

# **Unsustainable future-unsustainable past?: How Environmental Advocacy Prevails in the Hungarian Legislation After 1990**

by

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## Abstract

One of the greatest challenges of today's societies is to face the environmental crisis; and in order to advocate green interests, environmental issues have to be presented on many levels. The aim of this thesis is, to find out, how environmental advocacy is prevailed in the levels of the Hungarian public sphere, and how effective it was in the environmental policy making and the green civil society's work from 1990 until the present days. While the current Hungarian Government has demolished the institutions of environment, green issues are still represented in the legislation as well as in the Hungarian green movement. The goal of thesis is to reveal, whether the retrogression of environmental advocacy is due to the current government's policy or rather a part of the historical processes of Hungary. Due to the lack of literature of the Hungarian green advocacy after the period of 1990, the thesis is based on experimental researches and qualitative interview findings in order find out, whether the representation of environmental interests have always been unsustainable, or is it a new tendency in the history of Hungary.

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## Introduction

*“Natural resources, in particular arable land, forests and the reserves of water, biodiversity, in particular native plant and animal species, as well as cultural assets shall form the common heritage of the nation; it shall be the obligation of the State and everyone to protect and maintain them, and to preserve them for future generations.”<sup>1</sup>*

One of the greatest challenges of today's societies is to face the environmental crisis: environmental conditions and natural resources are decisive for the societies.<sup>2</sup> Although as we can observe from the introductory quotation, the current Hungarian government aims to record the basic environmental endeavors in the Fundamental Law of Hungary, the recent changes in the environmental institutions and the opinion of the environmental NGOs present contrary intensions. One of the most lucrative opinions was formulated by the Hungarian Commissioner of Fundamental Rights: “The reorganization and restructure of the environment, the continuous reduction of the budgetary resources, the lack of skilled experts, gradually weakened the system of environmental management. As a consequence of insufficient financial resources, the efficiency of the tasks of the environmental, nature conservation, water authority and administration bodies deteriorated and the control over the environment users weakened. The official control activity, which is essential to check compliance with the statutory or regulatory decisions, has been significantly reduced due to financing difficulties.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Fundamental Law of Hungary, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Losers of the crisis, 2013.

The overall impact of the anomalies presented in the report is to breach the right to a healthy environment. The Commissioner drew attention to the fact that the proper institutional system is essential to the right to a healthy environment and that the state must comply with the institution's obligation to protect the institution, as derived from the Fundamental Law, based on the legal and organizational framework based on the principle of prevention. As the Commissioner of Fundamental Rights suggests, it is important for the current government to recognize the importance of environmental protection and, accordingly, to structure the institutions' system from the ministerial level to the territorial bodies, to enforce environmental interests when deciding, and not to look at this area as a barrier to the economy, to be undermined and downgraded.<sup>4</sup>

The duality that characterizes the current situation of the Hungarian environment can be clearly observable between the relationship of the current Hungarian government and the green NGOs. It is also apparent, among the aforementioned report that the capability of environmental advocacy has declined at the governmental levels from 2010.

The aim of this thesis is therefore, to find out, how environmental advocacy is prevailed in the Hungarian public sphere, and how effective was it in the environmental policy making and the green civil society's work from 1990 until the present days. Although the current Hungarian government has made determinative and destructive changes in the institutionalization of the environment, sustainable committees are still operating and seemingly the green civil society is also representing environmental issues. The goal of this thesis is to reveal, whether the retrogression of environmental advocacy is due to the current government's policy or rather a part of the historical processes of Hungary, and also, whether green advocacy actually existed in the past 27 years. The study will examine the following two hypotheses.

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<sup>4</sup> Losers of the crisis, 2013.

1. None of the post-regime governments could effectively represent environmental issues and only embraced the idea of sustainability superficially.
2. Whilst during the regime change it seemed that the green movement will gain political power and influence, it could not become influential neither in society, media nor in public sphere.

The goal is to find out, what criteria has influenced or prevented the political-and the civil society to make the environmental issue “The Case” and what is the reason, that in the past 27 years it is still just “a case”, and only “one of many cases”.

## Chapter 1: Methodology

### 1.1 Experimental analyses

In order to fulfill the goals of the thesis, the following methodologies are going to be used.

The first chapter will clarify the main definitions of the field as well as the current models of environmental advocacy. In the literature review, the focus is on how governments along with green NGOs can advocate environmental issues, and which level is best suited for such advocacy. Such clarification is important if we want to understand the Hungarian comparison.

The second chapter of the thesis will present the comprehensive literature summary of the former-regime's environmental provisions and the development of the green movement. Such historical overview is momentous; from this we can gain the benchmark from which the post-regime environmental advocacy's state has been developed.

The theoretical and historical reviews are followed by the comparative analysis of the post-regime governments' environmental policy making. Since the narrowly defined subject of the thesis is not yet discussed in the Hungarian literature, this part of the thesis will rely on parliamentary data, experts' background materials, analyses of strategic proposals, assessments and summary materials. Each of the periods of environmental ministries will be examined. The analysis will follow the undermentioned structure:

1. Institutional comparison
2. Legislative comparison
3. The situation of environmental NGOs during the period
4. Relationship between the environmental ministry and the green NGOS

There to monitor the institutional changes from 1990, the thesis will rely on the data of the Hungarian parliament as well as on the summary by the Sustainable Development Committee.



The development of the commissions, funding system and authorities are also available in parliamentary data, and will allow a comprehensive knowledge about the given periods.

For the comparison of the environmental laws, the dataset of the Comparative Agenda Project's<sup>5</sup> will be used. Thereunto achieve a transparent comparison and to present the different political area's environmental policy making inclinations, the results from the dataset will be presented on charts.

## 1.2 Interviews

As it was mentioned in the introductory, Hungarian green advocacy is lack of national literature and has to rely on formal and international literature. Therefore, one of the goals of the thesis is to fill the missing gap of the Hungarian environmental advocacy's literature. In order to achieve knowledge about the relationship between ministries and NGOs, the last analysis of each period will present the interpretation of in-depth interviews. The interviews have been made personally, in Hungarian language and in the past two months. During the selection, the following considerations have been taken into account:

- What role the interviewee had in the green policy making or green movement.
- How influential was the interviewee at his role.
- How reliable the interviewee's answers will be.
- How valid will be the interviewee's answers.

The final sample includes 16 respondents from the green political-and the civil sectors. Three formal Ministers of the Environment, one Member of the European Parliament and four formal Members of the Hungarian Parliament agreed to participate in the examination, along with eight current actors of the Hungarian green movement (either as a member of an NGO or

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/>

as an expert). In accordance to the sensitivity of the topic and the personality of the actors, there was a risk of invalid or unreliable answers, but with the topic-guided interviews, it was manageable and unique, comprehensive and authentic answers were generated. The topics of the interviews are listed below.

- Relevant environmental events and laws at the given period.
- Obstacles of the green policy making/green movement.
- Personal and professional opinions about the given Ministry- and Minister of Environment.
- Outstanding achievements in accordance to environment.
- Evaluation of the relationship between each Ministry- and Minister of Environment
- Evaluation of conciliation processes
- Evaluation of cooperation between politicians and civils
- Collaboration- and relationship with the background apparatus.
- Representation of environmental issues
- Development of the political- and media agenda of the environment

With the analyses of these interviews, the complete picture of each period of the environmental advocacy will be outlined. Getting acquainted with each case from 1990 until nowadays, the conclusion about the post-regime's period's environmental advocacy will be deductible and will reveal whether the retrogression of environmental advocacy is due to the current government's policy or rather a part of the historical processes of Hungary. Thus, the following chapter of the thesis continues with the summary of the recent literature on environmental policy making and advocacy.

## Chapter 2: The Background of Green advocacy

### 2.1 Theoretical Background

Thereunto to achieve the previously stated aims of the thesis, this chapter will focus on the theoretical background of environmental advocacy. In accordance to the comparative analyses of the periods of the presentation of green interests, to the parliamentary data analyses and to the in-depth interviews, the theoretical part of the thesis will follow the below described structure. First, a literature review will define the importance of institutional and governance processes in environmental advocacy. Then the historical background of the different environmental worldviews will narrow the question of advocacy. The last part of the chapter will describe the historical processes in the green political-and civil era in Hungary, in order to understand, what were the previous factors, which shaped the post-regime's environmental actors' behavior in the presentation of the green issues.

In order to understand environmental policies as advocates of environmental issues, one has to be aware of the two systems: natural environment and human policy making- and governance. As Fahey and Pralle discussed the relationship between governance and participation: Many scholars argue “how to involve and coordinate a wide variety of actors in governance arrangements, develop positive working relationships among them and empower less dominant voices.”<sup>6</sup> Environmental governance has indeed changed in the past few years internationally and instead of hierarchy relationships, it is now more opened to participation. But when a country's institutional system still enables participation “scholars identified barriers to public participation in environmental governance”<sup>7</sup> As Fahey and Pralle conclude, broader participation occurs from public, when less officials are involved, and when citizens have already been participated in other processes. State remains important and central in environmental politics and policy making, although participation can be observed more in

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<sup>6</sup> Fahey, Pralle, 2016.p. S38

<sup>7</sup> Fahey, Pralle, 2016. p. S39.

local politics. In the case of this study, the role of the state will be examined as the authors suggest. Albertini<sup>8</sup> suggests a similar way when it comes to research green advocacy. She determines environmental performance as a multidimensional construction. This includes the outcomes and impacts companies have on their stakeholders and the environment as well as the principle of environmental responsibility, and the environmental responsiveness which determines the future outcomes and impacts. Environmental researches can have both non-objective and objective characteristics. According to the author institutional pressure measurements mostly include non-objective indicators and require case study or normative study. On the other hand, analyzing the increase of awareness of the environmental issued needs objective indicators, and also, it should use empirical studies. But in order to examine the indicators, first we have to clarify the relationship between the governor and the civil advocacy in accordance to environment.

In order to explain this relationship, the advocacy coalition framework by Albright<sup>9</sup> is normative. As Albright describe: “Builds on the concept of policy subsystems that encompass the group of individuals who are involved in or seek to influence a specific policy problem.”<sup>10</sup> The subsystems have functional and territorial dimensions. In such coalition, individuals share a common belief system and show coordinated activity. The author’s belief system is structured hierarchically into deep core belief, policy core beliefs and secondary beliefs. An event in the policy system cab draw attention to a policy failure, appear on the media agenda and the discussion about the ideas and further can lead to policy changes. “These major interdependent mechanisms in the ACF have been posited as link between shocks (either internal or external) and policy change: redistribution of resources, skilful exploitation by a

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<sup>8</sup> Albertini, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Albright, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Albright, 2011. p.486

minority coalition, and changes in the dominant coalition's belief system through learning".<sup>11</sup> It is very unlikely from minor coalitions to replace the dominant ones but it is possible to convince them of their position. "A shock may bring about policy change when member of a dominant coalition alter their understanding of a policy problem and/or solutions and undergo policy oriented learning."<sup>12</sup>

As another framework, argued by Albright, the Policy change hypothesis, claims: Changing the policy core attributes of a government action program requires both (i) significant perturbations external (( sic. or internal)) to the subsystem (e.g. changes in socioeconomic conditions, system-wide governing coalitions, or policy outputs from other subsystems) and (ii) skillful exploitation of those opportunities by the (previously) minority coalition in the subsystem".<sup>13</sup>

As Hasan and Shaari presented: "The objective of the environmental policy is to protect natural environment. The protection of the natural environment can be done by fostering the far-reaching changes both in individual behavior and consumption patterns, as well as the characteristics of products and underlying industrial processes and resources. These changes have to be achieved simultaneously by taking account of the social and political imperatives of economic growth and prosperity." <sup>14</sup> Anderson and Leal also argue, that the governing power is not only have to take account of the presentation of the environmental issues, but also focus in other fields as well. They draw a line between government and market. "The key is to give decision makers the incentives to manage resources properly." <sup>15</sup>

As they quote John Maynard Keynes: "Both when they are right and when they are wrong, the ideas of economists and political philosophers are more powerful than is commonly

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<sup>11</sup> Albright, 2011. p. 487-488.

<sup>12</sup> Albright, 2011. p.488.

<sup>13</sup> Albright, 2011. p.489.

<sup>14</sup> Hasan, Shaari, 2017. p. 633

<sup>15</sup> Anderson, Leal, 2001. p.7

understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Even practical men, who believe themselves exempt from intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of defunct economists. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from academic scribbles of a few years back.”<sup>16</sup>

Another economist, Pigou has also argued that only authorities and government can fix and intervene in environmental crisis and market failures which causes this crisis. In his words: “No “invisible hand” can be relied on to produce a good arrangement of the whole from a combination of separate treatments of the parts. It is therefore necessary that an authority of wider reach should intervene to tackle the collective problem of beauty, of air and light, as those other collective problem of gas and water have been tackled.”<sup>17</sup> Environmental policy makers are following the ideas of these economists and presume that markets are responsible for resource misallocation and that these problems should be corrected with political processes.

But the governments’ problems are not only come from the economics, and therefore, not every conflict can be solved by political processes. As Shi-Ling Hsu presented:

“Environmental policy conflicts used to be predictable. Environmental advocacy groups battled with regulated industries in courthouses and legislatures (Federal and state), and governments were stuck in the middle. But: the emergence of the new environmental problems created new schisms. “New law –and policy making conflicts are pitting traditional allies against each other.”<sup>18</sup>

According to the author, the new kind of opposition postmodern in nature “because it has sought to undermine the legitimacy of lawmaking by arguing that it generates outcomes that

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<sup>16</sup> Anderson, Leal, 2001.p.9

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, Leal, 2001. p.10.

<sup>18</sup> Shi-Ling Hsu, 2017. p. 27.

are structurally and inherently biased.<sup>19</sup> As he describes, the primary fear of this new form of environmental postmodernists is that special interest groups are lobbying to their own advantages in environmental law. But their skepticism towards law-making also suggests that they fear of losing their own power and role in the process of law-making. Their mistake is according to the author is that they confuse criticism with refutation. What he suggests is affirmative proposal from them but without mistaken the same conflicts they are fighting against. As he states: “the only principled way forward is to broaden public participation and knowledge.”<sup>20</sup> Moody also takes Shi-Ling Hsu’s opinion. As he describes in his study: “Arnold Toynbee argued that rise and fall of civilization reflects a rhythm of challenge and response since we are not choosing the circumstances as around us, but as Viktor Frankle states, we have the power to decide how we’ll respond. “<sup>21</sup>

And while these authors all suggest environmental advocacy groups to respond and become more active in presenting their views, institutional barriers still exist next to these initiatives.

The new types of environmental governance in recent EU directives- characters integrated, participatory and transparent decision remain processes. Several analyze have shown that EU activities have effects on domestic politics and policy in member states. These effects have two dimensions: bottom-up and bottom-down. In accordance to the bottom up aspect, member states accept the mutual benefits, identity, discourses, etc. of EU, while in the top-down aspect, they concern the EU directives, institutions and regulations. But if it comes to environment, member states have resisted the harmonization of environmental standards and policies when they clash with their domestic interest. As the study cites Weale: “... cross-national differences in environmental policy are “deeply rooted in policy styles and

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<sup>19</sup> Shi-Ling Hsu, 2017.p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> Shi-Ling Hsu, 2017. p.87.

<sup>21</sup> Moody, 2009-2010. p.70.

organizational structures”, comprising a mix of institutional and ideological factors that are likely to be difficult to change.”<sup>22</sup> The Central European pattern is the same in Hungary. They have concerns about the institutional mismatch between long-standing EU members and them.

According to EU, in the field of environment, legislation must be adopted at national level as well as appropriate institutions and enforcement mechanisms. On the one hand, Hungary had serious deficits but on the other hand, it performed well in some fields (for example small per capita pollution load). But the economic struggles made hard to perform well on the field of environment. The EU Commission report drew up serious concerns in water and air pollution control and waste management. The report was more critical on the field of environment than on any other fields. As the study emphasized, the most important institutional task for Hungary was to integrate environmental policies to the field of economic policies, both sectoral and macro levels. “As long as economic policy cannot look further than annual wrangling over budgeting and without at least a medium-term economic strategy, there is no hope for integrating environmental policy into economic as a whole.”<sup>23</sup> Important priority of Hungarian environmental policy is the dissemination of environmental information in the widest circle of interested people. Hungary follows the pressure-state-response model. “A typical feature of this system is the separation of pressures (e.g. emissions, waste generation), the states resulting from pressures (e.g. air quality) and interventions or measures aimed at the reduction and elimination of harmful impacts (e.g. environmental expenditure.”<sup>24</sup> This model contributes to an integrated approach in which environmental indicators are classified by their role in the process as well as in the environmental media. From the 1990s, the need for

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<sup>22</sup>Unalan, Cowell, 2009. p.33

<sup>23</sup> Kerekes, Kiss, 2008. p.166

<sup>24</sup> Pomázi, Szabó, 2005. p.55



accountable and transparent environmental information has grown both in Hungary and in the world.

As a conclusion, Caddy's quote is significant in the case of the thesis. As the author describes "... the most significant barriers to successful implementation are institutional in nature, as reflected in: poorly designed policies and institutional frameworks, the absence of adequate systems of information management and control as well as a lack of clarity in the allocation of environmental responsibilities between different branches of national government, between national ministries and environmental agencies or inspectorates and between national, regional and local authorities."<sup>25</sup>

The analyses of the Hungarian cases will rely on the aforementioned literature. But in order to understand the processes which shaped the situation of the environmental advocacy in Hungary, the next part of the chapter will clarify the different influential green worldviews as well as the significant events from the history.

## 2.2 The Evolution of the Green Movement

There to understand the institutional and policy changes of Hungarian environmental politics, first it should be clarified, how environmental awareness transforms into politics. This chapter also presents the determinate worldviews of green politics. The knowledge of such background is important, if we want to understand the advocacy practices of both politicians and the members of environmental NGOs.

There are several political-and social factors, which determine environmental problems to become political act. It is an important, although not necessarily condition for the establishment of ecological movements to have the "green approach".<sup>26</sup> Ecology as a combination of words (oikos=environment, logos=science) was first used in 1866, in the

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<sup>25</sup> Caddy, 1997. p.55

<sup>26</sup> Szabó, 1985.

study of E. Haeckel<sup>27</sup>, whom labeled a new biological discipline by this. This period of science observes the living organization in accordance to its' physical and biological nature. Ecology examines the interaction between organisms and nature and explores the problems of their relationship.<sup>28</sup> Ecology has established in biological sciences, within that, human ecology, which examines human and nature. Since human are societal species, their relationship can only be studied by social aspects. Human cause those ecological damages, which respond to society by environment. Today, political ecology as a phrase is used to determine such theories, which consciously assume their commands political nature, and indicates that the problem of environmental crisis is socio-political.<sup>29</sup>

Two main theories have been evolved during the 18<sup>th</sup> century according to Worster: the imperial and the arcadian.<sup>30</sup> Arcadian was inspired by the understanding of creation and the harmonic coexistence with the animals. He was not examining the world as separate, but as in total; his main follower was Gilbert White, but even Saint Francis of Assisi has testified this view centuries before him.<sup>31</sup> The second theory, the imperial, is disclosure of Descartes and Francis Bacon, in which science should be used as an equipment in order to rule the environment.<sup>32</sup> In the Western world, imperial has become the dominant trend. It was also determinant in the development of gaianism and deep-ecology as well.<sup>33</sup> According to the followers of gaiaism, biosphere is a simply, self-regulatory system, which balance is demolished by technology and human. As James Lovelock<sup>34</sup>, the founder of the theory explained, if human interrupts this system, Gaia (the Earth) might survive, but humanity will definitely die. On the other hand, deep-ecologists believe, that the laws of nature are ahead of

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<sup>27</sup> Szabó, 1985.

<sup>28</sup> Szabó, 1985.

<sup>29</sup> Szabó, 1985.

<sup>30</sup> Worster, 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Albert, 2008.

<sup>32</sup> Albert, 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Albert, 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Szabó, 1985.

the wealth of human, and in so to prove their rights, they are not even afraid to express their opinions aggressively. They think that people should sought to satisfy their needs-, and not their desires and that they should not protect the individual, but the whole ecological system.

<sup>35</sup> O’Riordon uses different terms in accordance to Albert, to distinguish between the environmental ideologies: he differentiates between ecocentrism and technocentrism.

Technocentrism is featured in industrialized societies, where people believe that environmental crisis can be solved by technology. In opposition, ecocentrism followers tend to think equipments are not sufficient enough to recover from the environmental crisis. They think that the answer is in the re-organization of the economic-and social institutions, the establishment of a responsible political power, the de-centralized lifestyle and the reduction of consumption. Real alternative is given by the ecocentrism, technocentrism accepts the existing social-, political-and economic system. <sup>36</sup>

The previous distinction is acceptable by the Hungarian environmental expert and scientist, Máté Szabó as well. As he describes, there are people on one hand, whom care about pure ecology, and their work and analyses can be characterized as objective and imperative. They imagine their realization of their demands in the current political system, and they are not questioning the political institutions and procedures. In order to achieve their goals, they are not even afraid to enlarge the power of the state. In opposition, the other group is more likely political and social. The solution of the environmental crisis according to them is in the change of the current social system; they blame technocrat political for environmental crisis. They are interested in changing the current political system in order to get out of the crisis. They want to establish a political sphere which is led by the people and a less powerful state.

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<sup>35</sup> Albert, 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Albert, 2008.

These two ecological view have produced the classical distinction between political right and left. With such distinction, green movements can also be separable.<sup>37</sup>

Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne<sup>38</sup> also describe these worldviews, but instead of two, they determine four ideologies to explain the environmental ideology. The four main worldviews according to Clapp and Dauvergne are market liberals, institutionalists, bioenvironmentalists and social green.<sup>39</sup> Market liberals do not believe in climate crisis and although they see some inevitable problems, they think that modern technology, money and economy are improving the global environment. Institutionalists on the other hand are aware of the crisis, but they see potential in enhancing state capacity and improving the effectiveness of global institutes.<sup>40</sup> Bioenvironmentalists stress out the biological limits of the earth to support life. They worry about population growth. They stress out the role of neoclassical economy in the climate change crisis. Bioenvironmentalists are against globalization, since they think it is the reason why harmful production processes are occurring in poorer countries. “Solutions proposed by bioenvironmentalists flow logically from their analysis of the causes of environmental damage: we need to curb economic and population growth.”<sup>41</sup>

Social greens believe that social and environmental problems cannot be separated. The fight against inequality is playing a major part of their theories. Many of them are from a more activist stance focus on the destructive effects of the global spread of large-scale industrial life. “They argue that capitalism, and its global spread via neocolonial relations between rich and poor countries, not only leads to an unequal distribution of global income, power, and environmental problems, but is a threat to human survival...The arguments of social greens on growth and consumption, and on the role of the global economy in accelerating both, are

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<sup>37</sup> Szabó, 1985.

<sup>38</sup> Clapp, Dauvergne, 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Clapp, Dauvergne, 2005.

<sup>40</sup> Clapp, Dauvergne, 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Clapp, Dauvergne, 2005.

close to bioenvironmentalist arguments. But few social greens accept bioenvironmentalist arguments regarding population growth, instead maintaining that overconsumption, particularly among the rich in the First World, is a far greater problem. Unlike bioenvironmentalists, most social greens see population-control policies as a threat to the self-determination of women and the poor.”<sup>42</sup>

As we can observe from this chapter of the thesis, ecology had grown from biological sciences. But in the past centuries, this focus of this view has shifted into social-political problems. We can also state, that the political left-right distinction can also be discernible from these ideologies.

### 2.3 Historical background

In order to understand the evolution of the green movement in Hungary, first we have to clarify the term and conditions of what green movement signify. Such organization, group, party, etc. can be considered as ecological movement, which fight against environmental problems caused by the industrialized societies. Green movement is a social movement, not only because its' purpose is social, but also, because it has social base. Therefore ecological movement is a part of social movements, and can only be separated relatively from the anti-nuclear-or peace-movements. They bring new aims, new strategies, and new color into the political scene. The appearance of the green movement can be described by political-social trends, but the form of their presence is affected by the democratic tradition of the political culture. Greens draw up not only ecological goals in their programs, but also emphasize social issues. They represent their targets in both local and global levels; what they share is that they all want political-and economic changes with non-violent instruments. The variety of green movements can be divers: they can organize themselves as NGOs, as pressure organization or as party. Their political act cannot be described with the conventional protest forms: civil

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<sup>42</sup> Clapp, Dauvergne, 2005.

disobedience and non-violent direct actions are popular attitudes among environmental groups. Although green movement cannot be clearly described with the classical political right-left differentiation, but they can indeed re-product this fission among the group.<sup>43</sup>

The evolution of green movement is divided into three main parts. Initially, biologists and future-researchers were dealing with ecology. They were modeling environmental problems with a small amount of examples, and draw general and political conclusions from them. In the 1970s, green worldviews have been known already in greater social groups and appeared in the political scene as well. This was the decade, when the critique of technology has been released, and green movement had several solutions for that. The political- and social system's models have become more concrete, and the starting point became the crisis of the industrialized society. By that, the movement's social critical nature has been strengthened, and at the same time, the natural history aspects have been overshadowed. The role of the environmental movement has changed in the second part of the 1970s, when the anti-nuclear groups have been established. They become more and more political, but kept their anti-technology and pro-environmental attitudes.<sup>44</sup>

The success of the green movement lies on how large social collaboration can it realize for the cause (for example for an anti-nuclear demonstration); its success depends directly in proportion with the number of people they are able to mobilize. The 1980s were a turning point in accordance to the size of the green movement membership: western green movement has registered the highest number of members at that time.<sup>45</sup> It can be stated, that the membership of a green movement is significantly younger, than other political groups, but also, that the older age groups are equally represented. Above averagely high educated people are represented, but other layers of society are also participate in the movement. People from the 1960s' student movements are still involved, as well as the representative of the

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43 Szabó, 1985.

44 Szabó, 1985.

45 Albert, 2008.

conservative side.<sup>46</sup> But the political character and strategy of the environmental movement is not only influenced by its mobilization power but also by the political-and party system and the political culture. It is prosperous for articulating ecological needs when political culture cultivates citizen activity and involvement. In a political system which reacts to these new needs, environmental movement cannot become an opposition power; but with lack of tolerance from politics, the radicalization of the green ideology cannot be excluded. When the political system is not bearing the needs of the movement, then inherently greens will search for other political institutional forms. This can occur with a foundation of a green party, but also, with integration to an already existing party; this is defined by the structure of the party system and legitimacy.<sup>47</sup> Today, ecological movement is more professional than alternative movements and increasingly integrates into the political decision-making process.<sup>48</sup> As it can be observed from the aforementioned historical background of green movements, the trend and the nature of them have integrated their ideologies into political thoughts. In order to understand the development of green politics in Hungary, I will present the establishment of the Hungarian green movement and green parties. With the literature review of the history of the Hungarian case, it will be more transparent and comprehensive, how the post-regime governments have deal with environmental policies and also, what were the historical reasons of the backlash of green ideologies in the Hungarian political- and party system.

While in the 1970s' western societies the advance of the green parties was discernible, environmentalism was only institutionalized in the late 1970s in Hungary. The available party documents from those years negotiate the environmental issues, but not in the western style. They have stated that in a socialist society there is no need to an autonomous environmental institution, since the participants of the socialist economy, so to speak, protect environment

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46 Szabó, 1985.

47 Szabó, 1985.

48 Albert, 2008.

automatically and based on inner compulsion. But such positive toned document was not preserved, could not be preserved from the 1950s: the power structure of that decade has exploited nature in order to achieve their goals. Socialist planned economy therefore did not accept nature as part of the inner part of economy; they did not look at the natural resources as objective value. The accomplishing of interests demanded the breakdown of the civic society and the prohibition of NGOs and movements. According to the structure's planned and topped down organized nature, horizontal relationship between locals and civil society was eliminated. After the late 1970s, only state-and financial supported organizations could deal with environmental issues (for example the Patriotic People's Front, the Communist Youth League, the Hungarian Pioneers Association, National Council of Trade Unions, etc.)<sup>49</sup>

Although, at this time, many experts of ecological question (such as doctors, biologists, landscape designers, etc.) have discovered environmental problems on their own fields, and with this, they made great impact on the field of the application of green considerations. Next to them, the number of such experts has also increased in several relevant ministries and director apparatus, who not only were aware of the ecological crisis, but were also interested in the institutionalism of environmental issues. While these experts could not give away confidential results of environmental state examinations due to their statuses, but they were able to achieve informally, to leak the facts. All of the local ecological conflicts in the 1970s and 1980s have evolved like this. The central political power had no other chance, but to make compromises with these expert groups. In this period, the central of power had to pay attention to the national echo and the country's image as well. Although the power was pursue a closed environmental politics in the 1970s, but they have agreed on a construction of a state environmental institution. The other fear of the authority was in accordance to the

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49 Szabó, 1999.



institutionalization of environment was that they were afraid of the spread of the ecological movement.<sup>50</sup>

The most significant event for the Hungarian green movement in the 1980s, was the conflict around the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros barrage. For the first time a wide political protest mobilized and was even able to articulate the conflict between the elite of the Kádár-regime and the society. When in 1989 the Németh-government changed its policy towards the barrage, the nature of the conflict changed. The problem was placed into a foreign policy area, the conflict between the society and the elite disappeared, and the driving force of the civils become exhausted. Anti-Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros protest groups have still maintained both in Hungary and abroad, but only as expert groups.<sup>51</sup> In Hungary, the green movement was mainly organized along thematic-, specialist- and local conflicts. These protests were not able to become a political force for a long time.<sup>52</sup>

1989 opened a new political space for the Hungarian environmentalists. But their role is controversial. With the new economic and political issues after the transition, the social movement, including the environmental movement, was excluded from the margins of the politics. While temporarily all opposition parties have supported the protest against the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros barrage, the transition events, the rehabilitation of 1956 and the reburial of Imre Nagy were not ecological conflict based. The voters' preferences and the outcome of the election also were not affected by ecological problems. (Szabó, 1999) The other reason for the retreat of the green advocacy was, that in the new political system the process of party-formation was stronger, and green professionals were absorbed in the background by the other parties.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Szirmai, 1999.

<sup>51</sup> Szabó, 1999.

<sup>52</sup> Szabó 1999.

<sup>53</sup> Szirmai, 1999.

Although the new political system has immediately created a break line between the environmental policy makers and environmental NGOs, in a sense of environmental institutions, the development took a different direction. At the level of institutionalization, the need for the necessity of green advocacy has been previously noticed. And before the regime change, even the members of the Hungarian green movement could play a role in the advocacy processes of the institution, even though their role was marginal and symbolic.

In the late 1987, the first environmental act was passed in which the maintenance of national environmental issues was ranked into the level of ministries. Such act was already existed in most of the developed countries at that time. According to 1987. VII. Law<sup>54</sup>, the Environmental and Water Management Ministry have been established, as a result of the concentration of the National Environmental Authority and the National Water Management Authority. The establishment was motivated by the following: “In the second part of the 1980s, it has become clearer, that organizational modernization and strengthens is needed in environmental issues. The global processes have also increased this decision, since individual environmental ministries have been already formed both in the Eastern and the Western part of Europe. In accordance to Hungarian politics, the intensifying green movements have also made impact, which have raised the attention to the environmental damages, omissions, which also carried a political message itself.”<sup>55</sup> The Ministry of Environment and Water Management has started functioning from April 1988.

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<sup>54</sup> [http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=98700025.MT](http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=98700025.MT)

<sup>55</sup> Láng, 2003.

## **Chapter 3: The comparison of the environmental advocacy**

### **3.1 Introduction**

As the aforementioned literature review of the theoretical- and historical background of environmental advocacy presented, institutional, governmental-and non-governmental factors should be considered while analyzing the effects of the representation of green issues. While it can be observed, that the current Hungarian government's environmental institutional changes show recession, it is not yet clear, whether this decline is also valid for their capacity of green advocacy. Thereto reveal the answers for the research questions, whether the retrogression of environmental advocacy is due to the current government's policy or rather a part of the historical processes of Hungary, and whether green advocacy has ever existed in the post-regime's Hungarian environmental sphere, the next chapter will examine the below listed criteria of the Governments. As the methodology section of the thesis described, the post-regime's different environmental periods will be analyzed, at the level of institutions-, legislation-and policy maker-environmental NGO relationship. The comparative case studies rely on the parliamentary-and non-governmental materials, as well as the dataset of the Comparative Agenda Project and on the previously explained in-depth interviews. After getting acquainted with the different process developments and opinions about the green advocacy, the answers for the hypothesis of the thesis will be revealed.

### **3.2 The Period of Transformation (1990-1993.)**

In accordance to the previously reviewed literature, the quality and effectiveness of environmental advocacy can be measured, among others, at the institutional levels. Strong institutional background is indispensable for the operative environmental advocacy. The state of the Hungarian environmental representation at the institutional level has gone through

several changes in the past 27 years. As the report of the Hungarian environmental<sup>56</sup> events presents, the profile and the name of the Ministry of Environment has changed immediately after the formation of the first free Hungarian Parliament, according to the 1990. XXX. Act<sup>57</sup>, and become the Ministry of Environment. Water management has been transformed into the Ministry of Transportation, Communication and Water Management. The Ministry went through another modification during 1990, in accordance to the 1990. LXVIII. Act<sup>58</sup>, Regional Development was attached to it, significantly changing its' original profile and widening its' legislative role at the Hungarian legislation. As the report<sup>59</sup> presents, the central functions of construction and monument protection have also become under the competence of the Ministry of Environment. On the account of the institutional reorganizations after the regime change, the Parliament also established the General Inspectorate for the Environment as well as the National Water Directorate, under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment, in 1990.<sup>60</sup> The first freely elected Hungarian Government also gave ground to environmental advocacy at the level of Parliamentary Committees. The Environmental Committee of the Parliament was formed right after the establishment of the new Parliament in the 3 May, 1990.<sup>61</sup> The name and functions of the Committee have not changed until 2010.

In addition to the institutional changes, in accordance to the presentation of green issues it is also determinative, how the attitude of the environmental minister has taken shape. The first Minister of Environment was Sándor Keresztes. The next sub-chapter will present the legislative changes which can be associated with his name.

<sup>56</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development , 2013.

<sup>57</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=990000030.TV>

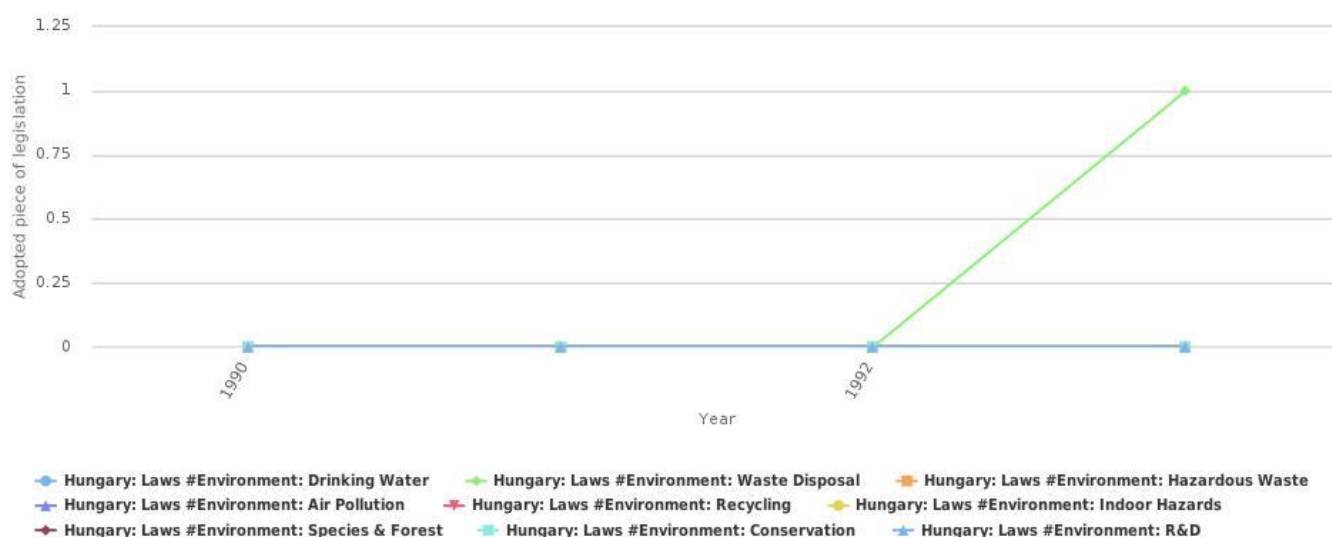
<sup>58</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development , 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

<sup>60</sup> 43/1990. (IX. 15.) Government Regulation.

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.parlament.hu/biz37/korb>

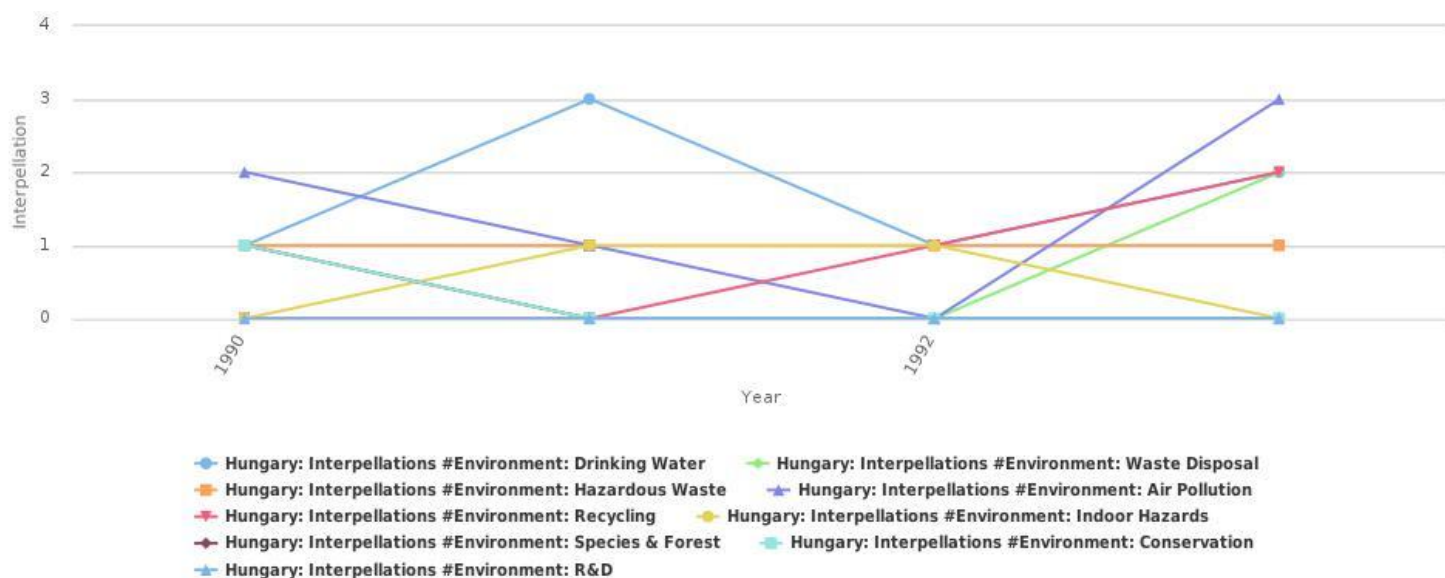
The most significant task for the first freely elected Hungarian government in 1990 was to re-build democratic institutions and legislation. This can also be observed in the field of environmental legislation. Environmental related laws have not only been created in the Ministry of Environment, but also in other ministries as well. Although several significant environmental provisions were made from 1990 until 1993, general environmental issues<sup>62</sup> (such as drinking water, air pollution, species and forests, waste disposal, recycling, conservation, hazardous waste, indoor hazards, R and D) were not included in the general legislation.<sup>63</sup>



<sup>62</sup> <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/>

Despite of the lack of the presentation of the environmental issues in the legislature, the parliamentary agenda has displayed green issues, in the interpellations at the Hungarian Parliament.<sup>64</sup>



Determinative Act was provided on the local governance level as well. Environmental- and nature protection tasks of the local government were secured in the 1990. XX. Act. This law provided the tasks and powers of local governments and their bodies, agents and some central subordinate bodies; the chapter lists the environmental and nature protection tasks of local governments. In accordance to environmental advocacy, local legislation is indispensable, since the majority of the environmental crisis could be solved locally. Such law provides the emergence of awareness in the society as well.

Important legal changes have been also made at the field of nature conservation. The 30/1991. (V.14.) Parliamentary decision<sup>65</sup> on the use of highly protected forests have been signed, with a single, but very important, call for a forestry moratorium in the increasingly protected forests. Its justification is particularly remarkable: "... Until the designation of the

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=991H0030.OGY>

entire forest reserve network, which is to be taken in the nature protection act, the preservation of our forests in the near natural state under enhanced protection can only be possible by excluding cuts. "<sup>66</sup>

In 1991, the Parliamentary Committee on the Environment initiated the formation of the new environmental law.<sup>67</sup> Although the process of making this Act took a few more years, the intention of itself was descriptive to the new democratic era.

However, in terms of the interest of the thesis not only the legal actions by the government are important, but also their relationship with the other actors of the environmental advocacy.

Therefore the next part of the sub-chapter presents, how the respondents of the in depth-interviews' attitudes have been shaped by these legislations, and describe their opinion about the first period of the Ministry of Environment.

After 1988, the field of environment was saturated by corruption, as one of the leader of an environmental NGOs described. Lobbying and power went hand in hand, and no permits have been issued along rational arguments. Another respondent, a long-time environmental expert discussed, during this period, civil society has also had to face their incapability of self-organization. And while on hand, the civils wanted to be organized, many of the actors of the environmental movement have chosen the political path instead. As he stated: „There where no one, who could have forced them otherwise.” But not every respondent made such statements. One of the experts described this period as a specific transitional period, when effective Acts have been established, such as the product fee of the petrol as well as the idea of the founding of the Regional Environmental Center.

Another leader of a green NGO has also explains this period as a temporary time of environmental advocacy. He has highlighted the role of the green movement in the regime

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<sup>66</sup> 30/1991. (V.14.)

<sup>67</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

change. As he described, the institutional background of environment was not yet structured but organizations could already operating then. The attitude towards green issues was rousing from the parties; they treated the issue as a consensus. Civil society and politicians collaborated in this period. Since he was already a member of the green movement back then, he could explain the development of the movement as well. According to him, the funding system was acceptable for the environmental NGOs, and since for a long time, they could made use of foreign funds as well. Environmental advocacy became strong not just in the capital of Hungary, but also in the countryside. The emergence of the green awareness was also transparent in the environmental education, as another expert stated. At this time, the demand and the trend of environmental knowledge have strengthened; forest schools and professional textbooks have appeared. New environmental NGOs were established, with sustainable environmental educational programs and funding projects. As one of the actor of the green movement explained, the aims of these structural projects were the reinforcement of the local civil society and NGOs. They used international examples to improve the presentation of the Hungarian environmental issues, for example, with the establishment of the Hungarian Re-Leaf or the celebration of the Day of Earth.

In conclusion, the first period of the environmental representation at the Hungarian Parliamentary manifested differently in the green movement. While the emergence of the new environmental groups occurred, the legislative processes have not yet been able to articulate the interests of the field.

### **3.3 The Period of the Impending Greens (1993-1994.)**

After the promising first three years of the Ministry of Environment, due to personal reasons, a new Minister, János Gyurkó has been interposed and only worked in the office for one year. During his time, no adopted piece of legislation has been accepted; and no general environmental interpellation has been said in the Hungarian Parliament. Although, not closely



to the ministry, but in a relation to the environmental protection, one significant provision and one Act has been accepted.

In 1993, an environmental impact assessment law<sup>68</sup> was created. As the FFB report summarizes: "The importance of this legislation: "A EIA in Hungary was considered by law makers as important. They did not expect the issue of the new environmental law, but the 1986/1993. (VI.4) Government Decree made it mandatory for the environment to be significant. Regulation can be regarded as having a limited prior status in 146/1992. (XI.4) Gov. Decree, which required EIA to have a significant impact on the environment." <sup>69</sup>

The other major Act of this year was the 1994. LV. Act<sup>70</sup>, which aims that "the reduction in the land area would remain within reasonable limits, and the protection of the quality of the land will have a proper legal background."<sup>71</sup>

The below mentioned figure shows the other- minor- legislative changes in accordance to the environment.

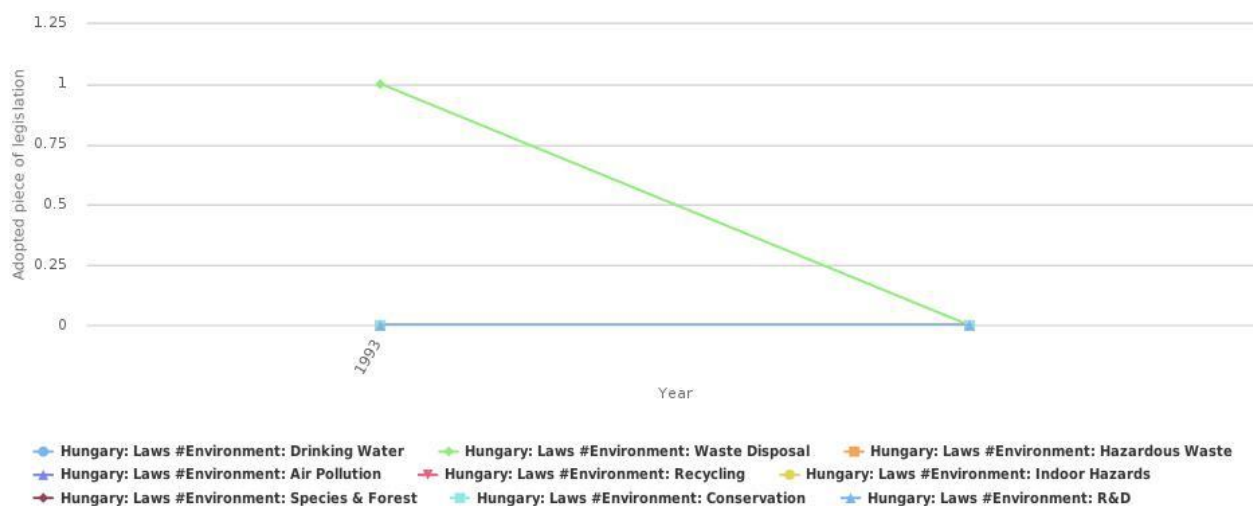
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<sup>68</sup> 1986/1993. (VI.4) Government Decree

<sup>69</sup> FFB, 2013.

<sup>70</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=99400055.TV>

<sup>71</sup> 1994. LV. Act

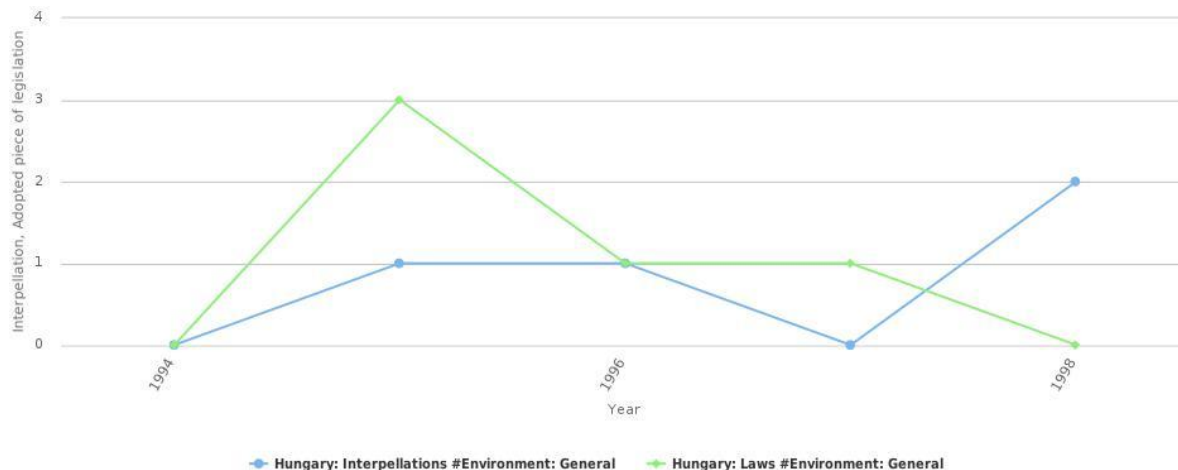


As one of the interviewee has described the short period of the Gyurkó Ministry, the emphasis on the personal attributes of the minister has become stronger. Gyurkó had more political power, than his predecessor, and was “reasonably opened”. The value of the natural conservation has upgraded, from which later the National Environmental Program has developed. In accordance to the respondent, the representation of the environmental issues were “flowing” in this short-term.

It can be stated, that this one year period of Gyurkó’s Ministry remained trackless. In addition to legislation, only minor changes were appointed, although the value of natural conservation has been upgraded at this time. However, this period reviled a new factor of the research. The weight of the personality of the Minister has increased in accordance to the representation of the green interests.

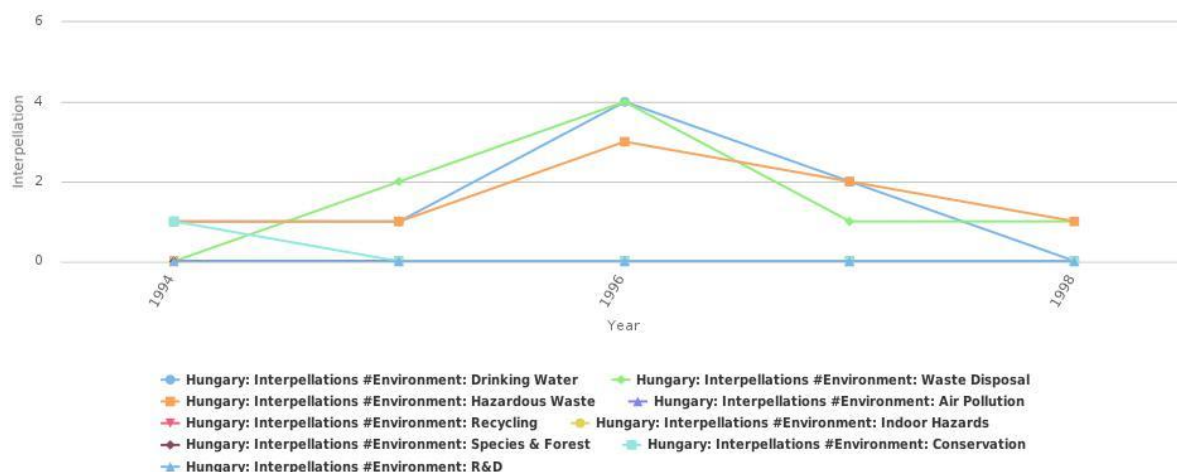
The following year, 1994, was the change of the first freely elected government, and an advent of a new era of environmental advocacy both in political and civil levels.

### 3.4 The Period of the Environmental Upturn (1994-1998.)



After the general elections in 1994, in accordance to the 1994. LVI. Act,<sup>72</sup> the Ministry of Environment and Regional Development remained with the formal responsibilities and name; the head of the Ministry became Ferenc Baja. As the above table presents, the legislative work has become more active than in the previous period. More Acts were made from 1994 and also, the representation of environmental issues in the Parliament became more frequent with the interpellations.

<sup>72</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=99400056.TV>



A decisive law has been made already in this year, about the protection of the agricultural land. Under the 1994. LV. Act<sup>73</sup>, the reduction in the agricultural land area should remain within reasonable limits, and the protection of the quality of the infield should be legally assured.<sup>74</sup> 1995 was a defining year for the environmental advocacy. The comprehensive environmental Act has been completed with the 1995. LIII. Act<sup>75</sup>. It contained the general regulations of environmental protection. The purpose of the Act was creating a harmonious relationship between man and environment, to protect the national resources and to ensure the conditions of the sustainable development. The range of product-priced products has been extended; 1995. LVI. Act's<sup>76</sup> extension concerned fuel, batteries, tires, refrigerators. Not only have the green issues in the narrow sense been presented at the Hungarian legislation, but the Hungarian Government has also modified water management provisions. 1995. LVII. Act<sup>77</sup> has defined the general provision, as well as the rights and obligations in accordance to water management, and detailed water management regulations. Basic obligations have been

<sup>73</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=99400055.TV>

<sup>74</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

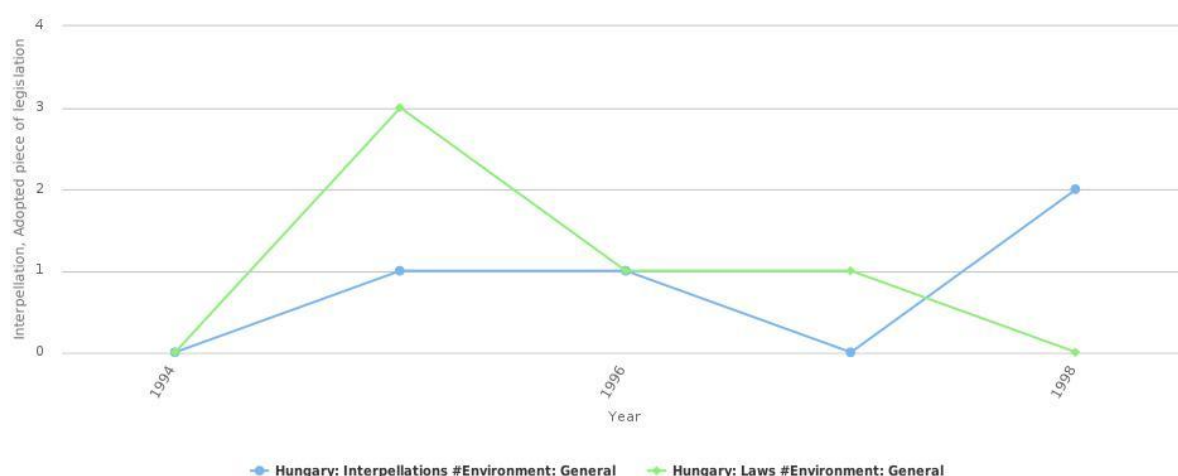
<sup>75</sup> <http://www.kvvm.gov.hu/index.php?pid=9&sid=9&hid=156>

<sup>76</sup> [http://www.kvvm.hu/cimg/documents/1995\\_EVI\\_LVI\\_TORVENY\\_2008\\_0101\\_17\\_OLDAL.pdf](http://www.kvvm.hu/cimg/documents/1995_EVI_LVI_TORVENY_2008_0101_17_OLDAL.pdf)

<sup>77</sup> <http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=99500057.TV>

laid down by the 1995. XCIII. Act<sup>78</sup> as well: this law aimed to restore to protect the levels of natural resources.

But after the foundation of the legislative background of the basic environmental representation, until 1996, a decline can be observed at the level of green advocacy in the Hungarian Parliament. Not only the number of adopted laws has decreased but also the number of interpellations, as shown in the table below.



In 1996, however, the presentation of the green interests in the legislation has strengthened again. The Act of nature conservation (1996. LIII. Act<sup>79</sup>) was accepted in this year in the interest of preservation and protection of the natural resources. Closely related to this Act, laws were made about the protection- of forests (1996. LIV. Act)<sup>80</sup> and wildlife (1996. LV. Act)<sup>81</sup> as well. The diversity of the environmental advocacy at this period can also be cognizable by the nuclear law that has been approved in 1996. 1996. CXVI. Act's<sup>82</sup> statement is in accordance to the world wide trend and the worldview of environmentalism: nuclear power can only be used in such way, that it does not harm the socially accepted risk level in

<sup>78</sup> [http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=99500093.TV](http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=99500093.TV)

<sup>79</sup> [http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=99600053.tv](http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=99600053.tv)

<sup>80</sup> [http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=99600054.TV&cel=P\(98\)](http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=99600054.TV&cel=P(98))

<sup>81</sup> [https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=99600055.TV](https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=99600055.TV)

<sup>82</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=99600116.TV>

addition to human life, current and future's generations health, living conditions, nature and material goods.<sup>83</sup>

Considering the work of legislation, environmental issues were represented in the Hungarian Parliament from 1994 until 1998. But based on the in-depth interviews, there are aspects that shade the success of this period. As every respondent have highlighted, despite the fact that green interests were advocated in the legislation, the cause was not depended on the environmental commitment of the Minister, but rather on his strong political embeddedness and that he saw business in the area. The decisive role of the Minister can be confirmed by the responses he gave during the interview. It also reveals events from which the real situation of the environmental advocacy can be explained.

As he described, “nothing can be achieved without fight, and the meaning of the fight is creating the future.” He explained the key to success is in personality, as well as authority and that he tried to prove this everyday during his serving. The history of the appointment of the Minister is also descriptive: it presents the attitude of the government towards green interest and what is the background of the environmental advocacy at the level of politics. During the process of the governmental formation, he suggested to merge environmental-and nature protection and regional development into one ministry. He imagined a complex sustainability ministry, which structured around several branches. However, during the coalition negotiations between the Socialist Party and the Liberal Party, he was not the candidate for the position of the Minister of Environment and Regional Development. But because of a political bargain-the liberals did not accept the nomination of the socialists-just after an hour conference, Baja became the Minister. Just a day after his election, he was negotiating with the representatives of the environmental NGOs. As he described in the interview, his aim was to understand not only the financial and the expert background of environmental issues, but

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<sup>83</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

also to maintain a good relationship with the green NGOs. He described the Hungarian movement as being professional. He also claimed that the relationship between the Ministry and the representatives of the environmental NGOs was positive. He believed that control only exists when institutions exist, but he also highlighted the importance in shared responsibilities. His ministry work was closely related to the Environmental Secretary of State. Baja emphasized the role of legislation in accordance to environmental advocacy. Another important institution was established during his period, where green interests were manifested: the Committee of Environment. They were processing under a four year program, and as the Minister described, as “a community”. He claimed that at this Committee they were even able to cooperate with the representatives of the opposition. The Committee had a contract with the Hungarian Academy of Science, beside of the environmental NGOs; they were in charge of making the background expert materials. Informal round-table meetings were also usual under Baja’s Ministry. As he described, the cooperation with the civil society was pre-signed and the Ministry established several financial-and non-financial supporting systems for the environmental NGOs. As the Minister explained, if the interests of the political actors or the green movement’s actors collide, cooperation cannot be established, and the advocacy of environmental issues cannot be maintained. Apart from the significant relationship with the green civils, and the general environmental legislative work, he considers the agricultural Act as his greatest achievement. The process of re-buying the agricultural lands equaled to him as a war, but as he stated, they had to fight in this war. In these 4 years, they re-bought every land, and made 5-6 thousand contracts.

The responses of the Minister were in contrast with the answers by the actors of the NGOs and the experts of environment. As one of a former MP has described, during this period, the Minister was also participating the meetings with the civils. They could be part of the law making process also; they got the Acts in mail and could comment on them, and they could

attend the meetings of the Environmental Committee as well. He described the period of Baja as the “merry days of peace”. Current MP Interviewee highlighted the role of the Minister-as she explained, he was a strong Minister. The role of Baja came up in other interviews also. As one of the environmental experts has explained, the representation of the environmental issues was significant, because of the political ambitions of the Minister. In accordance to him, this was visible on the ground of regional development. The environmental fund has strengthened during this period, and the civil society was assigned to redistribute the significant amount of the financial support. A leader of an NGO has highlighted two major attributions about these years. He confirmed the importance of the environmental legislatives and provisions, and also acknowledged the role of the Minister. As he explained: “The Minister saw business on the field of environment”. In according to the European MP, the most generous period was the period of Baja. As he also described, the Minister had political weight, and he relied on the apparatus during work.

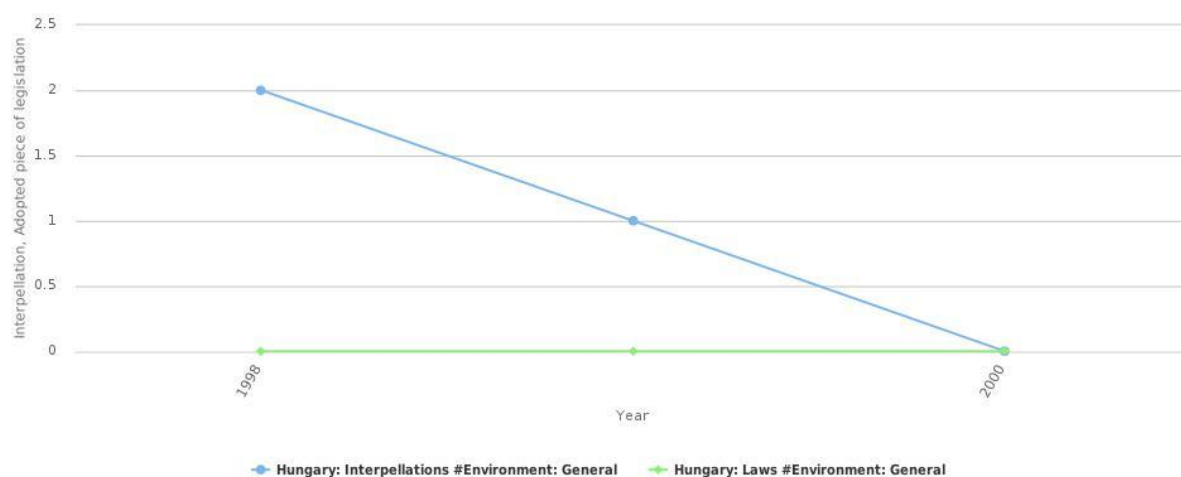
In conclusion, after 1990, this was the first period, when environmental issues have been presented in both of the examined fields. The Minister’s personality and attitude influenced the structural and financial changes which occurred at this time. The amount of adopted pieces of legislation has increased, as well as the representation of environmental issues in other parliamentary genres. In accordance to the interview responses, the actors of the green movement were generally satisfied with the relationship with the Minister and the Ministry and emphasized the positive tendency that occurred in the representation of green issues.

However the rising period of the Ministry of Baja, in the following years, development of environmental advocacy evolved in a negative direction.

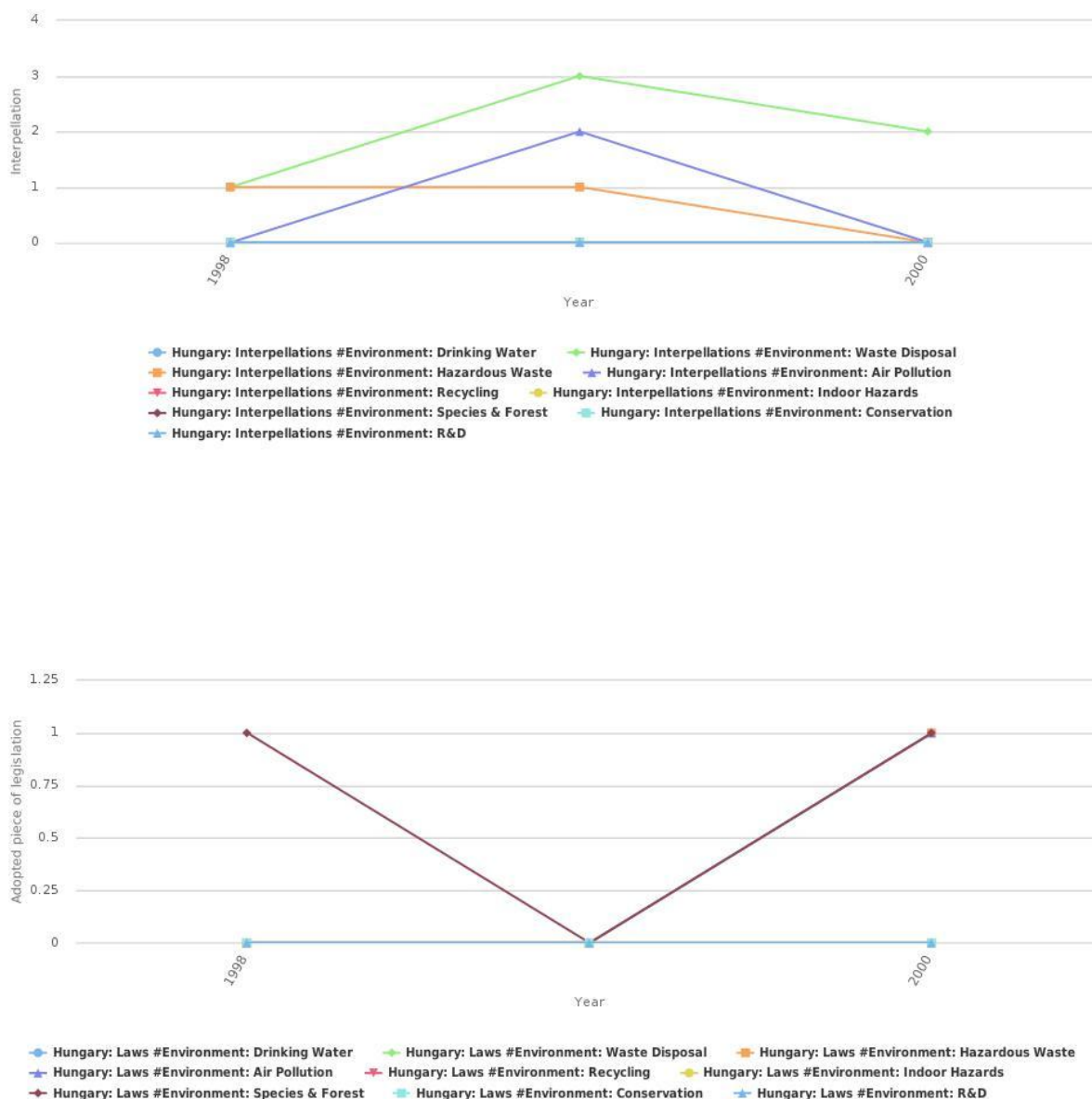


### 3.5 The Period of Ministry Scandals (1998-2000.)

As shown in the figure below, the representation of the environmental issues have changed in the period between 1998 and 2000 the Parliament. General environmental laws were less emphasized and the role of the green advocacy impaired.



After the 1998 elections, the newly elected Fidesz government has removed the Regional Development part from the Ministry under the 1998.XXXVI. Act and so the representation of the environmental issues remained at the Ministry of Environment. The appointed Minister from 1998 until 2000 was Pál Pepó. As the figures below show, green advocacy is little observed in the work of the Parliament at this period. Compared to the Ministry of Baja, the numbers of the interpellations have decreased and only two adopted legislation have been accepted. The reasons for the decline can be deconstructed based on the in-depth interviews.



There is consensus in the judgment of the Ministry of Environment during the lead of Pepó. As the interviewees described, scandals were followed by other scandals in this period, and the emphasis on the environmental issues declined. The European MP claimed that the green civil society had great expectations in 1998 and hoped for a green change, but when Pepó became the Minister of Environment, they realized, that the government has appointed an incapable leader for the role. In accordance to him, the Ministry became a paying place and was the background institution of corruption. Another respondent told that there were no

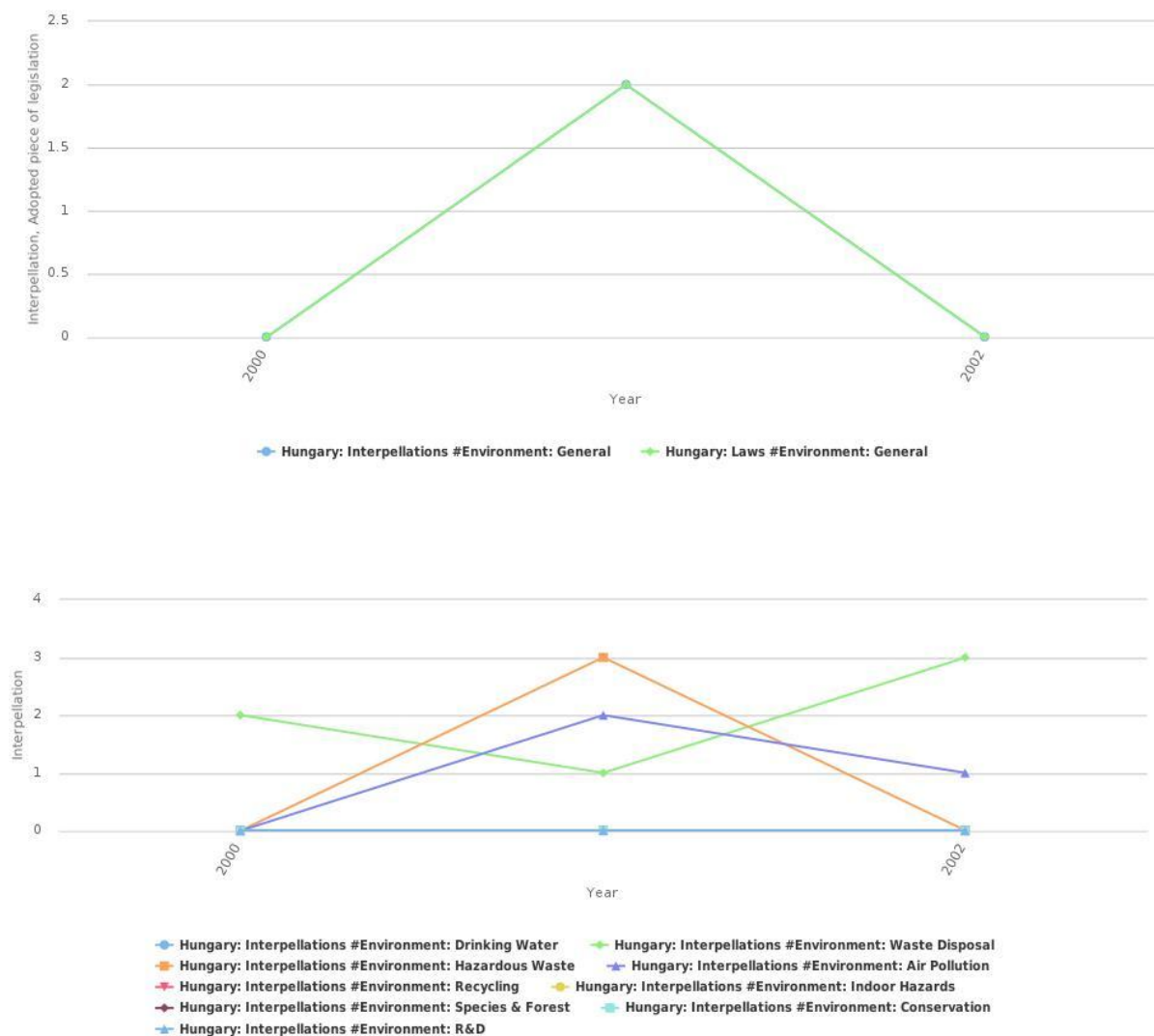
contact between the Ministry and the NGO representatives. An environmental expert also claimed that cooperation was hard with the Ministry. In accordance to a leader of an environmental NGO, the Prime Minister of that time, Viktor Orbán has always disliked the issue of environment. As he stated, this period was like a constant civil war situation, and not only NGOs have suffered from the attitude of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Environment, but also the apparatus. The period is characterized by many restructuring and dismissals of experts on the level of institutions.

In summary, the period between 1998 and 2000 changed the positive tendency of green advocacy in all of the examined fields. The institutional changes and the decrease of the number of the adopted laws have presented the retrogression, as well as the responds by the environmental actors. New finding of the chapter is, that not only the attitude of the Minister towards environmental protection matters, but also matters, how the Prime Minister approaches the field. As the respondents emphasized, the change of the state of environmental advocacy was much dependent on the attitude of the Prime Minister, than in the previous periods.

### **3.6 The Short-Term Period (2000-2002.)**

Due to the resignation of Pál Pepó, Ferenc Ligetvári became the Minister of Environment in June 2000. He only spent six month at the Ministry. As the European MP described, his task was to consolidate the previous period. Ligetvári was opened to the civil society and attempted to get to the bottom of the corruption cases. Although it is difficult to interpret this period on the level of institutions or legislation, the Minister's approach to the opening for the green society indicates some sort of reinforcement of environmental advocacy at the Hungarian Parliament. Béla Turi-Kovács, the Minister followed, had fit into this tendency. As shown in the figure below, although the numbers of the general environmental

interpellations were not prominent, all of the major green issues were presented in this parliamentary genre.

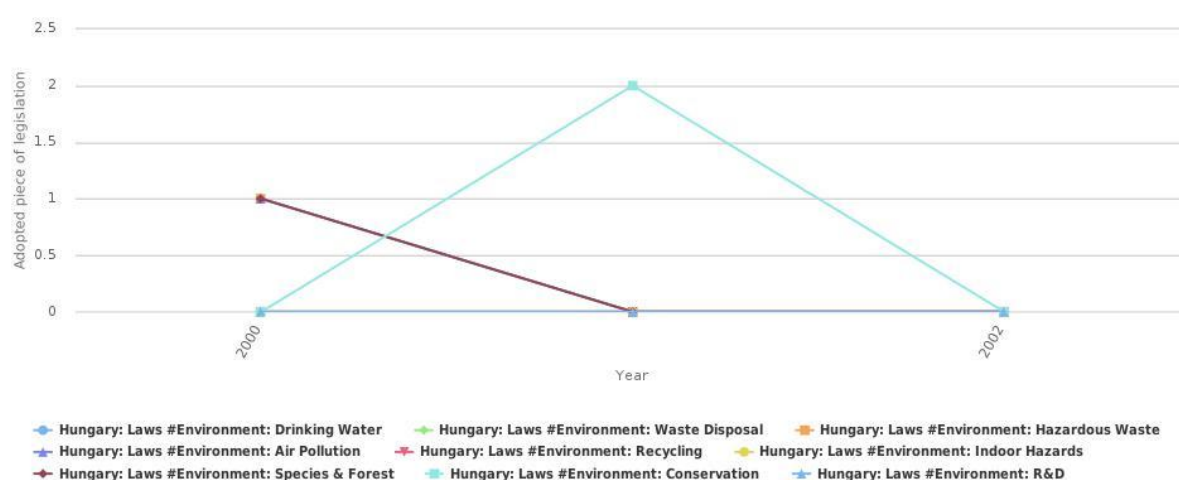


The number of adopted piece of legislations has also increased. Decisive law has been established in the area of waste management. The 2000. XLIII. Act<sup>84</sup> aimed to minimize the impact of waste on the environment, to reduce the amount and hazard of waste and to utilize the generated waste. An Act was made in connection to chemical safety; 2000.XXV. Act<sup>85</sup> has regulated the functions of chemicals. The presentation of environmental issues also

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.kvvm.hu/szakmai/hulladekgazd/jogszabalyok/kv/0300100.htm>

<sup>85</sup> [https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=a0000025.tv](https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=a0000025.tv)

appeared at the level of Government Decrees. 21/2001 (II.14) .<sup>86</sup>This provision claimed the durable and effective preservation and improvement of ambient air quality, in order to preserve the protection of human health and the state of the environment.<sup>87</sup> Environmental impact assessment has also been regulated in this period, with the 20/2001(II.14) Government Decree<sup>88</sup>. Thus, the representation of the environmental issues has strengthened, compared to the previous two periods. The interviewees are also agreed on this statement.



As one of the environmental experts has explained, Turi-Kovács's goal was to rebuild the renown of the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry has organized forum with the green NGOs, so to resolve environmental issues with their cooperation. A leader of a NGO has also described the activity of the Minister as pacifying. Due to the approaching EU accession, environmental work has become more professional at the level of institutions and legislation, and green experts and civils were involved in the process of legal harmonization. The European MP also emphasized the partnership with Turi-Kovács and also with his apparatus. He claimed that cooperations have taken place at different levels of the Ministry. Civils could

<sup>86</sup> <http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/getdoc2.cgi?dbnum=1&docid=A0100021.KOR>

<sup>87</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development , 2013.

<sup>88</sup> [http://www.kvvm.hu/cimg/documents/jogsz20\\_2001.pdf](http://www.kvvm.hu/cimg/documents/jogsz20_2001.pdf)

join the work of the Committee; they could participate in formal consultation forums and could engage in legislation. But in accordance to other respondents, a negative change was also observed at the green advocacy. As a formal MP described, civil assets have run out in the early 2000 and the change of the consuming culture has also shaped the way environmental issues presented. An environmental expert highlighted that one of the reason of the decrease of green advocacy was that environmental education was pushed into the background and environmental representation has lost its' accepted position after 2000.

In accordance to the findings of the chapter, it can be stated, that the period of Turi-Kovács has resulted improvement in environmental advocacy. The number of the adopted legislation has increased and the apparatus of the Ministry pursued to maintain a good and professional relationship with the actors of the green movement. But despite of the several positive changes, the tendency of the green civil development started to decline. The change of the consuming culture of the society and the decrease of the environmental education delayed the quality of the representation of green interests in the field of the green movement.

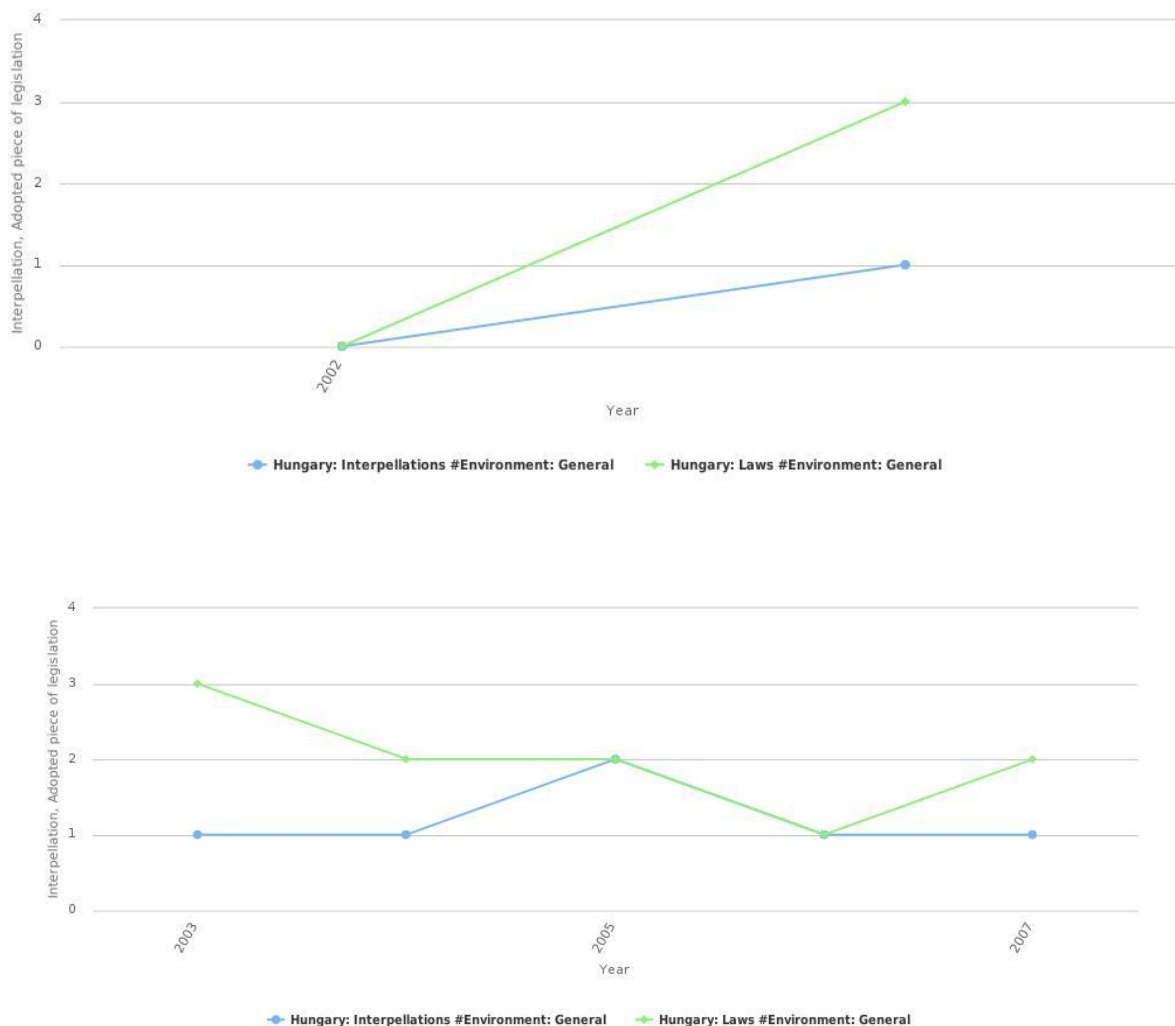
### **3.7 The Period of Green Pacification (2002-2006.)**

After the 2002 elections<sup>89</sup>, a distributed period occurred at the level of environmental advocacy. With the 2002.XI. Act<sup>90</sup>, Water Management has been detached to the Ministry of Environment again. The first Minister of this period, Márta Kóródi was the head of the Ministry for a year; she was replaced by Miklós Persányi in 2003, who then remained in the seat until May 2007. Comparing the two Minister's attempt to present green issues in the Hungarian Parliament, it can be stated, as shown in the figures below, that in addition to

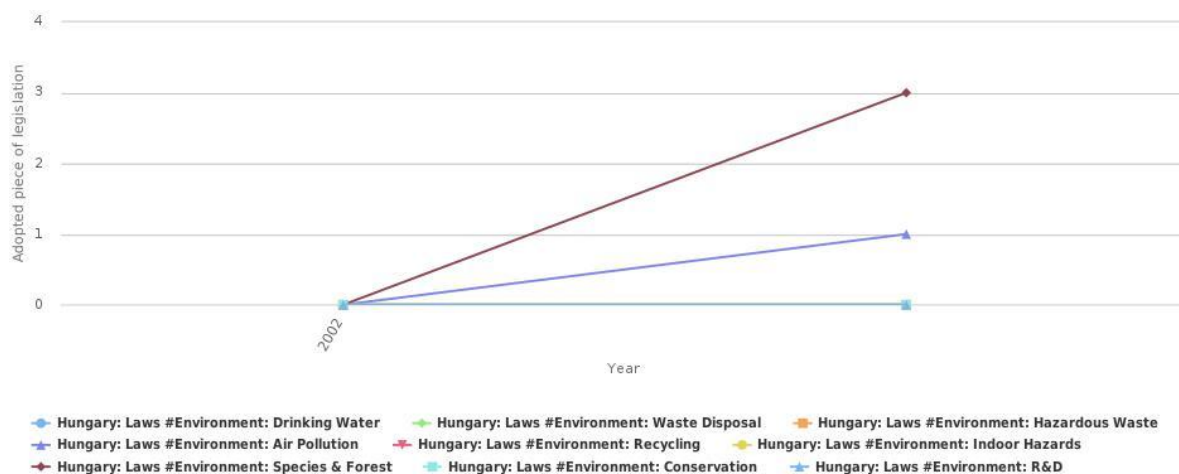
<sup>89</sup> [http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/49/49\\_0.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/49/49_0.html)

<sup>90</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development , 2013.

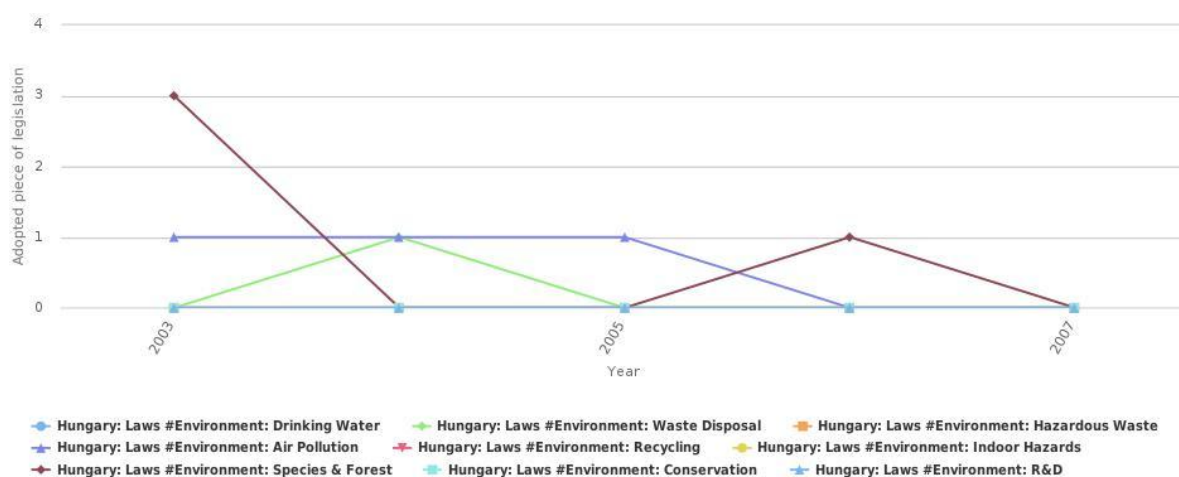
general environmental interpellations, slow progress can be observed from 2002, but this development decreased in the following years.



However, a significant difference can be observable at the amount of adopted pieces of legislation. Although Mária Kóródi was only serving as a Minister for a year, during the Ministry of her, the number of adopted Acts and provisions increased, compared to the previous periods.



Whilst this tendency remained in the first year of the Ministry of Persányi in 2003, towards the end of the cycle, the representation of environmental issues at the legislation has clearly declined—as shown in the figure below. The relatively representative number of adopted legislation can be explained by Hungary’s accession to the European Union. In 2004, Hungary has taken the European Union’s community legislation, as a full member of the EU’s environmental protection.<sup>91</sup> With the relevant EU regulations, the Bird-and the Habitat Directive, the NATURA 2000 regulations and tasks were implemented as well, with the 275/2004. (X. 8.) Government Decree.<sup>92</sup>



<sup>91</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development , 2013.

<sup>92</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.



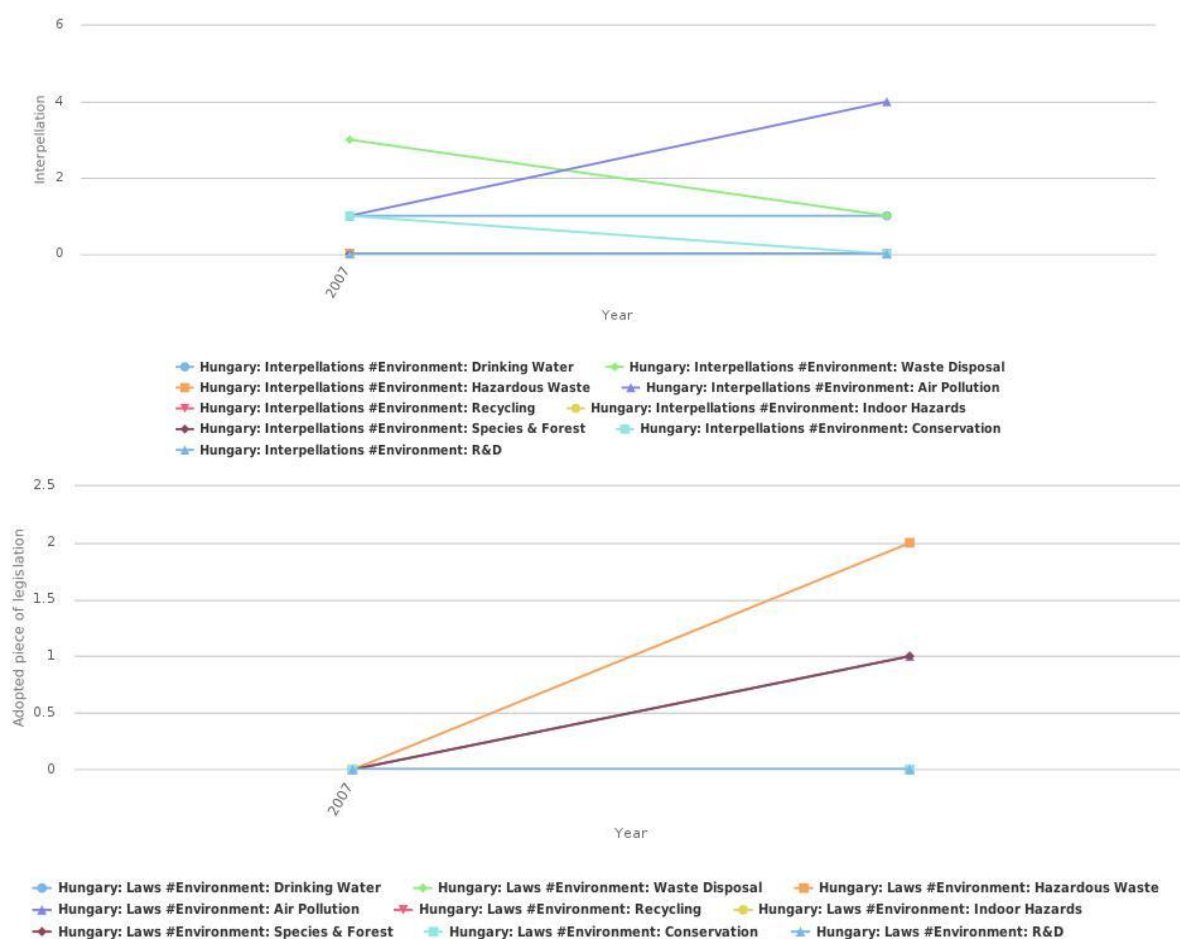
According to the interviewees, the duality of this period can be observed in the field of environmental advocacy. As it was observed in the previous cases, the attitude and personality of the Ministers have been highlighted by the respondents. As a former MP described, while Kóródi maintained a good relationship with the civils, Persányi was not definite and was not capable to articulate the green issues. The current MP also claimed that Kóródi made several gestures towards the greens. While some respondents were satisfied with the relationship with Minister Kóródi, many of them emphasized her inexperience. As the EU MP explained, without professional embeddedness, Kóródi was afraid of the green civil society and only made relationship with the „comfortable civils”. On the other hand, as he described, Persányi had conflicts with the green civils also. But as he stated, he was also ambitious to keep the relationship with them. Persányi was actively participated in the National Meetings of the greens, as well as other forums. Many formalized frameworks were established during his period. Substantive cooperation was between the green experts and representatives and the apparatus. A leader of a NGO shared the previous characteristics of the two periods. In accordance to her, Kóródi's Ministry was unnoticeable, while Persányi has systematically dismantled the environmental authorities. As she claimed, during his Ministry, green advocacy at the level of government and Ministry was only operating as a PR Ministry. According to a leader of a NGO, 2004 was a fraction at the presentation of environmental issues. As he described, due to the EU accession, the case of environment was no longer interesting.

In sum, this period of environmental can also be characterized by duality. General environmental legislative work has decreased and the environmental authorities have been dismantled during this term. Despite of these processes, the Ministry had to follow the EU legal harmonization, which improved the representation of green interests at the level of the Hungarian Parliament. The respondents have also highlighted the downturn in the cooperation

between the Ministry and the green movement. Compared to the previously periods, it can be stated, that in these years, the state of green advocacy has weakened in all of the examined grounds.

### 3.8 The Period of the Green PR Ministry (2007-2008.)

Another shorter period occurred from May 2007 in the field of environmental politics when Gábor Fodor became the Minister of Environment and Water Management due to Government restructuring. He remained Minister until May 2008. Despite of the short term, it can be stated, that the representation of environmental issues at legislation has strengthened, as it can be discernible in the below mentioned figures.



As shown in the tables, not only the amount of the adopted pieces of legislation increased, compared to the previous period, but such legislation has been adopted, which was determining for the Hungarian green civil society. With the 2007. CXLV. Act<sup>93</sup> about the Parliamentary Commissioner of Civil Rights, the Hungarian Parliament has established the institution of the Parliamentary Commissioner of future generations.

Despite of the short lengthens of the period of Fodor's Ministry, at the level of institutions, the representation of green issues can be observed. As the Minister himself claimed in the interview, environmental issues became political issues at his period. According to him, they could make green issues closer to people and the need for self-organizing was in the society. As he explained, environmental awareness was a real social case in 2007. There were symbolical issues, such as actions against the pollution of the river Rába or hazardous waste, in which the Ministry also took part. They held permanent reconciliations with the civils, and he described the relationship with them as close and nutritive. His State of Secretary and the cabinets were in charge of the contact with the green NGOs and experts. As it has also been raised in the previous comparisons of the governments, Fodor also emphasized the role of his personality. In accordance to him, the state of environmental representation is dependent on the Minister. The success of his politics and the previously presented Baja-Ministry was in his opinion, that they were nationally known politicians. As he described, environmental issues were never been strong enough, to achieve better position in the Hungarian Parliament, since financial and economic issues bear greater power of lobbying.

The EU MP confirmed the positive attempts of the Minister, as he stated, there was intent, but there were no results in addition to environmental advocacy at the level of legislation. In accordance to him, the Minister tried to maintain the good relationship with the civils, but by and large, Fodor's Ministry also operated as Persányi's PR Ministry. As the green expert also

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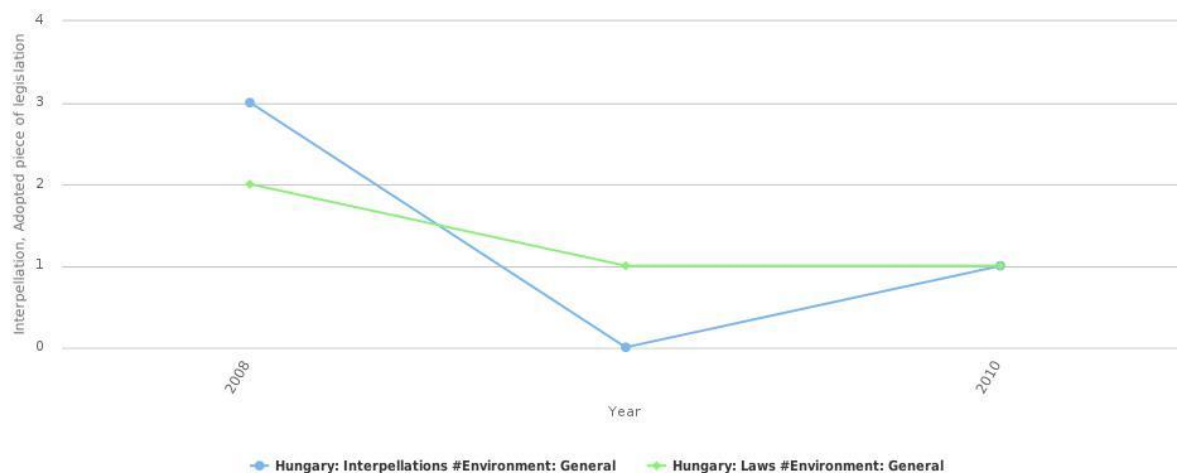
<sup>93</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.

explained, although the Minister was not an expert of environmental issues, the weight of the Ministry has strengthened. He claimed that the personality of the head of the Ministry was accounted, and not the representation of environmental awareness. A leader of a NGO characterized this period as an environmental melting pot, where the ministry tried to solve the green problems on the level of PR. But according to her, the political actors of the Ministry were not professionals and had no concept on how to advocate green interests.

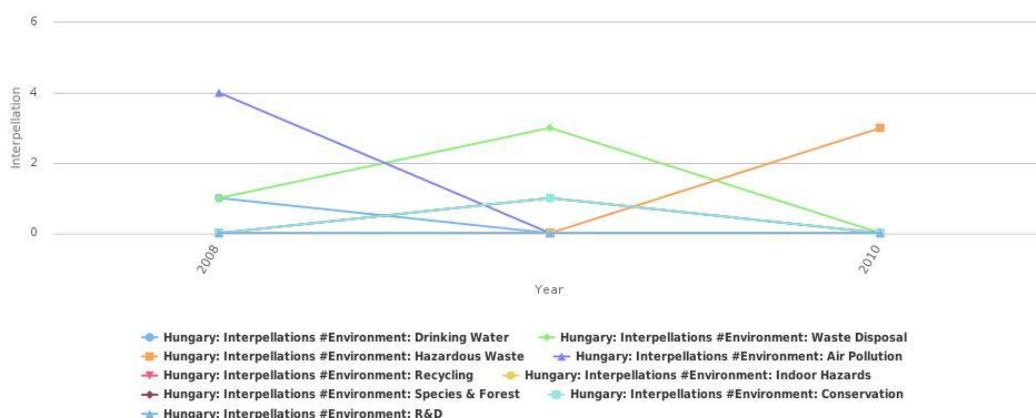
Despite the increase of the adopted laws, the most significant act for green advocacy was the appearance of the Green Ombudsman's Office in the Parliament. With such legislation, the level of environmental advocacy has strengthened in the Hungarian Parliament. Compared to the previous periods, due to the personality and political role of the Minister, the representation of the green issues increased at the level of the Ministry. But although the issues were presented, the interviewees claimed the professional background and practices of the Ministry, but emphasized the fine relationship with the apparatus of the Ministry.

### **3.9 The Period of the First Green Retrogression (2008-2010.)**

Due to governmental reconstruction, and additional personal change has occurred at the head of the Ministry of Environment and Water Management in May 2008 and Imre Szabó became the Minister. As the below mentioned figure presents, retrogression can be observed at the level of legislation in addition to the representation of environmental issues. This decline applies to both the legislative work and the interpellations at the Parliament.



Although if we examine the detailed figure of the provision and the interpellations, some fields of the environmental issues were more represented, the general amount of the environment related Acts indicates the decline of green advocacy at the Hungarian Parliament at this period.

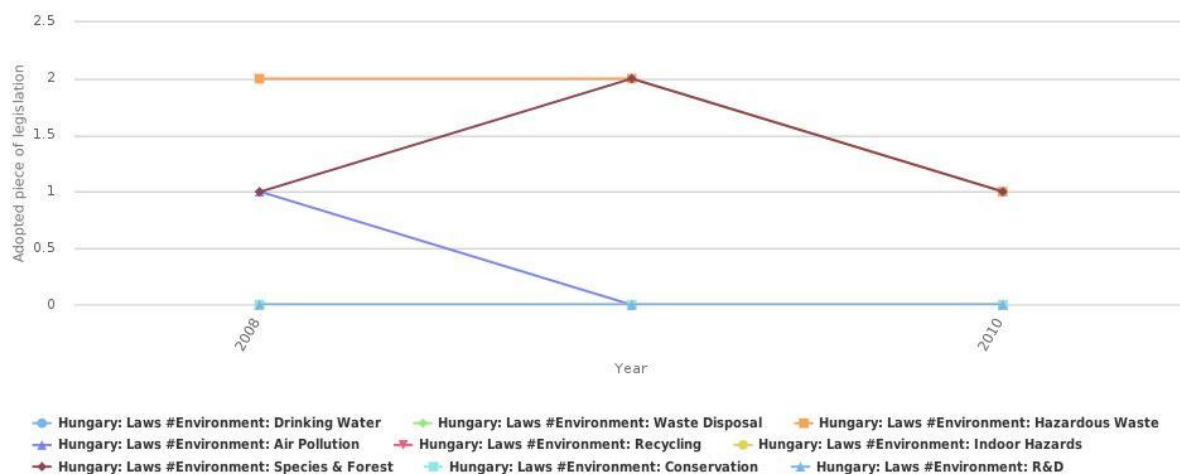


Some determinative Acts were however accepted in this term. The Law of forest and wild life protection has been changed and from then, the 2009.XXXVI. Act<sup>94</sup> also included the factors of sustainability. Regulation of the water companies<sup>95</sup> were also appointed to the Parliament during Szabó's Ministry. Government Decree was made for the protection of the quality of air, which has highlighted the responsibility of the air polluters.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> [https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=A0900037.TV](https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A0900037.TV)

<sup>95</sup> 2009. CXLIV.

<sup>96</sup> 306/2010. (XII.23.)



At the nominee hearing of Imre Szabó in 2008, he stated the following aims of the Ministry. As the background material of the Committee<sup>97</sup> interview described, they wanted to become the green conscience and the Ministry of Future Generations. Nevertheless in the in-depth interview for the thesis, he claimed that these goals have been realized only partially. As he explained, the global economy crisis influenced the state of environmental representation at the Hungarian Parliament. He described himself as a green person, since he was close to the green movement before. According to Szabó, the Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány wanted to merge the Ministry of Environment and Water Management with the Ministry of Agriculture and appointed Szabó first as a State of Secretary. But due to the green civil lobby, eventually he was the appointed Minister. Szabó claimed, that in order to achieve the previously mentioned goals of the Ministry, he focused on the reinforce of the management. Therefore to structure the Ministry, he first wanted to change the management and then consolidate the power. As he explained, meetings with the green civils were systematic, even at the level of the Minister. He has participated in the National Green Meetings, as well as on the itinerant conventions. In according to Baja, great emphasis was on the environmental education and the awareness of green issues during these two years. Funds were provided from the Ministry to the green NGOs. He highlighted the legacy of Fodor in addition to green

<sup>97</sup> [http://www.parlament.hu/biz38/korb/dok/szabo\\_imre.pdf](http://www.parlament.hu/biz38/korb/dok/szabo_imre.pdf)

programs at schools, but criticized the state of Fodor's directorate. Szabó claimed that effective use of the EU funds was his matter of heart, but as he described, the global situation did not benefited the representation of green issues in Hungary. Although, first time in the history of Hungarian green advocacy, the country was represented at the Climate Summit in Copenhagen<sup>98</sup> at the level of Prime Minister (Gordon Bajnai). <sup>99</sup>As he stated, despite of this negative trend, the Ministry attempted to maintain a professional conciliation relationship with the actors of the green movement. The representatives of the environmental NGOs and experts were involved from the early pre-legislative processes. Therefore when the Government decided to enroll the funds, his aim was to prevent this action. As the previous Minister's, he also emphasized the role of the Minister in the presentation of green interests. Szabó highlighted the importance of the Minister's power relations and the Minister's place at the personal-and governor/political structure.

During the qualitative interviews, complete contrary opinion occurred between the Minister and the actors of the green movement. As a formal MP explained, they became friends and foes with the Ministry. The European MP described the period of the Ministry of Szabó as a downturn, both professional and in the contact with the civils. In accordance to a member of the green movement, despite of what Szabó explained previously, the environmentalists have never heard of the Minister before he was appointed. A leader of a green NGO also stated that although Szabó was „endurable” as a Minister, he was a marionette of the Government. In addition to green legislation, another member of a green NGO has highlighted, that social debates were not typical in this two years. And though Szabó emphasized his commitment to the green civil funds in the in-depth interview, an environmental expert explained that when

<sup>98</sup> [http://unfccc.int/meetings/copenhagen\\_dec\\_2009/meeting/6295.php](http://unfccc.int/meetings/copenhagen_dec_2009/meeting/6295.php)

<sup>99</sup> [http://www.parlament.hu/egy-kepvisele-adatai?p\\_auth=ZATer1Ig&p\\_p\\_id=pairproxy\\_WAR\\_pairproxyporlet\\_INSTANCE\\_9xd2Wc9jP4z8&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=1&p\\_p\\_state=normal&p\\_p\\_mode=view&p\\_p\\_col\\_id=column-1&p\\_p\\_col\\_count=1&\\_pairproxy\\_WAR\\_pairproxyporlet\\_INSTANCE\\_9xd2Wc9jP4z8\\_pairAction=%2Fintern-et%2Fcplsql%2Fogy\\_kpv.kepv\\_adat%3Fp\\_azon%3Db063%26p\\_ckl%3D40%26p\\_osszefuz%3D](http://www.parlament.hu/egy-kepvisele-adatai?p_auth=ZATer1Ig&p_p_id=pairproxy_WAR_pairproxyporlet_INSTANCE_9xd2Wc9jP4z8&p_p_lifecycle=1&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=1&_pairproxy_WAR_pairproxyporlet_INSTANCE_9xd2Wc9jP4z8_pairAction=%2Fintern-et%2Fcplsql%2Fogy_kpv.kepv_adat%3Fp_azon%3Db063%26p_ckl%3D40%26p_osszefuz%3D)

Norwegian Fund has started to support the Hungarian civils, the Ministry took that as a substitute and less state aid was given from then on.

In conclusion, this period of environmental advocacy has again can be characterized by duality. The presentation of green issues decreased at the level of institutions and legislation. The work for the green NGOs has become difficult after the reduction of the financial subsidies. While the Minister has highlighted the good relationship with the civils, in contradict, the respondents of the interviews have been unsatisfied with his ministry work and claimed the absence of professionalism. The interviewees also emphasized the place of the Ministry between other Ministries, and stated, that during this period, in comparison to the year 1998, Ministry of Environment afresh became in sufferance. Therefore, a clear retrogression of environmental advocacy can be observed during this period, both in institutions, legislation and in the relationship between the Ministry and the green movement.

### 3.10 The Period of the Elimination of the Greens (2010-.)

From the institutional point of view, 2010 was retrogression in terms of environmental advocacy. Based on the 2010. XLII Act, the new government<sup>100</sup> has abolished the autonomous Ministry of Environment and Water Management. The cessionary of the Ministry and the accountable for the general green issues became the Ministry of Regional Development. Sándor Fazekas was appointed as the Minister of Regional Development, at the same time, as the responsible for environmental protection. As the report by the Committee of Sustainable<sup>101</sup> future described, the function of climate politics first belonged to the Ministry for National Economy, then it shifted to the Ministry for National Development. The regulations of Water Management pertains to the Ministry of Interior from 2012, while the professional tasks of Water Management remained at the Ministry of Regional Development.

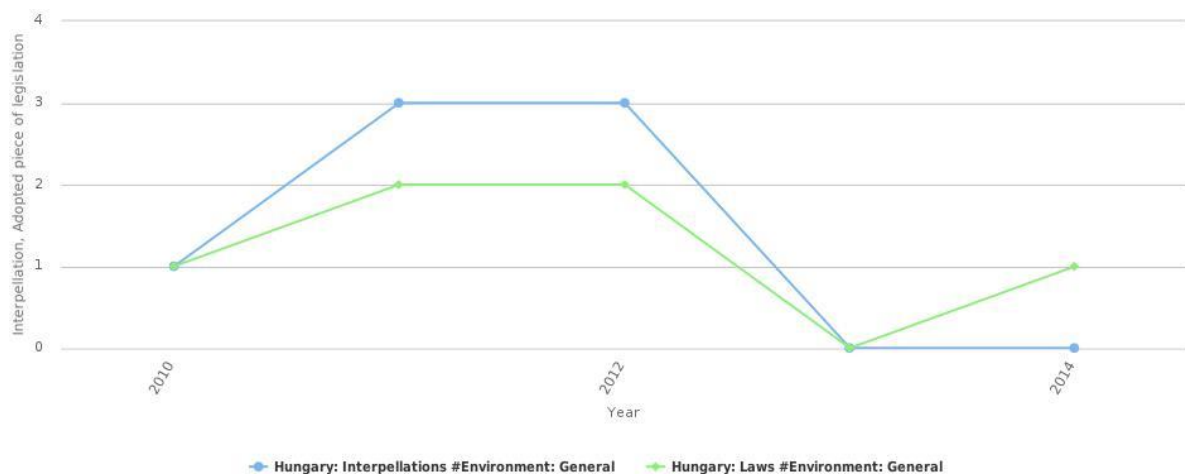
<sup>100</sup> [http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/455/455\\_0.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/ovi/455/455_0.html)

<sup>101</sup> Hungarian Commission of Sustainable Development, 2013.



But during this period, progressive institutional changes have also occurred. Based on the 23/2010. (V. 14.)<sup>102</sup> Parliamentary Decree, the Government established the Parliamentary Committee for Sustainable Development. With the inclusion of this Committee to the Parliamentary routine, the presentation of environmental issues can appear in the early stages of the process of legislation. However, despite of the establishment of the Committee, the representation of environmental issues at the institutional ground has rather damaged by the 2011. CXI. Act<sup>103</sup>, in which the Parliament has eliminated the Office of the Ombudsman of Future Generations. Its' tasks were transferred to the Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights from 1 January, 2012.

Although the Comparative Agenda Project's dataset<sup>104</sup> only has data until 2014, the tendency of the decline of the environmental issues at the Hungarian legislation is demonstrative. General downturn is shown in the environmental interpellations as well as in the number of the adopted pieces of legislation.



<sup>102</sup> <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=A10H0023.OGY>

<sup>103</sup> [https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy\\_doc.cgi?docid=A1100111.TV](https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1100111.TV)

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/>

However, a new dimension of green advocacy appeared in the 2010 Hungarian Parliament from the political point of view. The representation of environmental issues has improved, when the first Green Party entered the Parliament in 2010.<sup>105</sup> That the appearance and electoral win for Politics could be different in 2010 brought new impetus and hope for the environmentalists; the program of the party caused optimism in those who have actively participated in the work of green civils. However, based on the results of the past 7 years, the initial enthusiasm is now declining.<sup>106</sup>

Therefore in accordance to the legislative-and institutional changes, it can be stated, that the post-2010 Hungarian Government has reduced the environmental advocacy in the level of the Parliament, although some symbolic changes were made to maintain the basic presentation of the green issues and also, a green party was participating in the parliamentary work. In so these governmental transformations are relatively new to the Hungarian green movement, the literature on the post-2010 Hungarian environmental advocacy is deficient, and therefore the importance of the qualitative interview's findings are important to take into account.

A not yet seen consensus can be observed in the interview responses from the greens, when they described the current Hungarian Government's relationship towards environmental advocacy. The answers are not first, but now predominantly characterized by emotions. However, in terms of the effectiveness and credibility of the findings, the responses are equally valued, since the arguments are supported by professional reasons. As one of the formal MP described, the crisis of environment dates back to the period of Imre Szabó (2008.), but it got worse by the years. As he claimed, it is now absurdity to think in policy making without corruption. He misses the strategies during the legislative terms, as well as the vision and the involvement of the civil experts. Another interviewee, a member of a green

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<sup>105</sup> [http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/parval2010/354/354\\_0\\_index.html](http://www.valasztas.hu/hu/parval2010/354/354_0_index.html)

<sup>106</sup> Fábián, 2015.

NGO also explained the constriction of the participation of the environmentalists. As he stated, “the government itself legitimacies its own decisions. “ But according to him, not just the scope of green participation has decreased at the level of policy- and law making, but also the representation of the green issues at the media. Although he emphasized that there are some improvements at the legislation, for example the Act of the right for a healthy environment.<sup>107</sup> On the other hand, as the leader of a green NGO highlighted, the most significant environmental laws are existed due to the EU legal harmonization. In accordance to him, positive changes in green advocacy can only be observed at regional governmental levels. He claimed that environment has been centralized from 2010, and it is not visible where the actual decisions are made. According to him, green experts and civils have no possibilities to participate in the progress of legislation, although the professional background materials have not yet been shaped by the government. He emphasized that green civil society is lack of capacity now, and many of their colleges had to leave their jobs because of the established situation. He was the first respondent who talked about the fear they face in their everyday work. As he explained, they not only experience censure at the parliamentary work but also in environmental forums. Professionalism have decreased and they became implementers after 2010. In accordance to him, the greatest problems environmental advocacy has to face is the problem of the implementation of the laws and the redistribution of the EU funds. Another formal MP agreed, that the current Government’s environmental policy making does not match the interest of society. He described the present presentation of the environmental issues as insular and centralist. An MP also highlighted the problem with the amount of the EU funds. As she claimed, not only the environmental institutions have been murdered in 2010, but also the green consulting discipline. The lack of dialogue is a problem in accordance to another green expert as well. As he stated, the current level of environmental

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<http://www.kormany.hu/download/e/02/00000/The%20New%20Fundamental%20Law%20of%20Hungary.pdf>

advocacy can be characterized as an “open slap in the face”. Representation of green issues has lost its’ role after 2000 according to him. But as another environmental expert described, the lack of an independent Ministry would not be a great problem, but, the case of environment has atomized, and there is no way to become coherent. In accordance to the expert, green advocacy still exists at an informal level; the inconvenience is in the deficit of environmental governance. He has also presented the shrinking financial support for the NGOs. A leader of a green NGO explained the previously mentioned duality of the recent environmental advocacy changes: while the representation of the green issues was eliminated in 2010, constitutionally it strengthened: the Fundamental Law of Hungary contains paragraphs about environmental protection. He has also emphasized the role of the Deputy Ombudsman. So according to him, environmental protection is still manifested at some levels of the institutions. As he claimed, civils are tolerated: although they are not prohibited, they are not supported as well. And instead of the development of green advocacy, the current Government considers economic issues more important. The European MP responses are in agreement with the previous explanations of this period. What he described, that while it is difficult to cooperate with the government, the apparatus of the Ministry is still operating professionally. In 2010, he was the first president of the Sustainable Development Committee, therefore he experienced the reduction of the green advocacy in practice. As he described, the difficulty of his position consisted in the majority of the Governor Party. The European MP attempted to represent environmental issues and encouraged civil participation in the pre-legislative work. But after a while, his space became limited. An expert of the environment also claimed that their equipments are limited to maintain the green interest at the level of institutions a legislation. As he stated “their task is no longer include creativity”. But despite of the backlash of advocacy, environmental consciousness at the society grows; in accordance to him, in a long-term, the government should shift focus to this also. He also

mentioned the fear of the green civil society and blames it for the reduction of their activity. A leader of another NGO is not that negative. She sees progress in the green civil society. She feels a noticeable resurgence on the field of green society which manifests in organizing fundraising parties and protests. As he explained, the anti-civilian acts by the current Hungarian government brought the actors of the green society closer and a positive tendency can be observed. But while the green movement's situation improves, the demand of professional experts and work is decreasing. While her NGO worked for the government from 2010, after 2012 they no longer required their knowledge and critics. Since the situation has degenerated as such, that she cannot even enter the Parliament.

Although many themes aroused in the interviews, in relation to the research topic, it can be stated, that the institutional changes from 2010 have reduced environmental advocacy at the Hungarian Parliament. But while the functions of the Ministry of Environment and Water Management have merged into different Ministries, the establishment of the Committee of Sustainable Development, even with narrow limits, has retained the presentation of environmental issues. The declining number of the adopted legislative pieces also present negative tendency, but as the reviewed literature and some interviewees unveiled, the Fidesz Government displayed green-and sustainable interests in the Fundamental Law of Hungary. However, a clear deterioration can be observed in the Government's attitude toward the actors of the green movement. As each of the respondents have stated, the need for professional and expert work has diminished from 2010. They also claimed that the financial support of the greens does not help to increase environmental awareness, or to operate as organizations. In sum, based on the opinion of the members of the green movement, environmental advocacy has disappeared from the Parliament in Hungary.

In summary, the period after 2010 shows retrogression on the matter of environmental advocacy, but just like in the previous cases, the decline is not completely obvious. The

elimination of the Ministry has essentially demolished the presentation of the green interests in the legislation. Despite of the presence of a Green Party in the Parliament, the numbers of the adopted laws as well as the amount of interpellations have diminished. But on the other hand, the Government presented environmental interest and commitment to sustainability in the Fundamental Law of Hungary. The other positive tendencies which are occurring in this period are due to the regulations of the European Union. And while at some level, environmental advocacy still exists in the Hungarian Parliament, the situation of the green movement became significantly worse. With the abolishment of the subsidies, their everyday work has become restricted. At first, this period was described with fear of the respondents. And although the environmental politics should rely on their professional knowledge, the Ministries are no longer requiring the help of the green movement. However, despite of the obstacles, the green movement continues their work in order to find other platforms to advocate environmental issues in Hungary.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

As Albertini<sup>108</sup> stated, environmental performance is a multidimensional construction. The aim of the thesis was to find out, how this construction has been presented in the environmental advocacy of Hungary from 1990. The goal was also to reveal, whether the recently discernible retrogression of the environmental advocacy is due to the current government's policy or rather a part of the historical processes of Hungary. The thesis compared the post-1990 Government's practice in the field of the representation of green interests. As the findings of the experimental research has presented, different periods of the Hungarian environmental advocacy at the institutional and legislative levels have been influenced by different criteria. But as Fahey and Pralle<sup>109</sup> presented, the hierarchy of environmental governance is in transformation, therefore green advocacy no longer manifest at the level of politics only, but also at the level of the participation of the green movement. The suggested change of the hierarchy of relationships was also analyzed in the thesis, with the comparison of the relationships between the Ministries and green movement of the examined periods. As the case studies have presented, none of the post-regime governments could effectively represent environmental issues and only embraced the idea of sustainability superficially. While there were rising periods in addition to green advocacy at the legislation (such as the period of the Ministry of Ferenc Baja, or the Ministry of Gábor Fodor), none of the argued periods have fully interiorized the suggests by the green movement and therefore, the presentation of environmental issues have remained in the background of the Hungarian Parliament. But not only Governments had difficulties with the green advocacy; the constantly changing periods were not favored by the Hungarian green movement as well. The constant reduction of the subsidies and the personal interests of the Ministers have influenced

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<sup>108</sup> Albertini, 2015.

<sup>109</sup> Fahey, Pralle, 2016.

the progress which the green movement could actualize in the presentation of the environmental interest. So whilst during the regime change it seemed that the green movement will gain political power and influence, it could not realize these expectations. In conclusion it can be stated, that while the current Hungarian Government has demolished green advocacy at the level of institutions and legislation, this is not a novelty in the history of environmental representation. Rising and falling periods of green advocacy has not followed the periods after 1990 and none of the detailed Governments, nor could the green movement efficiently present the environmental interests in Hungary. Therefore in the context of the thesis it can be stated, that in accordance to the representation of environmental interest, Hungary has an unsustainable past, and if the presented tendency continues, will have an unsustainable future as well.



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## Appendix

The interviews were recorded on Dictaphone, and notes were made during the interviews in Hungarian language. The extract is presented in the thesis, separate transcript has not been made.

### Topic guide

What is your recent job and how does it connected to environmentalism?

What was your role in the Hungarian green movement/green politics?

What are the strengths of the Hungarian green movement/politics?

Which events prove the success of the green movement/Ministry of Environment and why?

What obstacles did the green movement have to face?

What is your opinion on the current government's environmental policy?

In the past 25 years, which laws and provisions were outstanding in accordance to environment and why?

Which law/provision was harmful for environment?

How is the relationship between you and politicians/actors of the green movement?

How does environmental advocacy works in practice?

How the consultation between the Ministry and the Greens work?

In total, how would you describe the cooperation?

What would you change and how, in order to emphasize the role of environment on the political agenda?

### List of the interviewees

In accordance to research ethics, all of the interviewees have been noticed that their names might appear in the thesis, but in order not to affect the presentation of the research results,

they are referred by their positions instead. However, because of their decisive role in the Hungarian environmental sphere, with their agreement, their names are outlined below, in so they can be linked to the positions refereed at the research findings.

Ámon, Ada : head of Energiaklub

Baja, Ferenc : Minister of Environment and Regional Development (1994-1998)

Bödecs, Barnabás : formal MP of Jobbik (2010-2012), founder of HUMUSZ

Faragó, Tibor : professor at ELTE, environmental expert

Farkas, István : head of MTVSZ

Fodor, Gábor: Minister of Environment and Water Management (2007-2008.)

Gadó, György: Greenpeace Hungary

Jávör, Benedek : MP of the European Union (2014-), former MP of LMP (then PM, 2010-2014), formal member of Védegylet

Lányi, András: professor at ELTE, writer, philosopher, founding member of Védegylet

Lukács, András : Head of Levegő Munkacsoport

Mező, János: member of Greenpeace Hungary

Pánovics, Attila: professor at the Science University of Pécs

Schmuck, Erzsébet : MP of LMP (2014-), formal head of MTVSZ

Szabó, Imre: Minister of Environment and Water Management (2008-2010)

Szilágyi, László: formal MP of LMP (later PM. 2010-2014.), founder of HUMUSZ