

## Environmental protection's power to influence politics

Rich Heffern | May. 9, 2011 Eco Catholic

"There is no conservative way to breathe air or liberal way to drink water," writes Steven Cohen on the Huffington Post Green page, in an [article](#) [1] titled "The Political Power of Environmental Protection." "The health, safety and security of our families are at the heart of America's bedrock support for a clean environment. The environment is not an ideological issue."

Cohen is surprised by the right wing's focus on environmental protection as an example of government overregulation. Most people favor environmental protection, he points out. "Just as police forces can sometimes use excess force, some environmental regulators can get carried away. But just as people tend to support their local cops, they also support environmental regulators. Protecting the environment is not an example of government run amok."

Cohen is executive director of Columbia University's Earth Institute.

### NCR's Eco Catholic Blog

Eco Catholic is an exploration of the green Catholic imagination and ecological spirituality. Contributors include Rich Heffern, *NCR* staff writer, columnist and author, and Carol Meyer, executive director of the Sustainable Sanctuary Coalition.

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[1] [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steven-cohen/the-political-power-of-en\\_b\\_859287.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steven-cohen/the-political-power-of-en_b_859287.html)

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