

Contributions of international NGOs to the promotion of global environmental governance.



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Abstract:

*The problem of the environment is one of the recent international problems in the history of human societies, the defense of the environment interested many actors of the global civil society as the international non-governmental organizations. The study **aims** to study "environmental governance" as a new concept and the role of the NGOs and their contribution in the sustainable development. By adopting the descriptive and historical **approach**, it became clear that the NGOs have always played an important role in defending this issue, These organizations have been able to manage global environmental policies through their work by focusing on Sustainable development policies of States .as a **conclusion** The features of NGO have allowed them to play an important role in environmental policies, but their effectiveness depends on their ability to coordinate with other actors in the international arena.*

Keywords: International NGOs- Global environmental governance- sustainable development- environment.

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Introduction:

The environment problem is one of the relatively recent international problems in the history of human societies, and this after it became clear that the effects of harm to the environment are not limited to a specific field but extend to many other fields. As a result of this, the international dimension of the environmental protection took its scope and the international interest in it increased as it became an important topic, it is the current trending subject and it is of international concern.

The environmental non-governmental organizations have witnessed a growing interest at both the international and national levels since their emergence through what they are trying to do from the target goals in order to achieve them, by adopting positions that enable them to impose and determine their place in the scope of their work to effect a change in the human perception of the environment, by working on the way to reduce environmental problems and explain their repercussions through its contribution to spreading environmental awareness, as well as its participation in ensuring the right of future generations to enjoy an appropriate environment and available resources.

This drives us to raise the following problematic: **How far can NGOs play a role in managing global environmental affairs?**

Since the hypothesis implies a relationship between two variables, each variable carries investigative and researchable indicators.

Through the following study, we will try to formulate the following hypothesis as a basis for research and a starting point:

-The effectiveness of NGOs in managing global environmental affairs depends on their ability to impose themselves as an environmental actor, as well as their coordination with various actors in the international space.

To answer the exposed dilemma, the topic was divided, as follows:

1. What is global environmental governance?
2. International non-governmental organizations in the field of the environment.
3. The contributions of non-governmental international organizations to sustainable environmental governance.

The study used the descriptive analytical method to understand and analyze NGOs in terms of their interaction with other international actors, and the historical method was adopted in monitoring the evolution of its role in the field of global environment.

1- What is global environmental governance

a- Defining global environmental governance:

Global governance is defined as a collaborative leadership process that brings together governments, multilateral public agencies, and civil society to achieve goals acceptable to all. It provides strategic direction and then mobilizes collective energies to meet global challenge. (Bin Saeed, From International Governance to Global Governance: Ontological Transformations in Environmental Governance Analysis)

"Mark Beeson" believes that governance is a special type of work meant to solve problems and conducting policy issues, and that political, economic and social processes that are under the name of globalization have led in return to changing the parameters of governance. (Beeson, 2009, p. 180).

Global Environmental Governance is defined as a complex network of institutions related to the environment, treaties and agreements, and a set of actors that constitute the realistic system of global environmental governance, as well as includes multiple institutional entities, although they do not have the same degree of influence on this system. (Bin Saeed, 2014, p. 209)

Global environmental governance is also defined as a group of organizations, political mechanisms, financing mechanisms, rules, procedures, and standards that control efforts to protect the global environment. (Bin Saeed, 2013, p. 168)

It can be said that global environmental governance is how to organize the various actors involved in decision-making processes at a global level in order to solve environmental challenges and conflicts in addition to enhance the global environment.

b- Characteristics of global environmental governance:

✓ multiplicity of involved actors:

So that environmental policies are no longer confined to nation-states only, but are also characterized by the increased participation of private actors - such as expert networks and environmental protectors - in addition to new agencies established by governments - agencies behind the state - without any interference from the state. (Biermann, 2009, p. 59)

Currently, many NGOs are involved in setting the agenda and policy formulation, in addition to the role of the business sector through the participation of multinational companies in international negotiations.

We must say that the multiplicity of involved actors in the process of environmental governance has added a new dimension to this process and new dynamics.

✓ **privatization:**

Global environmental governance has become a sign of a shift from inter-governmental systems to public / private and private / private cooperation in global environmental policy-making, private actors have become partners with governments in implementing international standards such as the semi-executive agencies of many development assistance programs managed by the World Bank Or bilateral agencies, the emergence of new actors and institutions in environmental governance reflects diversity and privatization.

✓ **Fragmentation:**

Emerging global environmental governance is characterized by increased fragmentation at different levels and groups of rule-making and implementation, and this fragmentation may be vertical between levels of transnational, international, national, and sub national authority - multi-level governance - or horizontally between the various parallel rule-making systems that is maintained within various groups of actors. (Biermann, 2009, p. 60)

The distinctive characteristics of global environmental governance can greatly affect its functions in terms of both performance and effectiveness.

c- Global Environmental Governance Functions

✓ **Executive function:**

The deliberation of the executive function is considered to be filled in the international context because member states have executive powers in the United Nations system, and the executive function can be viewed through three primary functions: the delegate function, the administrative function and the leadership function, and despite this versatility in the executive function, most of them are related Driving. As for setting the agenda, proposing budgets, and starting legislation on the basis that leadership at the international level is characterized by exchange and flexibility.

✓ **Judicial function:**

Thirteen functions have been identified within the judicial impacts of global environmental governance:

-Strengthening the rule of law.

- Interpretation of rules and regulations.
- Establish a formal law by recognizing customary law.
- Moving from written rules to applied principles of the law.
- Determine the public interest through the interpretation and application of the law.
- Providing arbitration and settling disputes.
- Acting as the state prosecutor.
 - Strengthening compliance with the law by strengthening the legal responsibilities system.
 - Promote adherence to the law by building trust and incentives.
 - Ensuring compliance and translating international agreements into domestic law.
 - Provide access to justice.
 - Ensure environmental justice.
 - Identify pre-existing rights. (Nasseri, (2011/2012), p. 23)

✓ **Financial function:**

The role of the financial sector in environmental governance is much less institutionalized than the other three sectors, and these jobs have been tendered in consensus based on the concept of environmental insurance (Nasseri, (2011/2012), p. 28)

2- International NGOs in the field of the environment:

Before introducing international NGOs, a jurisprudential and legal definition of international NGOs is required

a- Definition of international NGOs

"Muhammad Bousaltan" defines it as "special organizations, societies or federations within the framework of the national law, its main headquarters is located in one of the states and is subject to the law of this state (the country of the headquarters), but in practice it has a regional or global extension due to the tasks that it intends to do and it may constitute its branches in other regions or countries

And "Marcel Mar" defined the non-governmental organization as: "Every gathering, association or movement permanently formed by people belonging to different countries to pursue goals other than profit and gain". (Saadallah & Bin nasser, 2005, p. 31)

They are mainly characterized by their humanitarian or cooperative goals rather than as commercial objectives. In general, it seeks to lessen suffering, promote the interests of the poor, or protect the environment. (Saduq, 1996, pp. 17-18) Governmental organizations mean a number of areas, including the environmental one.

And the International Law Institute defined it as "gatherings of people and societies that are established freely according to a special initiative and practicing an international activity of public interest without the intention of gain, and this is outside every concern of a national nature. (Shehata, 1995, p. 220)

Through those definitions ,international NGOs can be defined as follows:

It is a non-governmental (nonprofit) structure and may be large or small worldly or religious and may work for the benefit of its members only, or for everyone who needs help, some of them focus on local issues and others work on national, regional or international levels globally.

They are organizations that have goals that serve the public interest, so that they are not subject to governments and not affiliated with any party or religion, that is, they are organizations that achieve the interest of the human being, whatever their religion, color, or political affiliation, and these organizations may obtain funding from governments or individuals interested in them, and in the same Time is a non-profit organization.

Therefore, we can summarize the characteristics and advantages of international NGOs in the following points:

- Nonprofit.
- Independence.
- Achieve the public interest.
- It is established by individuals interested in general humanitarian issues such as environmental issues.

b- The historical development of non-governmental environmental organizations

Although global environmental policy studies are a relatively recent phenomenon, global actors have contributed to global environmental policy for more than a century.

The first non-governmental environmental organizations appeared in the late nineteenth century, such as the International Union of Research Organizations in Forest Science -1891- and International Friends of Nature-1895-, and their number increased in the last century in forms that attract attention. And there is a study that confirmed that the international non-governmental organizations active in the field of the environment increased from 1953 to 1990 by about 90 organizations. (Bin Saeed, 2011, p. 114)

During the last three decades of the last century, the number of international NGOs increased fourfold. A UN report published in 1995 on global governance raised that there are approximately 29,000 international NGOs, and the importance of international NGOs in developing Environmental rules, as it was stipulated in many treaties that individuals and NGOs be granted the right to inform its secretariat about all violations committed by countries. Currently, more than 100,000 NGOs working to support the environment can be counted. (najam, papa, & taiyab, p. 63)

c- The methods of work of international non-governmental organizations in the field of environment:

Today, international non-governmental organizations have become one of the most important actors and partners of government parties, as they play a crucial and effective role in spreading environmental awareness and setting environmental standards in international frameworks, so the role of these organizations takes several forms represented in the following:

- ✓ **Information exchange:** Through the Global Environment Outlook report, we find many examples in this regard, the most important of which is the Multilateral Environmental Agreement such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.
- ✓ **Conferences to develop global environmental policy:** These organizations work to raise environmental awareness and gain important decisions from official decision makers, in order to influence local and foreign policies related to the environment.
- ✓ **Operational functions:** the United Nations has introduced them as actual partners in many instances through its participation in various treaty negotiations within the framework of United Nations environmental conferences.
- ✓ **Evaluation and monitoring:** Performance appraisals and monitoring the conditions carried out by NGOs can make decision makers in the international arena vulnerable to public accountability for decisions in a way that government organizations cannot do.
- ✓ **Demanding environmental justice:** Over the past decades, NGOs have been effective in many countries, to highlight the differences between

those who bear environmental burdens and those who benefit from environmental investment .(Nasseri, (2011/2012), p. 95)

3- The Contribution of NGOs in Governance for the Sustainable Environment:

a- The contribution of non-governmental organizations to achieving sustainable development policies:

the professionalism of NGOs in interacting with global issues (especially environmental issues) which is demonstrated by thinking and analysis, and even proposing development policies that are in line with the requirements of sustainable development, as they have evolved from merely preserving the environment, to investment even in major political and economic issues For sustainable development, there are many non-governmental organizations in the form of horizontal networks in the field of expertise such as the "International Center for Environmental Law and Development" and "the Foundation for the Development of the State and Law" specialized in the field of international environmental law, which provides high-level expertise Such as the inclusion of environmental rules in the World Trade Organization.

It is worth noting in this context, that most of the concerns of these organizations revolve around the necessity of achieving environmental sustainability and integrating environmental policies into developmental considerations, and have taken more severe positions with the capitalist system that aims only for rapid profit, even if at the expense of the natural environment, On the other hand, many international economic organizations have created NGOs, such as "the World Trade and Sustainable Development Center", which coordinates the exchange of information between NGOs and the "World Trade Organization". (See: Qassem, 2012).

It should be noted here that all these efforts led the General Assembly of the United Nations to issue several resolutions, including Resolution No. 2481 (D-29) of 1974, which includes the Charter of State Rights and Its economic duties, which states the necessity of linking environmental and development policy.

It is worth noting that the Arab world is witnessing a dynamic movement of non-governmental organizations in their interaction with environmental issues. In this regard, the "Urban Environment Promotion Association" in Egypt's Arab republic and the United Nations Center for Human Settlements and the United Nations Relief Program organized an Arab meeting on "The Role of NGOs in Supporting the Continuous Development of Poor Societies" in Cairo on 16-18 October 1995.

The conference, "The Integrated Role of International and Non-Governmental Organizations in Sustainable Development," which was held in the State of Qatar from 04 to 06 March 2002, stressed the role of NGOs in raising

awareness, and practices in line with the sustainable development goals. (Abdul-Lawy)

b- Contributing to environmental education:

This is embodied in environmental education, which is intended to prepare individuals to be compatible with their environment, and making individuals able to understand environmental systems, furthermore after the 1972 Stockholm Conference recognized the role of environmental education in protecting the environment, a wave of interest in environmental education emerged, and the Belgrade Charter Which resulted from the international symposium that was held in the Yugoslavian capital in October 1975 as a comprehensive framework that defined the foundations of work in the field of environmental education, then was followed by the Arab symposium on environmental education held in Kuwait in November 1976 and the international conference held in Soviet Tbilisi, in October 1977 which is The last international meeting about The development of environmental education and means of disseminating it. (Hajeh, 2015, p. 76)

✓ **Contribute to spreading environmental awareness**

Environmental awareness means sensitizing individuals to the importance of preserving the environment, and dealing with them rationally through strengthening the role of educational and media institutions, as well as environmental associations that work to raise the cultural level and develop their awareness to participate effectively in improving the environment and protecting it from pollution (Khawaja, 2009, p. 34), since the Stockholm Conference In 1972, NGOs played an indispensable role in identifying risks, assessing environmental impacts, and taking measures to address them. They also monitored public and political interest in environmental and development issues. For example, a number of NGOs in various parts of the world (Chile, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Turkey, and the United States), published national reports on the environmental situation, and several international NGOs including the World Watch Institute, the World Resources Institute, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources issued important reports on the global environment, And some aspects related to the environment and development, such as: public education, environmental education, and the transformation of the environmental problem from a scientific to a political problem. (Quraid, 2013, p. 64)

In addition to this, and in order to sensitize the citizen and spread environmental awareness, as well as introducing people to their right to live in a healthy environment, Non-governmental organizations, , follow a number of methods , such as participation in various media programs through the various written and press media that deal with environmental issues, and initiate lectures Seminars and exhibitions are organized as one of the important tools for

disseminating an environmental culture among members of society, by their contribution to reporting environmental problems, providing them with the information and data necessary to discuss and submitting proposals that they deem necessary to preserve the environment. (Jérôme & Guttiner, 1993, pp. 124-125)

Some NGOs and environmental societies, in order to contribute to the spread of environmental awareness, have established political parties whose slogan is to protect the environment and raise awareness of its importance.

✓ **The role of NGOs in environmental work:**

Regarding volunteerism, we find that the United Nations has touched upon its definition on the occasion of the International Volunteer Day corresponding to the fifth of December and that of the year 2008 in its programs that: "Voluntary work is a non-profit work that does not provide a counterpart for a known fee and is a non-professional work that individuals do in order to help And develop the standard of living of others and human societies in absolute terms. " (Quraid, 2013, pp. 126-129)

Proceeding from this, volunteer work for non-governmental organizations forms the nucleus of the material work of environmental organizations and associations in all its fields, whether it was done for the purpose of removing waste, undertaking forestation, preserving green areas, or purifying water spaces, or if these activities are related to preserving the soil or its components, or it is intended including air protection or in general helping to alleviate every environmental problem.

It is worth noting here that many environmental NGOs have taken upon themselves the issue of mitigating the environmental problem to be addressed and if it is possible to prevent or repair environmental damage, and in this regard the Earth Summit "Rio 20+" witnessed the launch of a number of partnerships and Pledges on a wide level to reach creative solutions to the problem of climate change, by intensifying voluntary environmental work, where the voluntary organization "Environment Online" concerned with encouraging children to plant trees and plants, and this organization is active in about seven thousand (7000) schools. Distributed over one hundred and fifty (150) countries, This organization also pledged during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development "Rio 20+" to plant one hundred (100) million trees during the next five years. (Abdul-Lawy)

Therefore, it can be emphasized that international non-governmental organizations and environmental NGOs are striving to address environmental problems locally, regionally, nationally, and globally, through the implementation of voluntary programs and campaigns through which the goal is to conserve natural resources and the integrity of the environment. And the sustainability of

development, and this in order to improve the livelihoods and ensure the right of every citizen to a healthy environment.

c- The contribution of NGOs in establishing and developing international environmental law:

As for the scope of international environmental law, non-governmental organizations carry out various international activities that greatly affect political decision-making within states, to the extent that these organizations can monitor the implementation of states' international obligations by states in accordance with international agreements, and submit reports to relevant international bodies.

Therefore, NGOs can contribute to the development of the rules of international environmental law by recognizing a number of rights, which are:

- ✓ Participate effectively in international negotiations related to international environmental agreements, whether by granting observer status to the non-governmental organization, or by using it to represent the state within the official delegation in charge of negotiation and thus has the right to participate in decision-making, and the participation of the non-governmental organization provides the state with access to scientific expertise and The legal and economic possessions owned by these organizations, and at the same time the organization presents its point of view and provides appropriate solutions to environmental problems (Al-Shaalan, 2010, p. 92)
- ✓ Official organizations in some environmental agreements, such as the Secretariat in the Climate Change Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity, cooperate with NGOs to provide them with scientific, legal and economic research and studies that help in implementing these agreements.
- ✓ These organizations monitor states 'compliance and implementation of their obligations in accordance with international environmental law and environmental agreements. They can also monitor states' implementation of their environmental obligations in accordance with national law. (Abdul-Lawy)
- ✓ NGOs also have an important role in encouraging the creation of appropriate legal formulas to hold countries and international organizations accountable for damage to the environment, and in 1993 NGOs succeeded in providing support to the World Bank to establish an inspection team meant to assess the damage to individuals caused by Projects that the bank supports or finances, so that the appropriate decision is taken in the event of damage to pay compensation to those affected or cut or withdraw financial support for the project. (Hajim Al-Hith, 2008, pp. 105,110)

The agreement "Civil Liability for Damage Resulting from Dangerous Activities on the Environment" adopted by the European Council also allows individuals and associations affected by actions or activities established in another country to file a lawsuit before the judicial authorities of the country causing cross-border pollution. (Nasas, 2004, p. 160)

In addition to this, the United Nations acknowledged the contributions of NGOs in developing environmental law in most of its reports, especially the Resolution 8115, which stipulated that "By these means, international NGOs inside and outside the United Nations program emphasized the importance of international environmental law to reduce Harmful impacts to the human environment and to facilitate the task of member states in organizations to prepare national or regional legislation and measures to protect the human environment. (Al-Awadi, 2009, p. 76)

Therefore, NGOs have worked over the past decade to enhance their presence by developing environmental protection rules and directly affecting the production of international environmental protection rules.

Despite these efforts and others made by non-governmental organizations in the field of protecting and preserving the environment, in many cases these organizations find themselves unable to achieve their goals for which they were established and this is a result of obstacles, difficulties and challenges that prevent them from exercising their function. Mainly represented in limiting and repairing, if possible, the environmental degradation that affected the human environment in all its constituent components.

Conclusion:

- non-governmental organizations represent one of the modern civil society organizations that have emerged to confront some environmental problems. They have a major role in managing global environmental affairs by introducing environmental issues and persuading global policymakers and the masses.
- Facing environmental problems, tackling them, and working to reduce them, does not take place without concerted efforts and complementarity . This confrontation does not lie in the work of one individual, one party, one country, or one organization. Rather, it lies in setting a road map in which everyone contributes, whether it is This is on a national, regional or global level. Countries have realized the importance of joint international cooperation and action to preserve and conserve the environment.
- The efforts of non-governmental organizations in the field of environmental protection, whether by spreading environmental education or contributing to the development process, or by developing international environmental law at various times, all of this translates that

the issue of the environment in the last quarter of a century has become not a concern of Official institutions at home or abroad, , and this is due to the growing public awareness among all of them of the necessity of maintaining a balance between the human being and the environment in which he lives.

- The importance of the role that it plays compared to other actors of the global community lies in that it has a greater margin for action compared to international organizations, as it has the flow and speed in performing its work compared to countries that need legal frameworks, in addition to having a greater resonance in the hearts of peoples) The sustainable development process Preserving the environment is carried out by peoples before governments (assuming that they have no personal interests behind their work.

Recommendations :

And after we presented these results, we came up with some recommendations that we believe that if they are implemented in the right and proper way, this would be a reason to solve many environmental problems and guarantee the freedom of environmental NGOs, which makes them immune to the pressures that can affect the outcome of their friendliness in Environmental protection field.

Providing coordination mechanisms between NGOs and other international actors, by holding joint periodic meetings to coordinate efforts taken in the field of environmental protection, as well as coordinating work between the efforts of international NGOs, including regional and local organizations, and this through Holding conferences, meetings and consultations on the various environmental hazards that threaten the living planet.

The principle of exempting the companies and establishments that protect the environment from some taxes must be decided in order to motivate them to include some environmental goals in all their future investment plans, in return the necessity of approving the principle of progressive taxes on companies and establishments with environmental behaviors.

The international organizations are non-governmental despite their efforts in the field of environmental protection, but the agreements concluded and the legal projects that came with them lack the element of compulsion and therefore do not entail a breach of international responsibility, so they must be included in binding international agreements.

Developing environmental awareness and education programs, encouraging the establishment of non-governmental organizations to protect the environment at the local and international levels, and providing support and attention to the budget of international environmental non-governmental

organizations so that they can start their important work in the field of environmental protection.

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