

# ‘Jumping on the *green* bandwagon’: The discursive construction of GREEN across ‘old’ and ‘new’ media genres at the intersection between corpora and discourse

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## 1. Introduction

The paper explores aspects of the semantics of ‘green’ across ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ printed media genres, with the purpose of illuminating how issues of environmental discourse are construed in media discourse. In particular, it will deal with patternings of the lemma GREEN<sup>1</sup> by focussing on a domain-specific corpus of newspaper articles, which may be described as ‘institutionalized’ forms of journalism, as well as on news weblogs, a ‘new media genre’ (Bruns and Jacobs 2006; Herring et al. 2005, Facchinetti and Adami 2009), which have increasingly attained widespread popularity as articulated forms of journalism or, to a certain extent, ‘anti-journalism’ (Lasica 2001, Grossman 2004).

By combining quantitative with qualitative methodologies and procedures, the paper also aims at contributing to the growing body of research incorporating corpus linguistics (henceforth CL) techniques within discourse analytical approaches (see, *inter alia*, Hardt-Mautner 1995, Partington et al. 2004, Baker 2006), grounded on an SFL perspective (see, *inter alia*, Bayley, Bevitori and Zoni 2004, Thompson and Hunston 2006, Miller 2006, Coffin and O’Halloran 2005, Morley and Bayley 2009, Bevitori 2010, 2011a, 2011b, Bednarek 2010), in order to uncover traces of competing discourses, underlying ideological assumptions, as well as reader positioning (Martin and White 2005).

The paper will begin by analysing the frequency of the lemma across corpora, as well as documenting the occurrence of its word forms. By selecting *green* for closer inspection, the major semantic domains will be thus identified and the collocational behaviour of the item will be traced by investigating patterns of co-occurrence and co-selection, alongside attitudinal resources that are typically associated with them. Some of the research questions addressed include: How is *green* discursively constructed in newspapers *vs.* news weblogs? What kind of differences/similarities between institutional (the press) or *un*-institutional (the blogs) forms of journalistic discourse(s) can be observed? Moreover, following Hunston (2007, 2010), can consistent discursive formations be observed within the specialized domains, and if so, what kind of attitudinal meanings are typically associated with the word? What (evaluative) role does the occurrence of certain types of phraseology play?

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 outlines the aims and purpose as well as ways to achieve them. A description of the corpora and rationale used in this study is provided in Section 3, while Section 4 discusses the main findings. A preliminary analysis of frequency distribution of the lemma has been performed in order to trace differences and

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<sup>1</sup> The lemma GREEN is used to indicate all wordforms. Wordforms of the lemma are given in italics.

similarities across corpora. As far as the press corpora are concerned, since occurrences of the lemma are half as frequent in the US than in the UK press, special attention was then focussed on the latter, where the presence of the item *green* as an organizing element of phraseology proved more interesting.

## 2. How green is *green*? Aims and Methods

*Green is the prime colour of the world,  
and that from which its loveliness arises*  
Calderon de la Barca

The relationship between environmentalism and the colour *green* is by now customary. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*)<sup>2</sup>, the term *green*, in its political or specialized sense of ‘belonging to or supporting environmentalism’ (13a), is first attested in the early 1970s in Germany, arising from campaigns against nuclear power stations. The decade saw in fact the emergence of the Green Party, as well as several environmentalist movements across the globe, which, despite sharing a number of key principles, may be said to advocate a variety of perspectives or positions, alongside providing different recipes for action.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, a second sense of the word in the dictionary (13b) relates to products, services, and so on, ‘designed, produced, or operating in a way that *minimize harm* [my emphasis] to the natural environment’.

This would seem to suggest that *green* is to a certain extent ‘primed’, in Hoey’s terms (2005: 13), to co-occur with positive attitudinal assessments, or, to put it in another way, to carry a favourable ‘semantic prosody’ (Stubbs 2001, Partington 2004, Huston 2007; see Stewart 2010 for an overview). A Google search for the phrase ‘going green’, for example, whose meaning is usually taken to be self evident, gives a return of websites (and images) in which most environmental practices are construed as positive, or associated with favourable meanings; such as switching to ‘more’ eco-friendly ways of living and consumption. However, it might be argued that as a heavily-culturally-(and politically)-loaded term, the word *green*, apparently positively construed in various contexts, is frequently given a negative representation in the press. Despite concerns for the preservation of natural resources, the prevention and control of industrial pollution, alongside implementation of procedures for safeguarding the health and well-being of human and non-human organisms, environmental or ‘green’ practices have also attracted strong criticism. Let us briefly consider the following example from one of the articles in the corpus:

- 1) “Colour them **green**”, warbled Barbra Streisand. That was in 1963, and she was singing about her envious eyes. But flash forward to today and those words would equally apply to the myriad players in the let’s-make-environmental-and-energy-policy game. (*Sunday Times*, 16.12.2007)

The extract is taken from the opening paragraph of an op-ed article, published in *The Sunday Times* at the end of 2007, which may provide us with a useful starting point. First of all, it can be observed that several levels of intertextual reference are at play. The

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<sup>2</sup> Second edition, 1989; online version November 2010.

<sup>3</sup> For a review of some literature on the emergence of the Green Parties in Western Europe, see Kaelberer 1993.

referent 'them', for example, in 'colour *them* green' is manipulatively used by the journalist to make a parallelism between Streisand's 'green eyes', as a metaphorical representation of jealousy, in the singer's lyrics and 'green' in its specialized sense as 'environmentally aware or responsible'. Nonetheless, it could be argued that the use of parallelism (Jakobson 1960; see also Miller 2004) would also entail shared values between writer and reader(s) by 'invoking', in Martin and White's terms (2005: 67), or implying, an evaluative attitude or stance towards environmental issues, which will become apparent in the concluding clause 'the-let's-make-environmental-and-energy-policy-game'. Moreover, the headline unequivocally highlights a negative criticism of environmental practices, reading: 'The art of *going green* lies in hiding the cost' – a crucial issue, that of costs and benefits in newspaper articles, pointing to more ecologically responsible behaviours, which will be dealt with more thoroughly in a later section (see 4.3).

The above discussion points to the fact that since attitudinal assessments can be linguistically realized and negotiated in a number of ways - which are both implicit and explicit - different methodological procedures may be required in order to shed light on the complex and multifaceted nature of the evaluative and attitudinal aspects of discourse - and, as is the case here, of environmental discourse in the media (see also Bevitori 2010, 2011a, 2011b). In order to approach the issue, a corpus-assisted discourse analysis methodology is therefore adopted. The cross-fertilization of quantitative and qualitative approaches or, from another perspective, 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' procedures in the analysis of texts and discourse(s) may in fact prove beneficial (for a detailed discussion, see Bevitori 2010: 46-55). While a fine-grained analysis of particular texts can provide a comprehensive view of the means through which meaning potential is realized, as well as identify what kind of evaluative stance is foregrounded in that particular instance of discourse, the analysis of recurrent patterns, including patterns of co-selection and word sequences, across texts can widen the scope and permit comparison across competing discourses.

Since my interest lies primarily in examining ways in which the word *green* is used across corpora, in order to explore how the evaluative stance is construed in specific media contexts, a need was felt to combine corpus linguistic techniques within the analytical tools of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday [1994]2004; see also Thompson and Hunston 2006), as well as the appraisal framework - an extension of the SFL account of the interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics, which essentially deals with the way that speakers express evaluation, attitude and emotions through language (White 2002, Martin and White 2005). As the system is rather complex, a comprehensive description would require a lengthy treatment. I shall thus limit myself to an overview of the system, by focussing in particular on those categories which will emerge as more relevant to the study. Details will be found in the analysis section.

Broadly speaking, appraisal entails three 'interacting domains' (Martin and White 2005: 35): attitude, engagement and graduation. The attitude system is further subdivided into affect, judgement and appreciation. While, affect is concerned with positive/negative language resources for expressing the speaker/writer's emotions, judgment has to do with those resources morally assessing human behaviour, both in terms of 'social esteem' or 'social sanction'. Finally, appreciation deals with positive/negative assessments of both products and processes. The subsystem of engagement, which is inspired by Bakhtin's dialogic perspective on producer and receiver positioning (White 2003), is concerned with those resources, such as projection, modality, concession, etc., which act to position the speaker's voice with respect to the various propositions and proposals conveyed by a text.

‘Dialogism’ is key term in the engagement system; the system includes basic options for both eliding (*i.e.* monogloss) and referencing (*i.e.* heterogloss) dialogism. Heterogloss resources can be divided into two broad categories according to whether they act to dialogically ‘contract’ (or, in other words, to challenge, reject) or ‘expand’ alternative positions (or, in other words, to entertain, acknowledge, open) in their ‘intersubjective’ functionality (see White 2002, 2003, Martin and White 2005). Finally, graduation involves language resources acting to ‘adjust’ the degree of evaluation (Martin and White 2005: 37). Before moving to the analysis of the lemma, a quantitative description of the corpora will be provided in the next section.

### 3. Corpus and Rationale

The analysis was conducted on two specialized corpora dealing with environmental issues. The first is a specialized press corpus I designed and compiled myself a few years ago in order to carry out investigations into how climate change, one of the most emblematic issues of global environmental discourse shaping our new century and its geopolitics (Giddens 2009) was discursively constructed and negotiated in UK and US newspaper discourse(s) in 2007 (Bevitori 2010). The second, a fresh new corpus of weblogs, consists of blog posts and responses from three selected weblog sources covering 13 months-span, from December 2009 through December 2010.

While newspapers discourse can be seen as a composite (in terms of discourse types encompassing diverse communicative purposes) and ‘mediatized’ form of political discourse (Fairclough 1995: 176), playing a pivotal role in the relationship between broadly defined political institutions and the readers, news blogs may be described as an ‘opinionated genre’, which has started to supplant the ‘traditional vox-pop’ format (Bruns and Jacobs 2006). According to Bruns (2006), although blogs can be classified depending on their context of use, the practice of news blogging may be conceived as an interactive forum in which the role between journalists and reader becomes blurred. A collaborative and even ‘authoritative’ environment, as Lasica (2001) put it, ‘based on community endorsement’, which Bruns and Jacobs (2006: 6-7), by coining a new word, define as ‘produsage’:

there is now an ongoing shift from production/consumption-based mass media which produce a *vision* of society for us to consume as relatively passive audiences, to produsage-based society which is open for others to participate in, to develop and challenge and thus to continually co-create [...].

I shall get back to this later on in the discussion. As far as data are concerned, the Climate Change Press (henceforth CCP) corpus comprises newspaper articles from six quality newspapers, published in the UK and in the US in 2007, which was designed to represent a variety of wider range of arguments and perspectives of the political spectrum (Bevitori 2010: 58-60). As far as the UK CCP corpus as a whole is concerned, the newspapers include the *Guardian* and its Sunday edition, the *Observer*, the *Independent* including the *Independent on Sunday*, *The Times* including *The Sunday Times* overall amounting to about 1,900,000 tokens. Quality newspapers included in the US CCP corpus are: the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, comprising their Sunday editions, corresponding to approximately 1,480,000 tokens. The whole CCP Corpus overall amounts to 4,094 complete articles in the region of 3,395,000 running words. The breakdown of the number of articles, the overall number of running words and average number of words per article of all the newspapers are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1** UK and US CCP corpora (daily and Sunday editions) (from Bevitori 2010)

	No of articles	No of words	Ave. no of words per article
UK	2,702	1,912,897	707
US	1,392	1,482,128	1,064
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4,094</b>	<b>3,395,025</b>	<b>829</b>

As noted, the news weblogs corpus consists of blog posts and responses from three selected weblog sources covering 13 months-span, from December 2009 through December 2010. Blog sources included are *Grist* and *Climate Progress*, as well as the blog sections of the *Guardian*. Table 3.2 provides data of the number of articles in each source as well as the total number of tokens and the number of tokens of the posts only.

**Table 2.** Weblogs Corpus

Blogs	No of articles	Tokens All	Tokens Posts
Grist	39	127.841	36.775
Climate Progress	39	206.862	69.051
Guardian	39	280.899	44.576
<b>Overall</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>615.602</b>	<b>150.402</b>

As far as the former are concerned, both *Grist* and *Climate Progress* at the time of compiling the corpus were listed as the two top sites of the ‘green’ section of *Technorati*, one of the most popular blog directories on the www<sup>4</sup>. However, both of them, as well as most of the blogs appearing in the above mentioned directory are US-based<sup>5</sup>; it was thus felt the need to keep track of British environmental blogs by selecting the *Guardian* for close analysis. A discussion of the main findings is provided in the following section.

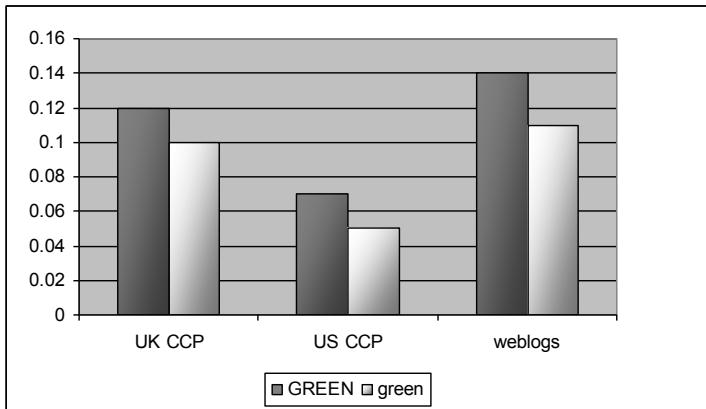
## 4. Investigating GREEN

### 4.1 Frequency and distribution

For the purpose of analysis, the relative frequencies of the lemma GREEN, including all wordforms, expressed in terms of instances per 100 tokens, have been compared across corpora. An initial wildcard search (\*) of the lemma has thrown up a number of instances containing compound nouns, such as *greenhouse*, *Greenpeace*, *Greenland*, as well as popular surnames, which have been immediately discarded. Proper instances have thus been recounted and relative frequencies are presented in Figure 1.

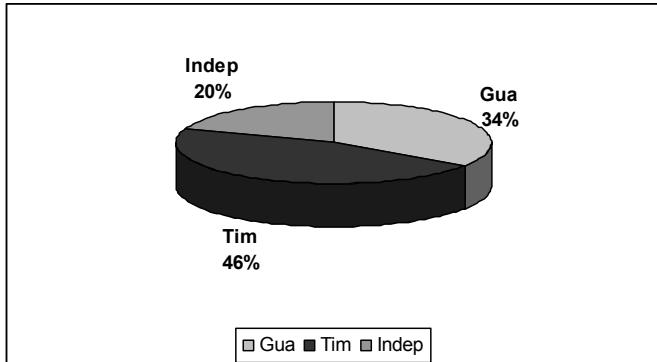
<sup>4</sup> At <http://technorati.com/blogs/directory>

<sup>5</sup> See Technorati’s State of the Blogosphere at <http://technorati.com/blogging/article/state-of-the-blogosphere>

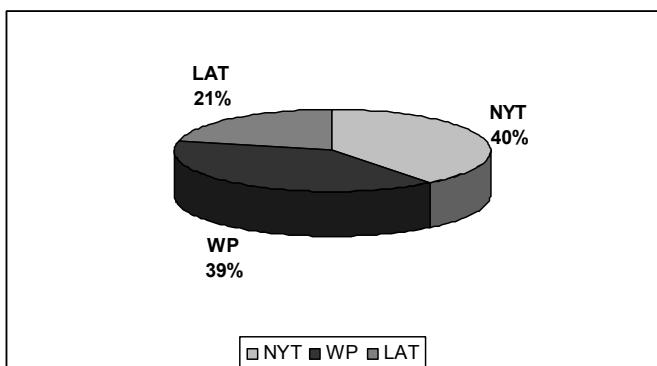


**Figure 1.** Relative frequency of lemma GREEN and wordform *green* cross corpora

In the news weblogs corpus the relative frequency of the lemma GREEN and the wordform *green* is 0.14 and 0.11 respectively. In the UK CCP corpus, both the lemma and wordform have a higher relative frequency than in the US CCP Corpus, 0.12(0.10) compared to 0.07(0.05). The breakdown of the instances of GREEN across newspapers in the each corpus is given in the Figures 2 (UK) and 3 (US). As the Figures show, in the UK corpus, the frequency of the lemma is unevenly distributed across newspapers, with 46 percent of all instances occurring in *The Times*, compared to 20 and 36 percent in the *Independent* and the *Guardian* respectively. Interestingly, in the latter, 8% of all instances of the lemma are found in the headlines. In contrast, in the US, the lemma is more evenly distributed between the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, with around 40 percent of all instances in each one, whereas instances of the lemma in the *Los Angeles Times* are set around 20 percent.



**Figure 2.** Distribution of the lemma GREEN across newspapers (incl. Sundays) in the UK CCP corpus



**Figure 3.** Distribution of the lemma GREEN across newspapers (incl. Sundays) in the US CCP corpus

As a following step, a list of the most frequent wordforms of the lemma GREEN across the three corpora was produced and results are given in Table 3. A collocation profile of the most frequent word forms was first traced and the meaning patterns typically co-occurring with the search terms identified.

**Table 3** Wordforms of GREEN across corpora

Wordforms	CCP UK	CCP US	BLOGS
green	1,981	908	700
greener	150	33	29
greenest	61	9	19
greening	16	11	19
greenery	8	4	*
greenie/s	10	9	7
greenness	10	*	1
greeny/greenish	*	*	4
greens	111	22	57
greenwash/ing	24	5	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,371</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>860</b>

For the purpose of analysis, the paper will deal with the word form *green*, also briefly touching on the compound *greenwash*.

#### 4.2 Collocates and semantic domains across corpora

An investigation of the concordance lines of *green* within a 5-words span across the UK and US CCP corpora and the news weblogs corpus elicit a number of collocates from the following semantic domains; ‘energy & technology’, ‘politics & policy’, ‘construction’, ‘lifestyle & behaviour’, ‘environmental groups’, ‘business & economy’.

To begin with, in the US press, instances largely fall into the domains of both ‘energy & technology’ and ‘construction’, covering around 30 percent in each one. The main collocates include *energy*, *efficiency/efficient*, *building/s*, *homes*, *project/s*. This seems to suggest that the two domains in the US corpus are conflated and discourse(s) around energy-efficiency measures tend to predominate. A closer inspection reveals that the word *energy* is frequently co-selected with *buildings*, a sample of which is given in Concordance 1:

cars, require new public buildings to be green-certified and hand out **energy-eff**  
had nine bills on **energy efficiency** and green building in the Virginia General  
ending energy conferences and classes on green building. In October, he decided  
ge **energy-efficient** building through its Green Home Choice program, started a ma  
uilding can be. Hill's project comes as "green" and "**energy efficient**" have beco  
w it will work. The new house will be as green and as **energy-efficient** as a buil  
had nine bills on **energy efficiency** and green building in the Virginia General  
st and to encourage developers to build "green" **energy-efficient** buildings. Alth  
illion to corporate efforts -- financing green buildings and **energy- efficient** t  
lend to companies interested in creating green services or constructing **energy-f**

#### Concordance 1 Sample of *green* and *energy* in the US CCP corpus

A ‘Green Building Strategy’ was in fact adopted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which defines ‘green building’ as ‘the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a

building's life-cycle [...].<sup>6</sup> It is thus not surprising that the adoption of a new plan attracted considerable media attention. This is made more explicit if we look at another frequent collocate in the corpus; the noun *interest*, which is typically co-selected with *green buildings*, alongside the intensifier *growing*:

id they are seeing a **growing interest** in green homebuilding, especially as the h  
the **growing interest** in green homes and green buildings, Virginia has been slow  
nts. And despite the **growing interest** in green homes and green buildings, Virgin  
id they are seeing a **growing interest** in green homebuilding, especially as the h  
res," Bob Beitcher says. His **interest** in green design was sparked a decade ago w

#### Concordance 2 Co-selection of *green* and *interest* in the US CCP corpus

In the UK press, on the other hand, collocates can be largely grouped into four domains as follows:

- 'lifestyle and behaviour', relating to both individual and institutional behaviour, (i.e. *go/going, homes, travel, credentials*, the adjectives *living* and *ethical*).
- 'energy and technology' (e.g. *energy, carbon, electricity, technology, power*)
- 'politics and policies'; which can be sub-categorized into 'political measures', such as *agenda, policies, taxes, projects*, as well as 'actors' in the policymaking process; i.e. *government, Brown, David, Cameron*;
- 'environmental groups' (e.g. *party, groups, campaigners, lobby, movement*);

However, it should be recognized that these domains are not watertight and a certain degree of fuzziness should be taken into account, as will be detailed in a later section.

Despite sharing a number of similarities, some interesting differences emerge across newspapers. While in the left-leaning *Guardian* (including the *Observer*), 39% of all instances belong to the 'lifestyle and behaviour' domain, instances relating to the 'energy & technology' domain tend to dominate in *The Times*, with more than 30 percent of all occurrences. Moreover, in the latter, more than 10 percent of all instances relate to the 'business & finance' domain (with items such as *company, business, industry*). This is hardly surprising, as business has traditionally been at the very heart of *The Times*, while environmental issues have usually received a good deal attention in the *Guardian*. In contrast, in the *Independent*, a large number of instances (around 60%) are found in the politics & policy domain, in which the motif of taxation (*tax/taxes/taxation*) stands out.

As far as news weblogs are concerned, similarly to the US CCP corpus, the 'energy and technology' domain also tends to predominate, with 24 percent of all occurrences. However, a slightly different sets of collocates tend to emerge: renewable(s), such as *solar* and *wind*, which alongside *nuclear*, are statistically salient words, appearing as top keywords from the list generated by comparing the news weblogs corpus to the CCP reference corpus (keyness data are given in Table 4).

Table 4. Top Keywords

Key word	%	Keyness
NUCLEAR	0.0481	69.751
SOLAR	0.1093	69.24
WIND	0.0638	56.749

<sup>6</sup> See EPA, *Green Building* at <http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding> (accessed March 3rd, 2011).

The diachronic difference between the corpora may partly explain these findings; as widely acknowledged, since corpora are sensitive to time of collection and sample, this is likely to affect data. A case in point, for example, is the high occurrence of the cluster ‘green tea party’, a ‘green’ version of the increasingly influential ‘Tea Party’ populist movement based in the US, which was founded in 2009<sup>7</sup>.

Another striking difference between corpora may be observed in the presence of collocates in the semantic domain of ‘economy’, standing out significantly in the corpus (20 percent of all instances), with items such as *job(s)* (31), *economy* (21), *economic* (8), *stimulus* (8), *benefits* (7), *investment* (7). Moreover, as already noted, cases in which the domains of ‘energy’ and ‘economy’ tend to conflate, as illustrated in the following example, are not infrequent:

2) Fortunately other countries, China, the EU, India and others (even the Saudis?) are jumping on the new **green energy economy** wave in a big way (*Grist*, 09.02.2010)

Although largely missing from the CCP corpora, economic issues linked to environmental sustainability are widely discussed in the news weblogs. I shall turn to this in a later section (4.4.)

### 4.3 *Green* in the UK press

An analysis of concordance lines reveal that wordform *green* tends to co-occur with the verb forms *go/going*. A closer examination of the pattern *go\* green* may thus be useful here and will be dealt with in more detail in the following section (see also the Appendix at the end).

#### 4.3.1 *Go\* green*

As observed, in the UK CCP corpus, the verb forms *go/going* are amongst top collocate of *green* in all the newspapers in the corpus, although with a higher frequency in the *Guardian/Observer*. This is strongly associated with meanings of volition or desirability; a look at the three-word cluster *want\* to go green* may in fact provide a complementary perspective on data. It shows a semantic preference for meanings of deontic modality such as *have to* and *should* in examples 3 and 4, or through the use of directives (e.g. *start* in example 5), functioning to give advice or recommendations on what should be done in order to help the environment. Moreover, by ‘blowing’ up the concordance line, it can be observed that the main Actors in the clause are ‘people’, mainly through the use of the generic *you*, as well as ‘companies or businesses’:

3) "If you really **want to go green**, you *have to* reduce energy per unit per gross domestic product, and you have to reduce carbon per unit of energy," Leibreich says. (*The Times*, 30.03.2007)

4) Curran says that if *Irish companies* really **want to go green**, *they should* only buy carbon credits as a last resort and *should* look at reducing their own emissions output first. (*Sunday Times* 09.12.2007)

5) HEADLINE: Fleet Heroes: **Want to go green?** *Start* by looking at the grey. (*Observer*, 18.03.2007)

The use of the circumstantial adjunct *really* in examples 3 and 4, which in Martin and White’s framework is classified as a ‘contracting’ resource of ‘proclaim:pronounce’, functions as an emphaser, acting to strengthen the necessity of taking action in order to make improvements to the living conditions.

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<sup>7</sup> On the origins and growth of the movement, see Rasmussen and Doug 2010.

The use of ‘contracting’ resources in the engagement system, such as indicators of counter-expectancy, which according to Martin and White (2005: 67) act to ‘alert the reader that attitudinal values (positive/negative) are at stake’, are a clear strategy through which the authorial voice acts to align ‘compliant’ (Martin and Rose, 2003: 270) readership. In the following example, through the adjunct *even* at the beginning of the sentence, the authorial voice sets itself against the widely held assumption that ‘eco-friendly’ ventures cannot only benefit the environment, but also, and more importantly, have the potential to create a positive economic value:

6) *Even* the governments **want to go green**, setting a target for the UK of producing 10% of its electricity supply from renewable sources by 2010, compared with about 4% currently. (*Sunday Times*, 28.01.2007)

The piece is an extract from an article in the corpus whose heading reads: ‘Good for the planet, good for profits’. The article reports on the recent investment trends in the green energy sector across UK in 2007. Although new clean-tech sectors are construed through values of positive appreciation (*good for*), a negative judgement is also implied; the sub-heading which follows reads: “The opportunities to make money in eco-friendly ventures may favour the realist rather than the visionary, reports [...].”

The fact that ‘going green’ plays a pivotal role becomes immediately apparent if we look at instances of the three-word cluster *going green is* in the following:

avel; Pg. 11 LENGTH: 668 words HEADLINE: Going green is **not a priority** in the bu  
ndividual travellers and many companies, going green is **still not a priority**, ho  
permarket chain. "At Tesco, we know that going green is **not just a desirable way**  
reen is good. In fact green is more than good. Green is **not a choice**-it is **a duty**  
ing to build an extension or a new home, going green is **worth considering**. As Mi

### Concordance 3 Sample of *going green is* in the UK CCP corpus

As the sample illustrates, the three-word cluster *going green is* in the corpus tends to co-occur with resources conveying the significance/importance of the activity or expressing meanings of necessity or obligation (e.g. *worth considering*, *a priority*, *a duty*, *an imperative*). Most of the instances relate to consumer responsible behaviour alongside lifestyle choice and options. However, once again, more context is needed in order to disambiguate meanings.

In the example which follows (7), strategies of parallelism and repetition (acting as a quasi-hyperbole) are used, in order to build up the argument through attitudinal resources of judgement, in the sub-category of ‘social sanction’. This is particularly outstanding in the series of analogies and contrasts in the passage; the antithetical parallelism between what was *good* in the past (i.e. ‘greed’) and what is *good* now (i.e. ‘green’) is further strengthened through reformulations of intensification (*in fact*, green is *more than good*). By subversively pairing what is commonly held as positive or ‘good’ behaviour, i.e. *green*, to what is commonly held as ‘bad’ behaviour, i.e. *greed*, a negative attitudinal assessment is ‘flagged’:

7) Yes, everything is either **green** or low carbon or low impact, and if it's not **green** it's organic. Twenty years ago **greed** was **good**, and now **green** is **good**. *In fact green is more than good. Going green is not a choice – it is a duty, even a creed.* (*Sunday Times*, 21.01.2007)

As the example shows, negative assessments are not readily apparent; however, the journalist’s ironic stance, exerting a moralising effect, can be seen more clearly in the last sentence, where the construal of ‘going green’ as a moral imperative (e.g. *a duty*), through

disclaiming formulations of ‘denial’ or negation, functions once again strategically, and subversively, to position readers to assess positively the sense of obligation deriving from people’s attitude towards environmental issues. This is further intensified through the adjunct *even*, followed by the noun group ‘a creed’.

The use of the noun *creed* is quite interesting and invites further exploration. In the *OED*, *creed* is defined as ‘a system of belief in general; a set of opinions on any subject’ and is generally related to religious tenets or spiritual guiding principles. Occurrences of the noun *creed* in my corpus are very rare; there are only four instances, all co-occurring with *green* and/or *global warming*. In all instances, the pattern carries negative associations. Interestingly, turning to a larger reference corpus such as the *British National Corpus* (BNC) for further evidence, a search for the noun group ‘a creed’ throws up 19 instances, all pointing to negative associations, as the sample illustrates:

All three excuses, almost **a creed** for the nomenclatura, contain some truth  
as an attitude towards life, not as **a creed** about the world.  
more likely possibility, not embraced as **a creed**.  
Theirs is a cynical creed; **a creed** which spells destruction, division and  
ment, and they will not easily embrace **a creed** that has been rejected by so many nations  
group like this, I don't think we need **a creed**, we certainly wouldn't persecute anybody  
'Fascism', he said, 'is not **a creed** for the smug mice who choose to emerge  
Individualism is not **a creed** to be adopted by women.  
eas and theories; conservatism ' is not **a creed** or doctrine, but a disposition' .

#### Concordance 4 Instances of *a creed* in the BNC

In other words, this seems to suggest that by drawing on readers’ shared meanings, the use of ‘a creed’ acts to dynamically position readers to challenge the seemingly widely accepted dogma of mainstream environmentalism. Moreover, beyond the importance/significance of what ‘going green’ is or means, the issue of costs and benefits is also crucial and is generally construed through resources of judgement and graduation (in italics in the examples):

- 8) Headline: **Going green** is *not without* cost. (*Guardian*, 19.01.2007)
- 9) The cost of **going green** will therefore remain *prohibitively high* for many (*Sunday Times*, 30.3.2007)
- 10) Headline: The art of **going green** *lies in hiding* the cost (*The Times*, 16.12.2007)
- 11) How can I **go green** *without paying the earth*? (*Guardian* 06.01.2007)
- 12) Companies say **going green** will help the planet - and *generate higher profits* (*Independent*, 28.02.07)

In the following example (13), the idea behind encouraging an environmentally-responsible lifestyle, while holding back its costs, is one of the most contentious issue over which political parties fight to gain the sympathies of the green electorate. In March 2007, the then leader of the opposition, David Cameron and the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, engaged in the fight to woo the people with a ‘green’ sensibility. The phrase ‘without paying the price’, in fact, is a quote attributed to David Cameron, laying blame on Gordon Brown for deliberately hiding the fact that ‘going green’ is costly:

- 13) The battle over which party is best placed to claim the **green vote** continued yesterday when Mr Cameron accused Mr Brown of lacking courage on environmental taxation. "He's telling people what they want to hear - that **you can go green without paying the price**. That's not leadership, that's not substance," he told the Tories' spring forum in Nottingham. (*Guardian*, 19.03.2007)

It can be observed that in the example, the pattern *go\* green* is co-selected with *green vote*. A further exploration of the cluster ‘green vote’ may be worthy of attention. There are 17 instances of the *green vote* in the corpus. A closer look at its collocation behaviour shows that the phrase is typically associated with verbs such as: *chase*, *winning*, *claim*, *woo*, *want*, expressing a strong demand or desirability, also in negative imperative constructions (*don’t go after*, *don’t lure*), suggesting a critical stance towards these same practices, as well nominalized processes (*on race for*, *battle for*). Concordance 5 gives a sample:

ron is going too far to **chase** the green vote. Kenneth Clarke, the las  
 BODY: \* Criticism **on race for** the green vote \* Labour also set to d  
 he green bandwagon. They **want** the green vote. They especially want  
 02 words HEADLINE: **Don't go after** green vote with bad science BYLINE:  
 cusp of an election in which the Green vote will be crucial. With  
 if it were just about **winning** the green vote, Cameron's strategy is  
 cusp of an election in which the Green vote will be crucial. With  
 the old Soviet Union." **Don't lure** green vote with bad science, Jenny  
 own took on David Cameron for the green vote yesterday with a series  
 erongo head-to-head in **battle for** green vote BYLINE: Andrew Grice Po  
 step up the **battle to secure** the green vote BYLINE: Nigel Morris B  
 to **woo** the increasingly critical green vote by outlining their rival  
 party is best placed to **claim** the green vote continued yesterday when

#### **Concordance 5. *green vote* in the UK CCP corpus**

By recontextualizing Kermit’s popular catchphrase, then, if ‘going green’ is *not easy*, it is not least because new taxation raises problems with regard the best way(s) to pursue sustainable goals - which has been the object of much debate. However, although in the *Guardian*, criticism is mostly directed towards politics and lifestyle habits (with politicians and authorities’ credentials being questioned), in *The Times*, businesses (and companies alike) are at the centre of vigorous public debate. This will be further explored in the following subsection.

#### *4.3.2 on the green bandwagon*

As noted at the outset of the paper, working with relatively small corpora enables the researcher to better interact with texts and alternate procedures. By selecting one of the concordance lines from the above sample (Concordance 5) for closer inspection,

he green bandwagon. They **want** the green vote. They especially want

it may be observed that in the concordance line ‘green vote’ co-occurs with ‘green bandwagon’. Moreover, a glance at the most frequent three-word clusters in the corpus (see Appendix) reveals that the ‘on the green’ is related to the word ‘bandwagon’, which seems to suggest that the presence of the ‘figurative idiom’ (Cowie 1998), ‘on the green bandwagon’, is not random. Here is the expanded concordance line:

14) *No wonder Nationalist, Conservative, Labour and Lib Dem activists are **on board the green bandwagon**. They want the green vote. They especially want the green youth vote.* (*The Times*, 21.01.2007)

The use of the figurative expression implies a negative judgement, in the sub-category of ‘social sanction’, of the practice of chasing the vote. This is construed through resources of negative expectedness (*no wonder*), acting to position readers to willingly accept that all the parties involved behave in a way that is convenient to them. Although in the example, being on the ‘winning side’ is related to politics, other instances of the idiom in the corpus (the core phrase *on the bandwagon* and all its variants *jump/jumping/climb* etc.) are strictly related to corporate ‘greenwashing’ strategies as a way of warding off criticism about existing

environmentally destructive practices. A few examples from *The Times*, as well as the titles of the articles, are provided here below:

- 15) There are more such consequences, but you get the idea: think hard before **jumping on the green bandwagon**. There is no free ride. ("No free ride on the green bandwagon", *Sunday Times*, 03.03.2007)
- 16) And it pits Tesco against Marks & Spencer, a company that **jumped on the green bandwagon** a bit earlier. ("Green, the new whitewash", *The Times*, 21.01.2007)
- 17) There is a one-off element, in that businesses **are climbing** on to **the green bandwagon** and often buying existing **green companies** to give them a flying start. But the still-high price of oil, and its concentration in the volatile Middle East, should **keep the bandwagon rolling** ("Co-op's green man proves ethics can be as good as gold", *The Times*, 11.02.2007)

A search for the word *greenwash* in the corpus may provide further evidence; out of 24 instances of *greenwash* in the UK corpus, 4 are found in *The Times* and regard the corporations' attempt to appear more environmentally friendly. The remaining instances are equally distributed between the *Guardian* and the *Observer*, where criticism is largely directed to government measures:

- 18) The *hot air* politicians are emitting about saving the planet *could heat every house* in the country. Rarer is the MP prepared to *inject a note of scepticism* into the **greenwashing** of *parliamentary politics*. (*Guardian*, 04.03.2007)
- 19) But the biggest **greenwash** of all involves *flying*. (*Guardian*, 07.02.2007)
- 20) His [Blair's] *bold initiatives and stirring speeches* now look like little more than **greenwash**. For the first time, we have the figures to prove it. (*Guardian*, 05.03.2007)

As is evident from the examples given above, the meaning of 'greenwash' is transferred into the domain of politics, where politicians' inconsistent behaviour and credibility is jeopardized. Again, an examination of the two-word cluster *green credentials*, emerging amongst the most frequent clusters, may provide useful insights. Collocates to the immediate left shows a grammatical preference for the pronouns *their, its, his* (see Table in Appendix), as well as a semantic preference for verbs such as *establish* and *prove*. Although collocates of 'credentials' in the BNC confirms that both verbs have a high frequency rank, the noun phrase *green credentials* in our specialized newspaper corpus tends to co-occur with more intensified lexis, such as the lexical verbs *jostling/rushing to establish; emphasizing, trumpet, trot out, showcase*, hinting at lost credibility to be restored, a sample of which is provided in Concordance 6:

nuclear industry. It leaves Tory green credentials **in disarray**, since it start jostling to **establish** their green credentials, thousands have been on the government by **emphasising** green issues and his own credentials - es of huge adverts to **trumpet** its green credentials. But while BP and She r tried last night to **restore** his green credentials by announcing that he E: Stay-at-home Brown **reveals** his green credentials BYLINE: Will Woodward sterday **rushed to establish** their green credentials by pledging to offse over themselves to **trot out** their green credentials. But some are sceptic supermarkets battle to **prove** their green credentials. The trend was kick-s sumer Council, which **assessed** the green credentials of the supermarkets. Wray BODY: BT will **strengthen** its green credentials today with the renewa ong multinationals to **prove** their green credentials. The Leadership on tee is **questioning** Gordon Brown's green credentials in its annual examina announced measures to **prove** their green credentials. The education secret as an opportunity to **showcase** its green credentials. Ros Taylor reports 997 which sought to **carve out** his green credentials, echoing a government

**Concordance 6.** 'green credentials' in the UK CCP corpus

As can be observed, typical actors include the *government*, the prime minister (*Brown*), political parties (*Tories*), as well as companies (*supermarkets, multinationals*), whose conduct and actions are under scrutiny. The credibility issue seems then to provide one of the most influential arguments for the claim that ethical values play a crucial persuasive role. Let us consider the following example:

21) Is it just me, or is that the *single most challenging* thing about **going green**? Just carrying on. *You* think *you're* doing something useful, then something like Blair happens, or *you* think about Jeremy Clarkson, and suddenly *you're* plunged into weeks of self-doubt. (*Guardian*, 13.01.2007)

The extract refers to Blair's views on personal travel. The former prime minister's credibility, as well as that of other public authorities, is undermined on the basis of lack of consistency (see also Bevitori 2010: 127). What is worth noting, however, is the dominant presence of the second personal pronoun (*you*) - a strong colligate of 'go\* green' - which emerges as a discourse participant acting to engage readers in the texts. A sample of 20 instances is given in Concordance 7:

have to make sure that **you** are building green houses, not greenhouses,' Cooper  
thical trainers. We all know that being green doesn't mean **you** have to walk  
per cent). However, if **you** are already green-minded and have taken steps to l  
eelgood factor that makes **you** feel more green-minded.' And that is not somethin  
charity. '**You** can make any mortgage "green" if **you** look for the cheapest dea  
icity. Even if **you** don't switch to a green tariff there are other financial  
ADLINE: Business & Media: BUDGETING: Go green - **you'll** save more than just the  
hat they want to hear - that **you** can go green without paying the price. That's  
s fans will tell **you** it is the smartest green investment around. It is the lead  
eminder that in politics - even if it's green - **you** should never take anything  
mercury, so **you** can't bin them. What's green about that?" But there was a g  
es Brignall and Rupert Jones suggest 10 green ways to keep **you** out of the red B  
: Save cash as **you** save the planet: The green revolution: Start the year as **you**  
uxury of "choice" but **you** can still be green in many ways. If you have a garde  
o work for the government **you** need your green credentials in some sort of order  
on't mind dishwashers too much. **You** use green energy, and ideally **you'd** recycle  
pare A 1,000-3,000kg Either **you're** very green indeed, or **you're** lying. Hopefull  
he coming years. Are **you** a low-emitting green angel, or the new Jeremy Clarkson  
be size 13 wide. What was the last nice green thing **you** did? I'm attempting to  
and the government bang on about being green, but then **you** get something like  
er an issue of either **you** do a building green or **you** do it cheap. With this pro

#### Concordances 7. Pattern of co-selection of *green* and *you*

I shall now move on to consider patterns and meanings of *green* in the news weblogs.

#### 4.4 Green in the Blogosphere

##### 4.4.1 onto a different *bandwagon*

An investigation of the phrase 'on the \* *bandwagon*' may be a useful starting point to compare and contrast usages of the word *green* across corpora. First of all, it should be noted that although occurrences of the idiom, similarly to the UK CCP corpus, point to a criticism of politicians' behaviour, such as in examples 22 and 23:

22) But unfortunately, there are now far too many politicians and interest groups who  
have **jumped on the "Climate Change" bandwagon** for their own purposes.  
(*Guardian*, Jan. 2010)

23) European politicians immediately **jumped on the bandwagon** - this was a golden  
opportunity not to be missed. (*Guardian*, Jan. 2010)

Although this may find an explanation in the fact that both examples appear in the *Guardian* blogs, further evidence suggests that a different wording of the phrase highlights a distinctive evaluative stance. Let us consider the following example:

24) Thirty states already have renewable portfolio standards, and they're **making a huge difference by forcing utilities onto the renewable bandwagon**. And Home Star has **the potential to** induce **enormous** energy savings - **cheaply**. (*Grist*, July 2010).

In example 24, 'renewable portfolio standards', (or RPS), are directives aimed at improving the production of energy from renewable sources. A marked form of variation from the idiomatic phrase above may be observed. The causative '*making a huge difference by forcing utilities*', for example, suggests a positive appreciation, which is also strengthened by resources of gradation, the intensifier *huge*. Moreover, in the sentence which follows, the phrase '**the potential to**' is seen to carry positive semantic associations, reinforced by the intensifier *enormous* and the adjunct *cheaply*. This may be further corroborated by analysis conducted on the BNC, which shows that the semantic sequence '*ha\* the potential to*' is typically followed by material processes such as *generate, develop, become* – strongly associated with change and transformations. Although not always positive - instances such as '**the potential to generate disasters**' are also found - '**the potential to**' carries with it a sense of something which is positively perceived in more than 80 percent of all instances.

To sum up, the analysis of *green* in the blogosphere not only 'attracts' different sets of collocates, but also different semantic associations. Whereas in the UK CCP corpus, the phrase is predominantly found in business contexts, with negative overtones of opportunism, in the weblogs, uses of the phrase variants, as well as their co(n)textual environment, convey a positive attitude. Although it would be helpful to check whether this is due to diachronic differences (it would be useful, for example, to check occurrences of the phase in a new corpus of newspaper articles sampled with same criteria), it can be argued that the discrepancy may lay in the fact that a different range of meaning potentials are activated in the genre. This will be further explored in the next, and last, section.

#### 4.4.2 *green economy* and *green jobs*

The fact that *green* in news weblogs tends to privilege certain semantic combinations (and not others) is quite crucial to our understanding of the similarities as well as of the differences between forms of 'journalistic' discourse. In this last section, the word cluster *green economy* and *green jobs* have been selected for closer inspection as both *jobs* and *economy* both rank high in the list of keywords extracted by a log-likelihood ratio, with a keyness score of 180.31 (*economy*) and 189.03 (*jobs*) and An analysis of collocates to the immediate left shows a semantic preference for material verbs such as *build* and *launch*, while on the right-hand side, words are in the domain of both legislative enactments, such as *bill* and *legislation*, as well as investment of services or facilities:

25) And for God's sake, let's **build out our** vital green-economy infrastructure, and **not let it decay** as yet more people are pushed into the **ecological disaster** of car ownership (*Grist*, Aug. 2010).

In the example, 'green-economy infrastructure' is construed through resources of positive appreciation (the lexical item *vital*) which contrasts with a negative evaluation (*ecological disaster*) of 'car ownership'. Similarly, the antithetical parallelism between '*let's build out*' and '*let not decay*', alongside the use of the possessive *our*, functions rhetorically to align people in the blog community around the efforts of developing a sustainable living.

Interestingly, the first person imperative construction (*let's*) emerges amongst the top keywords, immediately following the word *wind* (see Table 4 above), with a keyness score of 53.888. In the following example (26), the negative WH-interrogative followed by the infinitive has a same rhetorical function. It must be noted that the word *economy/economic* in the weblog corpus is frequently co-selected with *jobs*, carrying positive semantic associations (e.g. 'green, decentralized, robust economic future'):

26) **Why not invest** in municipal composting programs, *which would* reduce the stream of organic matter rotting uselessly in landfills, and give city farmers **a rich and sustainable** source of soil fertility? **Of course**, there's **no shortage** of un- or under-funded projects that **could create jobs** now and **contribute to a green, decentralized, robust economic future**. (*Grist*, July 2010)

In example 27, 'a green economy' is construed as an opportunity. This extract from one of the blogs reports on findings of an authoritative research institution demonstrating an increase in the ability of the economy to develop more rapidly. This increase - if we look at from the point of view of transitivity - is brought about by 'cutting global warming', which enacts the semantic role of the initiator or causer, through a hypotactic verb group complex: '*make the economy grow faster*' and resources of epistemic certainty; e.g. *will, would*.

27) A new macroeconomic analysis of **green economic policies** *finds* that cutting global warming pollution *will* make the **economy grow faster**. [...] The modeled **job creation** is consistent with the *findings* of Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, which used an input-output model to *find* that **a green economy would create** 1.7 million **new jobs**. (*Grist*, April 2010)

Moreover, in the last clause 'a green economy' is the Actor of the material process 'create', whereas the Goal is typically realized by 'jobs'. A close inspection of the typical collocational behaviour of *green jobs* in the corpus may confirm this; it shows a semantic preference for material processes such as *create, contribute to* alongside resources of positive appreciation (*good*). A sample of 10 instances is provided in Concordance 8:

celerate innovation to **create** green jobs. The good news is that  
 jobs now and **contribute to** a green, decentralized, robust econo  
 9, and tallying the number of green jobs it **created** was a bureau  
 stimulus package and use the green jobs it **created** as proof of c  
 jobs were destroyed for each "green" job **created**. We're even go  
 ference title was "**Good** jobs, green jobs"; put it on a logo with  
 pollution, and **creating good**, green jobs. Like many cities, Por  
 - and working to **create good**, green jobs and a vibrant, low-carb  
 it too (modern civilization, green jobs, prosperity, fancy cars  
 e energy efficient and **create** green jobs. "No bill that could p  
**Concordance 8.** 'green jobs' in the news weblogs

To sum up, the discursive construction of *green* in the news weblogs is typically realized through positive assessments, underpinning the endeavour to build a sustainable economic future.

## 5. Conclusions

Through a combined used of a quantitative and a qualitative approach and procedure, the study presented here has attempted to illustrate how 'green' is discursively constructed across traditional and new forms of journalism. As with other cultural key words, meanings of

‘green’ are socially constructed and, as such, contingent upon discourse contexts. An investigation into patterns of occurrence and co-occurrence of the word has shown that ‘green’ tends to co-occur (and is perhaps ‘saturated’) with evaluative meaning(s) and this is affected by details of phraseology (Hunston 2010). While the more ‘participatory’ form of news weblogs journalism construe ‘green’ through positive attitudinal resources, aimed at aligning communities and promoting an active and ‘caring’ citizenship, in the UK newspaper discourse, negative attitudinal assessments are typically foregrounded, aimed at criticizing certain *unsustainable* practices and behaviours. While preliminary quantitative analysis can serve the purpose of empirically testing and verifying research hypothesis, from a corpus-assisted discourse analysis perspective, quantitative analysis can also serve the purpose of guiding decisions regarding case selections, as well as producing feedbacks for the methodological and theoretical discussion. A promising line of inquiry, as I hope to have shown in this paper, where methods and techniques engage in a fruitful dialogue.

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## Appendix

Three-word clusters with *green* in the UK CCP corpus

N	Cluster	Freq	Related
1	OF THE GREEN	30	
2	THE GREEN PARTY	28	<i>the green party said (5), for the green party (5)</i>
3	<b>TO GO GREEN</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>want to go green (5)</b>
4	ON GREEN ISSUES	22	
5	TO BE GREEN	22	
6	THE GREEN MOVEMENT	16	
7	<b>THEIR GREEN CREDENTIALS</b>	<b>16</b>	<i>to prove their green credentials (5), his green credentials (11), its green credentials (10)</i>
8	THE GREEN AGENDA	14	
9	TO THE GREEN	14	<i>to the green alliance (5)</i>
10	<b>ON THE GREEN</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>on the green bandwagon (6)</b>
11	TO A GREEN	12	
12	GREEN AIR MILES	11	<i>a green air miles (7)</i>
13	THE GREEN LOBBY	11	
14	TO GREEN PROJECTS	10	<i>money going to green projects (7), to green projects around (7)</i>
15	<b>GOING GREEN IS</b>	<b>10</b>	