CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION
The final chapter is composed of two sections, the first dealing with comparative analysis of the three ecological movements and the second section is summation of the thesis.

SECTION I

The ecological movements against the BHEP, KNPP and STRP are compared with each other in terms of strategy, ideology, leadership, organisations, membership, interaction with political parties, government and perceptions regarding environment, development and the preferred alternatives.

Ideology

The predominating common ideologies are environment protection and survival of the local population. The subsidiary operating ideologies are:

(a) in case of the Bedthi movement's second phase, the undercurrent of upper caste ideology operated which emerged in response to the perceived threat to its caste members.

(b) In the case of the KNPP movement, ideologies of peace and disarmament operated. This indicates that, in addition to a predominant ideology, locally specific ideologies operate together.

Strategy

The protest activities were a combination of institutionalised action like petitioning, voting in
elections, fighting legal battles in the court of law and the non-institutionalised actions of protest -
(a) Dharnas
(b) Marches
(c) Meetings
(d) Demonstrations
(e) Signature campaigns
(f) Rastha Rokus
(g) Gherao
(h) Satyagraha.

The nature of protest activity was peaceful and non-violent. The strategies of BHEP first phase, KNPP and STRP were largely short termed and spontaneous which responded to sudden emergence of external crisis and non-crisis situation. The EM against BHEP second phase, in contrast, was planned in its totality in the beginning itself. Except the anti-BHEP movements first stage, all the other movements had approached the courts and legal channels as a strategy. The anti-KNPP movement utilised elections as a strategy which did not succeed. The rest of the movements did not utilise this strategy and instead, appealed to the elected representatives, for justice and political parties for support.
Organisation

All the three movements were characterised by formal organisation in the early stages of mobilisation itself. The anti-BHEP movement organisation was not flexible as in the organisation of the other two movements. The BHEP first stage and the STRP movement were characterised by the joint operation of the formal organisation and informal networks of local leaders. The BHEP second stage was characterised by the joint operation of the formal organisation, representatives of political parties and castes. Hence it was a coalition of these varied organisations which were headed by a religious head. In the KNPP movement, the skeletal organisation PSS functioned with a coalition of Urban and Rural groups - the common characteristic of these movements is informal and multiple membership. Hence, movement organisation varied from flexible to non-flexible.

Leadership

We find that in BHEP movement, a single leader (in the first phase political and in the second religious) led the movement. In KNPP movement, a collectivity of leaders from urban and rural areas ranging from journalists to village leaders, Chartered Accountant to traders, farmers and scientists vanguarded the movement. In the case of STRP, it was a coalition of two local
leaders which directed the course of movement. Hence we find a range of movement leadership ranging from a single leader to a collectivity.

Membership

In the BHEP and KNPP ecological movements, the members were drawn predominantly from the directly affected areas and were also joined by people coming from the indirectly affected areas. In STRP, the members were drawn mainly from the indirectly affected areas, as the project did not directly affect any human habitation.

The caste dimension of the membership in BHEP was dominated by Havyak Brahmins even though other castes were equally affected. In its second phase, the movement made conscious attempt to dislodge the Havyak Brahmins bias by incorporating various non-brahmin castes. The KNPP and STRP movements membership was drawn from the Upghat Havyak brahmins and the varied castes in the coastal area.

Occupation

The predominating occupation was that of Thotagars in all the movements with KNPP and STRP movements exhibiting a greater diversity of occupations.

Interaction with Political Parties

The common underlying fundamental tenet was that environment transcends party politics. In the BHEP,
first phase movement, the successful integration of political parties’ support was achieved due to the non-discriminatory nature of project impact on all sections of the people. In addition, the political parties felt the responsibility to the wishes of the people and extended spontaneous support. In the second stage of the BHEP movement, the earlier spontaneity and support were missing and each political party was guided by political reasons and pressures. The support of all the parties was achieved due to the previous history of all political party support due to people’s pressure and the exercise of the authority by the religious head. In contrast to the earlier phase, conscious generation of all party political support took place. This also highlights the changed nature of the response of political parties to environment issue which was politicised and was seen as an electoral issue mainly due to the elections of 1989.

In case of KNPP movement, on the other hand, none of the political parties at any level supported the movement. In their individual capacity, the political party members extended support who distinguished environment from political issues. Due to the contesting in General Elections 1989, the movement allowed itself into the quagmire of political rivalries and was seen as a vote bank and an electoral issue in
the subsequent General Elections of 1991. The defeat in
the elections resulted in the loss of credibility of the
movement in the eyes of the public and political party
which continued to distinguish environment and party
politics. In contrast, the STRP movement was supported
by all the political parties and was not used as an
issue in the elections. Hence the varied interactive
relationship between the movements and political parties
is captured by these three movements.

Government and Movement Interaction

The common factor in all these movements was that
the government in power was not identified as an 'enemy'
and instead was appealed to for the redressal of the
perceived grievances of the development of project was
initiated by the government itself. The response of the
government vis-a-vis the movements ranged from the
immediate acceding of the demands to downright volta
tface. In the first stage of BHEPEM, the government
immediately agreed to the demand. In contrast, in the
second phase itself which was drew later, the government
was adamant in implementing the project. In the KNPP
movement, the government by appearing to concede the
movements demand delayed the issue for years on the
ostensible reasons of holding dialogues. The government
prevaricated the issue by not revealing its true stance
to the movement. In the case of STRP, the government
was altogether indifferent to the movement though initially it adopted the same strategy of deliberate ambiguity. Thus we have in these movements all the possible responses from the government.

Movements Perception of Environment

All the three movements gave primacy to the maintenance of the existing environmental equilibrium in their areas. The primacy accorded to the environment was due to their perception of environment and in the case of BHEP movement it was directly linked to survival. Environment was perceived to be the 'Life Sustaining Force' which had to be preserved at all costs. It was considered to be essential to the very survival of man. The respondents felt an affinity to the forests around them and spoke of forests and environment. The long established linkage between the local human communities and the environment was sought to be retained at all costs. The respondents articulated their psychological and physical dependence on environment and stated that they would not be able to live if removed from their environment. This formed one of the bases of their protest against the development projects.
Development and Movement

The respondents of all the three movements felt that the development project would not bring development on the grounds that
(a) it would destroy the environment
(b) consequently, affect their survival
(c) The perceived benefits accruing from the projects by the government are far outweighed by the losses due to destruction of environment.
(d) This model of development generates inequality and destroys communities for the sake of larger interests and hence is not relevant to their existence.

Movement and Alternatives to Development

As the movements have emerged as a response to a specific development project, they offer alternatives
(a) to the project
(b) development model.

The alternatives offered to the development project are based on environmentally design, small scale, less polluting technology and cater to the local needs which range from
(a) solar energy
(b) wind
(c) tidal
(d) mini and micro hydel power plants
(e) run of the river schemes
(f) generation of electricity through pipe lines. Each movement had offered specific alternatives to the development project.

Alternative Development Model

The alternative development Model that emerges would be one developed and evolved in association with the local people themselves in consonance with the given state of environment and the established interlinkages between human communities and environment. This would ensure equity in disbursement of the envisaged benefits of development and equality and justice.

Environmental awareness emerged initially in the BHEP ecological movement as linked with survival and later in the KNPP ecological movement was associated with the abstract notion of environment protection and in the STRP ecological movement was entirely on environment protection. The sources of environment awareness were the nature and extent of project impact on the people and environment, the conscious self-education about the wider processes of environment by reading books, magazines and interaction with scientists as well as the awareness of other ecological movements.

In the BHEP ecological movement's first phase, environmental awareness was largely folk knowledge and survival based, which by interaction with scientists evolved into a general and higher awareness of the
environment which formed the backdrop of the KNPP ecological movement by the increased awareness and sensitivity to the environment, which in turn partially formed the backdrop of the STRP ecological movement.

It must be noted that environmental awareness does not necessarily result in activism and in fact may be dormant, as the qualifying variable is the perceived threat from the project which in turn is determined by the nature of the project itself. In the BHEP ecological movement, activism was a result of the perceived threat submergence of forests and land by the dam which was easily comprehended by the local people. The increased awareness and activism of the BHEP resulted in two conflicting groups, each functioning independently for the achievement of the common goal. The division continued in the second phase, with the breakaway scientific group taking the lead and overshadowing the earlier group.

In the KNPP ecological movement, the 'outsider' role in the initial stages was instrumental in initiating the movement in UK and was unknowingly interventionist. The later insider-outsider expected a supportive response from the outsider which was not perceived to be given. Moreover, the insider at the later stage of the ecological movement, perceived that
the outsider was using the ecological movement for its own ends.

In the case of the STRP ecological movement the entry of the outsider was in the later stage and its base of operation was non-local. It was perceived by the insider to be using the ecological movement to build its base.

Hence the ecological movement dynamics is composed of within the movement power struggles in conjunction with the external responses of the government and political parties. The self-referential nature of the ecological movement which perceives itself to be environment result in similar activism in the KNPP ecological movement which was largely due to the nature of the project which was not conducive for the people to understand the project, as it was too conceptualised and was not visualised by the people. Low education levels did not deter in the generation of environmental awareness among the people. Occupation which was largely land based was another factor which contributed to the generation of awareness.

The insider and outsider interaction considerably shaped the ecological movements dynamics. The 'outsider' is able to exercise influence depending at the juncture and level of his entry. In the BHEP ecological movement's first phase, the external
scientific intervention which was initiated by the insiders themselves, drastically influenced the movement dynamics and led to the division in the core group of the ecological movement are simultaneous and reinforce each other. The primary ideology is ecology which operates in conjunction with other ideologies which come into operation at the local contextual level which may include - Gandhian, Marxian, caste, tribe, feminist. It is quite possible that the subsidiary ideologies may project a specific ideological identity which overshadows the ecology identity.

In addition to the existing trends in Indian environmentalism of Marxist, a Gandhian or Appropriate technologists, a new trend which is different from these is emerging that of ecological which does not contain either the Marx a Gandhian a Appropriate technologists trends.

SECTION II

The emerging ecological perspective is based on the pan Indian reverence to nature and the local contextual perceptions on ecology as well as the incorporation of the scientific knowledge. It accords primary importance to the maintenance of environmental equilibrium and the non-exploitative man-nature interlinkage.

The ecological movements question the present notion of development on the grounds of the
environmental damage and the affected survival of the people. The post the question of development for what and at whose cost and for whom. The development model is perceived to destroy environment, the local environment dependent communities and results in inequity, inequality and injustice. The ecological movements hold that the development process does not involve the participation of the people in the development process in a democratic set up and hence ecological movements want greater participation in choosing the development model which affect the lives of the people. The change orientation of the ecological movements at the local level is resistance to the development project but at the larger national level, is transformative.

The ecological movements are not anti-development per se but to a specific mode of development. They are also not advocating protection of environment per se but are concerned with the ecological interlinkage which is a combination of development notions and environmental perspectives.

The emerging alternative development model is based on and gives primary to the maintenance of the environment the equilibrium and the human dependence on environment which is conditioned by the ecological ethic and resource prudent activities involving
environmentally benign appropriate technologies. The alternative development model is evolved by the involvement of the multiple and diverse human communities in the decision making process, which does not destroy environment, human cultures or generate inequity and in equality.