even helpful for making purchasing decisions.

Civic Engagement A belief that active involvement in the political process can make a difference in society. People strongest on this trend reject the notion that inequities in society are inevitable and should be expected.

Introspection & Empathy Tendency to analyze and examine one's actions and those of others, rather than being judgmental about variances from the norm or from one's own way of doing things. An interest in understanding life rather than taking sides.

Culture Sampling This trend identifies the view that other cultures have a great deal to teach us, and measures people's inclination to incorporate some of these cultural influences into their own lives.

Global Consciousness Considering oneself a "citizen of the world" first and foremost, over a "citizen of one's community and country." Non-ethnocentricity, feeling affinity to peoples in all countries.

Ethical Consumerism A focus on the perceived ethical and social responsibility policies and practices of the companies from which they buy. Consideration of labor policies, mistreatment of animals, etc. Desire to see companies be good corporate citizens in terms of these social concerns.

Brand Apathy Placing little importance on the brand name of a product.

Importance of Spontaneity Tendencies to enthusiastically embrace the unexpected and spontaneous events that temporarily interrupt daily routines.

Rejection of Authority Desire to transcend the rigid framework of traditional authority. Possessing a questioning orientation, critical of and willing to look beyond the status quo.

Everyday Ethics A measure of how individuals respond in situations that put their ethical beliefs to the test. When a person sees a way of turning a situation to his advantage at the expense of another person, institution or company, how does he respond? Will he report mistakes made in his favor by a waiter, a bank or the government?

Personal Creativity Desire to use one's imagination and creative talents in daily life, both at work and at play.

Meaningful Moments Cherishing the ordinary moments in everyday life over once-in-a-lifetime, grand-scale events. Taking time to indulge in individual pleasures. The sense of impermanence that accompanies momentary connections with others does not diminish the value of the moment.

Discriminating Consumerism Seeking objective, comparative product information and carefully evaluating one's needs before making purchases. Preference for practical and functional products, satisfying real needs.

Deconsumption The willingness to adopt a lifestyle in which consumption plays a less dominant role. This attitude is expressed in a desire to limit or reduce one's consumption of goods and to spend less than before.

Flexible Gender Identity The feeling that one has both a feminine and masculine side to one's personality. The desire to actively explore and express these different facets of one's personality. Having a feeling of being more masculine at times and more feminine at others.

Strategic Consumption An attitude adopted by consumers to get the best price for whatever they buy. The methods vary and can include, for example, making a better assessment of their needs in order to be more selective in their purchases, hunting for special promotions, discounts, bargains or other forms of price reduction, switching to cheaper brands, or postponing purchases.

Rejection of Order Living with a certain amount of disorder as an expression of oneself. Also, a desire to distance oneself from society's traditional moral code governing good manners and the golden rule in favor of a more informal and relaxed approach to life.

Social Responsibility A belief that society, and the individual, has a responsibility to help those less fortunate. Tendency to believe that quality of life can improve when people work together.

Racial Fusion People who are strongest on this trend are accepting of ethnic diversity within families, such as interracial marriage, believing that it enriches people's lives.

More Power for Media Belief that celebrities and those in the media should have a greater influence in society.

Largesse Oblige Social conscience of the economic variety. The "haves" have a moral duty to help or share with the "have nots".

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Table 1: Annual Estimates of the Population by Sex and Five-Year Age Groups for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005," July 1, 2005

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