

Effective environmental advocacy

Mary Alice Haddad¹

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Abstract

As sea levels rise and pollution spreads, people around the world are organizing to advocate for a better environment. Which advocacy strategies are the most successful in persuading citizens, governments, and businesses to change their behaviour in pro-environmental ways? Based on two original datasets of environmental organizations and their actions and more than a decade of fieldwork, this talk will argue that a relatively small set of advocacy strategies are particularly effective in communities around the world: make friends on the inside, make it work locally, make it work for business, educate, and engage the heart (through art). Confrontational advocacy strategies such as protests and lawsuits that gain a lot of coverage in the popular press and by scholars tend to be less reliably effective, although they can occasionally generate dramatic change. Perhaps surprisingly, these five advocacy strategies are effective everywhere, in all types of regimes and in every region of the world. The presentation will begin by giving an overview of the cross national evidence about different advocacy strategies. It will then focus on one strategy in particular—make it work locally. Using four specific examples from East Asia, it will show how local, community based advocacy efforts can scale their success to the regional, national, an even international level through institutionalization, incremental innovation, seizing political opportunities, and trans-national networking. The presentation will end with a call to participants in the room to think about how they can utilize these proven strategies to promote better environmental outcomes in their own communities and countries.



Biography:

Mary Alice Haddad is Chair of the College of East Asian Studies and Professor of Government, East Asian Studies and Environmental Studies at Wesleyan University. Her

publications include “Building Democracy in Japan”(Cambridge 2012), “Politics and Volunteering in Japan: A Global Perspective” (Cambridge 2007), and NIMBY is Beautiful: Cases of Local Activism and Environmental Innovation Around the World, co-edited with Carol Hager (Berghahn Books, 2015), and articles in journals such as Comparative Political Studies, Democratization, Journal of Asian Studies, and Non profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly. She has received numerous grants and fellowships from organizations including the Institute of International Education (Fulbright), the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, the Japan Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Mellon Foundation, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, and the East Asian Institute. She is the Co-editor of the Cambridge Elements in Politics and Society in East Asia series and serves on several editorial boards...

Speaker Publications:

[5th World Summit Climate Change and Global Warming;](#) Amsterdam, Netherlands- February 17-18, 2020.

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