CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION: POLITICO-CULTURAL CHANGE AND INSTITUTIONAL REDESIGN

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Introduction

As the earlier chapters in this volume have clearly detailed there is a robust scientific consensus that global warming is happening, "that it is largely man- made, that it is global, cumulative and potentially destructive, and that it will have to be brought under control sooner or later if disaster is to be avoided" Gough, 2011: 1). This chapter accepts this dominant scientific consensus and examines how the vast majority of Irish political actors, i.e. political parties, civil society[8] organisations and key political institutions, have found it extremely difficult to articulate and communicate the overwhelming and immediate necessity to address the challenges posed by climate change. The chapter briefly reviews the societal context in which efforts to address climate change are attempted and discusses the variety of politico-cultural dynamics and institutional design issues that facilitate and sustain the obstacles to a meaningful societal engagement with the challenges posed by climate change.

Despite the International Panel on Climate Change 95 per cent certainty on anthropogenic climate change (O'Sullivan and Emmelhainz, 2014) and the similarly overwhelming consensus of Irish climate scientists, public opinion on the issues remains diverse and conflicted, driven by a complex mix of competing views, motivations and, in many cases, misunderstandings. However as the contributors in this volume have clearly detailed the time for mitigation, adaptation and building resilience into vulnerable societal infrastructure, is increasingly limited. Concurrently the risks from severe weather events, sea-level rises, growth and harvesting constraints become more apparent, and almost uniformly worse, with each climate change study and assessment.

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[8] Murphy notes that "the notion of civil society is problematic conceptually and is a contested field of meanings" (2011: 171). This chapter does not aim to add to that contestation but contends that it is useful to avoid viewing civil society as a "stand-alone concept" (Laine, 2014: 59). It is paired historically with the concept of the state; they are not just linked but help define each other. Bobbio argues that two processes, the state-making-society and the society-making-state, are contradictory (1989: 42). The completion of the former would lead to a state without society, i.e., the totalitarian state; the completion of the latter would lead to society without the state, i.e., the extinction of the state. As they are indeed contradictory, the two processes are unattainable. Society and state act as two necessary elements that are separate but contiguous, distinct but interdependent, internal articulations of the social system as a whole (Bobbio, 1989: 44).

Problems of scale and communicability

Unlike the United States where public opinion about the basic scientific facts of climate change has been the subject of very considerable efforts by vested interests to attack the degree of scientific certainty about climate change, Ireland has, to date at least, not experienced a similar co-ordinated attempt to undermine the scientific consensus. However, there have been, and there continues to be, very significant efforts by agri-businesses to dilute the public policy implications of climate change.[9] [10]

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[9] Food Harvest 2020 provides an interesting example of the nature of the interaction between agri-business interests and the public policy formulation process. Food Harvest 2020, now superseded by Food Wise 2025, was the result of a request by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to prepare, and present to the Minister a draft strategy for "the medium-term development of the agri-food (including drinks), fisheries and forestry sector for the period to 2020. The strategy outlined the key actions needed to ensure that the sector contributes to the maximum possible extent to our export-led economic recovery and the full development of the smart economy. The vast majority of the membership of the committee were members of the agri-business sector. The report recommended a very significant increase in agricultural output, for example, the report envisages that milk and pig-meat production will increase by 50 per cent, beef and sheep output by 20 per cent, poultry production by 10 per cent and fish farming production by 78 per cent. Representatives of the environmental sector raised concerns as to the scale of the output proposed and the lack of an accompanying Environmental Report as required by the EU's Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and an Appropriate Assessment Report under the EU's Habitats Directive. The Department's response was that the Food Harvest 2020 was not a Departmental policy but rather an industry blueprint despite the fact that (a) it is listed on the departmental website as being a part of the department's statement of strategy and required to be implemented and (b) the Minister was chairing the High Level Implementation Committee for Food Harvest 2020. Arguably this is a clear example of "regulatory capture", where policy is being driven by agri-business interests rather than the public interest. It is interesting to note that a similar trajectory appears to be developing in the successor process and Food Wise 2025, while having the requisite supporting environmental reports, is viewed by leading environmental NGOs as "fundamentally flawed and unfit for purpose. It should be withdrawn and completely redone on a properly informed basis" (An Taisce, 2015c: 1) and "unconvincing" and "inappropriately promotional" (An Taisce, 2015d: 2). It is noteworthy that there is very limited engagement with the issues by mainstream

One objective of this chapter is to briefly review the likely impacts of climate change on future economic and social well-being and the political issues that arise. In this regard it is helpful to briefly outline a simple, if incomplete, model linking key components of climate change to show where in the chain many of the political issues arise:

Economic activity →
Energy consumption →
Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions →
GHG cumulative concentrations →
Global temperature rise →
Regional climate change →
Impact on human habitats →
Social well-being

Figure 14: Causal Chain of Climate Change (Gough 2011).
Source: Gough, 2011.

It is also useful to distinguish between two categories of climate change policies: mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation policies act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to increase greenhouse gas sinks. Adaptation policies reduce the damaging effects of climate change that do occur, but do nothing directly to prevent it. Broadly speaking, mitigation policies address the first three factors, i.e. economic activity, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and adaptation policies address the last two, impact on human habitats and social well-being.

Gough *et al*. (2008) analytically distinguish four impacts on rich countries of the OECD such as Ireland. Direct impacts of climate change itself, distinguishing:

- Impacts in the global North;[11]
- The results in the global North of impacts elsewhere in the world.[12]

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journalism, particularly by agricultural correspondents, with the notable exception of the Irish Examiner.

[10] In a similar vein Crowley (1996: 94-95) notes the difficulties that arose when measures to link environmental protection to direct payments to farmers were first introduced.

[11] Most research indicates substantially greater direct negative impacts on habitats and livelihoods in tropical and subtropical regions.

The impacts of climate change policies, distinguishing:

- Adaptation policies;[13]
- Mitigation policies.

The nature of these impacts shapes societal and state responses to the impacts. With regard to the direct and indirect impacts on the global North, Rootes *et al*. (2012) note that the discussion of climate change and the policy responses to it tend to take place at international level and citizens and states have tended to focus on the dynamics underpinning international negotiations and the role of international institutions. The "geographic and temporal dimensions of the climate problem" create difficulties for institutions of governance in efforts to devise and implement policy change (Gollier and Tirole, 2015: 1). It is the sense of distance from exercising control over, the lack of a tangible involvement with, and the depersonalised nature of the negotiations that helps create the context for the significant obstacles to meaningful societal engagement with climate change in some states. These factors have helped "weaken the potential societal and political coalitions necessary to articulate and drive a robust climate change policy agenda either to address climate change or to institute broader efforts toward environmental mitigation or adaptation" (O'Sullivan and Emmelhainz, 2014: 4). Furthermore the portrayal of climate change as a global-scale problem often does not resonate with the values associated with many traditional, ethnocentric worldviews, and may contribute to "antagonism or cognitive dissonance" (Adger, Barnett, Brown, Marshall and O'Brien, 2011: 117).

Two additional issues also contribute to the type of response societies and states engage in. First, the effects of "not reaching mitigating goals will be catastrophic" (Walliman-Helmer, 2015: 4). Kahan (2014) notes how societies find it extremely difficult to accept the scale of the impact climate change will have.[14] Second, a risk of

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[12] These include resource scarcity, epidemics, degraded coastal infrastructure impeding shipping, insecurity of food supplies, collapse of weak states, and growing international tensions weakening global governance.

[13] Adaptation policies include investing in flood defences, for example Clontarf sea wall, extra reservoir capacity and making buildings resilient to climate change.

[14] He outlines a series of experiments detailing how a highly accomplished scientist who had reached a conclusion on climate change was unlikely to be perceived as an expert by participants in the experiement unless he took the position consistent with the one that predominated in their cultural group. He notes that if people are similarly selective in

intergenerational disaster exists. Climate change is an intergenerational challenge because the most severe consequences of high greenhouse gas emissions today will probably occur in the future. As a result those facing the challenges posed by climate change probably belong to different generations. Walliman-Helmer notes that "future generations are unable to influence the behaviour of representatives currently negotiating global climate agreements" (2015: 4).

However, "climate change is both a local and global phenomenon, and critical political drivers exist at all levels of the political system" (Rootes *et al.*, 2012: 678) and in Ireland disputes over the issue remain quite muted. This is not necessarily unusual and O'Sullivan and Emmelhainz note that in a number of other states "disputes over the issue often do not even reach the level of informed policy/ideological debate" (2014: 5). In Ireland this chapter suggests it is more useful to view the situation as one in which the debate has been 'sidestepped'. No serious political stakeholder appears to deny the scientific consensus yet very little significant political or policy responses have been proposed, devised or implemented. While the internationalisation and globalisation of the policy discussions via the EU and the UN, the intergenerational characteristics, and the likely catastrophic consequences, provide some explanation as to the "sidestepping" of climate change in Ireland the key explanatory factors lie closer to home. The process of 'sidestepping' occurs for a variety of reasons and this chapter contends that at national level in Ireland there are both politico-cultural and institutional reasons for this.

This is not to suggest that political culture and institutions are separate. They are not. Political culture shapes the choice, design and operation of institutions of governance. In turn the institutions shape the evolving political culture. The contention of this chapter is that due to a variety of circumstances Ireland has found itself with a political culture and set of institutions of governance that mutually reinforce a lack of willingness and capacity to engage in a robust and meaningful

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crediting evidence on what "experts" believe when they encounter it outside the laboratory then they will end up culturally polarized about what expert "scientific consensus" is on such issues. In another component of the same study, it found exactly that: subjects with hierarchical and individualistic values, on the one hand, and ones with egalitarian communitarian values, on the other, had highly divergent beliefs about what scientific consensus is on the risks of climate change.

debate on the impacts of climate change and develop appropriate and sustainable policy responses.

Political Culture

Coakley notes that in most societies the legal framework underpinning political life is critical but this framework does not exist in isolation. It is given life by the set of "political values and expectations that are dominant in the society within which it operates" (2011: 37). These attitudes are "fundamental, deeply held views on the state itself, on the rules of the political game and on the kind of principles that should underlie political decision-making" (*ibid*.). This 'political culture' imposes informal constraints or freedoms on what is "politically acceptable behaviour" and defines the parameters of policy discourse (O'Malley, 2011: 114). As a result a state's political culture shape how a state and society react to certain challenges. Insights into the broader cultural dimensions of climate change challenge many of the fundamental assumptions that have guided research on climate change adaptation (Adger *et al*., 2011). Most attempts to integrate adaptation into models of climate change assume simple cause-and-effect relationships between environmental risks and social responses. Such responses seldom appear in practice. In fact, "impact models generally fail to explain why different groups exposed to the same sets of changes display vastly different responses" (2011: 112). A substantial literature exists that details how information about climate change does not connect with all cultures and worldviews in the same way. Douglas and Wildavsky (1982) argue that societies with shared values and beliefs produce their own selective view of the natural environment, which influences how they interpret and respond to risk. Climate change narratives often interact with other beliefs to motivate responses, which in some cases may not be consistent with the 'rational' responses advocated by institutions promoting adaptation.

This chapter contends that Ireland's political culture and its interaction with the current institutional architecture of governance raises very particular problems for efforts to address the challenge of climate change.

The remainder of this section examines four distinct aspects of Ireland's political culture that have the potential to impact on the state's ability to engage with climate change in a meaningful way:

- Rurality-linked social conservatism;
- Anti-intellectualism;
- Political passivity;
- Localist politics.

Rurality-linked social conservatism

Adshead and Tonge note that until:

> very recently accounts of the political culture in the Republic of Ireland were prone to noting that the post-independence state was characterised by an unusually high degree of political and social conservatism, arising from the persistence of rural and peasant culture in Ireland, the relative failure of left politics, and Ireland's relative isolation from Continental European political movements and influences (2009: 142).

Despite some very significant changes in Irish society in the past 25 years, including dramatically increased urbanisation, it is critical to note that the values and attitudes of town people are not very different to their rural counterparts. Approximately 50 per cent of the population of Dublin have moved from rural areas. Adshead and Tonge (2009) contend that the critical issue, often ignored by analysts suggesting a crude binary between rural and urban, is the large number of Irish people who are somewhere in-between. Their political perspectives are shaped by a significant interaction with the issues prevalent in rural Ireland. Why is this important? An explanation of Ireland's delay in addressing the issue of climate change is that the society is still in flux as it rapidly urbanises but once that happens the recently urbanised Irish society will begin to view climate change as do their counterparts in the EU. This chapter suggests that this is mistaken, at least in part. The "rural fundamentalism" that nourished conservative and authoritarian values in Ireland (Commins, 1986: 52) is changing but it remains unclear it will be replaced by a more recognisable notionally progressive urbanised political culture. This is a critical point that will be addressed in more detail later in the chapter.

Anti-intellectualism

This links with another problematic aspect of the development of Ireland's political culture, a tendency towards anti-intellectualism (Chubb, 1992: 3-20). Social scientists have noted the very particular circumstances that shaped the development of mass political organisations in Ireland, for example the post-Famine context, colonialism, the move from the Irish language to the English language as the medium of the majority of population, fostered a conceptualization of the nation "bound up with kinship ties and peasant tribalisms as opposed to one shaped by class politics and secular modernisation" (Hutchison and Smith, 1992: 114 cited by Adshead and Tonge, 2009: 147):

> For the general public, an intellectual is someone who has read a lot of books and has a lot of ideas and consorts with other similar people, and is of no relevance to the practical affairs of the country (Fennell, 2014: 1).

This chapter contends that while Irish society retains its historical respect for education, it is a functionalist or instrumentally-oriented respect, and a very well grounded "anti-intellectualism" remains in Irish society (Corcoran, 2012: 1). Education is a mechanism to improve one's social and economic circumstances. As a consequence education is regarded up to a certain level, i.e. the necessary level or credentials to access appropriate employment opportunities, but after that it loses value and societal respect. In public discourse the words 'theoretical' and 'academic' are used to silence and disparage, or in the words of a former Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD, coffee table politics:

> That is what I call coffee table politics, where you sit down on a Saturday afternoon with a few, other pseudo intelligentsia and tell us all how the country should be run and why we should be so grateful that they are musing about our futures and planning the way ahead. There is a political constituency in this country that has convinced itself that is where it is all at ... People who are involved in the navel gazing business (Tynan, 1997).

This perspective becomes problematic because of the central role of knowledge and science in the politics of climate change. Substantial evidence exists detailing how societies like Ireland's respond to the viewpoints and perspectives of community leaders. Those who don't possess very much scientific knowledge and who can't engage in the sort of technical reasoning necessary to understand scientific evidence must necessarily rely on imperfect approaches to solving the problem of figuring out what is known to science. A key approach is likely to involve finding out what others who share their values think and basically deferring to them (Kahan, 2014: 13).

Political passivity

Since 2008, a variety of commentators[15] have noted the comparatively muted response by civil society in Ireland to very significant cuts in public expenditure. Hardiman (2009) and Byrne (2010) reflect on the relative passivity of Irish response to the crisis. Others described the Irish response as that of an "extraordinarily moderate and passive society" (O'Brien, 2011: 15) and 'not much more than a long collective whinge' (O'Dwyer, 2010: 2). Mair (2010: 7) describes a "passive" and "demobilised" citizenry. O'Malley notes that one of the "most notable features of the Irish political culture is its apparent passivity" (2011: 114). "There is no sense of outrage" (Keogh, 2013: 5). This passivity has consequences with regard to support for policy formulation aimed at addressing climate change, more specifically in the realm of building and maintaining policy advocacy coalitions. As a consequence Irish civil society's interaction with the state regarding climate change has been constrained by the limited leverage existing civil society coalitions bring to the table.

Such coalitions have been successful in challenging failures to meet European Union environmental legislative requirements and played a critical role in the implementation of the Habitats Directive in Ireland. For example, since 1997 Birdwatch Ireland, the Irish Peatland Conservation Council, An Taisce, Coastwatch Europe and the Irish Wildlife Trust have became closely involved in monitoring the designation of habitats for protection during the site designation phase and Ireland's seeming inability to prevent the widespread environmental degradation of nationally protected raised bogs (Laffan and O'Mahony, 2004).[16] They have successfully ensured that the state meet a considerable amount of its legal obligations. However, they have not had the capacity to ensure that climate change becomes central to mainstream policy discourse with the relevant institutions of governance, key economic stakeholders, and probably most importantly political parties, with the unsurprising exception of the Green Party.

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[15] For example, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, Vanity Fair and the International Monetary Fund. See Murphy (2011) for a more detailed analysis.

Localist politics

Excessive localism, i.e. national representatives spending a disproportionate amount of time addressing individual constituents' concerns and local issues, has been an observed characteristic of Irish political life for generations.[17] This "parish pump politics" has been analysed by political scientists to develop explanatory frameworks and suggested solutions. One of the most prominent responses has been to blame the electoral system and suggest that PR-STV is the key driver for localist political behaviour. For example, Adshead and Tonge note the way in which the "electoral system tends to refract national issues into local politics" (2009: 111) and candidates policy platform consists of promises to address the fact or perception that their constituency has not received "its fair share of government spending" (Mair, 2003: 102).

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[16] One dimension of the Habitats Directive is the protection of selected bogs. Commercial turf cutting was banned on these designated bogs. Under arrangements announced in 1999, a ten-year derogation was provided for domestic turf cutting on the bogs affected. This ten- year derogation expired for 32 designated bogs in 2009 (Cahill, 2011). Concerns about the depletion of bogs led the Irish authorities to provide national protection to additional bogs by designating them as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) under national legislation. This national designation affected 14 bogs (60,000 hectares) by 2000 with a further 630 bogs (65,000 hectares) proposed for future designation (EPA, 2008). The NHA bogs were initially designated in 2004 and were also provided with similar ten-year derogation for domestic turf cutting. The total area of bogland available for cutting peat in the State is 50,000 hectares. Significant loss of Irish bogs has continued over the past decade. A key category of protected bog is active raised (i.e. dome-shaped) bog; these bogs are active in the sense that peat is still forming in a significant area of the bog. A 2008 report on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland found that active raised bogs had declined by 35 per cent over the past 10 years and less than 1 per cent of the original active raised bog area is remaining.

A critical failing was that most sites were by the state designated without adequate consultation with the tens of thousands of landowners who retained their right to cut turf in these sites. Rather than acquiring control of turf cutting areas within raised bogs to create manageable hydrological units, the state put in place a derogation which essentially allowed turf cutting to continue on sites of conservation importance for a minimum period of 10 years. During this period a limited number of turf cutting rights were acquired from landowners on sites, however, in the case of most sites not all turf cutting rights were acquired. Once the deadline for the cessation of turf cutting was reached, landowners who retained turf cutting rights refused to stop cutting turf. As a result of the state's failure to protect raised bogs from turf cutting and drainage, the area of active raised bog in the country is less than 4,000ha in 2015.

[17] A 2010 survey found that Irish TDs, on average, spent 53 per cent of their working week on constituency-based work and 38 per cent on parliament-based duties. Dealing with queries from individual constituents accounted for 40 per cent of time spent on constituency work. While this focus promotes a strong voter-representative link, 69 per

This 'institutional' explanation is attractive at one level and appears to clarify many of the forces driving political representative behaviour, i.e. PR-STV is unusual, the localist behaviour of Irish public representatives is unusual and they are causally linked. However, as Farrell clearly details, "Ireland's electoral system is not all that unique after all" and "PR-STV is really not the reason why we have the politicians that we have, then what are we left with to consider?" (2010: 10). He suggests that it is more useful to see the problem as one that is "demand-led" rather than "supply-led". If we want to "reduce the constituency supply provided by our Dáil deputies then we need to address the demands made on them by citizens" (*ibid*.). Farrell details a number of shortcomings in Ireland's political and institutional structures that cause citizens to demand such high degrees of constituency service of TDs but one in particular should be singled out for the purposes of this analysis (Gallagher and Komito, 2010).[18]

There are real problems in the public service-citizen interface that is particularly acute in the health and welfare services. Citizens request their TDs help to navigate the maze of interaction and to support them in their efforts to "sort out problems, bottlenecks, snags in the system" (*ibid*.). As a result TDs have developed a role of 'brokers' situated between citizens weary from their efforts to engage with public services' representatives and public services that are very poor at dealing with citizen, or as some term them 'customer', queries. As "rational actors Irish citizens have no choice but to knock on the doors

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cent of TDs surveyed in 2009 said that the level of constituency work compromised their legislative duties (Oireachtas Library and Research Service, 2013: 2-3).

[18] Farrell notes this is compounded by a second problem, which is the weakness of local government in Ireland. One of the very unusual characteristics of Irish politics is that "we have at one and the same time one of the most decentralized (constituency-based) political systems in the world and also one of the most centralized (weak and under-resourced local government) – to paraphrase: the worst of both worlds" (2010: 9).

of the TDs to sort out their problems" (Farrell, 2010: 11).[19] If Ireland wishes to rid itself of "pothole politicians and a clientelist political culture", there is little evidence that abolishing PR-STV is the solution (Weeks, 2010: 1). "Electoral reform may be the wrong answer to the right question" (*ibid.*).

For the purposes of this analysis, the widely accepted existence of "localism in Irish politics" (Oireachtas Research and Library Service 2013: 1) that is linked to Ireland's political culture raises some very interesting issues, some very conducive to addressing climate change.

Institutions of Governance

A key question facing the Irish state is the extent that its "historically grown" institutions are able, and enable other actors, to cope with the challenges of climate change (Termeer, Biesbroek and van den Brink, 2011: 41). Developing and implementing the appropriate policies is not easy due to a variety of complexities. Decisions have to be taken "about measures that anticipate inherent, uncertain and unpredictable developments" (Termeer *et al.*, 2011: 42). A variety of public and private actors will be involved, each having different norms, interests and power resources. Furthermore the underlying problems and proposed policies will be valued and interpreted differently by these different actors. Policy areas such as housing, energy, agriculture and water management will become, if they haven't already, increasingly important. These policy fields are "embedded within their own specific governance institutions" (*ibid.*) and the institutions are the products of times in which climate change was not on the agenda.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is helpful to view institutions as "cognitive, normative and regulative structures that provide stability and meaning to social behaviour" (Scott, 2008). Governance institutions both enable and constrain the opportunities for actors to respond to changes and are concerned with policy formulation and policy implementation.

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[19] It is also worth noting that at present public representatives have "extremely large time commitments outside of normal business hours" (Brady, 2012: 1). This is not an inevitable feature of the electoral system and most of the difficulty is caused by the extreme volume of "constituency work and constituency visibility" that is a feature of the Irish system (*ibid.*) and this has a significant impact on the ability of women to engage in political life.

Termeer *et al.* (2011) provide a framework for examining the appropriate qualities of institutions that are crucial to enable governance institutions to address the issues arising from climate change. This framework identifies six distinct qualities:

- Variety;
- Learning;
- Room for Autonomous Change;
- Leadership;
- Resources;
- Fair Governance.

Variety relates to the extent to which governance institutions allow for, and encourage, a variety of policies to be implemented. The argument is that states simply do not know enough to develop an "optimal and fixed climate adaptation strategy for the coming decades" (Termeer *et al*. 2011: 43) and that, perhaps, a better strategy to deal with the manifold uncertainties and ambiguities is to allow for, and encourage, a variety of policy initiatives. The variety quality challenges mainstream policy approaches that focus on clarity, rationality, cost management, and performance-oriented management.

Owing to the uncertainties about how to anticipate climate effects, it is argued that adaptation should be considered a 'learning' process. As climate change adaptation is a relatively new phenomenon, it is likely that strategies will conflict with dominant values, routines and problem perceptions and solutions. It is therefore important that the actors involved are able and willing to scrutinise their underlying assumptions and learn from the experience. The extent to which institutions allow for, and encourage, learning is indicated by "the possibility and willingness to learn from each other across boundaries and a focus on listening and discussing doubts rather than defending views" (Termeer *et al*., 2011).

The third quality concerns the space that actors have to adjust their behaviour to changing circumstances. The extent to which governance institutions allow for and encourage autonomous change is indicated by:

> a continuous monitoring and interpretation of potential climate change impacts; a culture in which improvising

> is not only allowed but also valued; the capacity of self-organisation by the actors involved; and a government system in which the central authorities are not solely responsible for the issue of climate adaptation and the potential climate risks (Termeer *et al.*, 2011: 44).

To successfully adapt to the potential effects of climate change, three types of leadership are required. Institutions should thus allow for and encourage visionary leadership[20], entrepreneurial leadership[21] and collaborative leadership.[22]

For adaptation efforts to succeed, society needs to be able to generate sufficient resources. Financial resources are required to develop, experiment with and realise adaptation strategies. Educated and qualified people, that is, human resources, and authority are required to take and implement decisions. To enable climate change adaptation, institutions should be sufficiently capable of allowing for and encouraging the generation of financial resources, human resources and authority.

Finally, institutions should allow for and encourage legitimate policy processes, protect basic rights and equity, and be responsive, transparent and accountable.

In assessing how Ireland's governance institutions reflect the characteristics likely to lead to successful engagement with the challenges posed by climate change, it is important to note many of the key institutions are relatively recently established, for example the Environmental Protection Agency (1992), the Housing Agency (2010) or Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (2002). In this context it is more useful to review the operation of macro-governance institutions, i.e. government departments and county councils, and how they reflect the characteristics the literature associates with success.

The first institutional weakness relates to Ireland's inability to facilitate institutional variety. Hardiman notes that one of the striking features of the Irish state is "the degree to which power can be exercised relatively unconstrained by effective formal legislative challenge" (2012: 9). This also links the institutional space of autonomous change that Termeer *et al*. (2011) indicate as important. Ireland is a state largely dominated by its executive to an extent beyond the vast majority of fellow EU member states. Its centralising tendencies have their roots in the post-Civil War period (Adshead and Tonge, 2009: 29) and have never meaningfully been addressed. The coalition of interests served by these tendencies, while primarily composed of political parties, includes civil servants and many significant economic actors.

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[20] Visionary or directional leaders are good at linking time scales, and they are able to convince others of the need for anticipating potential future threats.

[21] Entrepreneurial leaders are good at gaining access to the necessary resources for realising projects.

[22] Collaborative leaders are good at bridging and building coalitions.

In relation to learning, a very significant literature details the ongoing inability by institutions of governance to learn in the manner detailed above (Whelan *et al*., 2003; MacCarthaigh, 2005; OECD, 2008, NESC, 2009; MacCarthaigh, 2012). However this appears not to be unusual, Termeer *et al*.'s analysis strongly indicates learning is hard to achieve and didn't observe any significant indications of paradigmatic change when "traditional institutions dominate the policy process, that is, all groups were chaired by ministries" (2011: 47).

Termeer *et al*.'s framework distinguished between visionary, entrepreneurial and collaborative leadership. This is an area identified by international analyses of Ireland and the OECD recommended that the Irish government recognise the "key role of leaders in defining visions and inspiring people to achieve them" (OECD, 2008: 27). Irish studies of leadership in the state's institutions of governance recognise these deficits in the aspects of the leadership capacity of senior public service leaders. For example, "developing a long-term perspective that leads to more strategic planning" should "be marked as an area for growth for the senior managers" (McCarthy, Grady and Dooley, 2011: 64) and leaders in the public service must be more "highly resilient in meeting the challenges of a fast-paced environment, with strong implementation skills and a focus on collaboration and accountability" (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2014b: 29). As with other characteristics detailed by Termeer *et al*.'s (2011) analysis the Irish state does not appear to be much different from the states they reviewed. All displayed difficulties in developing the appropriate leadership capacities.

It is when assessing the human, financial and institutional resources allocated to climate change policy that the Irish state begins to significantly stand out. The legislative framework proposed, the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015, is considerably weaker and more limited than equivalents in other EU member states[23] and the institutional framework it proposes, including the establishment of a National Expert Advisory Council on Climate Change, do not address the concerns about institutional autonomy or the allocation of the necessary financial and human resources detailed above. Interestingly, the Bill also largely ignored the recommendation of the cross-party Oireachtas Committee on the Environment (2013) undermining some of the key principles of fair governance articulated by Termeer *et al*. (2011). They note that in Finland and the Netherlands public hearings were similarly organised, and while they might not have been as representative as expected, they did feed directly into the legislative process.

Polito-cultural Change, Institutional Re-design and Climate Change

To coin a phrase that political science borrowed from biology, Ireland was at a point of 'political disequilibrium', when a moment of crisis brings a coalition of views together pushing for fundamental change, for a complete overhaul of our political institutions. This change didn't happen. As Keogh recently argued "why, at this critical juncture, tinker around with a bicameral system which was one of the jewels in the crown of William T. Cosgrave in the 1920s?" (2013: 7). Was this the product of detailed consideration of the state's institutional failings? Largely the radical changes didn't happen because "the political will to reform the aging Irish government system was weak and ineffectual" (Keogh, 2015: 3). These issues are raised not to condemn the government for its lack of appetite for institutional reform, a great deal was achieved, but rather to build on a point made by MacCarthaigh (2012) that the Irish state tends to add layers of accountability and establish new offices rather than interrogate whether the existing institutional architecture is fit for purpose, that in addressing the challenges posed by climate change, it builds extensions rather than think about moving house.

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[23] The Bill fails to set a numeric target for emissions reductions for the future. Finland, Denmark and France recently announced the introduction of climate and energy legislation, each setting clear targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Finland's law sets an 80 per cent target for 2050 while the Danish law sets a 40 per cent target for 2020, double the EU 2020 target. France's energy transition bill seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 and by 75 per cent by 2050 (Trocaire, 2015).

As a result this chapter contends that the likelihood of significant institutional change is highly unlikely, if it wasn't accomplished at the time of the greatest crisis facing the state, it is unlikely to happen because of climate change. However that doesn't mean that important reforms can't be made to our current institutions and there are a number of interesting areas where the unusual characteristics of the institutions of governance could potentially be a strength.

Burgmann and Baer (2012) outline a helpful approach to addressing climate change in a state: from above, at the level of decision-makers and policy pressure groups; in the middle in the activity of political parties, NGOs and academics; and "from below, where climate politics is driven is driven by hard-working activists and organisations" (Crowley, 2013: 534). They pay particular attention to the relationship to what they refer to as the "carbon lobby" and government, and the formulation of public policy. In relation to strategies for change it appears that from the middle and from below are attractive loci for engagement.

With regard to the former it is suggested that Irish political parties offer opportunities for engaging with key institutions of governance. To a certain extent the work of the Green Party has allowed the other parties, particular the larger parties, to ignore climate change and worse, to fall captive to lobbying by agri-business, construction and transport industries. This capture by industry-led lobbying remains problematic and needs to be addressed. Mair notes that the role of political parties has changed. The traditional roles they played were to:

- Integrate and, if necessary, mobilise the citizenry;
- Articulate and aggregate interests;
- Translate these into public policy;
- Recruit and promote political parties;
- Organise the parliament, the government and key institutions (2013: 89-90).

These roles have evolved and parties no longer play the key role they once did in mobilising citizens and translating these in to public policy. Mair suggests that parties have become so integrated in the state that they no longer 'represent' but instead govern. They "bring order rather than bring voice" (Mair 2013: 97). This can, and should, be combated.

Parties of whatever political hue, belong to their members, and their policy direction needs to be reoriented to reflect this salient fact. It is not suggested that we should look wistfully to a simpler time and attempt to reintroduce the model. It is contended that active engagement and interest in policy by citizens remains vibrant and it needs to be channelled, more so than currently, into the policy formulation processes of political parties. Parties are too essential a component of a functioning democracy to be left to party elites.

The variety of water charges campaigns are instructive in this regard. By and large they are creatures of the budget cuts rather than co-ordinated and coherent efforts to undermine public investment in critical resource infrastructure. While they are de facto anti-sustainability campaigns, that is not the view of the majority of campaigners. The fact that payment by use is recognised internationally as the most appropriate way to allocate scarce resources, the inherent conservation logic in such a method of payment has become irrelevant. Government efforts in the establishment of the utility, poor communications by the utility, and government's later attempts to meet the concerns of citizens have probably made the future of the utility in its current form untenable. However, the inchoate anger of so many of the previously unmobilised campaigners, while often a little frightening to watch, is, this chapter suggests a cause for optimism. If such energy could be focused on climate change, imagine the potential.

In relation to bottom up activity, two aspects of Ireland's political culture, as noted above have the potential to aid Ireland in addressing the challenges posed by climate change. The first relates to the strong attachment Irish people have to their locality. There is research showing how such an attachment to place can positively shape the development and implementation of adaptation strategies. Mishra, Mazumdar and Suar (2010) observe that people with high levels of place attachment were more likely to be motivated to prepare for climate change events such as flooding because of their social and economic investments within their locality. Several other researchers have also suggested that attachment to place is more likely to result in pro-environmental behaviour (Devine-Wright 2009b; Scannell and Gifford 2010). These observations suggest that place attachment may inspire citizens to develop or participate in climate adaptation planning processes.

There are a variety of ways people involved in locality-oriented politics can join with actors from 'politics in the middle' to reject the compromises and complicity of 'politics from above' and thus reclaim the role of moral and civic leadership on climate change in Ireland that has been effectively rescinded by the leading political parties.

In relation to the 'from above' level of activity, the OECD suggests that there is a need to rethink governance structures to adapt to climate change (2009). A typical arrangement for the co-ordination of adaptation strategies is for the Ministry of Environment to assume overall responsibility for climate change. The OECD suggests that this arrangement leads to weak intersectoral co-ordination.

A powerful central body, such as the Office of the Taoiseach, can better co-ordinate implementation by sectoral ministries, review legislation and hold implementation agencies accountable for their results (2009: 73-76). This model of operations is well suited to the centralised nature of the Irish state. It also builds on the previous experience of hosting the national social partnership apparatus and the co-ordinating, with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Irish input in to the Peace Process. Unfortunately to date this approach has not been adopted and, as noted above, the institutional framework proposed by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2015 would lack this institutional centrality and control over key resources.

Conclusion

Climate change is the greatest challenge facing global society. That is not to deny the terrible impact of forced migration, e.g. Syria, but to contend that climate change is the dynamic context in which these other human calamities take place. Ireland, for a variety of historical reasons, has developed a very particular political culture that has proved quite resistant to change, and a set of institutions of governance that are, at first glance, not appropriate to address the challenges posed by climate change. However, there are causes for optimism, and these should be grasped.