

### 3 The Connected Stakeholder Model: How Advocates Influence Policy

*Effective Advocacy* has shown that advocates across the world are utilizing a remarkably similar set of strategies to promote proenvironmental policy and behavior across a diverse range of political contexts. My research has revealed that six strategies are particularly effective: make friends on the inside, make it work locally, make it work for business, engage the heart, educate, and be a game changer. At first glance, it may appear that these are a strange set of strategies. How do they fit together? Why would they work to generate positive change in so many different political contexts? In order to help explain why these strategies are so effective across such diverse cultural and political contexts, this chapter introduces a new conceptual framework for understanding the policymaking process.

In brief, the Connected Stakeholder Model (CSM) posits that the key to understanding policymaking is to recognize that stakeholders involved in the policymaking process are not individuals championing a single, institutionally determined interest in a battle of ideas. Rather, they are complex individuals who likely belong to several different institutions and have diverse interests. Their perspective on any given policy issue will be deeply influenced by the people to whom they are connected through a diverse set of personal and professional networks. Furthermore, these connections enable them to develop complex and nuanced ideas about the issues, which help inform their policymaking.

In this model, the networks—both formal and informal—are the most important. Their scale and diversity are what determines the content and quality of the policy outcomes. Policymaking in this model is not a game played by a set of individual players all trying to win, nor is it a contest between two teams seeking to triumph over each other. Rather, it is a process

through which stakeholders with multiple interests are connected to one another through complex networks. These individuals and their networks then influence the people in positions of power who are making public policy. To lay the intellectual groundwork for the CSM, we return to the foundations of current advocacy and policy literatures.

Many current theories and models about policymaking are based on assumptions rooted in democratic political theory, especially the idea that policy is made when multiple stakeholders with differing interests compete. Perhaps most cogently articulated by Robert Dahl in *Polyarchy* (1971), the basic assumption is that when relevant stakeholders promote their interests through a free and fair political process, policies that benefit the majority and, hopefully, protect the minority emerge. In this conceptualization of politics, there is a relatively clear distinction between the public and private spheres, where the essence of politics consists of actors in the latter sphere trying to influence those in the former.<sup>1</sup> Polyarchy cannot be maintained if one side dominates the other. If that occurs, the polyarchy, which helps to ensure a political process that will be beneficial to the public good, will dissolve into an autocracy, anarchy, oligarchy, or another political system where a small minority benefits at the cost of the majority, or the majority benefits to the detriment of the minority.

Of primary importance for ensuring that polyarchy does not devolve into one of the less optimal political systems are the institutions governing the behavior of political actors in the system. A commonly adopted definition for institutions is the one posited by Douglass North: "Institutions are the rules of the game in a society, or more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. ... They are perfectly analogous to the rules of the game in a competitive team sport. That is, they consist of formal written rules as well as typically unwritten codes of conduct that underlie and supplement formal rules, such as not deliberately injuring a key player on the opposing team."<sup>2</sup> Given this commonly adopted definition of institutions, it is not surprising that pluralist-based models focus primarily on the constraining capacity of institutions and assume that the actors who are interacting within them are cooperative with teammates, competitive toward rivals, and neutral (or suspicious) of referees.

Moving from the realm of general theory to the concrete investigation of policymaking, John Kingdon articulates in more detail the relationships among advocates, policymakers, and the institutions that constrain them.

In his influential *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (1984), he argues that there are three main streams in the policymaking process—problems, policies, and politics—and that they all flow simultaneously through any given political system. Furthermore, he suggests that the policymaking process can be conceptualized as occurring in four stages: setting the agenda, specifying the alternative policy options, deciding among the alternatives, and implementing that decision. Advocates enter the process at one or more of these stages and engage with all three streams. Political entrepreneurs take advantage of political opportunities and frame their desired outcome in ways that make it a policy solution for current problems decision makers are trying to solve.

From these general building blocks, scholars examining elite-level politics have tended to focus on the choices that individuals and organizations make in their efforts to obtain policy outcomes that maximize the activists' preferences. Some scholars focus on advocates' efforts to influence the policy agenda;<sup>3</sup> others examine alternative specification<sup>4</sup> or implementation and compliance.<sup>5</sup> Many scholars have studied the role of political entrepreneurs and the ways that they work to influence the policymaking process.<sup>6</sup>

Another group of scholars has focused less on the choices of individual actors, instead scrutinizing the institutional constraints that shape both the choices available and the process through which advocates must operate. Since institutional constraints vary considerably by level of government, these scholars tend to examine the institutional influences on policymaking at different levels of governance: local,<sup>7</sup> national,<sup>8</sup> or international.<sup>9</sup> At all levels of government, research has focused on strategies that are aimed at influencing the institutional environment in which elite actors operate, such as altering market incentives or directly influencing policymakers through lobbying.<sup>10</sup> Figure 3.1 offers a visualization of ideal-typical, pluralist-based, multistakeholder policymaking.

### Assumptions of Pluralist-Based, Multistakeholder Policymaking Models

1. Policy actors are known. Influential policy actors are relatively few and can be clearly identified. They include politicians, bureaucrats, businesses, nongovernmental organization (NGO) activists, grassroots activists, and the various organizations that gather these actors together.

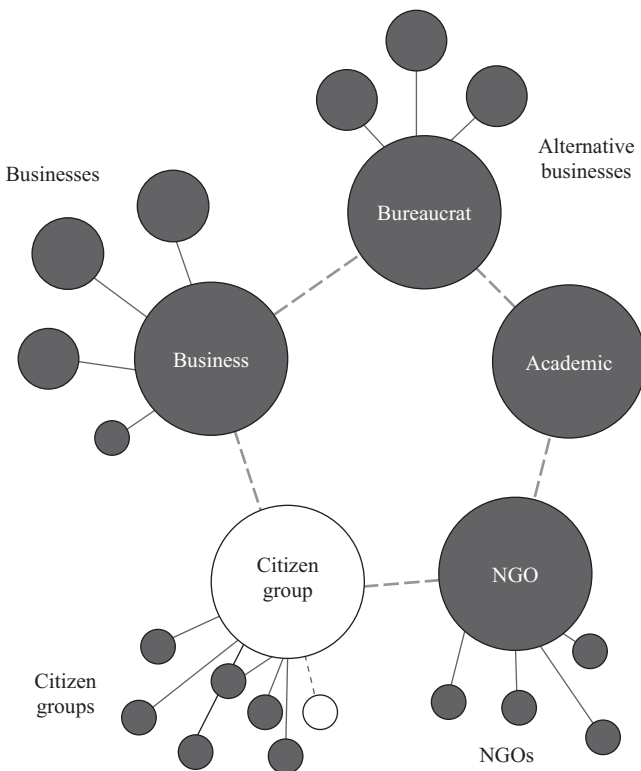
There are other actors who may be significantly involved in influencing policy outcomes (e.g., scientists, journalists), but they are generally considered to be acting on behalf of the key actors, or merely providing technical information, and are not usually viewed as independent actors themselves.

2. Policy actors have narrow, hierarchically organized interests. This is not to claim that the actors have narrow interests generally (surely a Greenpeace activist cares about clean air and clean water and endangered species), but rather to say that in any given policy negotiation, each actor is focused on a narrow set of interests that are usually identifiable based on the actor's institutional role. Each actor is trying to maximize his or her interests in any given policy negotiation. This idea can be easily conceptualized using the commonly utilized term *stakeholder*: for any given policy negotiation, each actor has a single, identifiable "stake" for which he or she is fighting as a highest priority.
3. Actors participating in the policymaking process emerge largely because of their institutional roles. Good policy decision-making includes "multiple stakeholders" in the process in order to represent a wide range of society's interests and increase the opportunity to develop policy that is beneficial to the public good. When each stakeholder fights for his or her stake, multiple perspectives can be heard and an optimal policy can be developed.
4. Some of the actors in the policymaking process are more political than others. It is expected that business, advocacy NGOs, and citizen group actors will work hard to promote their own interests in the course of policy discussions. In contrast, bureaucrats are often portrayed as facilitators, keeping the peace among the competing interests, listening to their different viewpoints, and trying to develop a policy that offers the highest public good.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, academics are frequently asked to lend their technical expertise to policymaking, and may be supporting other key actors (e.g., a business or NGO), but are not generally considered to be independent political actors.
5. Policy is the outcome of competing interests. The policymaking process is fundamentally one where multiple actors promote different interests, and the policy outcome that emerges is the result of that competition.
6. The policy outcome that emerges from this process is rigid. Actors worked hard to incorporate their interests into the policy, so they will take steps

to ensure that the outcome is “locked in” and resistant to post hoc negotiations.

In this conceptualization of the policymaking process, any given policy advocate (in this illustration, one located in a citizen group) is connected to a single member of the policymaking process who is the stakeholder representing the interest of that person or group.

Building on the idea of multistakeholder policymaking, policy scholars recognized that those who are influencing the policy process are not just linked to decision makers; they are also connected to one another through a variety of networks. Policy network theory strove to understand how these networks operated and how they influenced policymaking. Early



**Figure 3.1** Ideal-typical, pluralist-based, multistakeholder model. The small white dot is the advocate, the large white dot is their policymaking representative, and the gray dots are others.

developers of the concept of a policy network tended to examine “iron triangles” and similarly narrow and fixed networks that helped explain why policy was slow to change and why certain actors were able to protect their interests.<sup>12</sup> Subsequent iterations of the theory sought to categorize different types of networks. Categories might vary according to their power relations, functions, or size.<sup>13</sup> Other typologies, such as the influential one developed by David Marsh and Roderick Rhodes Marsh (1992), separated “policy communities” from “issue networks” along several dimensions, such as type of interest, number of participants, and distribution of resources.<sup>14</sup> Moving beyond typologies, scholars such as Hugh Compston (2009) further specified the ties that connected different members inside a network (e.g., resource interdependencies) and articulated specific pathways through which changes in resources, preferences, or rules would then generate predictable changes in policies.<sup>15</sup>

One of the most widely utilized theoretical frameworks that uses policy networks to explain policy change is the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) developed by Paul Sabatier (1988). First in an article and then in an edited volume, Sabatier and his colleagues have argued for a theoretical framework in which advocates are not working alone to change policy but rather are working together within a policy subsystem to try to influence policy change in their desired direction.<sup>16</sup> Since its conceptualization, scholars have fruitfully applied the idea of advocacy networks and advocacy coalitions to the study of environmental politics within and across national boundaries.<sup>17</sup>

The theoretical benefits of the ACF are its recognition of the dynamic nature of policymaking, its emphasis on policy learning as part of the policymaking process, and its inclusion of multiple types of actors coming from different sectors (government, NGO, corporate, academic). Because the ACF emphasizes the importance of coalitions of actors working together in a kind of “team,” rather than assuming that each stakeholder is disconnected from one another, the ACF builds on the assumptions of the basic multi-stakeholder model and adds some additional assumptions.

### **Assumptions of Advocacy Coalition Framework Policymaking Models**

The following assumptions are shared with the basic multistakeholder model:

1. Actors are known.
2. Actors have clearly identifiable, prioritized interests.

3. Actors emerge because of their institutional role.

The following assumptions are modified by ACF models:

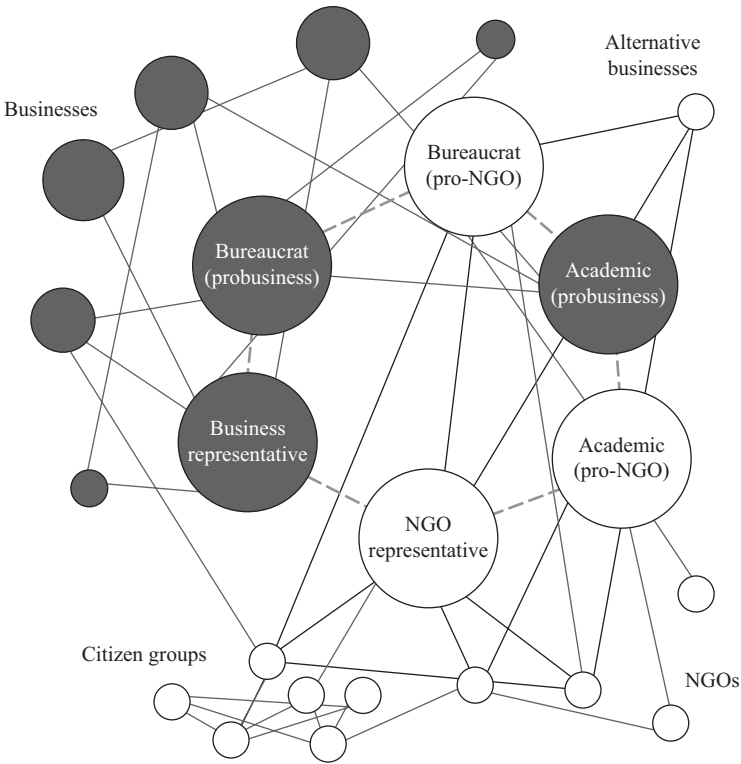
4. While some actors are understood to be more political than others, it is recognized that no actor is neutral. Bureaucrats and academics are generally not neutral but rather part of one or another coalition and will support their team in negotiations.
5. Policy outcomes are the result of a competitive process. The ACF contends that there are different coalitions (teams) that are competing rather than individual stakeholders, but the policy process is still conceptualized as a competitive one in which one team will win and another lose.
6. Policy outcomes may be rigid or flexible. The rigidity of a policy is part of the negotiation process.

In this conceptualization of the policymaking process, any given policy advocate (in this illustration, one located in a citizen group) is connected to a few participants in the process. The advocate is connected to an advocacy coalition, which is connected to a few policymakers, and they will then represent the interests of the coalition in policy negotiations.

The basic multistakeholder model and the ACF both emerged from research based primarily on the policymaking processes of western Europe, North America, and international organizations that are headquartered in those regions. While some scholars have been very successful at applying these theoretical approaches to East Asian contexts,<sup>18</sup> others have found that many of the basic assumptions of the Western-based models are not valid for other regions of the world.

For example, many East Asian societies lack clear distinctions among state, societal, and business actors. Scholars examining politics in East Asia often use the term *embedded* to describe the close personal and institutional ties between nonstate organizations and the government and the informal mechanisms through which different actors interact.<sup>19</sup> Scholars of the Middle East, who also struggle with conceptualizing more complex public-private relations, utilize “state-in-society” approaches in order to capture the more porous and dynamic nature of state-society relations in that region.<sup>20</sup>

Similar to those employing the ACF, scholars of East Asia have also noted the importance of networks of advocates working together to promote environmental outcomes. Like the coalitions in the ACF, these networks contain individuals who come from different sectors. Unlike in the



**Figure 3.2**

The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The white dots represent advocacy coalition members. The darker dots represent people not connected to the advocate’s coalition.

ACF conceptualization, actors in East Asian networks commonly belong to multiple sectors simultaneously (e.g., a retired bureaucrat who sits on the board of an NGO and is the founder of a business). This means that rather than having narrow, hierarchically organized interests, East Asian policy actors are usually assumed to have multiple, diverse interests simultaneously.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, in East Asian scholarship, there is a strong emphasis on the informal and personal nature of the networks rather than their formal institutional ties. The informal and personal nature of the networks allows them to be highly flexible, able to change with altering political circumstances, and also enables them to activate people outside any given



policy subsystem. Spouses, children, school friends, and others are important members of the networks, not just those who share a common belief or policy goal.<sup>22</sup>

As a result, scholars studying environmental politics and policymaking in East Asia have additional advocacy strategies that they investigate, many of which take place through some form of “embedded activism,”<sup>23</sup> where activists pursue their goals utilizing close personal ties with officials and informal channels between nonstate organizations and the government.<sup>24</sup> In addition to governmental and advocacy actors, this literature highlights the role of government-organized NGOs<sup>25</sup> and emphasizes the importance of informal personal connections to policymakers and informal institutional arrangements.<sup>26</sup>

As well as acknowledging the diversity of networks that individual policymakers and policy influencers have, scholars of East Asia also commonly recognize that “the state” cannot be taken as a uniform actor with a single perspective or set of interests. Indeed, identifying the diverse interests and intragovernmental dynamics that can be found within different divisions of central and national governments and between central governments and their counterparts in localities has been one of the region’s most valuable contributions to broader scholarship about governance and politics outside the region. Concepts such as the “developmental state,” pioneered by Chalmers Johnson’s study of Japan,<sup>27</sup> and “fragmented authoritarianism,” introduced by Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg in their study of China,<sup>28</sup> have been productively used by scholars for decades to understand politics inside and outside the region.<sup>29</sup>

While East Asian scholars recognize the importance of policy subsystems to bureaucratic politics, the ways in which they are used in ACF analyses frequently do not apply well to understanding policy advocacy in an East Asian context. Environmental (and other) advocacy organizations tend to be small, volunteer run, and involved in a diverse set of issues that do not fall into a single policy subsystem.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, frequent job rotation is a common practice for East Asian bureaucracies, and civil servants are reassigned to a different division every two or three years in order to develop broad expertise within a given ministry or local government.<sup>31</sup> This means that while an advocate may form a deep connection with a particular civil servant in a policy subsystem of great interest to the advocate, it is almost guaranteed that any particular government official will experience a job rotation that

removes him or her from the relevant policy subsystem before the policy of interest to the advocate comes to fruition. This means that the core ACF expectation that a relatively stable set of actors can work in a policy subsystem for a sustained period of time does not hold in most East Asian contexts.

In the East Asian context, networks are more commonly formed between people based on shared experience—they went to the same university, attended the same conference, worked on a common project—rather than because they are part of a single policy subsystem where actors have shared beliefs. Networks are maintained for social reasons and also because it is impossible to know ahead of time who in one's network will be in a position to be helpful at some future moment. One would never expect the members of a college football club to share a common set of beliefs. Nor would one necessarily expect everyone attending a conference to have similar beliefs—corporate exhibitors at a climate conference likely have different beliefs than municipal officials or NGO activists, even if they all find attending the conference useful. And yet, the shared experience offers the opportunity to make personal connections that can be tapped into later. As we will see, whereas ACF identifies shared beliefs as a fundamental source of strength to its advocacy coalitions, the CSM presented here posits that diversity of members and beliefs can contribute to the flexibility, strength, and effectiveness of the networks that advocates utilize to influence policy.

In Chinese there is a specific word to describe an individual's personal network—*guanxi*, commonly translated in English as “social network” or “connections.” *Guanxi* is built as a kind of social capital by cultivating relationships with and doing favors for those in your network, with the expectation that those favors can be repaid at some future point in time. The exchange of favors need not be direct. A favor done by your old college roommate for your boss's nephew can be added to your store of *guanxi*. The concept is central to any understanding of Chinese culture and is frequently studied as an important factor in China's political economy. A common phrase about a political, economic, or social problem is, “She used *guanxi* to solve the problem,” which means that she reached out to the people in her network to find people in their network who were in a position to solve her problem. The study of the use of *guanxi* has been important in the study of Chinese politics and, especially, business.<sup>32</sup>

Although we do not have an equivalent word in English, the concept is entirely common to American and European experiences. Individuals who

are described as having “powerful friends” or who “know all the right people” are people with “a lot of *guanxi*.” In earlier centuries, fraternity organizations, eating clubs, country clubs, and the like were designed to create and foster professionally relevant social networks. In the twenty-first century, companies such as LinkedIn and Facebook have used the digital mapping of these social and professional networks as the foundation of their multibillion-dollar business models.

One way that social scientists around the world have tried to map and measure these *guanxi* connections is through social network analysis.<sup>33</sup> Beginning in the field of sociology, social network analysis sought to reveal and describe the social ties that connected people and discover how these connections influenced individual behavior and social world.<sup>34</sup> The idea of network analysis then branched out to many fields, finding especially fertile ground in the computer engineering and life sciences. Furthermore, the rise of social media and the expansion of “big data” have combined with the development of sophisticated statistical techniques to enable not just the mapping of networks but also the testing of how various network features (e.g., centrality, connectivity) affect the behavior of people in the network.<sup>35</sup>

CSM borrows some of the concepts of social network theory when it describes the position of people within a policy-related network. In particular, some people act as “nodes” within a network, meaning multiple people are able to connect to others because of their relationship with the highly connected person. To the extent that these people are connected not just to a lot of people (picture the hub of a bicycle wheel) but also to multiple, diverse networks (picture the city hubs in a map of airline routes), they are more likely to have access to diverse perspectives and also be influential in the policymaking process.

The key point here is that for the CSM, policy-relevant networks are built through personal relationships made among individuals who may or may not share belief systems and may or may not be involved in the same policy subsystem. Unlike the ACF conceptualization, which has networks forming because of common beliefs and goals and bounded by policy subsystems that remain relatively stable over many years, in this model, networks are formed because of social, political, and economic relationships, and while the personal connections are maintained, their strength and relevance to any given policy subsystem shift over time. Thus, the CSM of policymaking combines the insights of the East Asian politics literature with policy

models that were developed based on the North American and European experience to create a model that can help explain effective advocacy across the entire world.

### **Assumptions of the CSM (Network-Based, Multi-interest Policymaking)**

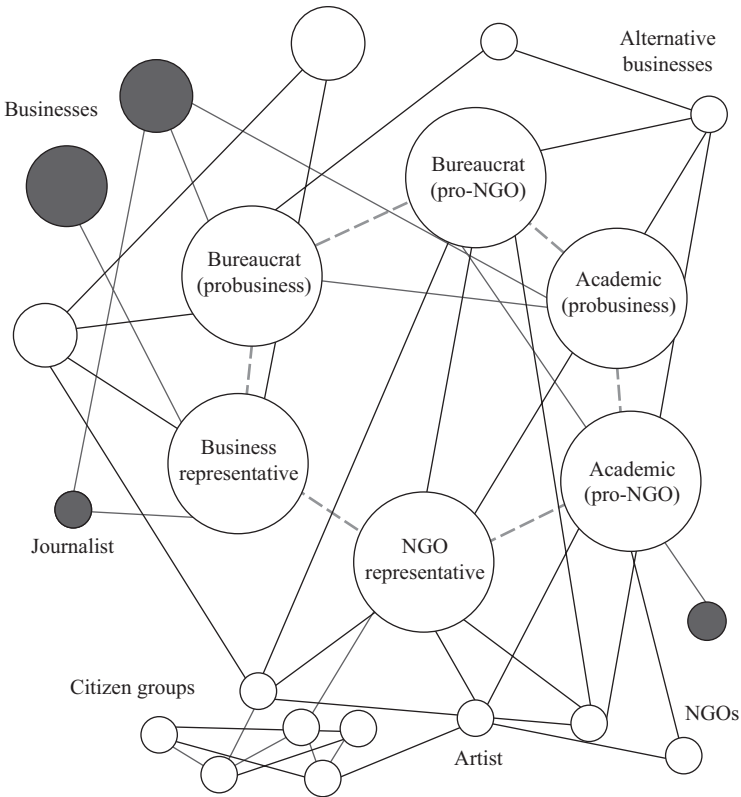
1. Key actors are not always known. Many important policy actors are predictable and known, such as government bureaucrats, businesses, NGO activists, grassroots activists, and the various organizations that gather these actors together. Some actors, however, might be highly influential but less visible since they may not be obvious stakeholders. For example, journalists, academics, celebrities, and even artists can exert an independent influence on the policymaking process. An exposé news story, academic study, art installation, or documentary film can influence policymaking depending on the content and timing of the work. These contributions are not exogenous to the policymaking model but rather are incorporated into it through the influence of networks.
2. Actors have multiple, diverse interests that generally cannot be hierarchically organized. It will commonly be the case that key actors “wear many hats” simultaneously and have multiple connections across diverse sectors and institutions that they build and maintain (e.g., a former ministry official who is also the founding director of an influential NGO, or an NGO advocate whose husband is the president of an energy corporation, or an academic who is on the board of an NGO and serves on government advisory committees and runs his or her own for-profit consulting firm). Therefore, it is assumed that policy actors have multiple and diverse interests, and it will generally be impossible to infer the exact nature of the actor’s interests based on his or her known institutional position.
3. Actors who are nodes in multiple networks will commonly find themselves in influential positions with respect to the policymaking process. Their role will not be primarily derived from their institutional roles but rather from their connections to diverse networks. Rather than the policymaking process being conceptualized as one in which individual stakeholders meet and compete for their stake, it is conceptualized as a group of individuals who are connected to diverse stakeholders coming together to discuss policy. Thus, the most influential people in the

process will likely be those who are nodes in diverse networks of stakeholders, not those who represent a particular stake.

4. All actors involved in policymaking are assumed to be political. Because all actors, whether they are businesspeople, NGO advocates, bureaucrats, or academics, will be approaching the policymaking process with an eye toward improving outcomes for members of their networks (and themselves), they will all be playing a political role in the process.
5. Policy is the outcome of personal negotiations among multiple actors with complex and diverse interests. It is not a competition. While policymaking frequently requires that there be people, causes, and organizations that “win” and those that “lose,” with any specific policy, the conceptualization is more one of negotiation than competition, with an emphasis on areas of shared and multiple gains rather than outright victories.
6. Policy outcomes will be designed to be flexible. It is assumed by all participants that implementation will not proceed exactly as planned and that some actors will be ignored while some interests are under-represented. Because policymakers value building and maintaining their networks with one another over the outcome of any particular policy negotiation, policy outcomes will be crafted to be flexible to account for new knowledge and changing circumstances.

In sum, networks are the most important part of the policymaking process—not the particular individuals at the table, not the institutions that they come from, not the institutional constraints of the policy process. The number, size, power, and diversity of the networks connected to the policymaking process will be the key to determining the policy outcome—its shape and its efficacy. The people matter, but an actor’s networks matter more than his or her institutional role, technical knowledge, or financial resources. When the people sit at the table to negotiate a policy, they will be thinking about the technical details of the policy, but they will also be seeking to benefit those connected to their entire network matrix. In theory, crafting policy that contributes to the collective improvement of the network resources of those involved in policymaking will also contribute positively to the public good.

The CSM posits that ad hoc advisory groups are a principal mode for making policy. Actors will be invited to take part in these advisory groups



**Figure 3.3**

The Connected Stakeholder Model (CSM) (network-based, multi-interest policy-making). The white dots represent people connected to the advocate through their networks. The dark dots represent people not connected to the advocate's networks.

based primarily on their connections to relevant networks. Policymakers will seek out advisers who have numerous connections to multiple stakeholder communities in order to maximize their ability to understand the potential repercussions of policy on affected groups and improve their ability to craft creative solutions to public policy problems. Any individual who occupies a “seat at the table” will bring to the discussions diverse interests that cannot be hierarchically organized because they stem from multiple institutional affiliations, complex social relations, and varied life experience. Many of the actors are likely to know each other personally and have long-standing network-based connections to one another.

This model is fundamentally based on diverse networks of people who interact with one another, and others in their network, over long periods of time. People are valued for their access to and influence within a network, and growing and maintain their network is a common goal for all actors. To use Kingdon's language, these networks are involved in all stages of policymaking—setting the agenda, specifying policy alternatives, deciding among alternatives, and implementing decisions—although some parts of the network may be more involved during some stages than during others. Different parts of any individual's network may be activated at any given time, and it is likely that several networks will be active simultaneously as the actor tries to influence multiple policies at different stages in different policy subsystems.

### CSM and Advocacy Strategies

How does this model relate to the strategies discussed in this book? The core questions of this book are the following: What advocacy strategies are most effective in creating behavioral change among governments, corporations, and individuals? And why are those strategies effective? The CSM offers a framework for understanding how very different types of strategies can combine to influence policymaking. In some cases the strategies are designed to influence policymakers directly—"make friends on the inside" is the most obvious case of this. When you cultivate a relationship with someone who is in a position of influence (or who you expect will or might be in a position of influence), then you gain policy access, enabling your ideas to be included in the policymaking process.

In other cases, the strategies are aimed at people who are closely connected to decision makers. These indirect advocacy efforts anticipate the likelihood that the people affected by the efforts will talk to not just one policymaker but several, so the advocate's ideas will already be known and understood by several policymakers when they sit down to discuss the policy. "Make it work locally" and "make it work for business" both fall into this category of influence. While it is unlikely that any given policymaker will have direct experience of any particular local pilot project or any particular green business product, information about local success stories will make its way through policymakers' networks to influence their decision-making.

Finally, some strategies are aimed at long-term, broad-based effects on the public, which in turn influence policymakers' networks. In some cases, such as art performances, short-term exhibits, documentaries published online, and public protests, they are intended to have immediate, intense influence on public opinion. For example, the Chinese documentary about air pollution *Under the Dome*<sup>36</sup> was published online on February 28, 2015, just ahead of the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference meetings in Beijing that year. It had more than three hundred million views before it was censored in China. Responses to the film in the public were immediate and intense, with thousands of people pledging to change their personal behavior—for example, walk more, drive less—in response to their new awareness. Although it is difficult to connect policy changes directly to the film, many new regulations to address air pollution went into effect in 2016, a year after the film's release.<sup>37</sup>

In other cases, the advocacy efforts and cultural change occur over a longer period of time. Simon Avenell's work has demonstrated that environmental lawsuits in Japan, most of which failed in the courts, ultimately contributed to the development of the concept of "environmental rights," which entered not only Japanese jurisprudence but the rhetoric of activists and lawmakers alike.<sup>38</sup> Chapter 9 will show how the South Korean start-up tech company Tree Planet has promoted the idea that trees are companions, living creatures with individual characteristics who should be valued and cared for, rather than merely a decoration or a source of energy. Similarly, Japan's Cool Biz campaign, also discussed in chapter 9, has promoted cultural shifts in Japanese and Asian fashion, reframing a proenvironmental lifestyle from a sacrifice that individuals must make for the planet to a lifestyle that is creative, fun, healthy, and liberating. These "game changer" strategies have shifted cultural ideas in ways that promote better environmental behavior on the part of individuals, businesses, and the government.

This book explains how individuals and groups can utilize specific advocacy strategies to influence the people in their networks, which can ultimately influence policymakers. The CSM theorizes that policy-relevant networks that advocates create and utilize are not merely the sum of individual actors' efforts. I argue here that the networks themselves exert a somewhat independent, or, more precisely, interdependent, effect on the policymaking process. In particular, formal and informal networks help advocates and policymakers work around institutional collective action



problems. As a result, the networks can have a catalytic effect, amplifying the effectiveness of advocacy efforts.

We can think of the networks affecting policymaking in a variety of ways, and I will focus on three here: information exchange, ally empowerment, and citizen engagement.<sup>39</sup> In all cases, the central feature of a network's value in influencing policy is the ways that it is able to reduce the collective action problems found in environmental policymaking and help network members identify and facilitate the development of win-win collaborations and effective policy.

Perhaps the most important role of networks in policymaking is the way they expedite the development and dissemination of policy-relevant knowledge. The environmental issue area is exceptionally complex, involving the full range of stakeholders from individual citizens to global corporations and everything in between. Given the scale and diversity of stakeholders, it is very difficult to identify the most policy-relevant knowledge and disseminate it to those who need and can use it. Additionally, institutional barriers frequently hinder information sharing both across sectoral lines (e.g., from the NGO sector to the corporate sector and vice versa) and inside organizations and governments; local governments with innovative solutions frequently have difficulty getting the attention of their central governments, and officials in one ministry may have difficulty collaborating with colleagues in a different ministry because of bureaucratic divisions of responsibility.

Networks—both formal and informal—enable people to share information across these institutional barriers. Networks help policy-relevant actors direct their resources in ways that can generate new policy-relevant knowledge, and once the new knowledge is generated, they can facilitate its dissemination to others. Many examples in the subsequent chapters illustrate how this can work. One of the best illustrations can be found in chapter 6, which describes how the KitaQ composting network helped develop, pilot, scale, and disseminate the innovative Takakura composting method, which has dramatically reduced municipal solid waste in dozens of cities in Southeast Asia and beyond. What started as the effort of the Japanese city of Kitakyushu to help its sister city of Surabaya in Indonesia deal with its trash grew into an elaborate effort that brought together local grassroots volunteer organizations, NGOs, and local and national governments in multiple countries.

A second, vital role that networks play in catalyzing advocacy is the way they can help advocates empower their allies. Cultivating and empowering allies is covered as a specific advocacy strategy in chapter 5, but it should be emphasized that the process of empowering allies is nearly always carried out through networks, and it is through networks that the other strategies can be combined with the strategy of empowering allies. Chapter 5 has several good examples that highlight the ways that advocates can use their networks to help their allies gain policy-relevant information in a timely manner, facilitate the development of allies' networks, and assist allies in overcoming bureaucratic and institutional barriers.

Examples of networks being used to empower allies can also be seen in chapters that are primarily focused on other strategies. Chapter 9, on game changers, discusses how then-environmental minister Yuriko Koike used her diplomatic connections to hold a Cool Biz fashion show of Asian political leaders. The success of the event helped raise the profile of her colleagues in other countries, enhancing Koike's *guanxi*, and contributed to the proenvironmental cultural shift toward wearing more comfortable clothes in the office during the summer, which leads to a reduced use of air conditioning.

Chapter 8, which focuses on art as an advocacy strategy, relates the story of the Daylily Art Circus, an event that brought joy and relief to victims of the 2011 triple disaster in Japan. Through its mobile circus, the artists used pop-up exhibits in unaffected areas in southern Japan to raise funds and spread awareness, compassion, and connection, which they then brought up north to the communities that were devastated by the environmental and manmade catastrophe. The art circus created formal and informal networks among individuals, artists, local governments, schools, and NGOs that facilitated compassionate connection and thus empowered not only their allies but also the victims of the disaster.

Finally, networks play an important role in citizen engagement. They do so in two ways: they can be used to engage citizens, and they are a way that engaged citizens can have their concerns heard by policymakers. As with the information catalyst and empower ally functions, the citizen engagement function can be combined with all of the advocacy strategies covered in this book. Chapter 7, about "make it work for business" strategies, and the "game changer" example of Ma Jun featured in chapter 9 both illustrate how making environmental performance more transparent can activate

business supply chain networks, which can then engage and motivate suppliers, banks, and consumers to engage in more environmentally friendly behaviors.

All of the examples featured in chapter 6, focused on the “make it work locally” strategy, illustrate the vital role of networks in scaling citizen concerns. Whether it is blocking the building of new petrochemical plants or promoting policies to combat air pollution, grassroots activists without many direct connections to policymakers are able to use a combination of public campaigns, successful local pilot projects, and activation of their networks to pressure policy makers to enact proenvironmental policy change. Networks also help governments engage citizens in the implementation of proenvironmental policies and the dissemination of proenvironmental practices across a broader population. The Citizens’ Green Seoul Committee demonstrates how networks can be used to engage and energize thousands of citizens, inspiring them to participate in green space-beautification campaigns, as well as recycling and energy-saving efforts.

Perhaps the most creative and fun examples of how networks can be used to facilitate citizen engagement are found in chapter 8, which focuses on the role of art. Whether they are the social media networks of individuals that helped *Under the Dome* go viral, or the community-based networks created by Ichi Ikeda’s Moving Water project in Kagoshima, art can both create and utilize networks that have catalytic effects on citizen engagement. Citizens who had not thought about environmental issues before are exposed to the art through one of their networks and subsequently find themselves moved and inspired to act in proenvironmental ways.

In sum, the CSM offers a framework for understanding how advocates are able to persuade individuals, businesses, and governments to change their behaviors in proenvironmental ways. Individuals utilize a variety of strategies in conjunction with others in their networks to generate change. The advocacy strategies featured in this book—making friends on the inside, making it work locally, making it matter (with art), and being a game changer—are effective because they activate networks connected to policymakers. These networks function to develop and disseminate policy-relevant knowledge, empower allies, and engage citizens.

### Benefits and Limitations of the Model

There are several benefits that the CSM of policymaking has over other models. First, it more accurately represents reality. Multistakeholder models assume that each stakeholder has a single stake for which he or she is fighting and that actors have little connection to one another except as competitors, which ignores the reality that policymakers and those who advise them are usually connected to one another and frequently have many stakes for which they are advocating. Similarly, while policy subsystems are a useful analytic tool, advocates and government officials are frequently engaging multiple subsystems at once, such that limiting analytic focus to a single subsystem is likely to miss much of the negotiation that may be occurring outside any given policy subsystem.

Second, conceptualizing policy actors as nodes in a set of interconnected networks containing multiple perspectives rather than institutional actors with defined interests dramatically broadens the possible policy outcomes and changes the scholar's conceptualization of the policymaking process itself. Stakeholders who are not "sitting at the table" can be heard. Actors with institutional affiliations that would ordinarily suggest hostility can easily become key allies. Policy outcomes have the potential to be much more creative and collaborative. Certainly, policy negotiations can still be expected to be contentious, but the process is not a game to be won. Conceptually framing policymaking as a collaborative process where individuals with different backgrounds, interests, and resources collectively craft policy opens up more possibilities for outside-the-room collaborations, informal resolutions, and flexible understandings among key actors.

Third, new actors become visible and relevant. While considerable research has investigated the role of scientists and other experts in the policymaking process, these experts are not usually conceptualized as political actors in their own right. Instead, at worst they are viewed as mere pawns of business, government, and NGOs, and at best they are seen as being required to work through those actors to affect policy.<sup>40</sup> Frequently, academics (and others) serve critical "network node" functions, maintaining connections to multiple civil society organizations and other actors. The CSM recognizes that when academics take part in policymaking, it is not just because of their technical expertise or as a pawn of another actor, but precisely because their multiple connections to diverse actors give them broad perspectives from

which they may approach policy questions. Although they may not have the financial resources of business actors or the social or political resources of an NGO, academics and other experts have the potential to play powerfully important roles because of their ability to synthesize the views of so many and craft creative solutions that benefit multiple stakeholders simultaneously.<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, because the CSM allows for anyone connected to a network to influence policy, even those who might not be at the table can be recognized as playing an important role in the process. These “outside the room” actors might be politicians, retired government officials, powerful celebrities, journalists, or other powerbrokers who pull strings from outside to manipulate events “inside the room.” In the CSM, these external manipulations, and the potential for them to affect policy, are not seen as exogenous to the policymaking process but rather are incorporated into it.<sup>42</sup>

Fourth, the role of institutions is reconceptualized. Rather than acting primarily as constraints on the policymaking process, institutions serve an important role in creating opportunities where multiple actors can meet and make connections with one another, facilitating the expansion of actor networks. In this way, institutions form a kind of structural framework for the creation of networks that influence the policymaking process. These institutional structures help give shape to the actors’ networks and can act as focal points for action. However, since the networks reach beyond the institutions themselves and crisscross other relationships, it becomes fairly easy for actors to use alternative networks to work around any institutional barriers they might face. Indeed, as many of the stories in this book will illustrate, it is often the case that networks form primarily for the purpose of creating an informal mechanism to get around institutional barriers.

To reiterate, formal institutions are important and create important and identifiable opportunities and constraints for actors working to develop policy. The CSM expands this common view of institutions by calling attention to the ways that they can nurture the creation of personal networks that enable the development of informal mechanisms through which actors can overcome institutional barriers.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, the CSM helps identify how networks enable feedback gained from policy implementation to loop back into the policymaking process. Networks can link policymakers to policy implementers, even when the two groups of people are located in different institutions, when they have different interests or beliefs, or

when they are in disparate geographic locations. Indeed, victims, clients, and those affected by the policy are also connected to networks linked to the policymaking process, making it easier to adjust and amend the policy even after it has been established.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, perhaps the largest intellectual benefit of the CSM is that it is not limited to democratic countries and does not assume democratic political processes. Actors create networks with each other and use those networks to inform themselves and influence policy in nearly every political system. They do so at all levels of policymaking from small villages to international organizations. The model does not assume that the networks are fully transparent, and it incorporates asymmetries of power. As with many other policymaking models, it contains a normative preference for more voices and perspectives to be heard during policymaking—it assumes that decision makers with the broadest understandings of the ramifications of policy for diverse constituencies will make the best decisions. It does not, however, require that those diverse perspectives come from people who are independent of one another or that they be interacting with one another in a democratic political context.

Although it has many benefits, the CSM also has several important limitations. While a benefit of the model is that it endogenizes more actors into it, it also complicates the identification of relevant actors, since they may include those who are not sitting at the table. Similarly, while the model assumes that the actors are acting rationally to grow and strengthen their networks and create policy that improves the conditions of those people and organizations to whom they are connected, it is not possible to derive an actor's interest directly from his or her institutional affiliation, nor is it possible to rank those interests hierarchically.

Thus, two core concepts in many policymaking models become more difficult to identify: the actors and their interests. It should be noted that the CSM places greater theoretical emphasis on the networks—their density, strength, and reach—such that precise identification of all of the actors and their interests becomes less important. What matters is identification of the networks that are connected to the policymaking discussions and the interests that are included in that network matrix. However, by de-emphasizing the actors themselves, questions of accountability and identification of precisely who is responsible for which policy become even more difficult to answer.

A second limitation of the model is one that it shares with many other policymaking models—the model assumes a functioning state bureaucracy and a competent civil society. The CSM assumes that decisions made by policymakers will be implemented. It assumes that actors strive to act in the best interests of the multiple people and organizations to which they are connected. Further, it assumes that once policies are developed, government and private actors tasked with implementing the policy as intended will strive to do so.

However, many places in the world do not have sufficient capacity in either the state or society to implement policies that are made. When that happens, the networks serving to bring constituent interests to the attention of policymakers will devolve into pure patronage networks in which money and power rule. There may be a way to reconceptualize the model to account for the transformation of a symbiotic, public good–generating policymaking network into a parasitic, private good–generating network. Indeed, at a further stage of theoretical development, the model may offer great insight into how policy processes can be corrupted. At this point, however, the model is not applicable to low-capacity governments and societies.

A final limitation of the model, which is also found in other policymaking models but is exacerbated in the CSM, is the difficulty of identifying the beginning and end of a policy process. The CSM offers greater dynamism and flexibility in the policy inputs, since networks can change and multiply over time. Furthermore, since the networks continue to give feedback to the actors even while policy is being implementing, it is assumed that actors engage in post hoc negotiations and make adjustments to the policy. Thus, it becomes extremely difficult to determine when policymaking ends. The starting and end points of any scholar's inquiry into a particular policy thus become somewhat arbitrary.





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# **Effective Advocacy**

## **Lessons from East Asia's Environmentalists**

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