Joining Up: New Data on Patterns of Political Mobilization in U.S. Environmental Groups

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Patterns of political mobilization help to predict electoral outcomes, legislative voting, and the outcomes of policy referenda. Membership in interest groups offers one measure of political mobilization but is notoriously difficult to measure, especially across space. This paper offers a new measure of mobilization for environmental action, derived from zip code and state level membership in U.S. environmental groups. It verifies that environmental membership levels covary with other measures of environmentalism. In addition, it compares states according to the variability of membership to assess homogeneity of environmental concern and shows where environmental mobilization is changing. To assess the factors that are associated with higher membership, demographic and economic characteristics are matched to environmental group membership. This data can be used to study environmental attitudes and mobilization, as well as interest group activity and how it manifests in policy outcomes.

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