A taxonomy of green ideas

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ABSTRACT Taxonomies of green political theories have so far been hampered by the shortcomings inherent to their having been designed on the basis of (a selection of) popular theorists or of theories known or thought to exist. In this article, I offer a new approach: a systematic, analytical taxonomy of green ideas rather than theories. I distinguish the issues or dimensions on which green theorists can choose positions at metaphysical, ethical, political and policy levels. It is hoped that this taxonomy can both open up new avenues of green thought and help political theorists and empirical scientists in designing and evaluating their characterizations of green beliefs and ideologies.

Introduction

The second half of this century has seen the evolution of a most fertile family of ideas, known among others as green, environmental or ecological thought. The green family, or, to drop the metaphor, these sets of green ideas, find their expression in everyday life through individual and collective action, movements, policies, politics, ethics and so forth. It has permeated reflections of all sorts on virtually every human activity from early infancy (in environmentally friendly nappies) through sleeping, working, eating, travelling, recreating and reading, to death (in an environmentally friendly coffin). If we neglect for a moment the reason for their emergence, these are good times for green movements and activists: the former prosper and multiply, the latter find a responsive audience for their call to arms.

However, the green family is as pluriform as it is large. The sheer amount of `-isms' used to describe green theories and people is remarkable: there is—to mention only the most important—ecologism and environmentalism, grey, green and Green, deep and shallow ecologism, anthropocentric, biocentric and ecocentric ecologism, ecofeminism, ecoterrorism; there is even a profound difference between nature and environment. To an outsider, all these labels and distinctions must be rather confusing.

This is one of the reasons why the rise of the greens has not made life any easier for social scientists, theorists and philosophers. In serious research on greens and their theories, it is by definition not enough indiscriminately to call...
everything that remotely smells of flowers ‘green’. Yet it has become increas-
ingly difficult to keep track of all the variants of green thought, to unravel the differences between them, to uncover the hidden consensus on the meaning of all these labels (if there is one) and to use them appropriately. Moreover, not all the labels used are equally important or relevant, depending on the researcher’s point of view. To the social scientist, the distinction between a deep ecologist and a moderate Gaian need not have any actual consequence since both may show the same behaviour and preferences; to the political philosopher, the same distinction may be of more importance than any other.

Moreover, the more green issues have become politically and socially relevant, the more scientists need reliable indicators to distinguish deep from shallow and Green from green. Large-scale sample research like the Eurobaromètre does not allow too many or too detailed questions, hence the data it generates remain open to interpretation. The same is often true for the relevancy of indicators themselves. In research on the rise and social basis of the green movement, many a social scientist has referred to Ronald Inglehart’s theory of generational value change\(^1\) in which the famous but controversial distinction between materialist and post-materialist values plays a key role. Yet the only indicator of, say, greenness in Inglehart’s model is the value attached to ‘trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful’. It has been convincingly argued that this question, if it is an indicator of greenness at all, tells us little about greenness but more about what being green meant to Inglehart himself, in 1977.\(^2\) The more detailed information a social scientist needs, the more likely it is that she will design her own indicators, and possibly invent the wheel all over again.

It would be most helpful for both theorists and empirical scientists to have at their disposal something like a simple and concise directory or vocabulary of green ideas. As a matter of fact, such catalogues do already exist, with Andrew Vincent’s recent article on political ecology\(^3\) offering, as far as I know, the most complete listing up to now.\(^4\) Unfortunately, directories like these have two major disadvantages. For one, they describe only those sets of green ideas actually thought to exist—either excluding other creeds through use of a, by definition, disputable understanding of ‘green’ or excluding them because the author, being human, is fallible. For another, one invariably incites disputes about the correct classification of the authors whose work is used to characterize approaches. All in all, classifications of green theories on the basis of the authors’ actual writings suffer from the defect that they were never meant to be classified as authoritative statements of say eco-libertarianism or eco-feminism. They are at most seminal works in Næssism or Rolstonism or Goodinism, works in which authors expound their own views of concepts like ecologism and utilitarianism.

In this article then, I intend to do three things that may help the newcomer to the field and perhaps also inspire the veteran. For one, I want to clear up the terminological mess surrounding green thought, at least enough to allow scientifically useful distinctions between different sorts of ‘greens’ to be made. In this respect, I offer a novel taxonomy of green thought, not on the basis of
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authors but on that of concepts. Secondly, I want to identify the most relevant issues on which green schools of thought diverge. In this context relevancy will mean relevancy from the scientist's rather than the activist's point of view; it is also meant as a warning that perfection or completeness is neither guaranteed nor sought for. Finally, I want to make a small contribution to the apparently irresolvable debate on the identification of the archetype of the green person.

In the next sections, I shall discuss green thought at the following levels of abstraction: metaphysics, ethics, politics, and policies. The final section summarizes the results and contains some notes on the description of 'the' (archetypal) green theory. A full list of the concepts and theories discussed is given in the Appendices.

Three remarks are in order before we set off. First, I shall consider the essential ideas and topics of debate among greens in terms of dimensions (denoted by numbers $I$--$N$) and positions on these dimensions (denoted by letters $a$--$z$). To avoid tiresome repetition of phrases and jargon, I often use these abbreviations of numbers and letters only. Reading this text will therefore be far less demanding if the reader occasionally utilizes the Appendices. For heuristic reasons, the dimensions are ordered hierarchically as in a tree, assuming each dimension to deal with a question that is less deep or fundamental or abstract than the preceding one and more abstract than the following. Of course the ordering is open to debate, but I do not see how any other arrangement could change the dimensions themselves—and it is the dimensions and positions that count here. In describing positions, I hope to offer the reader suitable material to develop useful indicators for research or building-blocks for theories. As illustrations, each section also contains outlines of several green schools of thought or action in terms of these positions.

Second, in describing positions I have tried to exclude eclecticism: in most cases, a green theory must ultimately support one position and no other; it cannot advocate ultimately contradictory theses on the same dimension. This is not to say that in real life amendments to and mixes of positions are impossible; on the contrary. Yet for the sake of clarity we have to identify the distinguishing, fundamental, defining characteristics of theories first before we can understand modifications. Third, it is good to note in advance that a position on one dimension at level $A$ does not always commit one to one and only one position on another dimension on any level—even if we assume that sets of ideas ought to be internally consistent.

Metaphysics—nature and the universe

No description of green politics can be truly complete without first understanding the positions greens take, consciously or not, on questions concerning the way the universe, hence also nature, should be conceived. I call these issues metaphysical since they do not directly concern nature itself but rather our perception of it, the way we imagine the universe to be composed.

Prior to other questions in green or indeed in any theory is an epistemological
question: to what type of knowledge and argument can one appeal? I call this
dimension (1) (Ir)rationalism and distinguish two positions on this issue: (1a)
mysticism and (1b) rationalism. The choice to be made here is one between on
the one hand the irrational, the irrefutable, the unquestionable, the magical
approach to the universe, and on the other the rational, internally coherent or
externally verifiable or falsifiable, measurable or arguable, scientific approach.

There can be no arguing, I believe, about the importance of this distinction in
green politics: New Age greens, tree-huggers and other green heretics, to
paraphrase Goodin, 5 are involved in a totally different ball game than your
everyday eco-sympathetic civil servant, politician or scientist. Both parties will,
at least on some decisive points, have quite diverging views on how nature
operates, how mankind relates to and fits into it, on what is really happening,
why it is happening, what should be done and what can be done, and most of
all on what counts as a valid argument. In the remainder of this article, I shall
follow Goodin’s advice to ignore the mystic branches of the green tree, but one
should note that a commitment to astrology need not prevent a green from taking
a position on the other dimensions discussed here.

Like (ir)rationalism, the remaining metaphysical dimensions do not describe
issues that are in any way typical of greens only; they are part of the heritage
of metaphysics in general. One of them concerns substantialism: when the
question arises in green thought, one either sees the universe as being made up
of one substance [(2a) monism], two, usually the Cartesian cogitation and
extension [(2b) dualism] or more [(2c) metaphysical pluralism]. These distinc-
tions often play a central role in green critiques of modern western thought and
technology. 6-7

Thirdly, greens argue over the composition of nature. For some, everything in
it is somehow connected to everything else [(3a) holism]. Due to the interre-
latedness of all parts of the universe, small changes in one area may have
substantial consequences elsewhere, the ‘where’ being often unpredictable.
Crudely put, the political implications of this view would be that we cannot save
the otter without saving the ecosystem of which it is part, that we cannot save
the latter without global change, and that we cannot do this without changing our
whole attitude, culture and society. Other greens follow Voltaire’s dictum that all
consequences must have causes, all sons fathers, but that not all fathers must
have sons: permanent change on a more limited scale is also thought possible
[(3b) compartmentalism].

A further point of argument relates to the motor of change: does change occur
in a reaction to or as a consequence of physical circumstances [(4a) materialism],
thus making humans mere instruments of economic, ecological and social
processes, or can change also originate in thought [(4b) idealism], thus allowing
green activists to appeal to a human sense of morality or decency.

Closely related to this issue is that of causation itself. One position claims that
everything, including change, necessarily happens the way it does at the moment
it does [(5a) determinism], as if a goddess, say Gaia, single-handedly ruled the
world. A second opinion holds that ideas can arise independently of the
(pre)determined rules of nature [(5c) voluntarism]. An idealist is not necessarily a voluntarist; he or she may well believe that cogitation follows the strictest possible rules, yet that ideas rule and shape the world. Nor is a materialist necessarily a determinist—as the existence of a third position, belief in chance [(5b) probabilism] illustrates.

A sixth dimension pertains to the ‘natural’ state of nature: either nature is basically in a state of harmony [(6a) equilibrium] or it is in constant change [(6b) evolution]. These two ideas, that of evolution and that of a natural equilibrium being disturbed by man’s actions, often occur in one and the same text and theory. Merging the two mostly serves either as a basis for a straightforward condemnation of man’s catastrophic influence on the natural course of natural events (a fallacious argument confusing is and ought), or more subtly as a means of distinguishing natural from artificial change (read: the greater part of what man does). Note that in the latter case, references to the notion of a natural equilibrium are in fact redundant. It is nevertheless essential to stress that the two, equilibrium and change, are mutually exclusive. If mankind is seen as part of a system that seems or ought to be in equilibrium, then whatever lasting change mankind’s disturbing activities results in, is by definition evolutionary, albeit not the ‘right’ kind of evolution. Hence the system cannot be ‘naturally’ in equilibrium. If, on the other hand, the system were by its very nature in a state of equilibrium, endemic development through evolution could not occur, nor could man be seen as part of the system. Eclectically combining the two perspectives, as happens in popular texts like Al Gore’s, is in fact opting for evolution.

A last important metaphysical dimension is that of the ‘mode of change’, an issue closely related to those of composition and natural state. On one perspective, the world (man’s social and natural environment) is an organic entity that develops through continuous, long-term growth; new elements springing forth from this entity must either adapt or wither [(7a) organicism]. On the other view, the world is seen as one gigantic machine, bits and pieces of which can abruptly be added, removed or substituted for others [(7b) mechanicism]. Perhaps surprisingly, the latter approach is not uncommon in utopian green literature. An example is Ernest Callenbach’s Ecotopia, which depicts the (by then more organicistic) development of the Western states of the US after they have radically separated from the rest and radically and rapidly changed an industrial into a green society.

This first set of seven dimensions already allows us to draw some clear lines between several green schools of thought as listed in for instance Vincent and Bosselmann including the two most well-known: deep and shallow ecology. As I vowed to ignore green heresies and mystical green theories (1a), I shall assume all theories discussed henceforth to adhere to rationalism (1b). ‘Deep ecology’, to begin with, has been characterized by many as (2a) monistic and (3a) holistic, because it sees nature as one, as (4a) materialistic, because it does not necessarily presuppose the universe to have a mind, (6b) evolutionary and as (7a) organicistic. Deep ecology does not, it seems, presuppose any particular
view on causation: (5a–c). In Arne Naess’ version of deep ecology, *ecosophy* takes a special place as the, almost literal, incarnation of deep ecology in a person’s life, resulting in a life in harmony with Nature. Since Naess’s Spinozist metaphysics cannot be separated from ecosophy without mutilating the latter, we shall characterize ecosophy as (2a), (3a), (4ab), (5a), (6b) and (7a)—silently passing over Naess’ interest in mysticism.

‘Shallow ecology’ is in many respects a mirror image of deep ecology: it is dualistic or pluralistic (2b), compartmentalistic (3b) rather than holistic, and definitely mechanicistic (7b). Like deep ecology however, shallow ecology allows both materialism and idealism (4ab) and it does not presume any view on causation (5a–c). Finally, unlike deep ecology, shallow ecology allows both an evolutionary and an equilibrium perspective on nature (6ab).

Deep ecology is in nearly all respects a special case of the so-called Arcadian view on nature, as shallow ecology is with regard to the imperial view. The two have been described by Donald Worster—and paraphrased by Vincent. It appears that both the Arcadian and imperial approaches are compatible with all forms of substantialism (2a–c), with both materialism and idealism (4ab) and with both views on the natural state of nature (6ab). Both views presume (5c) voluntarism, but they differ on two crucial points: the Arcadian view is holistic (3a) and organicistic (7a), the imperial view compartmentalistic (3b) and mechanicistic (7b). The so-called ‘technocentric’ approach is in turn a special case of imperialism since it explicitly assumes the possibility of planning change, making it an idealistic (4b) view of nature.

A very special brand of greens are those who adhere orthodoxy to their own interpretation of the Gaia hypothesis as developed by James Lovelock. Orthodox Gaianism, as perhaps best described in the hilarious but equally dependable *Green Bluffer’s Guide*, entails the view that nature is one and indivisible, ruled by an unchangeable invisible hand that will restore the natural equilibrium in nature any time it is disturbed. It is unquestionably monistic (2a), holistic (3a), materialistic (4a), deterministic (5a), equilibrist (6a) and organicistic (7a). A more politically viable version of Gaianism, moderate Gaianism, presumes that man can contribute to the restoration of equilibrium of his own free will making this approach voluntaristic (5c).

Finally, let us note that the terms environment and nature are not reserved for any one green school or persuasion. Although the use of the word nature is consistent with a view of man as part of the greater whole, implying holism, and environment with man as isolated from his natural surroundings, implying compartmentalism, both terms are used promiscuously by authors of both persuasions.

**Ethics—man in nature**

Although metaphysical differences are important, the differences of opinion within green movements and between them and non-greens are deepest in the field of environmental ethics. A central topic of debate concerns the object to
which value is assigned. A policy to save the malaria virus from extinction is, for instance, not likely to be justifiable if only the object 'mankind' or 'human interest' counts. I assume the following positions on this issue to be either so familiar or so obvious that they do not require any further explanation: anthropocentrism (8a), attributing value to man only; intellectualism (8b), attributing it to all beings capable of learning and understanding; pathocentrism (8c), also known as sentientism, attributing it to all sentient creatures; zoocentrism (8d), attributing it to all animals; biocentrism (8e), attributing it to all (forms of) life; and ecocentrism (8f), attributing value to all of nature. A less familiar position, finally, is evolutionary ethics (8g). I should stress that I deviate from Vincent's taxonomy here in bringing together under the same heading two positions to which he refers as ecological humanism on the one hand and evolutionary econaturalism or evolutionary ethics on the other. I shall discuss the differences between the two in a moment, after I have introduced all ethical dimensions. For now, I only want to point to the basic similarity between them: they are both evolutionary in assuming the attribution of value to be a matter not of one immovable, unchangeable object, but one of moral development, relative to time and place.

Two other, closely related dimensions are those of the nature of value and of the way of attributing value. As to the first category, the positions are fairly well established: either one sees value as something that is intrinsic (9a) to an object or situation, or its value is derived from external (9b) circumstances—again, either a situation or an object. We are, of course, talking in eschatological terms here: if in a theory value is attributed to \( X \) because of its relation to \( Y \) and so forth until an ultimate \( N \), \( N \) having intrinsic value, then the theory must be considered as an intrinsic-value theory. If there is no \( N \), it is an external-value theory.

Value can be attributed in either of two ways: equally (10a) or hierarchically (10b). In the first case, assuming for example that we are dealing with an anthropocentric theory, all humans are of equal worth; in the latter, assuming a pathocentric theory, we can put a higher price on humans than on animals.

In green theory, the following dimension is often confused with that of the object of value: the source of value. Since man is necessarily the mediator of value, thus making every theory of value ultimately anthropogenic, it might be more precise to speak of the reason for accepting one theory of value rather than another. The positions on this issue are classic and self-evident: some see value as originating in a divine decree (11a), others as inherent to nature (11b), as innate in man and detectable through reason (11c) or intuition (11d), or finally as mere social convention (11e).

A final distinction among greens is again a classic issue, namely, that of the theory of action. The main choice here is that between deontology (12a) and consequentialism (12b), between judging human behaviour by its consistency with certain basic (rights and) duties, respectively assessing its effects. As Michael Sandel once observed, the term deontology is used in two senses: as the foundational opposite of teleology, in which case the issue is whether value is
attributed to intrinsic or external origins [a distinction already covered by dimension (10)], and as the moral opposite of consequentialism. The difference between these two dimensions is subtle but clear: in the first case we appraise objects of moral action, in the latter moral actors.

Theories of moral action, both deontological and consequentialist, are as numerous as the laws in our hearts can be; I would not want to bore the reader by listing even those few I can conceive of. Our directory will remain incomplete in this respect, but I do not think this will in any way affect its adequacy in so far as we are concerned with the typically green contribution to moral and political discourse. Green theories introduce new objects of moral action, new criteria for the evaluation of human behaviour from the moral point of view and new weightings for criteria, but certainly no fundamental changes in the way human behaviour itself is evaluated.

The four new dimensions discussed here under the heading of environmental ethics are helpful, first of all, in broadening the picture of theories discussed earlier, such as deep and shallow ecology. Deep ecology, for one, is ecocentric (8f), whereas shallow ecology as defined by deep ecologists is anthropocentric, intellectualist, zoocentric or at best pathocentric (8a–d). Deep ecology holds to the belief that the value of nature is intrinsic (9a) and that all of nature is equally valuable (10a), whereas shallow ecology can value whatever it values both ways (9ab) but the value of man necessarily transcends that of non-human nature (10b). To deep ecologists, the value of nature is a given, a self-evident aspect of nature (11a). Shallow ecologists on the other hand can value whatever they value for whatever reason (11a–e). Finally, whereas deep ecologists must needs judge human behaviour by the universal and principal duty to live in harmony with nature (12a), shallow ecologists can be both deontologists and consequentialists (12ab).

Secondly, these ethical dimensions can be used to characterize several other green theories. Consider four doctrines recorded in Vincent’s list. Our new set allows us to describe environmental or ethical theism as any theory that values either life or all of nature (8ef) and justifies the value it puts on either one as originating in a divine order (11a), leaving it open whether value needs to be intrinsic to nature or not (9ab) and hierarchical or not (10ab), and by what standard man’s actions should be judged (12ab). Furthermore, in distinguishing authors from the concepts they try to elucidate, and in not confusing metaphysical holism (3a) with ethical biocentricity, our dimensions would not call the biotic or life-centred ethics Vincent discovers in Paul Taylor’s work an example of ‘reluctant holism’ but simply, straightforwardly, biocentrism (8e).

Returning then to the distinction between what Vincent calls ecological humanism (read: Brennanism, after its inventor, Andrew Brennan) and evolutionary econaturalism or evolutionary ethics (read: Bookchinism), both being evolutionary ethics (8g), we find that the first attributes value relative to man’s interests (9b), humans counting as equals (10a), and value being essentially the product of convention (11e). Brennan’s view, although it may not be prescriptive, seems to me to presuppose consequentialism (12b) due to the stress it puts on
human interests. Bookchin’s ethics differ fundamentally in seeing value as intrinsic to nature (9a) and innate in it (11b), yet, since nature develops or unfolds itself in ever higher forms of existence, value is hierarchically distributed (10b). Like Brennan, Bookchin is a consequentialist at heart (12b).

Finally, I want to point to an interesting perspective on environmental ethics that remains unmentioned in Vincent: the so-called theory of ‘concentric circles of responsibility’ as developed in Peter Wenz’ *Environmental Justice* (33) (310 ff.). According to this view, our individual responsibility (9a) for the consequences of our actions (12b) depends on the quality of the interaction (10b) between us and our surroundings, the interaction being more meaningful between man and man than between man and animal, plant or rock—but the latter need not be meaningless (8f). Wenz is not too explicit about the origin of value in this context, but it appears to be a matter of intuition (11d).

**Politics—the shape of a green society**

Broadly speaking, green political thought has to deal with two major questions: the traditional one of the desirable shape of human society, and the new one it put on the agenda itself, namely, how humans should administer the affairs of nature, if at all. The answer to the latter question can but need not lead to fundamentally new answers to the former. Whether it actually does depends mainly on the positions taken on the first five of the six dimensions that will be discussed in this section. It is important to stress once more that the choice for positions on these dimensions can also be independent in a second respect. Green political ideologies are not committed to one particular view of environmental ethics or metaphysics, nor does one particular view of environmental ethics or metaphysics commit one to one particular view of green politics. Consider the following three examples, which all seem to make perfect sense:

1. *The Green Workers Party* candidate (C) addresses a voter: ‘You are being exploited!’ Voter (V): ‘No I ain’t.’ C: ‘Yes you are. You could be better off under a different system in which our natural resources are not exploited, in which your air and water are not polluted, in which your children are not in danger of genetic injury or sterility!’ V: ‘Oh bu**er. I see. You’re right. And how do we get there?’ C: ‘Action. Firm action. And rigorous government intervention. That is what we need most of all now: a State that for once truly controls the economy instead of protecting the plutocrats. Capitalism will inevitably collapse because of its internal contradictions, but if we all push hard enough now, in parliament, in the streets and in the workplace, we might just kick it over the edge a bit sooner and save ourselves a lot of trouble.’ V: ‘Why, that’s good news, comrade. I’ll vote for you presently.’

2. *The Back To Basics Party* candidate: ‘You are being poisoned by your own government! You could be better off under a different system in which nature is not exploited, in which your air and water are not polluted, in which your children are not in danger of genetic injury or sterility!’ V: ‘Oh shoot. I see. You’re right. And how do we get there?’ C: ‘Abolish the state! Do away with government interference, subsidies and all that nonsense. The System will inevitably collapse because of its internal contradictions, but if we abolish it now we can save ourselves a lot of trouble. Let the consumer decide for himself whether he wants to die for state-protected inert monopolies and cartels, or if he wants to force them to become green.’ V: ‘You’ve pretty well convinced me!’

3. *The Raving Loony Save The Dinosaur Party* candidate: ‘Earth is being ravaged! By greed, selfishness,
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consumerism, progress, technocratic blindness, by lack of community feeling, by the immoral and unnatural acts of man! Plants are being burned alive, animals massacred, tortured, whole regions of the planet are being destroyed! This whole beautiful green planet is going to the dogs!' V: 'D*mn! I'm angry! What can we do about it?' C: 'Abolish the state! Do away with government interference, subsidies and all that nonsense. The System will inevitably collapse because of its internal contradictions, but if we abolish it now we can save ourselves a lot of trouble. Let the consumer decide for herself whether she wants Nature to die for second houses, second cars, second toothbrushes, or if she wants to save Creation from Sin!' V: 'M'ldud, you've got my vote!'

The traits that characterize green political thought are distinctly political, not metaphysical. First and foremost, a political theorist or activist interested in environmental issues has to decide on the scale of environmental problems. The popular (deep) green view is that we are experiencing a genuine ecological crisis (13a) threatening the survival of mankind or even that of all life on this planet. This view presumes that environmental problems are interconnected, one form of, say, pollution leading to another, partial solutions generating new environmental problems elsewhere in nature, and nearly all forms of human behaviour interfering with nature—for better or for worse. Note, however, that this position does not necessarily presume (3a) holism; it is still to some degree compatible with compartmentalism (3b). A second position with regard to the scale of current environmental problems is that there is no crisis, there are only environmental problems (13b). In this view, our survival or that of other sections of nature may still be at stake but need not be. If it is, it is not as a consequence of a fundamental crisis due to interconnected problems but because one or more of several, not necessarily related, environmental problems threaten one or more necessary conditions for the survival of a section of nature. Finally and at least in theory, it is possible to argue that there is really no problem (13c) at all with nature. One could expect some orthodox evolutionists to adhere to this view, not to mention some whose only interest in nature lies in its recreational functions, or some for whom the real environmental crisis is not a material but a moral crisis.

A logical sequence to the issue of the magnitude of environmental problems is that of the ‘relevance of society’ to environmental concerns: to most greens, humans and their society matter (14a) both morally and practically. To others, the whole question of the make-up of society simply does not matter (14b). The latter position is consistent with the ideas of a very wide range of green activists, from terrorists who, in their struggle to save nature from its most deadly enemy, mankind, would accept the destruction of man, down to the respectable citizen who financially supports Greenpeace without ever linking environmental to social issues.

Third, green political theorists need to assess the ‘relative importance of nature and society’: is their concern with the fate of nature an overall (15a) concern, limiting other interests and primary to these, or is it a matter of restricted (15b) importance, limited by other issues and secondary to them? In other words, should society be adapted to the perceived needs of nature, or is nature one, possibly minor, constraint among others on the shape of society? Very roughly, this distinction is, at least in their own eyes, the most manifest
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difference between Greens and greens, or deep and shallow greens, or green and grey, or true greens and hypocrites, respectively, fanatics and moderates. Its impact will become more clear in a moment, when we discuss dimension (19), the political theories adopted by greens.

A further familiar topic of debate concerns the ‘limits to growth’: either one does (16a) or does not (16b) believe in their existence. It is perhaps good to point out once more that one can be green or pro-environment, perhaps even deep green, without believing in the existence of limits to growth, if one for example believes that the real environmental crisis is a moral crisis. Moreover, a simple and formal recognition of the limits to growth commits one to neither an opinion on how close we are to those limits [cf. dimension (13)], nor to one on how important those limits may be [cf. dimension (3)], nor, consequently, to one on the seriousness of environmental problems. These are all analytically distinct issues.

Fifth and sixth, greens can take sides on the issues of the quantitative and qualitative development of the human population—meaning, less formally, population growth and economic growth. Possible positions here are: decrease (17a, 18a) of population, respectively a shrinking economy; zero growth (17b, 18b); limited growth (17c, 18c), also known as sustainable growth; unlimited growth (17d, 18d), a possibility both for those who do not believe in limits to growth and for those who believe that nature itself will restore whatever balance might be upset by a too high rate of development or a too hazardous type of development; and lastly uninhibited development (17e, 18e), meaning abstaining from any population policy or economic policy rather than actively promoting (either decrease or) growth. Note that the ambiguous phrases ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’ are used as euphemisms for both sustainable and zero growth.

Finally, greens can be distinguished by the type of ‘political theory’ to which they adhere, that is, the type of human society they advocate. In contrast to most dimensions discussed so far, the positions on this one are not necessarily mutually exclusive. They can occur in all sorts of combinations or mixtures. A clear example is feminism, which, like ecologism, can easily be combined with many other political theories. Nor would I want to pretend that the list I am about to give is complete (it surely is not), or that it is new. With two exceptions, the positions listed describe very old or very familiar political theories. The point to note is that, in principle, greens can support any political theory, any form of political and social order. Their green concerns, whether overall or restricted, do not have to result in totally new blueprints of perfect or imperfect societies; they can also lead them to put new (green) constraints on old theories, find new arguments for old theories or against alternative theories. Hence, a green theorist can also be, say, a liberal. Depending on whether her concern with nature is overall or restricted [cf. dimension (15)], I would describe her as an eco-liberal respectively a liberal environmentalist. The list, for which I have borrowed at least (19e) and (19f) from Vincent, looks as follows:
(19a) Liberalism
(19b) Libertarianism
(19c) Anarchism
(19d) Social democracy
(19e) Statist socialism
(19f) Pluralistic socialism
(19g) Conservatism
(19h) Authoritarianism
(19i) Fascism
(19j) Communitarianism
(19k) Feminism
(19l) Political naturalism
(19m) Political agnosticism

The last two entries on this list require some further explanation. Political agnosticism is included to cover cases in which a theory or theorist avoids all mention of a favourite or preferable political order. Political naturalism refers to the hypothetical category of genuinely new and typically deep green ‘back to nature’ ideologies. What would distinguish these political theories from other entries on the list is that they would want society to be rearranged as a part of nature following the perceived rules of nature. One could imagine here, for instance, an eclectic theory dividing human society into bio-, morpho- and geo-regional societies, with cultures, customs, economies and consumption patterns conforming to the ecological structure of each particular region. To some extent, Callenbach’s earlier mentioned Ecotopia36 (1975) satisfies these conditions.

The number of schools and beliefs in green political thought seems to surpass that in every other area of green theory. Since most of them are easily characterized in terms of the dimensions discussed here, I shall mention only a few and refer the reader for more details to the appendix.

The easiest way to begin a categorization of greens-in-politics is by explaining the three most popular and general pairs of epithets used by and for them: deep and shallow green, green and Green, and green and grey. As a rule one can say that ‘grey’ is used to denote every idea that is consistent with every denial of an environmental crisis (13bc), although some reserve the term for (13b) only, leaving (13c) unnamed or even unmentioned. For reasons of clarity and precision, it might be better to follow the latter convention and baptize (13c), denying the existence of any environmental problem, ‘blank’.

The use of the term green is even more indefinite; there seem to be at least three meanings. First of all, it is universally used in its most im precise and general meaning as ‘everything that remotely relates to a political interest in the environment’, as I for instance have done throughout this text. Secondly, green can be used in a broad sense as the opposite of grey, to denote every position consistent with (13a), the recognition of a global environmental crisis. Finally, green (lower case g) is used in a strict sense as the opposite of Green (capital
A TAXONOMY OF GREEN IDEAS

G). In the last case, both are consistent with (13a) but Green refers to theories in which nature is of overall importance (15a), whereas in green theories (lower case g) the interest in nature is one among others (15b).

The labels deep and shallow are used in two ways: either as synonyms of Green and green, or to denote consistency with the metaphysical and ethical ideas of deep and shallow ecology (see previous sections). In real life, the difference between these two interpretations is negligible, Green theories usually being consistent with deep ecology and green ones with shallow ecology, but as argued before, usually and necessarily are not the same thing. A shallow ecologist is not predestined to be lower-case-green.

The terms ‘environmentalism’ and ‘ecologism’ (also known as political ecologism) are, like deep and shallow, often used as synonyms of green, respectively, Green. Yet they can also be used in a slightly more determinate way. Both views not only presume the existence of an environmental crisis and the limited (environmentalism) overall (ecologism) importance of the fate of nature, they are also explicitly political creeds, addressing environmental as well as political and social issues. Moreover, both presume the existence of limits to growth, ecologism opting for either decreasing or zero growth, environmentalism for limited (‘sustainable’) growth. However, neither one is necessarily committed to the idea that politics and politicians can or should influence growth. For the record: the full profile of ecologism is (13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17abe, 18abe, 19a–l), that of environmentalism (13a, 14a, 15b, 16a, 17ce, 18ce, 19a–k). Environmentalism is obviously not compatible with political naturalism (19l).

Two examples of ecological political theories are ‘ecofeminism’ (13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17ab, 18ab, 19k), and its less radical sister (13a, 14a, 15b, 16a, 17c, 18c, 19k) that could best be described as ‘feminist environmentalism’. Murray Bookchin’s ‘social ecologism’ was described by Vincent as communist anarchism (19cj). Though he opposes the Enlightenment view of progress (read: growth), Bookchin’s ideas are obviously incompatible with government interference (18e). For the rest, social ecologism distinguishes itself in little from other ecologisms (13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17e). Lastly, the (hypothetical) profile of ‘ecofundamentalism’ would be (13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17ab, 18ab, 19l).

There is a special place in green literature for ‘single-issue environmentalism’ and ‘recreation environmentalism’, usually as examples of conservationism and preservationism [political profile of the latter couple: (13bc, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17de, 18de, 19m)], persuasions that seems to be truly despicable to the True Green. Conservationism and preservationism are interested in nature only insofar as they want to protect some parts of nature that are seen as valuable enough to maintain—the whale, the seal or other cuddly species in the case of single-issue environmentalism (13b, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17de, 18de, 19m), the city park around the corner in that of recreation environmentalism (13c, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17de, 18de, 19m). Conservationism and preservationism can be anthropocentric to biocentric (8a–e). Convention has it that the differences lie in their denial (3b), i.e. acceptance of holism (3a), as well as in the preser-
vationist’s insistence on the more stringent measures for the protection of sanctuaries for nature.

Finally, let us consider two slightly irregular perspectives on green politics: the ‘Earth First!’ and ‘UNA-bomber’s’ ideas. Both believe quite strongly that nature is on the verge of annihilation and that its interests outweigh man’s by millions, and both insist that we put a stop to growth before it is too late (13a, 14b, 15a, 16a, 17a, 18a). Although neither is really interested in human politics, the UNA-bomber seems partial to a life of liberty in friendly green communities (19bj), whereas Earth First! is more inclined to the benevolent dictatorship of Mother Nature (191).

Policies

In comparison to the previous three levels of debate, characterizing green policy theories is a very simple and straightforward affair. The first question for greens here is whether they believe political action to remedy or thwart environmental problems is possible (20a) at all or not (20b). Judgment on this issue depends mainly on the positions taken on a combination of the dimensions mentioned earlier, especially materialism/idealism (4), causation (5) and equilibrium/evolution (6), but also on quite practical considerations like the availability of means and resources, of political support and legitimacy.

Secondly, the green policy maker has to decide on the level of action. One possibility for green policies is that they are collective (21a), that is, deliberate attempts by the institutions of a society to transform or preserve a status quo. Most environmental policy is of this type, and most political action is directed at promoting or inducing such collective policies at the national, international or subnational level. A second option is that of group action (21b), in which one or more segments of society neglect the collective route and start operating on their own. Famous examples of this approach are Greenpeace, the RSPCA in its early days and Earth First! If neither of the above applies, green policy will be a purely individual (21c) action. The latter is especially an option for those who believe in invisible hands, the self-regulating capacities of the free market or the ineffectivity of political coercion.

The issue of the level of action goes hand in hand with that of the radius of action. The positions on this dimension hardly need explanation: green policies can be directed at the global (22a) community, a supranational (22b), national (22c), regional (22d), subcultural (22e), local (22f) or individual (22g) level. Decisive for any choice in this field is not whether the problem at hand concerns the whole planet, a biotope or merely the tree on the corner of the street—but where, at which tier, the necessary means and support can or should be mobilized. Of course, the range of the problem does play a role in this decision, but so do considerations of a political, ethical and metaphysical nature.

Finally, green policies can be basically of only two types: radical (23a) or reformist (23b). Here, I borrow the famous and elegant distinction Karl Popper made between utopian and piece-meal engineering. The two describe funda-
mentally different approaches to problem solving. Piece-meal engineering presupposes that problems should in principle be solved separately, one by one, one after the other, in their smallest possible shape, with the lowest possible amount of energy at the lowest possible speed. The idea behind this is that a policy aimed at realizing $X$ aims to realise $X$ and not $Y$. Now according to Popper’s falsificationist view, we can never be sure that we have complete information, nor that if we did (though on this view truth is a red herring), we could have complete control over the unlimited amount of information that ‘complete information’ would require. Since this is so, any change can have unexpected consequences, that is, it could result in $Y$ rather than $X$, which makes it advisable to design policies in such a way that they cause the least possible amount of expected damage and offer a maximum opportunity for testing and adapting them. Utopian engineering, on the other hand, presumes that problems should be solved as radically, speedily, completely, directly and fundamentally as possible, precisely because there is always a chance that something (pressure groups, new issues and problems, second thoughts) may come in between the first steps towards $X$ and the realisation of $X$. Though these two approaches clearly differ at a fundamental level, it is equally clear that, under the right circumstances, the two can result in precisely the same actual policy. They need not, though.

Since these four dimensions allow us again to characterize a vast number of theories, I can only discuss some of the more important strategies. Probably the best known approach to green policy is ecological modernization, the background of which has been described in detail by amongst others Albert Weale.\textsuperscript{42} The picture that emerges from this description is that of a typically active (20a) and collective approach (21a), applicable at any level (22a–g) and modest in its aims and expectations (23b). One could contrast this with what might be called ecological utopianism, the preferred approach of radical ecologism: also active (20a) and collective (21a),\textsuperscript{43} also applicable to every tier in world politics (22a–g) and probably applied to all at once, but distinguishing itself from ecological modernization by its radical methods and ambitions (23a).

Clearly distinct from these two are the policies of groups like Earth First! and the Animal Liberation Front or lone rangers like the UNA-bomber, policies that have been described alternatively as ecotage, ecoterrorism and ecobrutalism.\textsuperscript{44} Although they both believe that political action is possible (20a)—they definitely partake in it—and although their audience may be the collective, they prefer to act either as groups (21b) or as an individual (21c). Their radius of action is actually limited but in principle as open as that of ecological modernization and utopianism (22a–g). What they share with ecological utopianism is an unabashed faith in radical measures (23a).

Perhaps unexpectedly, green consumerism (buying green and selling green with green intentions) is not too different from ecoterrorism. At least not as a policy strategy. It is also a form of active and deliberate political behaviour (20a), implemented by individuals (21c) and applicable at any level (22a–g). The one difference lies, obviously, in the methods that are used: green consumers employ far more moderate strategies (23b) than ecoterrorists.
Table 1. A summary of green policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>Specific name</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>Ecological utopianism</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Ecological modernization</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>(group)</td>
<td>Ecoterrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>(individual)</td>
<td>Ecoterrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Green consumerism</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>Orthodox Gaianism</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Orthodox Gaianism</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
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<tr>
<td>b</td>
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<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
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<td>b</td>
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<td>a-g</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>a-g</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reader will note one interesting possible policy course, denoted with *, that has not been discussed before: reformist group action (20a, 21b, 22a–g, 23b). Examples of this approach are what might be called green producerism: cartel agreements, or in less controversial terms covenants, between members of an economic branch to diminish the use of or charge a price for, plastic bags in shops, to recycle one's own clients' waste or—thus legally limiting the clients' freedom of choice while at the same time circumventing democratic procedures (21a)—not to sell some products at all.

In view of the limited number of dimensions and positions discussed in this section, we can construct a relatively simple summary in the form of a table. The first four columns list positions on dimensions 20–23, the last two connect these to the names of the policy theories mentioned (Table 1).

The last green policy approach to be mentioned here is ecological passivism, typifying anyone who or any theory that does not believe that ecological policy can be successful, either because there are no environmental problems worth mentioning (13c), or because man cannot singlehandedly change the course of things (5a). Considering that on this view any type of policy may be desirable but will be considered impossible, the profile fitting passivism is (20b, 21a–c, 22a–g, 23ab). Not too surprisingly, the profile fits orthodox Gaians (20b, 21a, 22a–g, 23ab) just as perfectly as a grey or blank view on environmental politics.

In view of the limited number of dimensions and positions discussed in this section, we can construct a relatively simple summary in the form of a table. The first four columns list positions on dimensions 20–23, the last two connect these to the names of the policy theories mentioned (Table 1).

The archetype of the Green

In this article, I have discussed 23 dimensions on which green theories of society, of politics, of policy and of moral behaviour can take positions. Positions and dimensions were treated as concepts, whereas the individual theories of individual authors or groups were understood to embody and interpret rather than define them. Thus, we were able to distinguish green theories, 'isms', so to speak, from one another with a minimal amount of ambiguity and a maximum of impartiality.
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We have, on several occasions, observed that adherence to distinct positions on one or more particular dimensions does not necessarily commit a theorist to particular positions on other dimensions. As a result, we ended up with an immense number of possible combinations of two to 23 positions, each of these sets of combinations being 'remotely related to a political interest in the environment', that is, green in the widest possible sense. We have given names to some of these sets or 'possible green theories', but by no means to all. Actually, we have characterized only a subset of the more famous examples of only the subset of really existing green theories in terms of positions and dimensions.

Although I did occasionally exclude possible green theories (that is, combinations of positions) that were clearly logically inconsistent, in particular any combination of (15b), attaching limited importance to the fate of nature, and (191), political naturalism, I did not consider it my principal task to restrict the list to consistent or empirically supported green theories only. Whether or not a green theory is logically consistent depends on the compatibility of the positions, which in turn depends on their exact formulation, and the latter issue is obviously open to philosophical debate.

Since virtually no limits have been put on the characterization of theories as green in the widest possible sense, it might seem that anything goes, that there is no way of characterizing a theory as truly green. This would be a mistake. The set of possible green theories, of possibly truly green theories, can be limited in at least two ways.

Firstly, of course, there is convention. As indicated above, there are certain conventions restricting the use of the term green to theories that recognize the existence of a global environmental crisis (13a) and in some cases restrict it even further to distinguish between those that are not-really-green [lower-case-green theories in which the interest in nature is but one among several others (15a)] and those that are [capital-G-Green theories in which the importance of nature overrules every other interest (15b)]. Yet one should remember that these are merely conventions.

Secondly, there is the more promising alternative of consistency analysis. It seems elementary to demand that a possible (or rather, in this context, possibly) green theory be consistent in two respects: (i) with regard to known facts and (ii) with regard to the internal structure of the theory. I have already said something about the latter issue, logical consistency, above; suffice it to say here that although it may not be a simple demand, it is also one we cannot do without. It is a necessary requirement for any theory if it is to be taken seriously, specifically, if it is to be taken seriously as a green theory.

The term 'known facts' in the first condition should not be interpreted too strictly. If there is such a thing as a global environmental crisis, then any theory that does not take this fact (in the strict sense of an empirical fact) into consideration cannot truly be 'interested in the environment'; it cannot be called green. But likewise, if it were true that man should not intrinsically value life as such but only some forms of life, then any theory inconsistent with this fact (in
the related sense of an ethical fact) cannot be green either. One must admit that
unearthing a fact, discovering that something actually is or is not the case,
whether ethically or empirically, is not easy, to say the least. Yet we have to
assume its possibility as a second necessary condition for judging if theories do
or do not make sense as green theories.

In this text, I have merely tried to describe the borders of the green terrain,
not chart it in every detail. For the latter purpose, I argued, we, both theorists
and empirical scientists, have to turn again to one of the things we do during the
rest of the day: consistency analysis.

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The usual disclaimer applies: the views expressed here are mine and mine alone,
as are all flaws and errors.

Notes and references

1. R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution. Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*
2. M. Nas, 'Green, greener, greenest', in J. van Deth and E. Scarbrough (Eds), *The Impact of Values* (Oxford:
4. Other examples can be found: in P. Wenz, *Environmental Justice* (Albany: State University of New York
   Bosselmann, *Im Namen der Natur. Der Weg zur ökologischen Rechtsstaat* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche
   Buchgesellschaft, 1992); M. Wissenberg, 'The idea of nature and the nature of distributive justice', in A.
   Dobson and P. Lucardie (Eds), *The Politics of Nature. Explorations in Green Political Theory* (London:
   1975).
10. Vincent, *op. cit.*, Ref. 3.
14. B. Devall and G. Sessions, 'The development of nature resources and the integrity of nature', *Environmental
15. B. Devall and G. Sessions, *Deep Ecology. Living as if Nature Mattered* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith,
   1985).
17. Although a case can be made for both materialism (4a) and idealism (4b), Naess himself is deeply
    influenced in his metaphysics by Spinoza. See later.
18. For a quick reference guide to the following abbreviations, see the Appendices.
   1985).
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24. Like Marx's followers, Lovelock's do not necessarily follow his theory in all respects. It has been argued that Lovelock's own understanding of Gaia is in fact rather mechanistic (M. Maas, *Gaia, Machine of Organisme* (Leuven, Belgium: Van Halewyck, 1995)).
29. For further reading on types of moral theory, see for example M. Timmons, 'Ethical foundationalism', *Ethics*, 97 (1987), pp. 595–609.
33. Wenz, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4.
34. Andy Dobson has argued—and I believe he is correct in this—that not all ideologies are equally compatible with ecological concerns, particularly not if the latter dominate other political concerns [cf. position (15a), or Dobson's description of ecologism] Dobson, *op. cit.*, Ref. 4, p. 13). I have no intention of denying this when I say that greens can, at least in principle, support any political theory. Mere incompatibility has never stopped for instance politicians from expounding internally contradictory views. The dimensions I introduce in this text are primarily meant to describe possible green theories as a first necessary step towards answering further questions, like whether these possible theories can also be logically valid and empirically supported.
35. Vincent, *op. cit.*, Ref. 3.
43. Notwithstanding the fact that an intellectual vanguard of ecological utopians may be permitted to inspire, lead or make the first steps towards ecotopia.
44. Vincent, *op. cit.*, Ref. 3, p. 266.
### Appendix A: levels, dimensions and positions discussed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept/level</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysics</td>
<td>(1) (ir)rationalism</td>
<td>(1a) mysticism</td>
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<td>(2) substantialism</td>
<td>(1b) rationalism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2b) dualism</td>
<td>(2a) monism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) composition of nature</td>
<td>(2b) dualism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) motor of change</td>
<td>(2c) metaphysical pluralism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(5) causation</td>
<td>(3a) holism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(6) 'natural' state of nature</td>
<td>(3b) compartmentalism</td>
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<td>(7) mode of change</td>
<td>(4a) materialism</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(4b) idealism</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5c) voluntarism</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(6a) equilibrium</td>
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<td>(8b) intellectualism</td>
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<td>(10) way of attributing value</td>
<td>(10a) equally</td>
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<td>(11) source of value</td>
<td>(10b) hierarchically</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(11a) divine decree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(11b) inherent to nature</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11c) innate in man, reason</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(11d) innate in man, intuition</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11e) convention</td>
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<td>(12) theory of action</td>
<td>(12a) deontology</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(12b) consequentialism</td>
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<td>Politics</td>
<td>(13) scale of problems</td>
<td>(13a) ecological crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13b) environmental problems</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13c) no problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(14) relevance of society</td>
<td>(14a) matters</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(14b) does not matter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(15) relative importance</td>
<td>(15a) overall concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(15b) restricted importance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(16) limits to growth</td>
<td>(16a) belief</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(16b) no belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17) quantitative development</td>
<td>(17a) decrease</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(17b) zero growth</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(17c) limited growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(17d) unlimited growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(17e) uninhibited development</td>
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</table>
### A TAXONOMY OF GREEN IDEAS

| (18) qualitative development | (18a) decrease  
|                              | (18b) zero growth  
|                              | (18c) limited growth  
|                              | (18d) unlimited growth  
|                              | (18e) uninhibited development  
| (19) political theory | (19a) Liberalism  
|                         | (19b) Libertarianism  
|                         | (19c) Anarchism  
|                         | (19d) Social democracy  
|                         | (19e) Statist socialism  
|                         | (19f) Pluralistic socialism  
|                         | (19g) Conservatism  
|                         | (19h) Authoritarianism  
|                         | (19i) Fascism  
|                         | (19j) Communitarianism  
|                         | (19k) Feminism  
|                         | (19l) Political naturalism  
|                         | (19m) Political agnosticism  

| Policy | (20) political action | (20a) possible  
|        |                        | (20b) impossible  

| (21) level of action | (21a) collective  
|                     | (21b) group action  
|                     | (21c) individual  

| (22) radius of action | (22a) global community  
|                       | (22b) supranational  
|                       | (22c) national  
|                       | (22d) regional  
|                       | (22e) subcultural  
|                       | (22f) local  
|                       | (22g) individual  

| (23) types | (23a) radical  
|            | (23b) reformist  

Appendix B: virtual and real green theories

A complete list of all imaginable green theories, using only 22 of the 23 dimensions discussed here and ignoring mystical theories, would have 13 243 876 000 entries. This might be slightly too much even for the persistent reader. If we reduce this number to those theories that are more or less internally consistent, i.e. to those in which all positions are actually logically compatible with one another, the resulting list would presumably still be far too long and complex. Hence, I have listed here only those theories discussed earlier. Only the policy theories have been given a special treatment; in view of their relatively limited number, we can distinguish (nearly) every possibility here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green theory</th>
<th>Dimensions encompassed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox Gaianism</td>
<td>(2a, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6a, 7a) and (20b, 21a, 22a–g, 23ab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Gaianism</td>
<td>(2a, 3a, 4a, 5c, 6a, 7a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadian approach</td>
<td>(2abc, 3a, 4ab, 5c, 6ab, 7a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep ecology</td>
<td>(2a, 3a, 4a, 5abc, 6b, 7a) and (8f, 9a, 10a, 11b, 12a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecosophy</td>
<td>(2a, 3a, 4ab, 5a, 6b, 7a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial approach</td>
<td>(2abc, 3b, 4ab, 5c, 6ab, 7b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technocentric approach</td>
<td>(2abc, 3b, 4b, 5c, 6ab, 7b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shallow ecology</td>
<td>(2bc, 3b, 4ab, 5abc, 6ab, 7b) and (8abcd, 9ab, 10b, 11abcede, 12ab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentientism</td>
<td>(8c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biotic or life-centred ethics: biocentrism</td>
<td>(8e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental theism</td>
<td>(8f, 9ab, 10ab, 11a, 12b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentric circles of responsibility</td>
<td>(8f, 9a, 10b, 11d, 12b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolutionary eocentrism, evolutionary ethics</td>
<td>(8g, 9a, 10b, 11b, 12b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological humanism</td>
<td>(8g, 9b, 10a, 11e, 12b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green, widest possible sense</td>
<td>‘Everything remotely related to the environment’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green (broad), opposite of grey</td>
<td>(13a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green, capital G, cf. deep</td>
<td>(13a, 15a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green (strict, lower case g), opposite of Green; cf. shallow</td>
<td>(13a, 15b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecologism, political ecology</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17abe, 18abe, 19a–l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecofeminism</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17ab, 18ab, 19k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecofundamentalism</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17ab, 18ab, 19l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social ecologism (Murray Bookchin)</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17c, 18e, 19cj)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalism</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15b, 16a, 17c, 18e, 19a–k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist environmentalism</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15b, 16a, 17a, 18a, 19k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth First!</td>
<td>(13a, 14a, 15a, 16a, 17a, 18a, 19l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNA-bomber</td>
<td>(13a, 14b, 15a, 16a, 17a, 18a, 19b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey (broad)</td>
<td>(13bc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey (strict)</td>
<td>(13b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservationism</td>
<td>(3b, 8a–e) and (13bc, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17d, 18de, 19m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservationism</td>
<td>(3a, 8a–e) and (13bc, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17de, 18de, 19m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-issue environmentalism</td>
<td>(13b, 14b, 15b, 16ab, 17de, 18de, 19m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>(13c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation environmentalism</td>
<td>(13c, 14a, 15b, 16ab, 17d, 18de, 19m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable development, sustainability</td>
<td>(17bc, 18bc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable growth</td>
<td>(17c, 18c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological utopianism</td>
<td>(20a, 21a, 22a–g, 23a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological modernization</td>
<td>(20a, 21a, 22a–g, 23b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecoterrorism (group)</td>
<td>(20a, 21b, 22a–g, 23a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological reformism (group), green producerism</td>
<td>(20a, 21b, 22a–g, 23b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecoterrorism (individual)</td>
<td>(20a, 21c, 22a–g, 23a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green consumerism</td>
<td>(20a, 21c, 22a–g, 23b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological passivism</td>
<td>(20b, 21abc, 22a–g, 23ab)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>