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CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Current graduate students and recent alumni are invited to submit papers, case studies, and book reviews for the fourth edition of the *Asian Journal of Public Affairs.*

Paper Guidelines: Please substantiate your analysis with tangible policy recommendations. Papers should not exceed 6,000 words excluding endnotes and bibliography. Submissions must include a one-page abstract of the paper with contact information. Citations must follow the social science author-date system in the Chicago Manual of Style. Authors are also encouraged to submit policy case studies (max. 6,000 words) and brief book reviews (max. 1,000 words).

Final Submissions Deadline (Vol. 2, No. 2, Fall 2008):   November 15, 2008

Dear Reader,

The third issue of the *Asian Journal of Public Affairs* has once again been able to attract a range of contributions from current graduate students across the world. This issue highlights topical policy concerns pertaining to Asia. We hope that our new selection of articles will put forward innovative perspectives on current issues and still provide workable policy recommendations for an interconnected and multipolar world.

Our third issue opens with a commentary by Dr. Stephen Cohen, a Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, who critically examines the role of the international community in Pakistan's political reformation in his piece **Pakistan's Second Last Chance**. At the same time, Pakistan's neighbour India is facing obstacles in ensuring that the benefits of its impressive economic growth are reaching all ranks of society. In the second commentary in this edition, Dr. S. Narayan, a Senior Visiting Fellow and Head of Research at the Institute of South Asian Studies in Singapore, highlights the challenges faced by India in **India's Economy: Constraints to Inclusive Growth.**

While it appears that change is often slow to come, significant policy shifts are nevertheless possible, as one can see when examining the change in policy that led to the **Removal of the Casino Ban in Singapore.** Indeed, the process by which change is precipitated and inhibited in the context of globalization, is a central theme of this issue. The media in particular could play a crucial role in instigating reforms in Asia, yet in a significant number of countries the state continues to retain its influence over the press. A look at whether **State-owned Media can effectively Monitor Corruption in Vietnam** fits squarely into this debate. Despite the need for more government openness and flexibility, international non-state actors are increasingly circumventing and transcending the state as agents of policy reform. Analyzing **Global Governance and the Rise of NGOs** is therefore a timely task for policymakers of all levels. Since environmental degradation, a traditional concern for nongovernmental organizations, can only be mitigated through the consistent application of small-scale, incentives-based projects such as **Streamlined Life-Cycle Assessment** we also feature the discussion of such a practical cost-benefit framework in this volume.

We hope our third issue will be of interest to you and that it will spark new debate on the topics been raised. We would once again like to thank those who have provided their invaluable advice and guidance. We are especially grateful

to our faculty advisors, Prof. Mukul Asher and Assoc. Prof. Darryl Jarvis and to our mainstay, Ruth Choe.

Yours Sincerely,
The *AJPA* Editorial Board
July 2008

PAKISTAN'S SECOND LAST CHANCE

Stephen P. Cohen

While Pakistan is often labeled as a failed state it is more accurately characterized as a flailing state: searching for a political framework that enables it to cope with its most important domestic and external challenges. Since the 1950s Pakistan was governed by a narrowly-based military-political elite. With policy steered by the generals, India became a foreign policy obsession, domestic corruption and incompetence contributed to a failure to transform Pakistan's economy, and the state's key social indicators—literacy, the role of women, education—reveal that Pakistan fell behind Bangladesh, its former East Wing, once regarded as a political and developmental basketcase.

Last month's election in Pakistan has been correctly hailed as a turning point. It demonstrated that the state is not faced with an immediate Islamist takeover or a civil war. The election (watched by thousands of outside observers) was peaceful, even if preceded by several suicide bombings. The extreme Islamists were defeated and regional parties will play some role in the new coalition. The combina-tion of resurgent democratic forces, outside encouragement, and the empowering role of new technologies—the internet played a critical role—all contributed to an election outcome that was as welcome as it was surprising.

Pakistan now has still another "last chance" to get things right. My 2004 book argued that Pakistan's critical moment would come when a new government replaced the flawed regime of General/President Pervaiz Musharraf. That moment has now arrived. While its initial performance is admirable the PPP-PML coalition cannot take on the larger challenges alone. Outside powers have contributed to the distortion of Pakistani politics for decades, it is in their interest that they now play a positive role in assisting Pakistanis to achieve a more or less democratic order that can cope with several critical challenges.

India can do more to shape Pakistan's future than any other state. Indians are deservedly angry at Pakistan for its historic meddling in Kashmir, its support of Islamic extremists, and its attempts to under-

Dr. Stephen P. Cohen is Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution. He has taught at Johns Hopkins University, Georgetown University, Andhra University, Keio University and the University of Illinois and has dealt with South Asian affairs in a variety of professional attachments, including the Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Cohen has written, co-authored, or edited ten books. His most recent publications are The Idea of Pakistan (2004) and India: Emerging Power (2001).

cut Indian power. But the evidence is overwhelming that Pakistani attitudes towards India have changed markedly — even in the army — and that some kind of accommodation is possible. The four major crises (and several minor ones) that made Kashmir the flashpoint for a nuclear war also taught both sides that it could not be wrested from the other side by force. There will not soon be a formal Kashmir agreement, public opinion in India is not ready for one, but it makes strategic and economic sense for both sides to expand economic ties, encourage non-official dialogue and academic exchanges, and accelerate the process of rolling back sixty years of rivalry. India needs to encourage the development of a Pakistan that sees it as a natural partner, it also needs to assure Pakistan that its presence in Afghanistan is not part of an encirclement strategy (a fear that drives Pakistan's support for the Taliban).

China is regarded by Pakistan as its most trustworthy and enduring friend, but Beijing remains concerned about Pakistan's growing Islamic extremism. For the first time in memory, Chinese officials express concern over Pakistan, and profess their willingness to work with other states (including the U.S.) to stabilize it. China has no commitment to a democratic Pakistan — but it would be content with a competent civilian government that enabled China to develop its ports and roads as a transit point from Western China to the Arabian Sea and the Middle East. A "de-

mocracy with a Pakistani face" was the characterization of one Chinese official of what China could live with.

The United States has a long and inglorious history of supporting military regimes in Pakistan, but it reversed that policy when it became clear that Benazir Bhutto represented a viable challenge to Musharraf, and when she promised a more effective anti-terror strategy than he could deliver. Benazir herself understood the realpolitik behind American policy, but she privately argued that there was nothing wrong in America now tilting towards a civilian government when it had tilted in favor of the military for so long. Washington's error was in not making it clear that it supported all democratic forces in Pakistan; recent U.S. visitors have followed the lead of the American ambassador in doing so in the form of meetings with a wide range of newly elected officials and newly freed judges. America should also conditionalize its military assistance, as it has been paying too much for too little cooperation. Yet, it should increase, without strings, its support for developmental and educational sectors, cut out the contractors that charge predatory administrative costs, and work with like-minded states, notably Japan and the EU countries, to ensure that these programs are effective. The programs that delivered several billions of dollars in 2005 for earthquake show that assistance to Pakistan can be effectively absorbed and distributed.

There is room for an important contribution from other states, as well. Saudi Arabia propelled the exiled Nawaz Sharif into Pakistan when it became clear that the liberal, secular Benazir was emerging as a popular figure. While the Saudis can and should continue to aid Pakistan by subsidizing oil prices, neither it nor any other country should start playing politics within the governing coalition — outside powers must let Pakistanis work out their own arrangements for power sharing and on particular policies (even, when it comes to the U.S. counter-terrorism strategies). The EU states plus wealthy Asian powers, such as Japan and Singapore should take another look at their investment portfolios in Pakistan. Just as important as investment and aid is assistance to Pakistan's enfeebled bureaucracy, which badly needs training and support. One

justification for army rule was that it was Pakistan's only coherent organization. This was true only because other government agencies had been systematically starved over the years. In any case the army again demonstrated under Musharraf that it cannot run Pakistan — his successor has wisely pulled out officers and non-coms from civilian jobs.

Rescuing Pakistan from its own troubled history will not be easy, but Pakistani politicians, journalists, and academics now understand that this could be their last opportunity to fulfill Jinnah's dream of a secular and moderate state. Paradoxically, it is Pakistan's new importance regarding terrorism, as well as its nuclear capabilities, and its potential as a moderate Muslim state that compels others to do more than stand by and watch.

India's Economy: Constraints to Inclusive Growth

S. Narayan

In the wake of gloomy news from the U.S. economy, there has been considerable interest in the growth prospects in Asia, especially in India and China. There has been anxiety, as well as hope that the growth prospects in these countries would offset the slowdown in Europe, Japan and the U.S., that multinationals with footprints that extend across regions would be able to balance earnings and satisfy shareholders through better yields in emerging markets. The Finance Minister of India, during a recent speech at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, advised the U.S. on how to manage its affairs better, and the Indian Commerce Minister has spoken about the great opportunities that exist in India. Audiences have been impressed with the growth expectations of around 8% next year, and indeed, there is little doubt that entire South Asia will grow at around 6%, if not more.

From another perspective, real per capita income in India has been growing at over 7.2% per annum continuously for the last five years, translating into an opportunity to double per capita incomes in a decade. These are levels of improvement that have not been seen before, and a continuation for even two decades more would bring total eradication of poverty in India and standards of living that would be comparable to those of the middle income countries. There appears to be considerable optimism in India that this will happen.

Academic discussions, therefore, are focusing on the sustainability of this growth process, and the constraints to it. They look at stresses and strains and how they should be managed. The concerns about inadequacies in infrastructure are well known, as also the need to focus on health and education investments. There are other concerns as well, which are discussed below.

The Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government in India has focused on inclusive growth, on making the benefits of growth and income improvements available to all citizens. Yet, in the last few years, there is the worry that income disparities are increasing, that there is greater well being for a few,

Dr. S. Narayan is Senior Visiting Fellow and Head of Research at the Institute of South Asian Studies in Singapore. Dr. Narayan led an accomplished career in in local and central governments for nearly four decades. Before joining ISAS he served as Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister of India, Finance and Economic Affairs Secretary, and Secretary in the Departments of Revenue, Petroleum, Industrial Development and Coal. Dr. Narayan obtained his PhD from the Indian Institute of Technology.

while the lowest deciles are not much better off. The growth of income disparity is a phenomenon that is being witnessed in all countries, both developed and developing, but in a democracy like India, these disparities are likely to lead to social unrest. There have been two flagship programmes of the Government, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, aimed at providing 100 days of guaranteed employment to all those who seek it, and the Bharat Nirman, focused on developing rural infrastructure. There are some doubts whether these programmes have had the impact that they intended, mostly due to administrative inefficiencies.

Both these programmes focus on the rural poor. The argument is that over 500 million people live in rural areas, and with slow rate of growth in agriculture and increasing dependence on off-farm income generation, poverty alleviation programmes should focus on income generation in the rural areas. The gap in this conceptualization is that it does not address the concern of the urban poor. Nearly 40% of the population lives in urban or urbanizing areas, and the poor in urban areas have concerns that are quite different from those in rural areas. The difference in entitlements stems from the fact that the rural poor have access to shelter, in the form of some land for putting up a house or hut, whether it be own land or public land. They have access to water and to fuel (often firewood or agricultural residues). All these entitlements are free of charge for the rural poor. But as soon as the rural poor migrate to the city in search of employment, all these entitlements become priced goods. Rural farm labour often gets paid in kind for farm work, providing some food security. In urban areas, food is a priced good. Therefore, programmes aimed at the poor need to distinguish between the rural and the urban poor, and need to focus on delivery of food and fuel at prices that are affordable. This would involve a policy of distribution of cooking fuels like kerosene and domestic gas at subsidized prices, as well a food grains at below market prices. Importantly, the difference between the rural poor and the urban poor is that for the latter, employment and wages are not a concern, it is access to reasonably priced food, fuel and shelter. Therefore, programmes like the National Employment Guarantee Programme, cannot make any impact for the poor elsewhere than in rural areas. The urban poor, mostly in informal employment, need to be targeted with subsidies for food and fuel.. This argument is true for South Asia as whole, as conditions are similar in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

If the goal of inclusive growth is to be realized, there is urgent need for programmes that would address the different concerns of the rural poor and the urban poor. Failure to do so would make cities uninhabitable, with pressures on water, transportation, fuel and power. Very little is being planned in this direction.

A second concern lies in the area of agriculture. Rural production has averaged between 2 and 3 percent in the last decade. The economy has been growing at over 8.5% in the last six years, and therefore real incomes from agriculture are going down. Given high asset values for real estate, inadequate support prices and rising costs of inputs, agriculture is becoming non-remunerative. The decline in per capita availability is likely to exacerbate price pressures that are being caused by international factors in food production. There is a threat as well as an opportunity here. It is possible that growing urbanization, improved standards of living and consumption, would see a build up of pricing pressures on cereals, pulses and oilseeds in India in the short term—signs of this are already visible. As an opportunity, this gives scope to revitalizing investments and returns in agriculture. During the sixties and the seventies, India moved from being a food deficit country to self sufficiency in food grains, even considering the rapid growth in population. The institutions to provide research, technology, and the package of practices that would involve efficient and optimum management of land, water and inputs are already available. Investment in agriculture has been neglected for nearly two decades, with attention shifting to reforms in manufacturing and services sectors. Existing institutions including universities, research centres, extension machinery and seed and fertilizer delivery systems need to be revitalized to achieve food security targets. The advantage is

that, given a large number of agro-climatic zones, the dispersion between food crops and commercial crops is possible in a manner that would make agriculture a remunerative enterprise yet again. In the initial years after independence, capital formation in part was by keeping terms of trade adverse for agriculture: now that the economy has matured to some extent, increases in food prices must be accepted as a consequence of growth. The challenge is to ensure adequate production at these market clearing levels. The Indian Government has allocated a sum of $ 6 billion for food security, primarily for agriculture and irrigation. It is important to include elements of technology training and introduction to new practices, to improve farm efficiencies and productivity. It is also equally important to invest in value addition, in marketing chains and food processing.

Finally, for the growth process to be inclusive and sustainable, it is important that skills in demand are matched by skills in supply, to ensure productive employment. In almost every sphere of activity, construction, travel, hotel industry, manufacturing as well as IT, a shortage of skilled personnel drives up labour and wage costs. People with education are not necessarily those with relevant skills. Job mobility increased concurrently with states like Tamil Nadu attracting workers from Orissa or Bihar. It is important that relevant skill development takes place quickly to ensure balanced growth. In the last budget, Government has recog-

nized this problem and set up a large public-private sector initiative that would focus on skill formation.

The world at large is concerned about the pace of reforms in India. The focus is on financial and manu-facturing sectors, access to markets and labour regulations. But of equal concern are measures that would enable every citizen to participate in India's prosperity.

CAN A STATE-OWNED MEDIA EFFECTIVELY MONITOR CORRUPTION?
A STUDY OF VIETNAM'S PRINTED PRESS

Catherine McKinley

As part of a broader governance initiative, the Communist Party of Vietnam has tasked its state-owned media with exposing corruption within government and party ranks. However, the dominant Western media paradigm argues that it is impossible for a state-owned media to combat corruption because of an inherent conflict of interest between master (government) and servant (media). Given this conflict, this paper asks what elements of state control constrain or abet the Vietnamese press' ability to expose corruption and asks how the government's apparent commitment to a corruption-fighting media might be translated into policy. In answering these questions, it draws upon inductive processes and qualitative research methods including semi-structured interviews, two case studies and content analysis of key Vietnamese newspapers. It argues that the Vietnamese state-owned media is becoming more assertive and that private ownership would not necessarily improve coverage of corruption. Vietnam's government is apparently committed to a stronger corruption-fighting media, but is being slow to implement change.

Introduction

Since reunification in 1975, the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) has struggled to combat the growth of entrenched corruption. The challenge has notably intensified following the economic reforms (*doi moi*) and the growth of a dual (planned- and market-) system since 1986. Regulatory loopholes coupled with low official salaries have together increased the scope for rent seeking. In 2006 Communist Party Secretary, Nong Duc Manh, highlighted corruption as "one of the major risks that threaten the survival of our regime"

Catherine McKinley is a British national and has been a foreign correspondent in Vietnam since 1999. She completed her MSc in Public Policy and Management from London University in October 2007. The author can be contacted at catherine.mckinley@gmail.com.

(quoted in Thayer 2006) and said Vietnam must build up its state-owned media's ability to uncover graft.[1]

Western proponents of a free media, however, argue that Vietnam's press cannot properly carry out its 'Fourth Estate' watchdog role because of its state ownership.[2] International experience, as shown in this article, also supports the argument that a media reliant upon the state for patronage is unlikely to hold it to account. Vietnam, however, has a history of defying established paradigms. Since its David and Goliath defeat of two major world powers, a strong sense of nationalism has developed and encouraged the government to ignore foreign advice – especially when such advice is deemed inappropriate. Its confidence has so far paid off. The government has twice taken policy decisions that have led to the cancellation of IMF loans knowing that such moves may precipitate in a decline in other foreign lending and investment. It did not. Thus, *if* any country can break the paradigm that discredits state media as a force against corruption, Vietnam may be the country to do it.

In answering the question "Can A State-Owned Media Effectively Monitor Corruption?," this article focuses on Vietnam's print media and examines three questions. First, what elements of state control constrain or abet the Vietnamese press' ability to expose corruption? Second, to what degree is the Vietnamese government committed to building a state-owned media capable of identifying and exposing corruption? Third, to what extent is this commitment translated into policy?

The article draws upon three research methodologies, with independent research conducted during a nine-month period in 2006 and 2007. It includes, first, semi-structured in-person interviews conducted with senior policy-makers and members of the press to discuss the constraints faced by media, with specific emphasis on coverage of corruption. Second, two exploratory case studies, dated three years apart, to compare the extent to which media coverage was helped or hindered by state intervention: gangster operations in Ho Chi Minh City (2002-3, Nam Cam) and ministerial-level corruption using donor funding in Hanoi (2006, PMU 18). Third, content analysis of key Vietnamese newspapers to analyse media coverage vis-à-vis media ownership, and possible linkages to the political calendar.

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[1] Details of recent anti-corruption measures are outlined in Appendix One.

[2] Either by the CPV, government bodies, or so-called mass organisations - such as the Women's and Youth Unions - which in the absence of an independent civil society constitute the most direct route through which people can organise and voice concerns. At first glance, organisations owned by mass organizations appear freer from state influence than those owned by the CPV or government. They may also enjoy greater financial independence.

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State Versus Private Media Ownership: The Arguments

Much has been written to suggest that only a free press can fight corruption. A survey of media operations in 97 countries presented in the 2002 World Development Report concluded that state-owned media are less effective than private media in monitoring government (report cited in Peters 2003, 49). Free press advocates continue to argue for freedom from the state as a prerequisite for effective media operations. Yet a growing body of evidence suggests the real issue is political influence over the media: something that can be, but is not necessarily, associated with ownership.

According to Transparency International (2007) "the ability of the media to perform its watchdog role depends on the extent to which journalists are free […] from undue political […] influence." The assumption that the two are linked may be partly explained by the current dominance of neo-liberal economic theories[3] which equate private ownership with competition and state ownership with monopoly. The former forces transparency as part of the competitive process, the latter allows discretion and weakens accountability to those outside the state. Yet private ownership does not always engender the competition and/accountability as implied by neo-liberalism. This is true in Vietnam where some entrepreneurial activities are constrained by weak market, financial and state institutions.

Media competition, where it does exist, can be limited by large competitors as well as the state. Groups such as Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, are exemplary of "high levels of ownership concentration […] associated with less media effectiveness [exist] within the private sector" (Kaufman 2006, 3). Moreover, the need to maintain political patronage has ensured that many private-sector media groups in the West, where press independence is most traditionally valued, develop distinctly partisan political agendas. According to McCullagh (2002, 18), "a fair medium is one that gives equivalent […] space to the range of viewpoints […] in society. If we apply this standard to British and American newspapers they do not generally pass the test." This phenomenon is not, however, limited just to the West. Indeed, "the alignment of business and political interests […] is commonplace throughout southern Europe [as well as] Central and South America […] and in much of Asia" (Sparks 2000, 46).

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[3] Based on theories developed by Milton Freidman and the 'Chicago School of Economics' that argue, compared to the state, markets are more likely to encourage competition and destroy monopoly practices.

In developing and transitional economies, however, the creation of private media has not always been accompanied by an improvement in media monitoring of corruption. An explosion in private media broadcast ownership in sub-Saharan Africa has done little to counter corruption in the continent (Siochru et al. 2002). Nor in Malaysia where the "government's privatisation policy […] has not really resulted in a loosening of government control over the media" (Curran and Myung 2000, 144). Where media freedom is granted begrudgingly, the new private media may be denied access to state information and officials or prevented from publishing sensitive stories. Other institutions, such as police and judiciary, which the media may rely upon for information and leads, may also be transitioning from state control and unable to provide the necessary level of support an active media needs. If those on which reporters rely for information do not facilitate access, then exposure of corruption becomes inherently more difficult.

As the deficiencies of private media become clearer "a growing critical literature has raised serious questions about the market model as a democratic form of communication […] Despite institutional independence, the media act more like lapdogs than watchdogs" (Zhao 1998, 182). If this is true, can a state-owned media succeed where the private sector is increasingly failing?

In the West, Britain's BBC and America's National Public Radio show that state-owned media can retain editorial independence from the state. In one-party states, where judicial and legislative independence are curtailed, such media may find it harder to retain their independence. In Singapore, where legislative independence exists, media operations are often curtailed, proving further that the separation of state from the media does not necessarily facilitate media freedom. Curran and Myung (2000) note that the state-owned media systems of the former Soviet Union differ significantly in their ability to act independently. While the media was a tool of the state, the former was sometimes allowed considerable freedom when in the interest of the state. In Vietnam, such freedom is currently thought to be in the interest of the state as the government requires media exposure of corruption.

Although, "by any objective standard Vietnam remains a restricted country for true independent journalism" (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 31), the freedom to report and investigate cases of corruption granted to reporters is undoubtedly growing. Studies in 2003 and 2006, commissioned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), noted a slow but steady improvement in the conditions under which reporters work Elmqvist

and Lawarso (2006).[4] Gainsborough (2006, 3) notes, "it is widely accepted that rapid economic development of the kind Vietnam is experiencing […] leads to the emergence of a denser civil society as economic development precipitates social change". However, the experience of other Asian countries suggests that this change will push media reform forward, albeit not necessarily creating the kind of free media anticipated by Western liberals.

In Vietnam, the Media Law states that the press must "provide truthful information […] in conformity with the interests and policies of the Party". Although there is a risk of backlash against media freedom, as seen in May with the sudden arrest of two high-profile journalists who had made their names uncovering corruption, most members of the media appear to believe that the long-term trend remains positive.[5] An increasing number of legislative initiatives[6] indicate the government is increasingly determined to combat graft and intent on facilitating media participation in its efforts. The media was identified as a vital anti-corruption tool in a 2005 corruption survey co-authored by Sida and the Vietnamese government's Committee for Internal Affairs. But despite evidence that its leadership is becoming committed to a media capable of uncovering corruption, and that the media is taking advantage of its growing freedom, Vietnam has not yet developed an effective media policy framework.

Vietnam's Media Regulatory Environment

Vietnam's media operates within a complex regulatory environment that contains many contradictions and provides much scope for discretion. While the Constitution allows for freedom of speech, Article Two of the same document places the CPV above the law and makes criticism of the party an offence. The Media Law states that "no organisation or individual is permitted to limit or obstruct the operation of the media or journalists" and that the media should act as a "forum for the people." Yet, it also states that the media is "the mouthpiece of the Party", giving journalists dual and potentially conflicting responsibilities, and dilutes its freedom of speech clause with one that prevents the media from disclosing state secrets or disseminating "information

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[4] For example, better access to official source of information, less editorial intervention from government overseers, and more latitude to publish stories that may discredit government officials.

[5] On May 12th 2008, two reporters known for their aggressive coverage of corruption - Nguyen Viet Chien of Thanh Nien newspaper and Nguyen Van Hai of Tuoi Tre newspaper - were arrested and accused of 'abuse of authority.' Police said the reporters had written stories that contained inaccurate information regarding the corruption case known as PMU18 (discussed below).

[6] Detailed in Appendix One.

which is untruthful, distorted or slanderous and harmful to the reputation of organizations or…dignity of citizens." It states that reporters must pay fines to people they have harmed through 'slanderous' reporting, whether or not the report is accurate.

The 2005 Anti-Corruption Law offers all citizens, including journalists, the right to request information from some, though not all, government bodies. The Media Law, meanwhile, states that "organisations shall have the […] obligation to provide information to the media and to assist the media in providing accurate and up-to-date information, and shall be responsible before the law for the content of information provided." Legislation introduced in mid-2007 requires all state bodies employ a spokesperson to facilitate media access to information, but set no deadline for the employment of a spokesperson. Nor does it stipulate how timely the provision of information need be. Such loopholes continue to make accessing information difficult.

A Decree on Cultural and Information Activities issued in June 2006 codifies the rights and responsibilities of journalists and has furthered the confusion. The decree set fines of up to three million Vietnamese dong (US$ 190) to be paid by reporters basing stories on anonymous sources, banned articles that reveal party, state, military and economic secrets, and required reporters to have all articles reviewed by the state before publication (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, Global Integrity 2006). Yet it also clarified fines for hindering journalists' activities and threatening their physical safety.

These clauses and other vagaries of Vietnam's developing legal and regulatory environment can be, and have been, manipulated by the state to limit editorial freedom. In 2004, the editor of online paper, *VNExpress*, was removed after allowing readers to post comments about the state's purchase of 76 Mercedes Benz cars for use during an upcoming international summit. A year later, a reporter for *Tuoi Tre* (Young People) newspaper was indicted on charges of 'appropriating state secrets' and put under house arrest. He wrote a series of stories concerning the monopolisation of the pharmaceutical industry by a foreign investor that allegedly led to a rapid increase in drug prices. The online newspaper *Tintucvietnam* was closed down in 2006 after publishing readers' letters alleging high-level corruption.

While the contradictions implicit in Vietnam's legal framework continue to hamper media activities, there are signs that the use of these contradictions to limit editorial freedom is falling. Freedom House (2006, 9) notes that the constitutional protection granted to CPV officials "is slowly being eroded". Similarly, Elmqvist and Luwarso (2006, 11) add, "there is a lot more room now for investigative journalism." Nonetheless, "in Vietnam, policy […] is distinctly

secondary and can easily be jettisoned or adjusted to suit the circumstances" (Gainsborough 2007, 10). It is thus impossible to be certain that the current policy of encouraging editorial independence will remain in place.

Other Factors Influencing Media Coverage of Corruption

Politics as a Motivator

It has been suggested that Vietnam's coverage of corruption is linked to political machinations, with the media used as a pawn in a game of political one-upmanship. Anecdotal evidence suggests this may be true, with major corruption stories breaking in the lead up to a change in CPV or government personnel.[7] For example, a case involving the misappropriation of development funding in the Ministry of Transportation, the PMU 18 case[8] broke before a key CPV Congress in 2006. Thought to be linked to the Congress (Gainsborough 2007, 9), reporting reached a peak in April, just before the Congress opened, and was attributed to party internal conflicts (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 29). If such political links do exist, they could jeopardise editorial freedoms when stories break at politically 'inconvenient' times. But despite the obvious risks, policy changes over the past decade suggest "development will keep on being steps forward and backward, but with small inevitable gains" (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 38). The increasing regularity of live broadcasts (of parliamentary sessions, corruption trials and so forth) seems to indicate a growing openness, as did the publication for public comment of an important Draft Political Report before the 2006 Congress.

Growing Financial Independence

Facilitating increased editorial freedom is also linked to the gradual breaking of links between the state and its media. Although private media ownership is forbidden and is not likely in the foreseeable future, the Media Law facilitates

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[7] Such as parliamentary elections, changes to the membership of the CPV's powerful Standing Committee or Politburo, etc.

[8] Project Management Unit (PMU) 18 is a unit of the Ministry of Transportation responsible for road and other infrastructure projects. In December 2005 Hanoi police told the media they were investigating a gambling case relating to Bui Tien Dung, the head of PMU 18, in which he and 38 other gamblers - most of whom were state officials - had allegedly gambled millions of dollars of foreign aid money on football matches. Dung alone was said to have gambled US$1.8 million of funds taken mainly from World Bank funding and from EU, Australian and Japanese bilateral aid designated for infrastructure projects to be developed by his unit. It was discovered that the betting ring through which Dung has placed his bets was run by a former policeman. Investigations into the case led to the arrest of the deputy transport minister (a former head of PMU 18) and the resignation of the transport minister in April 2006, just as a key five-yearly CPV Congress was due to begin.

substantial financial freedom, stating that the media must become responsible for its own revenues because state subsidies will decline. It also allows media organisations to call themselves 'groups' hinting at a market-based corporate structure. Progressive media outlets, such as *Tuoi Tre*, *Tien Phong* and *Thanh Nien*, as well as various internet newspapers, have taken advantage of these regulations to create financially independent organisations run along business lines. With increasing financial autonomy, "prominent editors in chief […] have a strong influence [...] towards increased press freedom and higher quality journalism" (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 34 and 37). Their growing independence has allowed some newspapers to break away from 'safe' reporting and attract readers with more sensational stories. However, there are signs that some papers are allowing the pressures of advertising and circulation to limit or dumb down reportage, following the trajectory of some Western media organisations.

Distance from the Centre

Physical distance from central government also appears to increase editorial independence. Most of Vietnam's progressive papers are based in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) where a slow but steady decentralisation of political authority in Vietnam means the southern commercial capital's "authority *vis-à-vis* the centre has been strengthened" in recent years (Gainsborough 2003, 3). Its growing independence is reflected in the city's media. Political distance also appears to engender editorial independence, as evidenced by the relative freedom exhibited by papers owned by mass organisations rather than the CPV or government ministries.[9] According to Gainsborough (2006, 32), "in the absence of opposition parties, the […] mass organisations serve the function political parties would serve in a multiparty system." In a speech made in November 2006, Parliamentary Chairperson, Nguyen Phu Trong, asked mass organisations to increase their role in uncovering corruption.

Non-Traditional News Sources

Also broadening editorial freedom is the increase in internet and international media access within Vietnam. Internet newspapers like *VNExpress* and online editions of print newspapers are pushing the boundaries of what is possible under existing media-related laws. Internet use is low but rising fast in Vietnam, with 4,000-5,000 internet cafes in 2006 (Freedom House 2006c, 4), and changes in online news coverage are expected to continue to spill over into

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[9] Its three most progressive papers are all run by youth organisations and from head offices in HCMC. Thanh Nien is owned by the national Youth Union, Tien Phong by the national Communist Youth League, and Tuoi Tre by the HCMC Communist Youth League.

the print press. Already, progressive papers say they see their role changing, from mouthpiece of the state to voice of the people.

The Impact of State Media Ownership on Corruption Coverage

Linkage of Political Events and Coverage of Corruption

Opinion was divided regarding whether or not coverage is linked to political change. Policy makers and the press in HCMC saw no obvious connection, while media interviewees in Hanoi suggested a clear and substantial link. One said that although such a link is "unfair (it) is better than no-one getting caught." A policy interviewee said links, if real, probably result from a natural "candidate vetting process" prior to personnel changes in government and/or the CPV.

The case studies and content analysis both suggest a clear link between coverage of corruption and politically important events. Nam Cam's trial took place in 2002, the same year as a cabinet reshuffle. Nam Cam was allegedly linked to former prime minister Vo Van Kiet who was loosing sway in government and, according to Cohen (2002), "many believe it [was] all part of a power play at the highest levels." The suggestion that attempts in 1995 to expose Nam Cam's corruption were prevented by the state support this argument. Similarly, the resignation and arrest - linked to the PMU 18 case - of Vietnam's transport minister and his deputy just before an important five-yearly CPV Congress in April 2006 hint at politically motivated exposure of the case. Both were candidates for a new Central Committee, to be decided by the Congress, but withdrew their candidacies.

Content analysis data highlights a possible correlation between the coverage of corruption and politically significant events (see Chart 1). The vertical axis measures the number of headline references to corruption, the horizontal axis measures fortnightly periods defined. Each coloured bar represents the start of a politically significant event: blue for government, red for CPV, and yellow for other economic events with political significance. The February dip corresponds to a week-long public holiday over the lunar New Year during which newspapers did not publish.

Coverage of corruption and possible correlation with politically significant events
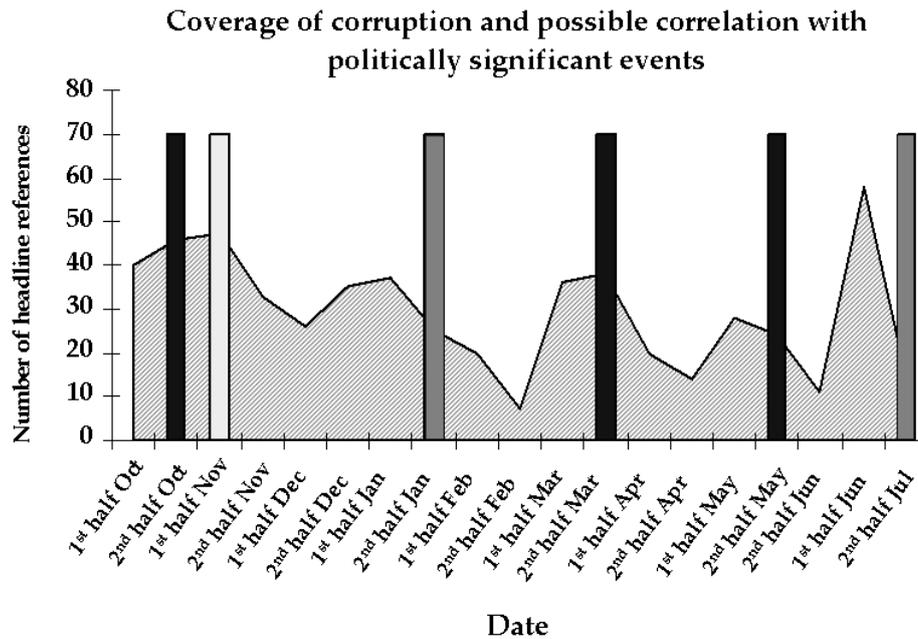
Note:

▮ Opening session of 2nd 2006 National Assembly	▮ Opening session of 1st 2007 National Assembly
▯ Vietnam joins WTO and hosts annual APEC summit	▮ National Assembly (parliamentary) elections
▨ Opening session of 1st 2007 CPV plenum	▨ Opening session of 2nd 2007 CPV plenum

Various Forms of Censorship

Direct censorship. Overt state censorship was not cited by media professionals as a constraint in their work. While some editors said compulsory weekly meetings with CPV Ideology Department staff had in the past been used to give strong 'suggestions' on news content, this is no longer the case. Policy-makers said the meetings are simply a discussion forum. (One, however, said they may be used to "remind" editors of news items forbidden under Vietnamese law). Interference in editorial content has fallen significantly in HCMC over the past five years and continues to fall, particularly for stories relating to senior officials. Reporters in Hanoi saw a more recent liberalisation: "Two years ago we had almost no anti-corruption stories. Now […] it's a lot easier to get them published," noted one editor. However, a reporter stressed that while his job is getting "easier," it is not yet "easy."

A glass ceiling? Opinion was divided on whether a ceiling prevents coverage beyond a certain level within the state. Policy makers insisted there is no ceiling, but most media interviewees assumed there is one, although they were unsure where it lies. One editor said coverage is capped at ministerial/mayoral level and then allowed only if a green light is given to senior editors when the story breaks: "You can't fight the top officials because they *are* the party. Scapegoats will be found […] They want the knife to be sharp but not too sharp." However, a senior reporter in HCMC said he believed limits

are often set by the journalists themselves: "It depends how far you dare to go."

Self-censorship. Self-censorship among reporters may be most prevalent at lower levels where journalists fear that by overstepping opaque boundaries they could suffer professional and/or financial losses. The media law and 2006 decree[10] have deepened that concern, and the recent arrest of the Thanh Nien and Tuoi Tre reporters have spooked many newsroom reporters, who indicate that they are afraid to continue their anti-corruption work until the reasons for, and consequences of, the arrests are clarified. Senior reporters interviewed in 2007 did not express the same degree of anxiety, saying they felt relatively comfortable navigating these boundaries. Recent interviews with editors reveal a concern that self censorship may increase in the foreseeable future in response to the arrests.

Few editors-in-chief favour corruption coverage because "it's not safe for them," said one senior news editor. He noted that because editors-in-chief may be dismissed by the state if their coverage is "inappropriate," many practice self censorship. Also, those running major newspapers are high ranking officials with "friends everywhere" and may censor their paper if reporters uncover stories that "implicate their friends." A second editor said that where newspapers do take risks, it is often because they enjoy high-level political patronage.

Access to Information

Editors and reporters said access varies according to whether the official holding the information has received permission to release it, and whether reporters have personal ties with that official. Policy makers acknowledged the difficulties and said they are trying to improve access, in particular through the July 2007 piece of legislation that forces all state organisations to employ spokespeople. One editor said the rule was welcome if it "forces responsibility" but was concerned it may mean other contacts will no longer talk to reporters. Junior reporters without a well-established network of contacts said they are already experiencing difficulties reaching people within government and the existence of spokespeople may be more of a barrier to information than an asset. Information gathering appears to be easier in HCMC than in Hanoi.

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[10] Decree on Cultural and Information Activities, which codifies penalties and fees to be paid by journalists if they slander or damage a person's reputation even if, as noted above, their allegations are true.

The cases studies show an increase in access in recent years. One senior reporter said he was "given" the Nam Cam story[11] in 2001 through an anonymous police tipoff. An unprecedented degree of press freedom was allowed during the lead up to Nam Cam's trial and the trial itself, which was broadcast live and "bore the hallmark of careful planning designed to boost the party's crime-busting image" (Cohen 2003). In contrast, interview data suggests that leads regarding the Nam Cam case as early as 1995 were not followed up by reporters because of official controls on the release of the information needed to substantiate those leads.

Information disclosure in the PMU 18 case was patchy. The names of members of the football gambling ring were never disclosed and some reporters were physically attacked when trying to report the case. The state's response was mixed, with the ministry of police offering support to journalists[12] while the prime minister suggested they par back coverage. One editor said he was "told" to stop reporting if it was suggested that the case reached beyond ministerial level. Still, other interview data suggests the state allowed more media freedom than it had in 2003. For the first time Nhan Dan, "had a green light from the party to expose the PMU 18 scandal" (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 27).

Ownership and Sources of Funding

State or private ownership? No interviewees saw private media ownership as a priority. If forced to choose, media practitioners said they would remain within the state because being part of a large state-owned media organisation confers respect and increases access to information: "(other) state organisations respect us and that creates access," said one senior editor. Interviewees cited patriotism, not ownership, as key to exposing corruption. According to one, "anti corruption [reporting] is a need […] of the people so the media must do

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[11] Nam Cam was a mafia boss in HCMC. He was arrested in 1995 and imprisoned for a short period before being released again, allegedly thanks to intervention by a senior government official on his pay role. He was arrested again in December 2001 and this time kept behind bars until his trial in 2003, during which he was found guilty of multiple crimes and sentenced to death. The investigations that followed Nam Cam's arrest netted dozens of high ranking officials alleged to have been on his pay role or to have otherwise had links with his criminal organisation. In Vietnam's largest ever court case, Nam Cam stood trial with 154 co-defendants including 21 senior state officials, among them senior police officers and officials from the Ministry of Public Security, public prosecutors, and two members of the CPV's decision-making Central Committee.

[12] [12] This support now appears to be questionable: following the arrests in May, Thanh Nien published an editorial demanding that the Ministry of Police explain why it had not alerted reporters to possible inaccuracies in their reporting while the case was underway instead of waiting until the case has closed to accuse them of 'abuse of power.' The ministry has yet to respond, saying it cannot comment while investigations into the journalists' arrests are ongoing.

it." He did not believe private ownership would alter his newspaper's position on corruption. "It's a question of wanting to better Vietnam," said another.

Type of state ownership. The form state ownership takes can impact the press' ability to expose corruption. One senior editor said his paper, which is owned by the CPV, is "very close to the sun" and must strictly comply with state instructions that may hinder reporting. In contrast, papers owned by mass organisations "don't feel the heat as much." A second editor said papers owned by youth organisations[13] are particularly liberal in their reporting.

Financial Independence. Rising financial independence for some papers has meant *de-facto* privatisation - a trend that is likely to continue. Papers owned by mass organisations appear to have the greatest financial independence, with one editor saying his paper relies almost completely on advertising, and with no financial links to the state gains "freedom in other areas."

Chart Two shows the number of headline references to corruption by select newspapers and compares that to each paper's ownership structure. Green represents ownership by a mass organisation, blue by the government, and red by the CPV. Block colour shows national-level ownership, while shading shows city-level ownership.
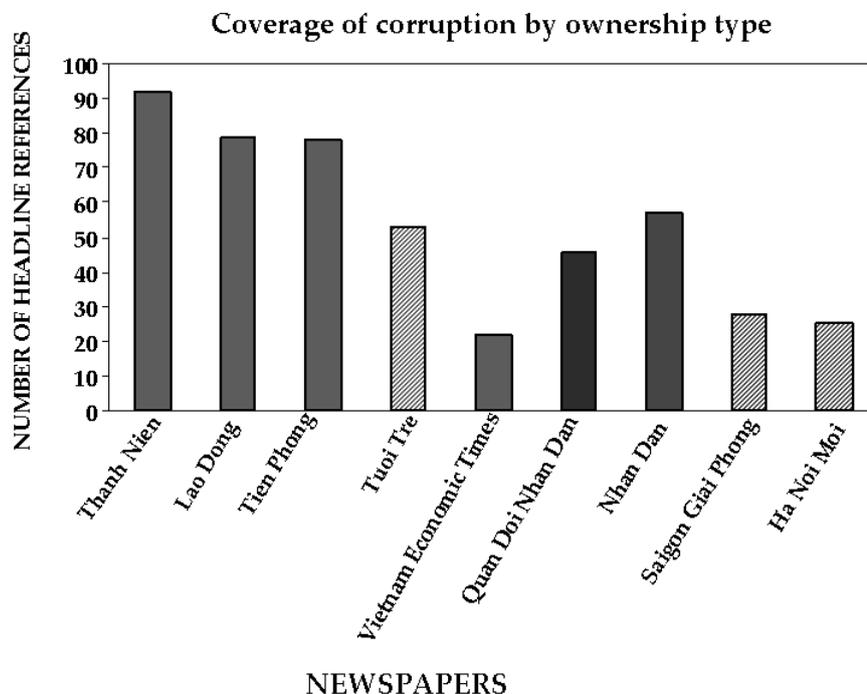
Distance from the Centre

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[13] Such as Tuoi Tre, Tien Phong and Thanh Nien.

Press interviewees agreed that physical distance from central government encourages bolder reporting, with newspapers based in HCMC taking more risks than those in Hanoi. Chart Three uses the same colouring and shading system as the above chart to show the number of headline references to corruption by newspaper and compare that to location, with the left-hand group based in HCMC and the right-hand group in Hanoi.

Coverage of corruption according to location
(Ho Chi Minh City or Hanoi)
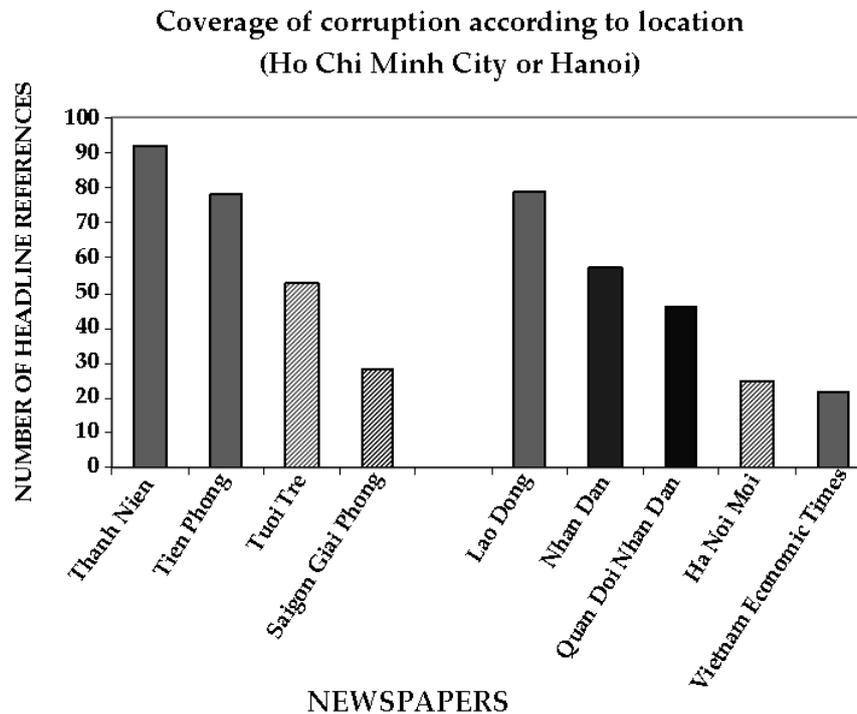
Potential for Backtracking

Vietnam's media liberalisation will continue, but there will be hiccups along the way. "I've been doing this for 15 years and it's getting easier every day" said one editor, while a reporter added that "if the prime minister told us to stop […] there would be a public outcry and we would publish people's comments. The PM would have to withdraw his demands." Since the May arrests, this assertion has been put to the test: faced with what is being viewed by the media as a crackdown on its anti-corruption activities, Thanh Nien and Tuoi Tre have carried high-profile letters and editorials condemning the arrests, with other newspapers and journalistic blogs following suit. Both papers say they've received unprecedented numbers of letters, calls and emails from the public demanding that the two reporters be released.

Policy makers interviewed said non-media aspects of Vietnam's anti-corruption efforts will make backtracking impossible. One of the letters published by Thanh Nien was written by Tran Van Tuyen, a Member of Parliament and head of the Government Inspectorate (Vietnam's anti-corruption

taskforce). Another came from Pham Quoc Anh, chairman of the Vietnam Lawyers' Association and also an MP.

Another interviewee said Vietnam's membership of the UN Security Council[14] will put the country under an international spotlight and "work in favour of countries trying to convince (the government) to become a good international citizen."

Media Expertise and Training

Journalism skills are generally low. Vietnam's under-funded and politically constrained journalism training institutes produce poor-quality graduates who have reasonable writing skills but limited knowledge of politics and economics, and are ill-equipped to build contacts, deal with ethical issues, or identify news stories. While self-financing papers can afford to retrain these graduates, others cannot. Policy makers said they are addressing the problem through cooperation with foreign donors and training groups and by upgrading journalism schools. Still, such upgrade plans are tentative and foreign training reaches only a few urban journalists.

Journalistic ethics are weak. Although the Vietnam Journalism Association has issued a Code of Ethics, many interviewees were unaware of its existence and did not know its contents. Where they did, they did not know whether it contains a voluntarily or mandatory set of standards.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Vietnam's press is becoming increasingly assertive, though it still operates within boundaries set and monitored by the state. The case studies presented in this article suggest that the role of the press in combating corruption - and the state's willingness to let it - has increased over time. Interview data indicates that this trend will continue into the future. However, it is impossible to know how much of Vietnam's corruption is uncovered but goes unreported, and coverage is patchy. Only a few newspapers, and reporters within them, expose serious abuses of authority. A newspaper's ability to do so is linked to several variables, including ownership type, degree of financial independence, and physical distance from the corridors of political power in Hanoi.

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[14] Vietnam became a temporary member of the Security Council on January 1st 2008. Its membership will continue until the end of 2009 and it will hold the rotating chair in July 2008

Senior reporters and editors attribute their coverage to a sense of patriotism that drives them to uncover corruption, together fuelling a bottom-up process of media reform. This patriotism could frustrate attempts by the state to back-track on media liberalisation, especially if the press enlists public support for its cause. Such support was amply demonstrated after Chien and Hai's arrests, as was the growing willingness of the media to stand up to the state when it believes its new-found freedoms are being curtailed.

Interview data suggests the same sense of patriotism is behind the CPV's general willingness to allow the press greater freedom. (A desire to placate a public angry at current levels of corruption could also arguably be a key motivator).

The media's lobbying power is also increasing, according to one editor, whose paper has successfully influenced policy making on several occasions.[15] As long as media and state motivations remain aligned, it is possible that Vietnam's state-owned media can contribute to the exposure of corruption.[16] Junior reporters are largely peripheral to the investigation of high-level corruption, probably because many fear reprisals if they overstep an opaque boundary. It is also possible that young reporters are being held back by editors who fear the consequences if they "let the wolves free."

Private ownership is unlikely to facilitate more, or even better, investigative journalism. High levels of self-censorship can be traced to state media ownership, and forces journalists and editors to censor their coverage out of fear of state retribution. However such censorship is often prevalent in the private sector and would not necessarily diminish if Vietnam's media were privatized. Were a private sector built from scratch using the resources of the reforming state sector, as would be the case in Vietnam, "it is unrealistic to expect [people] to radically change the way they make decisions" (Cramer 2001, 83). For a private media to work effectively and retain high ethical standards, support institutions and policies – such as media ombudsmen and libel laws - are needed that to date either do not exist or are not effective in Vietnam.

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[15] The interviewee's paper lobbied successfully for a limit on royalties to be raised in order to improve financial incentives offered to reporters working on corruption stories.

[16] It should be noted that patriotism as a motivator may be threatened as Vietnam develops. Social and economic changes already underway may weaken the patriotism felt by young people who are exposed to foreign ideas and choices that were denied their seniors. Without this motivation, reporters may succumb to cheque-book journalism. Moreover, because the CPV's patriotism is counter-balanced by more earthly concern of retaining power, the exposure of too much corruption within its ranks could frighten policy makers into backtracking on media liberalisation.

State ownership, on the other hand, can facilitate access to officials and offer security that Vietnam's still-new private sector cannot. However, the state can also hinder access and may over time, as it diminishes in significance thanks to several large privatisation programmes, no longer be the gatekeeper to information that it is now. Moreover, while state ownership can constrain the press financially, this constraint is falling and will continue to fall as commercial funding opportunities grow and state subsidies decline. For small papers, state ownership may provide funding which profit-driven private newspapers would not, thus ensuring the survival of minority-interest papers.

The government appears committed to be seen to be fighting corruption and including the media in its tool-kit. The CPV is now considering how to develop a media that focuses its enquiries only where prior state permission has been given. A tug-of-war between policy-makers wishing to liberalise the media and those wanting to restrain it is damaging the implementation of media policies. State-owned media may be especially vulnerable to political manipulation because key stories are either offered to reporters, or announced off limits, by the state. While a private media, *if* able to operate freely, would be less inclined to remain within the limits announced by the state, there is nothing in the data to suggest it would enjoy greater access to information.

Wholesale backtracking is unlikely but the reform process will involve steps both forward and back as the tug of war plays out. The media's growing assertiveness, as well as public participation in it and support for it,[17] should ensure that most steps are forward. Still, time is needed to translate reform commitment into concrete policy, because Vietnam's entire public sector is reforming and legislators are inundated with demands from all sectors. Proper implementation of new policies will be difficult if some parts of the CPV remain opposed to reform.

To improve the Vietnamese media's ability to expose and monitor corruption, a number of policy changes are possible. Foremost among these, is the clarification of existing laws and regulations. Vietnam's policy environment is confusing and becoming more so as piecemeal reforms increase the number of areas of legislative overlap or contradiction. In particular, this is true of legislation relating to access to information and the protection of journalists. Other problem areas relate to journalisms standards and media financing.

Clarification of Existing Laws and Regulations

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[17] As evidenced in the growing popularity of comments pages, letters to the editor, etc.

To improve the press' access to information, contradictions in Vietnam's legal system that complicate access and encourage self-censorship could be removed. While the government has yet to demonstrate a willingness to do so, the slow and steady legislative reform in other sectors suggests that media reform may soon be forthcoming. Publicity of the press' right to information, and a government push to facilitate access by ministries and other official bodies, would help ease current constraints. Perhaps most symbolically, it could encourage government staff to continue to talk to reporters while legislative requirements for ministerial spokespersons are implemented. Vietnam's top-down political organisation – one that allows senior officials to put pressure on implementing government bodies when deemed necessary - would suggest such stop-gap measures would not be difficult to implement.

In addition, Vietnam could strengthen legislation protecting journalists' physical safety, and amend legislation that holds reporters personally responsible for reporting erroneous reports. The detention of reporters Chien and Hai, two respected practitioners arrested on a charge of 'abuse of authority' that appears ill suited to their alleged erroneous reporting, has demonstrated the flaws in existing legislation.

Such changes could be included in the country's Media Law - legislation that is currently under review, and expected to be put before legislators in the near future. By holding newspapers, rather than individuals responsible, the government will encourage more in-house training as papers try to avoid the financial fallout of poor reporting. This could facilitate more courageous investigative journalism.

Legislative reform in a number of complementary areas could also enhance the media's ability to expose corruption. For example, Vietnam could introduce or improve legislation to facilitate whistle-blower protection, freedom of information, parliamentary authority to investigate misuse of state funds, and public participation in the policy making process. While progress is being made in some of these areas, such as public participation in the policy process, it is lacking in others: Whistle-blower protection and freedom of information legislation are either missing or weak. Given the stresses now being placed on Vietnam's legislators - the country's economic transformation demands the wholesale rewriting of much of its legal infrastructure - and the sensitive nature of media reform, it will be many years before such legislation is written and fully implemented. Nonetheless, the process should begin as soon as possible.

Improving Media Funding

To increase the press' financial freedom, Vietnam could continue to encourage the development of non-state revenue sources and the establishment of 'state-owned media conglomerates,' as allowed under the Media Law.[18] The state should encourage the transfer of press ownership within its own infrastructure to business-oriented media management bodies: something that is already happening but at a slow pace. An example is the recent transfer of the Saigon Times Group (publisher of the English-language Saigon Times) from direct HCMC People's Committee control to control by the committee's Department of Commence. The development of inventive avenues for revenue creation, such as online blogs and weekend supplements, should be encouraged, although current official suspicion of online news providers may mean such encouragement is not always forthcoming.

Finally, the state might consider ongoing subsidies for papers operating in geographical areas where revenue-raising opportunities are limited. Such papers, if able to develop their skills base thanks to increased budgets, could play an important role in uncovering low-level corruption of the kind that impacts Vietnamese people on an everyday basis.[19]

Strengthening Journalistic Standards through Codes and Training

Improving the quality of Vietnamese journalism is one of the biggest problems faced by policy-makers. Poor-quality reporting undermines not only the integrity of individual news organisations but also the state's anti-corruption campaign.[20]

Policies are needed to strengthen journalistic ethics and could be achieved through the revisions to the industry's code of ethics and, perhaps, the establishment of a media monitoring agency. Most foreign-funded journalistic

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[18] As argued above, such conglomerates, if linked to the state by the personal or political ties of senior management to government, may prove no more able to combat corruption than state-owned media organisations. However, their creation in Vietnam will increase the ability of under-funded organisations to seek financing from non-state sources (such as advertisers) and thus increase the resources available for anti-corruption reporting.

[19] 'Low-level' corruption refers here to the one-on-one exercise of petty corruption (by those with authority targeting those without it) that is prevalent throughout Vietnam. Examples include bribe taking by teachers who will focus their attention only on the children of those who have offered a bribe, or by doctors who insist on payment beyond the official state-capped fee before offering medical treatment to patients.

[20] An alternative view is that journalistic salaries also need to be adjusted to ensure the ability to recruit and retain quality journalists – and possibly reduce the incidence of corruption within the media. Commercialisation of the press and issues of funding discussed in the next section are related to salaries, but is not discussed in depth in this article.

training to date has focused on methods, not standards, and few reporters have shown genuine interest in improving ethical standards. The Vietnam Journalist Association's code of ethics must also be broadly publicised and strictly enforced: something that media practitioners say is not the case at present. A media monitoring agency, like Indonesia's Alliance of Independent Journalists, might also help to ensure that ethical standards are maintained.

Training could be both expanded and improved – and is needed to reinforce an industry code of conduct. Of more than 15,000 journalists in Vietnam "very few […] have any truly professional training" (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006, 44). Most of the journalism training in Vietnam is currently provided by a small number of facilities in Hanoi and HCMC and is largely inaccessible to most rural reporters. Media training currently focuses on writing skills and not investigative ones and provides graduates with only limited knowledge of the world around them, making them ill-equipped to view news in context. A first step is to emphasise differences between news stories and editorial comment, as well as objectivity and conflicts of interest.

Training programmes could also be adjusted to ensure graduates have a better understanding of issues relevant to corruption and its detection. Vietnam could consider the establishment of a dedicated facility for the training of investigative reporters. The Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, a non-profit agency, offers an example of best practice in Asia. Vietnamnet, an online newspaper, has expressed interest in establishing such a facility (Elmqvist and Luwarso 2006). However, both this option and that of an independent journalism body may prove controversial if established outside of the state. In Vietnam, it may be better to first develop such initiatives within the state and consider its separation from the state if/when the political environment allows.[21]

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[21] Private management and curriculum development may allow greater journalistic independence for reporters and students within the centre although, as this research has shown, such independence is not guaranteed.

Appendix 1. Key anti-corruption measures since 1996

The table highlights key policy changes made by the Vietnamese government, and announcements made by the CPV, regarding the fight against corruption since economic reforms began in 1986. Some key corruption cases and their outcomes are also included. It shows how efforts to combat corruption have gathered speed in recent years.

Period	Policy Change
1986-1989	
Sept 1987	CPV orders a purge to clean up corruption and chooses a prime minister with corruption-fighting credentials.
June 1989	Government announces a campaign to 'crush negative phenomena', including corruption.
1990-1999	
Nov 1990	Government announces that 18,000 government and/or CPV officials have been sacked, tried or disciplined for acts of corruption.
June 1991	First death sentence for corruption announced, condemning the director of a state-owned bank.
Dec 1992	An amendment to Vietnam's criminal law formalises capital punishment for acts of corruption.
Dec 1993	Prime minister announces launch of an anti corruption campaign.
May 1996	CPV issues directive calling for a clampdown on corruption.
Jan 1997	CPV chief says corruption is eroding the Vietnamese people's support for the communist party.
Jan 1997	Vietnam's first widely publicised anti corruption trial begins, under which the director of state-owned company Tamexco receives the death penalty for embezzling an estimated US$ 27 million.
Feb 1998	Parliament passes the country's first anti corruption legislation: an ordinance detailing preventative measures, penalties, and inter-agency cooperation. It also issues an Ordinance on Thrift and Combating Wastefullness.
Feb 1999	CPV chief launches new anti corruption campaign based on the socialist tenets of criticism and self-criticism targeting all communist party members. Promises to treat those who provide self-criticism leniently. Few members of the public believe the effort is genuine.
April 1999	A second major trial opens, in which 53 defendants are tried for involvement in the loss of US$250 million in state funds through state-owned trading company, Minh Phung Garment Co. Six death sentences are handed down.
May 1999	Government, for the first time, puts a figure on the cost of corruption, saying a total of US$5.8 billion in 'bureaucratic assets' are unaccounted for.

2000-2007

Sept 2000   Government announces a special commission that will send five task forces, headed by ministers or ministerial ranking officials, around the country to hear public complaints and address growing public unrest.

Dec 2000   Parliament passes an Ordinance on the Protection of State Secrets, which some in the media fear will limit the ability of journalists to access information and raise their exposure to threats of intimidation and/or litigation if they report information deemed to be a state secret. No definitive list of secrets is issued with the ordinance.

Jan 2001   Public sector monthly wages rise by 70 percent to VND210,000 (Vietnamese dong) - around US$15 – as part of a government plan to stem corruption.

Feb 2001   Outcome of the 1999 self-criticism campaign is published: findings show that over 40 percent of all government officials, including high ranking ones, are corrupt.

May 2001   First ministerial-level casualty of anti corruption efforts appears to be the sports minister, who is sacked with no reason given but amid rumours of misuse of public funds.

2002   Government approaches the Swedish development agency, SIDA, and commissions it to carry out a $840,000-study of corruption in Vietnam with the aim of using it to guide policy making. SIDA agrees on condition that the report is made public.

2002   State-funded film highlighting the extent and engrained nature of corruption in Vietnam passes the censors without change and goes on to win a Vietnam Movie Association award.

Feb 2002   Government issues a decree ordering all state employees to declare assets worth more than VND50 million (around US$3,300).

July   Two members of the powerful CPV's Central Committee are sacked
2002   amid allegations of involvement in a massive corruption scandal under investigation in HCMC: soon to become known as the 'Nam Cam' case.

2003   Prime minister appoints a spokesman for the first time: he chooses a former Viet Nam Television reporter.

Jan 2003   State sector salaries rise again to VND260,000/month.

Feb 2003   Nam Cam case goes to trial with 153 defendants. Among them are 13 senior police officers, three public prosecutors, three senior government officials, and three journalists.

May 2003   Vietnam's most senior deputy prime minister (of five) warns other government officials that they won't be treated leniently if found guilty of corruption and urges them not to abuse their positions.

May 2003   Director and deputy director of state oil firm, Petrovietnam, are fired

on suspicion of corruption and accused of signing fraudulent contracts worth several million dollars.

Dec 2003   Vietnam signs the UN's International Convention Against Corruption.

2004   Prime Minister issues several new pieces of official secrets legislation, putting even more information out of reach but failing to state clearly what is a secret and what is not.

Jun 2004   Agriculture minister is sacked for dereliction of duty, after failing to prevent a ministry-affiliated company from misappropriating US$4.7 million. When the case goes to trial, the company's director receives the death penalty and two former vice ministers get three-year suspended sentences.

Jul 2004   Vietnam becomes the twenty-third signatory to anti corruption agreement developed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Aug 2004   A conference hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and government think tank, the Central Institute for Economic Management, urges a greater role for the press in fighting corruption and suggests the media be given greater editorial freedom.

Sept 2004   Inquiry launched into the loss of US$16 million at a subsidiary of state carrier, Vietnam Airlines.

Oct 2004   Prime minister announces plans to develop a central anti corruption agency.

Nov 2004   Deputy transport minister and his son, also a ministry employee, are jailed for allegedly receiving US$1 million in bribes from trading companies requesting garment and textile export quotas to the US.

Dec 2004   Prime minister urges the media to 'declare war on corruption.'

Feb 2005   President of state-run Vietnam Journalist Association seconds the prime minister's request for a more active press, telling the media to provide in-depth coverage of corruption.

Oct 2005   Luong Cao Khai, head of the government's anti corruption task force arrested on suspicion of bribery.

Nov 2005   Parliament passes Vietnam's first Anti Corruption Law to replace its 1998 ordinance, and a Law on Thrift and Combating Waste. The corruption law forces all government employees and family members to declare their assets annually, demands more transparency in government, and establishes an anti corruption commission to be headed by the prime minister.

Dec 2005   Vietnam's largest ever public opinion survey concludes that corruption is the biggest threat the country faces.

Jan 2006   Vietnam's highly popular football season kicks off awash with match-fixing scandals. Officials fear investigations into the scandals could remove so many players, coaches and referees that it will be

impossible to complete the season.

Jan 2006   A Ministry of Transport official is arrested on suspicion of corruption after placing bets worth US$7 million on football games. His arrest leads to what becomes known as the 'PMU18' case, after the name of the ministry department he heads. The case leads, in April, to the transport minister's resignation and arrest of his deputy.

April 2006   Police announce that they are investigating alleged links between staff in the prime minister's office and the PMU18 case. No links are found.

April 2006   CPV convenes a key five-yearly Congress meeting, during which it confirms that fighting corruption is the party's key policy concern, and urges the media to become more active in uncovering graft.

June 2006   Parliament throws off its rubber stamp image and grills minister of public security about corruption. His grilling is broadcast live.

June 2006   In the wake of PMU 18, in which foreign aid funds were misused, France ties future aid contributions to Vietnam's anti corruption efforts.

June 2006   Police launch anti corruption hotline.

July 2006   CPV announces it will establish an anti corruption board to be run by a deputy minister.

Aug 2006	Parliament announces the launch of a special anti corruption steering committee.
Oct 2006	Government announces its anti corruption plan for 2007 which will focus on identifying and closing the policy loopholes that might be abused by corrupt officials.
Nov 2006	Ministry of Public Security establishes special anti corruption department.
Dec 2006	Government Inspectorate (ombudsman) establishes special anti corruption department.
Jan 2007	Anti corruption Steering Committee pledges to open all major cases under investigation to public scrutiny.
Feb 2007	Prime minister says there are 'no forbidden areas' in the search for corruption.
Mar 2007	Former deputy trade minister receives 14 years in jail for accepting bribes in the allocation of garment export quotas.
Apr 2007	A member of the Anti corruption Steering Committee says the body often relies on media reports to uncover cases.
May 2007	Vietnamese leadership meets with foreign donors to discuss progress on fighting corruption and donor aid.
Sept 2007	Transparency International reports a slight improvement in Vietnam's rating under its corruption perception index, but the rating remains low at 2.6 points out of ten.
May 2007	Government announces plans to teach the anti corruption law in schools to raise public awareness of the issue.
June 2007	CPV's politburo calls on the press to step up its anti corruption reporting.
June 2007	Government inspectorate launches an e-portal allowing agencies to exchange and update information on corruption cases under investigation.
July 2007	Those accused under the PMU18 scandal go on trial.

Source: *Factiva* News Archive

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Multiple Streams of Change: Explaining the Removal of Singapore's Casino Ban using John Kingdon's Agenda-Setting Framework

Ting Wee-Ming

The end of Singapore's casino ban surprised many observers and even Singapore's own parliamentarians and citizens. Changing the long-standing ban involved confronting the core beliefs that run deep within Singapore's society. Singaporeans generally believed that gambling was inherently evil, potentially detrimental to society and expected the government to restrict rather than endorse gambling. According to Sabatier (1988), changing such policy core beliefs would be extremely difficult. Moreover, removing the casino ban also required a "paradigm shift" – from a total disassociation from casinos to one that allowed the establishment of casinos but devised measures to control their related negative externalities. In Hall's (1993) view, such change in policy goals represents a major challenge. Yet, on 18 April 2005, the Singapore government announced its decision to proceed with the construction of two Integrated Resorts which would include casino gaming facilities. This decision, hardly possible a few years earlier, effectively ended the casino ban in Singapore.

Drawing largely upon available public records, this paper uses John Kingdon's Multiple-Stream Framework (MSF) to explain how a policy window opened and facilitated a dramatic shift in policy. This paper also examines how the problem stream, policy stream and politics stream have converged to make this policy change possible. While highlighting the strengths of the MSF, this paper also acknowledges the limitations of Kingdon's framework and suggests how insights from other complementary frameworks and concepts, such as the Advocacy Coalition framework and policy venue, can improve our understanding of Singapore's casino policy change. This paper concludes by highlighting some lessons and possible future implications for Singapore public policy-making and analysis.

Introduction

On 18 April 2005, the Singapore government announced its decision to proceed with the construction of two Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities. This decision, hardly possible a few years before, ended Singapore's

Ting Wee-Ming is a Singapore national and a recent graduate of Masters of Public Policy and Management, University of York, United Kingdom. (w_m_ting@yahoo.com)

longstanding casino ban and surprised many policy analysts in the process. Relying predominantly on available public records of speeches by Singapore's ministers, this paper uses John Kingdon's Multiple-Stream Framework (MSF) to explain how a policy window opened up to facilitate a dramatic policy shift in Singapore. It discusses the core policy beliefs and policy paradigms underlying the casino ban and the potential controversy associated with its removal made the policy less amenable to change. Subsequently, this article examines how the problem stream, policy stream and politics stream converged to allow the Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities to gain precedence over the original ban.

Besides highlighting the strengths of the MSF, this paper also reviews its limitations and it suggests how insights from other frameworks or concepts can complement our understanding of Singapore's casino policy change. These include Sabatier's (1988) Advocacy Coalition Framework, Zahadiaris' (1996) coupling process model, and Baumgartner and Jones' (1991) policy venue and policy image concepts. The article concludes with lessons and possible future policy implications for Singapore's public policy-making in the light of this case study.

Singapore's Casino Ban: A Difficult Policy to Change

Singapore's original policy to ban casinos was, in many ways, very difficult to change. First, to end the ban required a significant modification of the core belief system. Sabatier (1988) categorised the structure of belief systems (basic values, causal assumptions and problem perception) into 'deep core', 'policy core' and 'secondary' beliefs. While secondary beliefs may be easy to alter, Sabatier (1988, 145) notes that it is difficult to change deep core and policy core beliefs. Change to the former that related to an individuals' personal philosophy and fundamental normative axioms, is "akin to a religious conversion". Similarly, the latter, that associated with a fundamental policy position to achieve their respective normative axioms, can only occur if "experience reveals serious anomalies" in the original policy position. Prior to 2005, the core belief among Singapore's leaders and society generally considered gambling as inherently evil and potentially detrimental to society at large. Moreover, the policy core belief Singaporeans expected to be held by government was to restrict, rather than to encourage, gambling activities. As such, it was hard to reverse the casino ban in Singapore without an associated change or replacement in these deep core and policy core beliefs (Sabatier 1988, 145).

Second, the new policy would also require a dramatic change in the government's policy goal(s): The policy change would entail Singapore moving from a total ban on casinos to one that allowed the establishment of casinos albeit with devised measures to control the negative externalities of casinos. According to Hall (1993, 279), such a radical change in policy constitutes a 'third-order' policy change and requires a shift in policy paradigm through which

policymakers perceive the issue and their own role within it. This would necessitate a more 'disjunctive process' rather than being concerned with preserving continuities in policy. As a result, the proposed ending of the casino ban could expect strong resistance.

Moreover, the casino ban was not only one of the most stable policies but also potentially controversial and, therefore, less amenable to change. Rose (1990, 268-9) highlighted that repealing such 'inherited' and stable policies, especially controversial ones, would be very difficult in practice. Singapore had repeatedly turned down proposals to open casinos in the past. In 1985, even in the midst of a recession, then Prime Minister (PM) Goh Chok Tong rejected a proposal to establish casinos. As recent as 2002, Singapore's Tourism Working Group, a subgroup of the Economic Review Committee, suggested establishing a 'world class gaming facility' but was rejected by the government because of its potential adverse social impact (Lee 2005a). The legalization of casinos in Singapore could also be controversial. From a social perspective, religious and social groups worried that there might be an increase in problem gambling and broken families (Lee 2005a). From a law and order perspective, Singapore would potentially have to handle more undesirable activities such as money laundering, illegal money lending and organized crime. From a societal perspective, religious and social groups worried that casinos might give way to problem gambling and broken families (Lee 2005a). From a law and order perspective, Singapore would potentially have to handle more undesirable activities such as money laundering, illegal money lending and organised crime. It may also give rise to long-term impacts including affecting Singapore's safe and wholesome international image and erode Singaporean's work ethic (Wong 2005; Lee 2005a).

Even within Cabinet, ministers initial positions were divided and initially against the proposal. Some ministers were even having "serious reservations" (Goh 2005; Lee 2005a; Lee 2005b). Even PM Lee stood against the removal of the ban. Yet in 2005, despite all these challenges, the proposal to develop Integrated Resorts with a gaming component was accepted in Parliament. John Kingdon's Multiple-Stream Framework (MSF) offers a good tool to explain why the casino ban was able to be lifted against all odds. Before dwelling into the casino policy itself, we will first examine the major components of the MSF.

John Kingdon's Multiple-Stream Framework

While societal predispositions (values, political culture, constitution and so forth) set the context for the proposals to get on the agenda, John Kingdon argues that there is an element of chance when explaining why a certain policy proposal emerges rather than another (cited by John 2003, 487). There is an interaction of randomness in the processes of problem, policy and politics (ibid, 488). John Kingdon hypothesised that each policy domain contains

three relatively independent streams of actors and processes: the problem, policy and political (see figure for visual representation below).

The problem stream is concerned with how issues come to be recognised as problems and how conditions facilitate their definition as problems. The problem stream consists of "information about real world problems", "the effects of past government interventions" and how situations or conditions come to be recognised and defined as problems (Zahariadis 1996; Sabatier 1991, 151). Problems surface to the attention of society and governments either through systematic indicators, dramatic events such as crises and disasters, or through feedback from current programs (Parsons 1995, 193; Lester and Stewart 2003, 76).

The policy stream is concerned with the various strategies or solutions needed to tackle the problem. The policy stream comprises "various proposals, strategies and initiatives to tackle the problems" existing in a "primeval soup" of ideas usually generated by a community of researchers, advocates, public officials and other specialists (Exworthy and Powell 2004, 265; Meijerink 2005). These ideas or proposals are floated, allowed to mix with other ideas, constantly revised and combined with one another, and floated again (Lester and Stewart 2003, 77-78). The ultimate survival of each proposal will depend on its technical feasibility, budgetary practicability, compatibility with dominant values and current national mood, political support as well as anticipation of future constraints (Parsons 1995, 194; Lester and Stewart 2003). The outcome of this interaction in the soup will be a list of proposals that "floated to the top of the soup" by achieving a critical mass of stakeholders' acceptance (Parsons 1995, 194; Exworthy and Powell 2004, 265). They constitute the set of alternatives on the policy agenda.

The political stream is concerned with politics that affect the solutions chosen. It is composed of factors such as national mood, electoral politics, regime change and interest-group activity. Proposals that match national mood, congruent with current government orientation, enjoy interest-group support and face little organized opposition are more likely to rise to the top of the political agenda (Lester and Stewart 2003, 78; Meijerink 2005, 1064).

Figure: John Kingdon's Multiple Stream Framework (MSF)
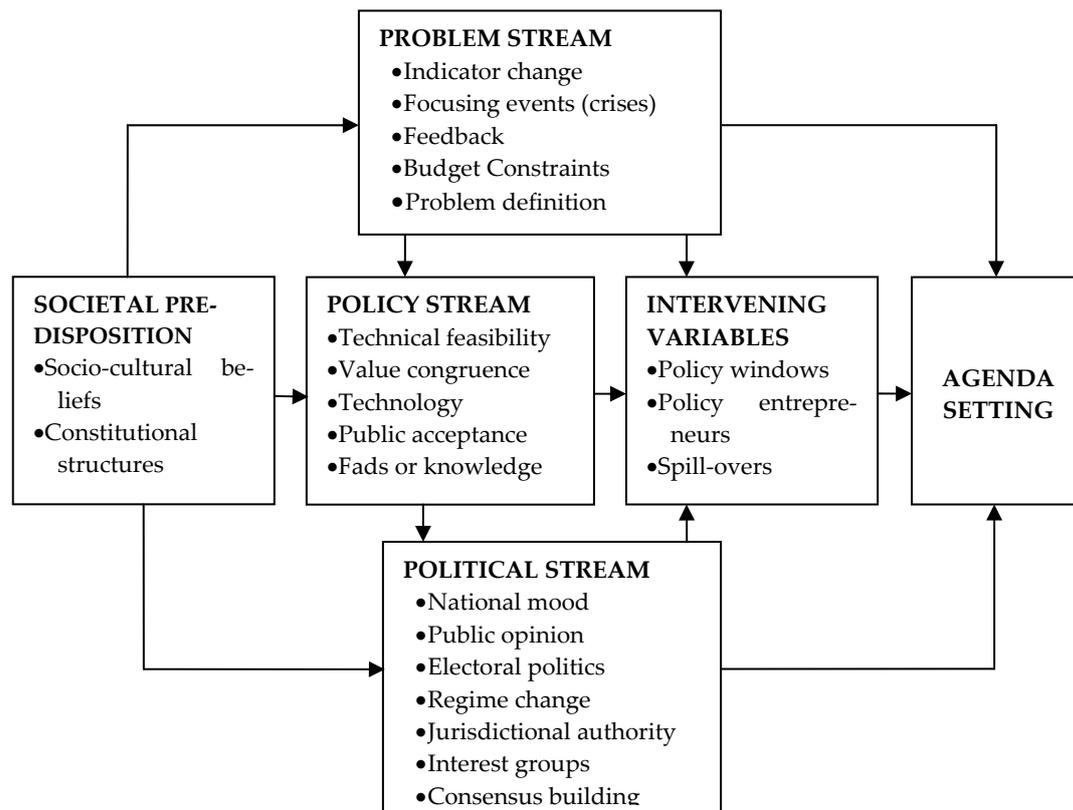
Source: Adapted from Lester and Stewart (2003, 72)

When these three independent streams come together, a policy window of opportunity opens. This is the critical moment one which Kingdon compares to the metaphor of a launch window in a space flight mission (cited by Parsons 1995, 194). "Once the window is lost, then the launch has to wait for another time when conditions and alignments are appropriate" (ibid, 194). The successful penetration through the policy window, however, depends on policy entrepreneurs, those individuals or groups willing to invest resources to push their proposals, to prompt others to heed the problems and to keep the issues on the agenda. The policy entrepreneurs are also important for coupling solutions to problems and coupling both solutions and problems to politics so that all the three streams would join for a policy decision to take place (Lester and Stewart 2003, 79; Zahariadis 1996, 403; Meijerink 2005, 1064). Policy change is then made possible.

Convergence of Three Streams:
The Adoption of the Integrated Resort Proposal

The Integrated Resort proposal was introduced in 2004 by then Minister of Trade and Industry, George Yeo, (Goh 2005; Lee 2005a). The proposal was examined through both public debate and media discussion. In December

2004, the government conducted a Request-for-Concept (RFC) to gauge if there were private investor interest and high quality concepts in the Integrated Resort proposal (MITI and MCYS 2004). On 18 April 2005, the Government announced its decision to proceed with two Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities in Singapore.

Societal Predisposition

It is important to start with an understanding of the context of how a typical policy is made in Singapore. The Singapore government has often sought the opinion of the public and other stakeholders through public consultation, formalized feedback channels, grassroots visits and the media. This was also the case for the casino policy. While most recognised the economic benefits of the Integrated Resort proposal, many stakeholders such as religious groups and social support groups were very much against the proposal on the grounds of serious social ramifications (Ibrahim 2005; Lee 2005a).

However, civil society in Singapore generally had limited influence over public policies (Ho 2000; Lyons and Gomez 2005; Lee 2002). The core decision-making entity for controversial policies that had serious social implications ultimately rested with the cabinet ministers. Speeches from various ministers made in Parliament reveal that there was indeed intense debate but also confirm the view that the ultimate decision was made by Cabinet (Lee 2005a; Lee 2005b; Lim 2005; Khaw 2005; Goh 2005; Wong 2005; Balakrishnan 2005a and 2005b). In this context the problem, policy and political streams need to be understood.

The Problem Stream

In the run-up to the adoption of the Integrated Resort proposal, the Singapore government listed a few reasons why not having an Integrated Resort with casino facilities could be problematic. First, both PM Lee Hsien Loong, and Minister of Trade and Industry, Lim Hng Kiang, mentioned that Singapore's tourism sector was facing major difficulties. Between 1993 and 2002, visitor arrivals were stagnant, tourism receipts fell and the sector's share of Gross Domestic Product dropped from 6.1 percent to 3 percent. Furthermore, this happened at a time when the regional tourism market had expanded and implied that Singapore's share of the Asia Pacific tourism receipts was shrinking quickly. Besides intense competition, the government perceived underinvestment as the main reason for the underperformance and believed that past solutions of incremental improvement were no longer adequate (Lim 2005; Lee 2005a).

Second, Singapore's vision of becoming a vibrant global city might be affected if it did not make efforts to change its image as an unexciting city without "buzz" (Lee 2005a; Lee 2005b). The government believed that Integrated Resorts with world-class entertainment would add vibrancy to Singapore, at-

tract not only repeated tourists but also global talent for its economy (Goh 2005; Lee 2005b). In his Ministerial Statement, PM Lee Hsien Loong (2005a) highlighted that the competitive environment had changed and if Singapore did not change and become a cosmopolitan hub, it might be bypassed by a new world order characterised by cities reinventing themselves across the globe. Investment in a large-scale Integrated Resort project without government funding, however, would not be viable without casino revenue. This revenue needed to become an "economic engine" and generate the bulk of profits to offset lower returns on non-gaming attractions (Lim 2005). As a result, an Integrated Resort with casino facilities became a necessary prospect for Singapore.

At the same time, the competing idea in the problem stream, that of great social cost, experienced diminishing significance during this period. The government underscored that casinos were already "at the doorsteps" in neighbouring countries making the impact of casinos unavoidable (Balakrishnan 2005a; Goh 2005; Khaw 2005). Singaporeans were already spending $1.5 billion in offshore casinos such as those at Genting Highland, Malaysia (Lee 2005a). Moreover, PM Lee (2005a) postulated that if Singapore were to continue to reject the idea of the Integrated Resort proposal, casino operators would go to neighbouring countries. This discourse reinforced the idea that the social cost of casinos would be felt irrespective of whether Singapore had its own casinos or not.

Hence, as debate progressed from the time when the case of Integrated Resort was initially proposed in 2004, it was unsurprising that the problem definition had slowly changed. The question on the casino issue was transformed from "whether Singapore should have casinos" to "whether Singapore can afford not to have Integrated Resorts with casino facilities" (Wong 2005). This shift in problem definition contributed to the "floating" of the problem stream that facilitated the ultimate removal of the casino ban.

The Policy Stream

Within Singapore's Integrated Resort proposal, there were two main solutions competing within the primeval soup of ideas. One floating solution was to maintain the status quo by keeping the casino ban and finding other ways to revitalise the city and the tourism sector. In this way, the social costs of casinos were assumed to be constrained. The other competing solution was to attach social safeguard measures to the proposal to develop Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities.

Among Kingdon's criteria that determine which competing solutions survive in the primeval soup (cited in Lester and Stewart 2003, 72), public acceptance generally favoured the status quo of the casino ban. However, most other survival factors generally favoured the Integrated Resort proposal in the run-up to the parliament session.

First, various government ministries were able to introduce technically feasible social safeguards to counter potential problems. To mitigate problem gambling, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, Vivian Balakrishnan (2005b), revealed measures to set up a National Council on Gambling, limit access to casinos only to people above 21 years old, install a high casino entry fee and empower gamblers themselves or their family members to exclude problem gamblers from the casinos. Collections from the entry levies would be used for charitable and worthy causes, including funding efforts to counter problem gambling. To treat gambling addictions, Minister for Health, Khaw Boon Wan (2005), unveiled plans to boost counselling services and treatments for both mild and serious addictions as well as to invest in research and training in best-practice treatments. To maintain law and order, Minister for Home Affairs, Wong Kan Seng (2005), introduced measures to set up a casino regulatory authority, ensure right ownership and management for the casinos as well as monitor relationships between casinos with vendors, suppliers and agents. A dedicated casino investigation branch would also be established along with a series of other measures would be taken to combat money laundering, illegal money lending, prostitution and syndicated crime activities. By introducing technically viable social safeguards, the government had given the new casino proposal a boost against the status quo solution.

In addition, the Integrated Resort proposal was budget-friendly because it would not need government funding. In December 2004, the government launched a RFC to assess the extent of private investor interest (MITI and MCYS 2004). The RFC attracted 19 submissions in all, but, more significantly, were the number of high quality proposals from established private investors (Lim 2005). These investors were willing to commit billions of dollars to build iconic developments of excellent architectural design and outstanding facilities for Meetings, Incentive tours, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE), if they were allowed to have casinos. Furthermore, the proposals were attractive from a time-perspective. PM Lee argued (2005a) that "without the Integrated Resorts, it might take [Singapore] 15 years or more to tender out the land in individual parcels, and to develop the area on the same scale". Consequently, the fiscal friendly and technical feasible Integrated Resort proposal got lifted further up in the soup.

The other criteria, of value congruence, also favoured the Integrated Resort solution. While gambling was generally considered undesirable in Singaporean society, the need to maintain Singapore's global competitiveness subsequently took precedence in government discourses. Several members of the Cabinet (Lee 2005a; Wong 2005; Lee 2005b; Goh 2005; Lim 2005) emphasised the need to prevent Singapore from being overtaken by other cities, and the imperative to take the country's strategic long-term interest into account. This

position was very much congruent with the dominant competition-state thinking or value that Singapore subscribes to. This stance also allowed the Integrated Resort proposal to gain the upper hand over the status quo position.

Besides being inferior when assessed using Kingdon's survival criteria, the casino ban solution also experienced difficulties of its own because of external events and global developments. Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports Vivian Balakrishnan (2005a), highlighted that a prohibitionist approach was not realistic and could no longer shield Singapore from paying the associated social costs as casinos could be easily set up in neighbouring countries. He argued that if casinos were allowed to set up near but not within Singapore, it would actually reduce Singapore's ability to control or regulate the casinos as they would be outside Singapore's jurisdiction.

Moreover, a survey conducted showed only a small minority of 2.1 percent of the population was likely to develop a serious gambling addiction. The result was comparable to similar studies in Hong Kong and Macau which were also majority-Chinese urban societies (MCYS 2005). Home Affairs Minister Wong (2005) reiterated that research undertaken to establish links between casinos and criminal activities were inconclusive. Minister Wong (2005) cited the US National Gambling Impact Study Commission 1999 report that showed "communities with casinos are not worse off compared to those without. These studies effectively weakened arguments that linked casinos directly with social problems or crimes and put into doubt the key rationale for the casino ban. As a result of these collective developments, the solution of combining the Integrated Resort proposal with social safeguards managed to float while the solution of the casino ban sank deeper in the primeval soup of policy ideas.

The Political Stream

It was noteworthy that there was a recent change of leadership within the government. In 2004, Mr Lee Hsien Loong took over as Prime Minister from Mr Goh Chok Tong. Albeit from within the same political party, the new leadership allowed a new orientation that could potentially facilitate the rise of a new policy proposal – in this case, the Integrated Resort proposal (Lester and Stewart 2003).

Remarkable progress was made to overcome the initial unfavourable national mood. Among the people, there was strong dissent about the Integrated Resort proposal especially among the religious groups. PM Lee (2005a) described how he had received "letters from many Singaporeans, especially

Christians, expressing their objections". Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs, Yaacob Ibrahim, (2005) also highlighted that the Muslim community was against gambling. The government addressed these concerns by reframing the project as an Integrated Resort and not a casino. Ministers further reiterated that Singapore would not embark on the proposal as a casino project alone (Lee 2005a; Khaw 2005). The government also emphasised the social benefits of the Integrated Resort proposal by highlighting that it would add 35,000 jobs to the economy (Lim 2005).Moreover, these would be "honest, decent jobs" that could "ensure good living in the midst of international competition", as well as jobs for older and less skilled workers in the midst of economic restructuring (Balakrishnan 2005b).

The role of then Minister Yeo as a policy entrepreneur was also very important. Senior Minister Goh (2005) in his speech highlighted that when the Integrated Resort subject was initially broached by then George Yeo in 2004, the PM and many ministers were against it. Yeo, however, persisted and argued for a RFC to gauge private investor interest and identify high quality concepts that could contribute to remaking Singapore as a more vibrant destination (Goh 2005). This strategy gained the support of Senior Minister Goh and managed to keep the Integrated Resort proposal on the agenda (Goh 2005). The RFC turned out to be a crucial turning point for many ministers. When high quality concepts from potential investors were submitted in March 2005, many ministers including PM Lee, Home Affairs Minister Wong, Health Minister Khaw and others were convinced. While initially against the decision these ministers were impressed by the huge market potential in MICE and the tourist sector as well as the employment potential (Goh 2005; Lee 2005a). From then on, the issue transformed itself into a question of "whether an economic investment comprising an overall tourist integrated investment project running into billions of dollars should be disallowed because of a gaming component" (cited in Lee 2005a). This was a key victory for the proponents of the Integrated Resort project because the Cabinet was the core decision-making entity for Singapore.

Policy Window of Opportunity. By then, the three streams had converged. The problem stream was defined as "whether Singapore can afford not to have Integrated Resorts" rather than "whether having casinos is harmful". In the policy stream, the solution that floated to the top of the primeval soup was having social safeguards to manage the social ills associated with casinos rather than having a total casino ban. In the political stream, the key decision-making body of Cabinet Ministers was won over by proponents of the Integrated Resort proposal. The policy window of opportunity had opened up at a critical time. On 18 April 2005 during a parliament sitting, the Government

announced its decision to proceed on two Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities.

Limitations of MSF and Role for Complementary Models

While the MSF is useful to explain Singapore's casino policy change, it also has limitations and gaps remain. Although Kingdon's framework highlights the need for convergence of the three streams, it does not specify under what type of conditions it was the solution looking for a problem or the problem looking for a solution. In response to this gap Zahadiaris (1996, 405-407) has hypothesised that if the problem stream that opened the window (such as a crisis), consequential coupling (i.e. finding solutions for a given problem) is more likely. On the other hand, if it is the political stream window (such as a newly-elected government pushing a new mandate) doctrinal coupling (i.e. finding problems for a given solution) would be more likely. In the case study of Singapore's casino policy, consequential coupling, over doctrinal coupling, is more likely conclusion. PM Lee's cabinet was not selected upon a Integrated Resort mandate. (In fact, there was still a question whether there was a casino mandate in the first place). Rather, the Integrated Resort proposal was approved in response to the problem of a stagnant tourism sector and the city's image.

Furthermore, the MSF is unable to offer greater insights into the crucial role of the RFC beyond simply being part of the political stream that helped to ease the initial resistance within Cabinet. Baumgartner and Jones' Punctuated Equilibrium Framework (1991) and its concepts of policy venue and policy image could be complementary. By organising the RFC, the policy entrepreneur had effectively set up an additional institutional venue for policy actions. It was also effective in advancing competition-state thinking above the belief that the casino ban should be maintained at all cost, thereby creating a new policy image.

Sabatier's (1988) idea of deep core and policy core beliefs within the Advocacy Coalition Framework may further supplement this understanding. Within Sabatier's structure of belief systems deep core beliefs take higher order than policy beliefs. Thus, although the deep core belief persisted among Singaporeans that gambling is evil, the government was able to use another deep core belief that the long-term economic interest of a nation or society is very important over the policy core belief that the Casino ban should be maintained. Incorporating these two other theories helps us to appreciate that other frameworks could complement Kingdon's model to help us achieve a better understanding of the casino policy change.

Implications for Singapore Public Policy-Making and Analysis

The casino ban in Singapore was a policy that was resistant to change because it required a change in the policy core belief system. The potential controversy associated with removing the longstanding casino ban made past attempts of policy change unsuccessful. It involved a third order change in policy goal requiring a paradigm policy shift. Kingdon's MSF offers a solid explanation of why the Singapore government was able to end the casino ban when it formally announced to build two Integrated Resorts with casino gaming facilities on 18 April 2005.

The convergence of the problem, policy and political streams allowed a policy window of opportunity for change to emerge. In the problem stream, the definition of the issue evolved from "whether having casinos in Singapore's own backyard would incur great costs" to "whether Singapore could afford to ignore the Integrated Resort proposal". The policy stream was transformed using social safeguards to manage the social ills associated with casinos rather than having a total casino ban. In the political stream, the key but initially resistant decision-making body, Cabinet, was won over by a policy entrepreneur to facilitate a realisation of the Integrated Resorts economic and social benefits.

This case study demonstrates that Kingdon's model is also usable in a parliamentary system with a small core group of decision-makers, such as Singapore. It is interesting because the framework was initially developed for the US presidential system. This papers findings, however, are similar to Zahariadis' (1996, 419) observation of the MSF in the UK and that it can be applied for "smaller parliamentary systems with strong executive control and partisan discipline".

This has significant implications for understanding other policies in Singapore that are resistant to change. It highlights that, by using the model and asking the rights questions, policymakers can focus on the right streams for action and policy entrepreneurs can assess the required commitment to their advocated policy. The MSF can be used to analyse why other policies have not yet changed. Which of the three streams have not converged yet? Are the underlying values and beliefs of the policies congruent with the socio-political climate? Is there a realistic chance the non-converging stream will converge anytime soon? Asking such questions will be useful. For policy makers, it will help to work on the relevant stream in order for policy change to succeed. For policy entrepreneurs, it will help them to assess whether to commit further resources into advocating their proposals.

Despite its usefulness in explaining the casino policy change in Singapore, Kingdon's model faced challenges in providing better understanding of the coupling process, the significant influence of the RFC on the cabinet and the belief structure. Zahariadis' (1996) work in the coupling process, Baumgartner and Jones' (1991) concepts of policy venue and image, and Sabatier's structure of belief systems were able to fill some of these gaps in understanding.

When complemented with other models of policy change, Kingdon's model can potentially be a good tool for analysis and even forecasting. For example, the knowledge on the nature of coupling processes will be useful for predicting the casino policy outcome. If we knew the problem to be a stagnant tourism sector and that it was a known problem looking for a solution (consequential coupling), it would not be difficult to forecast that the solution of having Integrated Resorts combined with social safeguards would float above the casino ban solution among the policy alternatives. Such analytical and forecasting insights would be valuable for most policy entrepreneurs, analysts, policymakers and even investors.

The possibility of creating new or changing policy venues in Singapore public policy-making has vital implications for both policy entrepreneurs and regulators alike. For policy entrepreneurs of other change resistant policies, they can look to open up new policy venues to encourage change. On the other hand, regulators will need to constantly keep watch on qualitative changes of existing policy venues or the creation of new policy venues. These could materially change the original intent of the policy domain. While many steps have been taken to minimise the negative effects associated with casinos, it is imperative to properly define the appropriate policy venue(s) for evaluation and fine-tuning of this policy. It may include the proposed Casino Regulatory Authority and/or, the National Council on Problem Gambling. More importantly, the wide-ranging interests of multiple stakeholders need to be adequately represented at these policy venues and balance commercial interests with social concerns. The regulator should be aware of the danger of erosions to any of these policy venues due to capture by the regulated entities and should refrain from developing a overly cosy relationship with the Integrated Resort operators. Research studies on the social impact of gambling should not be funded *directly* from the coffers of the Integrated Resorts operators to maintain research independence and objectivity. These measures will hopefully ensure that overall societal benefits continue to outweigh the costs in the long term.

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GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND THE RISE OF NGOS

Shaughn McArthur

> "The federal government shares domestic policy with state and local governments and with NGOs – and state and local governments do the same. These changes are not the result of an explicit policy decision; rather, they grew gradually and imperceptibly from hundreds of tactics decisions over two generations of public policy. They have cumulated, however, into a fundamental transformation of governance – a transformation that poses substantial challenges for public institutions and how we manage them" (Kettl 2000, 496).

The term governance is commonly traced to prescriptions made by the World Bank in the 1990s, when it began calling for 'good governance' as a prerequisite for sustainable economic development in a new era of public affairs. The World Bank laid out its vision in the following paragraph:

> Good governance is epitomized by predictable, open, and enlightened policy-making (that is, a transparent process); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law (World Bank, 1994: vii).

According to this definition, the World Bank envisioned quite a different role for government from what it had been prior to the fall of the Iron Curtain. Bureaucracies needed to exhibit more professionalism, governments more accountability and predictability and, heeding the principles of the rule of law, policymakers needed to open their doors to private stakeholders to a much greater extent than ever before. Perhaps most importantly, crucial in keeping public officials in line with this new standard, governments had to accept a substantial role for civil society in a new age of cooperative policy-making. The World Bank's conception of modern governance entailed "a pluralist institutional structure which creates intermediaries between the government and the people…These groups will hold government accountable, and provide a countervailing force to the power of the state" (Williams 1996, 164).

This shift from governance by government to governance with government, as it has often been termed, was spurred by fundamental changes in patterns

Shaughn McArthur is a Canadian national and MPP Student at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. He is the Founding Chairman of the African-Canadian Sustainability Initiative (ACSI), an INGO providing microfinance solutions to aspiring university students and entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

of socio-political interaction that characterized the period after the end of the Cold War. In what Swyngedouw calls a process of 'neo-liberal destatisation' following the triumph of capitalism and the free market over socialism, nation states around the world suddenly found themselves caught up in an unprecedented tide of global market forces (Swyngedouw 2005, 1998). Governments, in turn, found themselves operating under an entirely new sphere of influences, over many of which they had only limited control.

As market forces sustained and deepened their role in society, the new governance arena and the many new actors it encompassed called for a more participatory and cooperative approach to policymaking. Where governments of nation states had once been the top decision-making authorities within their jurisdictions, they now operated in a much diversified constellation in which actors from the private and civil sectors on occasion exercised powers over them. Hierarchical accountability, that is to say, was replaced by broad horizontal accountability: A new era of 'stakeholder governance' was born in which universal norms were defined and increasingly defended by private actors, and against which governments' legitimacy would increasingly be measured (Swyngedouw 2005, 1995). Hence, says Williams, "'good governance' presents a picture of interlocking disciplinary practices whereby the state is disciplined by society and society by the state" (Williams 1996, 157).

Two important characteristics of this transformation can here be briefly noted: Firstly, that the emergence of the new ideals of governance was inextricably linked to a parallel acceleration in the pace of globalisation in the 1980s and 1990s (World Bank 2000, 1); and secondly, that that it was, as Youngs says, "an actor-based phenomenon, linked to specific NGO strategies, not an impersonal structural trend" (Youngs 2004, 140). Both of these factors coincided in a way that defied what Zürn calls the "spatial congruence" (Zurn 1999) of traditional governance by governments. As governance redefined itself as a phenomenon taking place within international political spheres increasingly committed to the advancement of global issues, traditional governments, bound by old borders, were unable to project their governing capabilities across those borders with the same agility that non-state actors could.

The central spot occupied by non-state actors, including nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and multinational corporations (MNCs), in this global governance constellation is summed up in the following description of contemporary transnational policy networks:

> A model of world politics in which advocacy networks define new global issues, win commitments from 'policy actors' to address related concerns, and monitor

the implementation of those commitments. These advocacy networks, consisting of non-state, state, and intergovernmental entities – but dominated by the first – operate on a fluidly transnational basis (Spiro1998, 809).

Elaborating on the discussion sparked in the preceding paragraphs, the following paper examines the interlinked phenomena of globalisation, governance and the increasing importance of NGOs in contemporary policymaking. It begins by examining the diminution of state governments as supreme political authorities – as political, economic and informational transactions in the 1990s became increasingly global in scope – through a process Zürn calls *denationalization*. It shows how the gaps in public policy frameworks brought about by the shift to global governance were organically filled by the rise of NGOs and other non-state actors. It investigates how in the global governance constellation NGOs seek to govern *around* – that is, *extra-institutionally* – and increasingly *with* governments. It shows how NGOs exercise moral authority, thereby creating sensibilities to influence peoples' and institutions' behaviour and streamlining them with their own political objectives. Finally, extrapolating from this discussion, the paper concludes by briefly considering whether this transformation has engendered a process of democratization, as civil society has often claimed; and whether NGOs in the 21st century can in fact be deemed legitimate guardians of the concerns of humanity.

Denationalization and the Transformation of the Nation State

The national constellation, that is the convergence of resources, recognition and the realization of governance goals in one political organisation – the nation state –, seems to be in a process of transformation into a post-national constellation. The nation state is no longer the only site of authority and the normativity that accompanies it (Zürn 1999).

Where most political scientists would use the term globalisation to refer loosely to the same phenomenon, Zürn prefers the term denationalization, he says, because the increase in cross-border transactions – of goods, services, money, people and information – is yet far from being global. His point -- that major disparities still exist in the proportion of such transactions taking place between core countries and those reaching the periphery - is well taken. As concerns the present discussion of the significance of nation states' within a global governance framework, however, the term denationalisation carries relevant innuendoes about the types of challenges facing nation states under globalization. It invokes the difficulty national governments face in trying to achieve their goals in an era in which "the social space to be governed is no

longer national" (Zürn 1999). The term denationalisation therefore may be understood as describing a phenomenon under which physical space and national objectives have given way to transnational actors and normative ideologies as the base-factors delineating spheres of governance.

Recapitulating the blow this change has dealt to the traditional conception of nation states, at the 1999 UN General Assembly South African President Thabo Mbeki stated that "the process of globalisation necessarily redefines the concept and practice of national sovereignty" (Keohane 2000, 6). But while so-called 'hyper-globalists' have equated this process with the decline in relevance of the state to near obsolescence, and even a shift towards some future ill-defined world government, a large and expanding body of more moderate literature suggests that nation states will retain their importance. Governments of nation states will continue to play a central role in governance, the literature argues, as long as they are able to adapt to new constraints – often placed on them from outside their national borders, and over which they have only limited control - and to operate in a more cooperative governance framework. Those that fail to demonstrate willingness to work in tandem with other major actors will bear crippling burdens of pressure. Their foreign policy objectives in particular will be severely constrained. As mentioned earlier, the resulting paradigm shift has largely involved the weakening of vertical power structures, in which authority was delegated from the top of the state apparatus downwards, to a more horizontal system in which states have (often through a process of deregulation or cooperation with advocacy networks) relinquished some of their powers to non-state actors (Thürer 1999, 40).

The outcome of this reorganisation of nation states' place in the authority chain of policymaking is what Keohane and Nye refer to as *networked minimalism*: "Networked – because globalism is best characterized as networked, rather than as a set of hierarchies. Minimal – because governance at the global level will only be acceptable if it does not supersede national governance and if its intrusions into the autonomy of states and communities are clearly justified in terms of cooperative results" (Keohane 2000, 14). To say that nation states are 'retreating' or 'withering away', as some have been done is unwarranted; rather, the nation state today simply finds itself "increasingly embedded in complex constellations of actors and structures" (Djelic 2006, 9). As a matter of choice, the government of a nation state can enjoy the benefits of having these new actors as allies and learn to operate with them multilaterally, or shun them and learn to seek out an existence under the suspicious gaze of the 'international community'.

The implications of this should not be underestimated. As Youngs points out, nation states' increasing interdependence with transnational networks and organisations of state and non-state actors has altered their very self-identity, especially as those networks increasingly inform and guide governments' foreign policy decisions (Youngs 2004, 139). Indeed, as indicated in passing above, the very legitimacy of state governments within the international community increasingly relies upon their adherence to certain global ideals – the observance of human rights being the most important of these – and their willingness to cooperate with certain international bodies. Nation states' governments are increasingly evaluated within the international community according to their compliance with, for instance, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Transparency International, or Amnesty International. Failure to comply with such global standard-setting organisations and the networks they represent may result in sanctions from transnational organisations, such as the UNSC or the European Union. Repercussions for non-abidance to such standards can also come from other states who, often under pressure from non-state actors (such as advocacy networks composed of NGOs), seek to strengthen their own domestic political legitimacy by applying their authority towards popular objectives. NGOs themselves often reinforce such sanctions with naming and shaming, demonstrations, letter writing and other pressure tactics. The overarching implication is that in an era in which a government's legitimacy increasingly relies on international perception, "governance beyond the nation state cannot take the form of governance by government, but rather it needs to be a form of governance with governments such as we find in international institutions, or governance without government as in transnational institutions, or supranational governance" (Zürn 1999). What Zürn neglects to mention in this passage is that the agendas and mechanisms used by these institutions are increasingly substantially shaped and guided by the work of NGOs.

Standing at the centre of this new dynamic of governance with or without governments, where multinational corporations (MNCs) may be said to rule the sphere of economic globalization and forward agendas of financial interests and intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) to forward the interests of governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may be conceived of as the champions of social globalization. Sometimes referred to as the "Fifth Estate in Global Governance," NGOs have evolved over the past two decades to become widely accepted – and contested – as the de facto guardians of the interests of humanity; filling the gaps in global governance where governments lack a foothold (SustainAbility 2003, 9). Put differently, international NGO movements are understood as representing "issues of people rather than states… a new dynamic of embryonic participatory democracy to the global community" (Youngs 2004, 139).

The next two sections of this paper seek to deepen the understanding of the rise of dynamic non-state actors and the parallel maturation of their role in and approach to global governance.

The Rise of Civil Society and the Relevance of 'Soft' Power

> The key question for global governance is, who are 'we the people' when there is no sense of political identity and community, and the political world is organized largely around a system of unequal states? (Keohane 2000, 32-33).

Civil society – sometimes referred to as the 'third sector', indicating its distinct status from the public and private sectors – encompasses NGOs, social movements, churches, foundations, intellectuals and consumer groups. In more formal terms, civil society describes organisations of "social forms and relations that are neither state nor market" (Swyngedouw 2005, 1996). In less formal terms, civil society is organized by and for the people. It is involved in the delivery and implementation of public goods and services, as well as the monitoring of established institutions for any breaches in their commitments to public welfare, global public goods such as the environment, and human rights. Largely due to the terms under which civil society organisations are registered by national bureaucracies, especially for purposes of taxation and financial auditing, in common usage the terms civil society organisation (CSO) and nongovernmental organisation (NGO) have widely evolved into synonyms for one another. These organisations are also variously known as non-profit or not-for-profit organisations (NPOs), can include sub-groupings such as community based organisations (CBOs), and under special arrangements between governmental agencies and private actors can also denote hybrids such as quasi-nongovernmental organisations (QUANGOs) (SustainAbility 2003, 13).

Often described as 'epistemic communities', NGOs have in the past two decades mobilized communications technologies in such a way as to defy physical space as never before, bringing people with similar interests together in transnational social and activist networks, and coordinating between them on a massive and highly organized scale (Djelic 2006, 10). In this sense, then, international NGOs (sometimes referred to as INGOs) may be considered the social offspring of political and economic globalisation – at once a response to and representation of the universal needs of humanity, as the products and externalities of capitalism permeate ever more international borders.

In the decade following the fall of the Iron Curtain, the number of international INGOs rose from 6000 to 37,000. Together, these INGOs delivered more aid than the ensemble of the entire UN system. Additionally, some 1000 NGOs enjoyed consultative status at the UN Economic and Social Council (Youngs 2004, 139); today that number has tripled, to 3051 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs). The total number of NGOs worldwide continues to swell, reaching well into the millions if one counts those not operating internationally (Kettl 2000, 491). Even if measured in terms of their sheer numbers alone, NGOs' impact on global governance would presumably be significant. Consider the fact that the NGO sector now constitutes the 8th largest economy in the world – representing over $1 trillion annually, 19 million paid workers and countless volunteers, and $15 billion in development aid every year – and the significance of NGOs in the mobilizations of funds, goods and services, ideas, norms and people around the world is enormous (Hall-Jones 2006). Indeed, in today's global governance constellation NGOs "are powerful engines for organizing and driving policy change, and their influence has been impressive" - so much so, says Kettl, that "national sovereignty, even for the world's superpower, has been eroded" (Kettl 2000, 491). Yet, when one takes account of the fact that NGOs have no powers of regulation or enforcement, the *nature* of their impact may seem puzzling.

In comparison with state and interstate actors, which can establish and enforce regulations in varying capacities, civil society is commonly said to wield "soft" power. As inferred in the quotation from Kettl above, the potency of this type of power should not be underestimated. In the global governance arena soft power has become an important means of achieving behaviour-changing outcomes, both within and beyond the proper jurisdictions of nation states, as well as of state governments, IGOs and MNCs themselves: "Non-state actors (such as corporations and NGOs) may exercise power above, below and around the state, so that they may advance political objectives even where they fail to secure regulation and other forms of governmental action," says Spiro (Spiro 1998, 809). Soft power, in other words, exercised through sensitization and pressure tactics, is the mechanism of authority by which NGOs overcome limitations inherent in their position outside the public sector. This seemingly unstructured mechanism, in other words, enables actors within the NGO sector to govern *extra-institutionally*.

This positioning of NGOs outside of formal institutional infrastructures has played out in interesting ways in the history of the rise of NGOs. Where once these organisations operated on the fringes of major political systems and were seen as anti-establishment and anti-institution – for example, protesting massively against free trade and the WTO, the World Bank, summits of the G8 and the OECD's Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), to name

just a few – NGO's today do an increasing amount of governance *with* governments and other established institutions (The Economist 1999). Indeed, even Vladmir Putin has in recent years been caught participating in a Civic Forum at which NGO leaders provided input on Russian government policy (SustainAbility 2003, 9).

Increasing numbers of 'expert NGO' consultants now also contribute to the policies of the World Bank, often to the point of determining those policies. They play comparable roles at the UN and other intergovernmental organisations (The Economist 1999). Furthermore, in a more recent development, a growing number of NGOs – especially the bigger, 'brand-name' NGOs - receive increasing proportions of their budgets from state governments and IGOs (Paul 2000). The European Union, for example, channels some two-thirds of its development and relief aid through NGOs (Keane 2001, 26). One obvious implication of this is that these NGOs must be pursuing objectives that governments and governmental organisations consider complimentary to their own foreign policy objectives, and possibly even that they do it better and more efficiently than governments can themselves.

Taking this analysis a step further; these changes in the NGO sector's approach to public policy in recent years show striking evidence that these organisations, once considered the "shock troops" of civil society, are maturing in their role as global governance partners (SustainAbility 2003, 4). Once considered the arch enemies of globalization, for example, NGOs are increasingly navigating the channels of major transnational, governmental and intergovernmental institutions as a means of ensuring that the *right kind* of global policies are being pursued: "Paradoxically, perhaps, many NGOs now argue for more globalization, not less. In the process, however, they stress that it needs to be refocused on globalizing human rights, justice and accountability for those that abuse those rights" (SustainAbility 2003, 2). Finally resolved to the inevitability of the so-called age of globalization, in other words, NGOs see themselves as the protectors of an increasing number of issues that have become inextricably linked to and affected by the increasingly free movements of peoples, ideas, goods and services – not to mention the negative externalities of international industry – across international borders. These issues include the environment, labour rights, human rights, gender rights, and consumer rights, to name but a few.

This self-proclaimed mandate is laudable, to be sure, but do NGOs live up to their own expectations? This question is taken up in the next section.

Deepening Civil Sector Engagement: Democratisation, or Inflated Expectations?

As discussions continue about democracy and accountability in global decision-making, it becomes increasingly clear that NGOs have a vital role to play. Globalization has created both cross-border issues that NGOs address and cross-border communities of interest that NGOs represent. National governments cannot do either task as effectively or as legitimately. In the globalizing world of the twenty-first century, NGOs will have a growing international calling (Paul 2000).

"Democratisation and technological progress have revolutionised the way in which citizens can unite to express their disquiet," wrote the authors of The Economist in a 1999 assessment of the impact NGOs were having and could be expected to have on global governance in the 21st century (The Economist 1999). Indeed, the preceding pages have gone to great lengths to show that the rise of NGOs was clearly a product of globalization, enabled by technology; but are NGOs simply an outlet for social disquiet, as this quotation would seem to suggest? Are they really no more than a negative force in world diplomacy? Or does the rise of NGOs' engagement in public affairs in fact strengthen and spread democracy around the world? Are NGOs truly, as former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan once said, "The conscience of humanity" (Paul 2000)? And if so, what kind of controls are in place to ensure they were accountable to those on whose behalf they propose to advocate? Are the brokers of political legitimacy properly scrutinized to ensure they are legitimate themselves? These were just some of the questions social scientists around the world were asking themselves at the turn of the millennium. Alas, the relationship between NGOs, democracy and their claim to represent the voice of humanity is almost predestined to be a tenuous one, and NGOs are by no means short of their critics: "Non-state actors often cloak self-interest with the mantle of moral authority," says Spiro; "and not all transnational networks are politically progressive" (Spiro 1998, 810). Inasmuch as moral authority is linked to the very identity of the NGO sector, and the representation of humanity to the very notion of democracy, any discussion of 'global civil society' would be incomplete without some investigation of these important points of contention.

The boom of NGO presence and creation in newly democratised countries in Eastern Europe and Africa in the 1990s cannot be refuted, and the fall of the Iron Curtain itself is often linked to the strengthening of civil society (Hall-Jones 2006); but to say that democracy is a catalyst or precondition for NGOs is not the same as to say that in the long run NGOs will help spread, ameliorate or entrench democracy. After all, NGOs themselves can claim little more than accountability to their memberships – although often numbering in the

millions – as proof of democratic underpinning in their own organisational structuring. But although their leaders are unelected, NGOs often defend themselves against accusations of being structurally undemocratic and unaccountable by pointing to controls in the forms of boards of directors, large memberships and accountability to the donors who provide their budgets as mechanisms of self-regulation.

An improving degree of external regulation of NGOs also exists. Even in the most open and democratic countries NGOs are subject to controls in the form of financial auditing and registration processes; and NGOs seeking consultative status at the UN go through stringent processes of accreditation and review to ensure their representative legitimacy. NGOs are also increasingly subject to peer regulation through their engagement within advocacy networks and coalitions. "Thanks partly to these controls and to the ethos of public service in the NGO community," writes James A. Paul, "NGOs are not often accused of corruption, breaches of the law, gross failure to live up to their mandate or other serious abuses. Compared with the frequent scandals of corruption and abuse of authority by officials of nation states, NGOs appear as relatively virtuous" (Paul 2000).

Accountability thus aside, evidence also shows that the pluralism represented by the engagement of NGOs in global governance does in fact improve the range and diversity of issues on policymakers' agendas. Even if merely in their ability to work at once in the field, face-to-face with people affected by the various global concerns NGOs claim to represent, and at the highly institutionalized national and international levels, NGO's represent an important link between humanity and the wielders of traditional 'hard' powers in policymaking. Taking into account their additional ability to inform and guide the final drafting of policies in the global governance arena, not to mention their important involvement in implementing those policies on the ground (in many cases with more legitimacy and ability than imparted to governmental actors, as indicated in the quotation above), it is clear that NGOs "are becoming, to an ever growing extent, actors in their own right, exercising a certain measure of authority, and must, in so far, be seen as highly relevant members of the international community" (Thürer 1999, 39).

Yet, powerful forces as they may represent, NGOs will never be fully independent or unilateral actors; rather, they are inextricably tied to traditional units of governance. As much as governments and intergovernmental organisations depend on NGOs to perform very important functions, NGOs themselves depend on those institutions for their very raison d'etre as interlocutors, as well as for increasing proportions of their budgets and, paradoxically – as indicated above, governments increasingly depend on NGOs for

their legitimacy in the "global issues arena" (Spiro 1998, 809) – for their legitimacy abroad vis-à-vis governments less willing to cooperate. An NGO seeking to deliver HIV/AIDS services in Uganda, for example, will encounter much different reception from the host government and be permitted to operate under much different conditions – that is, more or less freely and with more or less access to and cooperation from local state-level power brokers – if it is, say, Canadian based, UN accredited and funded by private donors than if it is based in Iran and funded by scarcely known religious organisations. Put differently, NGOs "can mobilize bits and pieces of their national legacies in the negotiation around transnational governance" (Djelic 2006, 16). Indeed, co-dependence between governments and NGOs is mutual and affects the global governance efforts of both state and non-state actors in very definitive ways.

The Final Analysis

The relationship between the rise of NGOs and the advent of global governance in the past two decades should by now be quite clear to the reader. Global governance is at once the arena that allowed a 'global civil society' to flourish, and that which made cooperation with such interlocutors necessary to reach ever more remote corners of the earth and segments of humanity. One important result of this rise and spread of NGOs is that peoples are forever becoming less isolated from one another, and their concerns less isolated from the agendas of state, interstate and supranational governing bodies. Hence, this paper is quite confident and not alone in stating that "NGOs contribute to the blurring of regional as well as national boundaries" (Skjelsbaek 1971, 439). It thus follows that the rise of NGOs carries significant and, indeed, inevitable implications for modern systems and mechanisms of governance.

While OECD Future Studies holds that NGOs' "very existence is an implicit indictment of governments" (OECD Future Studies 2001, 58) – that if IGOs seamlessly performed their mandate as international governing bodies there would be no need for NGOs – evidence raised in the discussion above shows that this sweeping statement completely misses the point. This paper has attempted to expose the relationship between the growing multiplicity of global governing bodies – be they non-state, state or interstate – as complementary, not substitutional. Each actor in the global governance constellation has its strengths as well as its weaknesses, and one cannot perform the proper contemporary function of the other more effectively; each has its turf, and has come a long way over the past two decades towards learning the extent and

limitations of its competencies in the new political spheres of global govern-ance.

Simultaneously, as the shift to global governance enters adulthood, its actors are learning to cooperate and coordinate with one another more effectively, fomenting the rules of engagement in a relatively new constellation. It is in recognition of this evolving relationship that political scientists increasingly speak of 'multi-level' governance; that is, governance performed by a multitude of actors organized for different purposes and performing different functions according to their capacities and expertise. Together, and not in a rivalrous relationship to one another, these layers of actors form a global gov-ernance constellation that is more diverse and versatile than its precursor, making it better suited to handle the complex range of policy issues that have become the preoccupation of an ever expanding and deepening international community.

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LCA for SMEs: Streamlining Life Cycle Assessment for Small-Scale Projects

Anthony D'Agostino

The Policy Analysis Exercise (PAE) is a public policy or management study completed as part of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy's Master in Public Policy curriculum. PAEs are usually undertaken for a client and provide an in-depth look at an issue affecting the client's organization that is particularly problematic, which may require outside expertise, or which the organization does not have the time or resources to address itself.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report (FAR) outlined the significant greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions that can be made in commercial and residential buildings to mitigate climate change. However, numerous barriers exist, which hinder developers, owners, and enterprises from adopting reduction measures. Large up-front capital costs and insufficient access to project finance, lack of awareness about current building technologies, and the inertia associated with modifying user behavior all present potential challenges towards implementing impact-reduction improvements. Another obstruction is the stakeholder divide that exists between building owners and building tenants, whereby owners have little incentive to invest in efficiency projects whose financial benefits accrue to tenants. As a result, tenants themselves may undertake retrofit[22] projects to actuate the environmental and economic benefits of energy-efficient buildings. The ongoing renovation project conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme's Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-RRC.AP) is one such project that is currently taking place in Thailand to achieve these objectives and was initiated to serve as a demonstration model for renovations to be implemented elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

However, the scope undertaken during the project-planning phase of a renovation project is oftentimes exceedingly narrow and focuses only on the end user's stream of benefits and costs. Instead, tools that adopt a life cycle perspective and avoid problem-shifting through product supply chain analysis

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[22] Retrofit – addition of new technology or features to older systems.

Anthony D'Agostino is a US national and recent graduate of Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. anthonyd@nus.edu.sg.

and life cycle inventorying should be institutionalized. Life cycle assessment (LCA), a cradle-to-grave methodology which has commonly been used in selecting materials for new construction, but has less often been practiced when conducting renovations, is proposed in this paper as a supplement to cost-benefit analysis in the process of devising a renovation scheme. A comprehensive LCA executed at the level mandated by the globally-recognized ISO 14040 standards can be costly and inaccessible to SMEs who lack resources and/or are unable to utilize it on a routine basis like manufacturing companies, but numerous streamlined LCA (SLCA) formats are available which are less demanding, yet still inform the design specifics of small-scale projects. Practicing these streamlined versions entails tradeoffs in areas like data accuracy, results sensitivity, and potentially sizable costs (as with the more robust options), signifying that organizations must understand the issues inherent in SLCA practice and prioritize their needs accordingly.

The retrofit of UNEP-RRC.AP's ~800m^2 office spaces on the campus of the Asian Institute of Technology in Pathumthani forms the case study in exploring these constraints and offers an empirical context in which to formulate a decision-making framework for optimal selection of a SLCA approach as determined by the organization's project objectives. Additionally, their current partnership with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and the Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI) presents an opportunity for life cycle assessment to be employed in projects jointly organized by the three organizations and to eventually enter Thai public policy beyond the current development of a life cycle inventory (LCI) database which was initially spearheaded by several Thai universities.

The purpose of the framework is to guide organizations that are considering the incorporation of SLCA into their operations, but lack a clear understanding of how to structure the process. In this paper, seven evaluative criteria based on intensive interviews and the current literature are developed which reflect the current needs of the organization and the employees that would be tasked with the responsibility of carrying out the SLCA. Nine SLCA approaches used by LCA practitioners worldwide, ranging from cost-free, qualitative options that could be completed in under a day, to rigorously quantitative, software-based options, are assessed to provide a representative spectrum of the SLCA offerings currently available. The approaches are scored according to the evaluative criteria within a multiple attribute decision analysis (MADA) framework. Through the MADA method, several scenarios can be constructed to model a diversity of organizational circumstances. For example, one represented scenario may consist of the availability of sufficient funding, but that the SLCA process must foster capacity-building, a quality often mandated by United Nations programs. This latter condition diminishes

the appeal of options like contracting external consultants or installing software with single-user licenses. These steps collectively represent a framework that can be applied to other SMEs that wish to adopt SLCA and are seeking a schematic for how to structure their requirements.

Consequently, an organization wishing to use this framework must discern their unique needs and evaluate the SLCA options accordingly, either through adopting industry best practices or forming a project oversight body to aggregate the interests of associated stakeholders. The results from this paper's MADA provide insight for how this might be achieved with full recognition that the decision-making process in complex, multivariate situations will benefit from a structured format. Doing so contributes to project compositions which ultimately serve the objectives of sustainability and environmental impact minimization more so than strict reliance on financial accounting measures for determining project specifications.