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978-0-521-60312-6 - The Environment and International Relations

Kate O'Neill

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“An extraordinarily important book presenting, in one place, a comprehensive review of the key themes and controversies governing the environment and international relations ... must reading for students, scholars, practitioners, and anyone who cares about the future of our planet.”

Ben Cashore

Professor, Environmental Governance and Political Science, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Yale University

“*The Environment and International Relations* provides a clear, intellectually coherent introduction to one of the key issues of our times. This will be a very useful text for undergraduate students and those who want to understand the political complexities of environmental challenges.”

Lorraine Elliott

Senior Fellow in International Relations, Australian National University

“How can we grasp the unprecedented challenges posed by environmental issues to the world as we know it? Kate O'Neill steers us with a firm hand through such questions, providing a series of robust analytical frameworks that bring clarity to a subject-matter so complex it can sometimes seem intractable. This is a precious guide for students, policy-makers, and anyone interested in either the environment or international relations.”

Charlotte Epstein

Department of Government and International Relations, The University of Sydney

“O'Neill provides a thorough and easily accessible *tour d'horizon* of global environmental politics. She provides theoretical, historical and critical insights into how well the international community is coping with problems of global and transboundary environmental threats, and the prospects for a broader shift to a more sustainable future. If readers don't come away far better informed and concerned about global environmental threats they simply weren't paying attention.”

Peter M. Haas

Department of Political Science, University of Massachusetts

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“Comprehensive, authoritative and accessible, with this book Kate O'Neill deftly manages to guide the reader, whether new to the area or not, through the dense maze of literature on the environment and International Relations. It deserves to be widely read.”

Professor Peter Newell

Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University and School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia

“An accessible and up-to-date introduction, designed to invite further reading and research. Readers will be indebted to Kate O'Neill for the way in which she has read and summarised such a wide range of literature. In my view there is nothing available that gives such comprehensive coverage.”

John Vogler

School of Politics, International Relations & Philosophy, Keele University

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## The Environment and International Relations

This exciting new textbook is an invaluable guide for students of global environmental politics from both political science and environmental studies perspectives. It introduces students to the ways in which the theories and tools of International Relations can be used to analyze and address global environmental problems.

Kate O'Neill shows that potential environmental crisis makes global collective action a necessity. She develops an historical and analytical framework for understanding global environmental issues, and identifies the main actors and their roles, allowing students to grasp the core theories and facts about global environmental governance. Consideration is given to how governments, international bodies, scientists, activists and corporations currently address global environmental problems (including climate change, biodiversity loss, ozone depletion, and trade in hazardous wastes), and to how these actors might work more effectively together. This book provides a new and innovative theoretical approach to this area, as well as integrating insights from different disciplines, thereby enabling students to engage with the issues, to equip themselves with the knowledge they need, and to apply their own critical insights.

### Features:

- Builds an innovative theoretical framework, enabling students to apply the tools of International Relations to environmental issues.
- Equips students to consider how international bodies could work more effectively together.
- Features end-of-chapter review questions, allowing students to check their understanding.
- Suggestions for further reading provide guidance on further exploration of topics.

Kate O'Neill is Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management at the University of California at Berkeley. She is the author of *Waste Trading among Rich Nations: Building a New Theory of Environmental Regulation* (2000), which won the 2002 Lynton Caldwell Prize for the Best Book in Environmental Politics, and is an Associate Editor of the journal *Global Environmental Politics*.

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*Themes in International Relations*

This new series of textbooks aims to provide students with authoritative surveys of central topics in the study of International Relations. Intended for upper level undergraduates and graduates, the books will be concise, accessible, and comprehensive. Each volume will examine the main theoretical and empirical aspects of the subject concerned, and its relation to wider debates in International Relations, and will also include chapter-by-chapter guides to further reading and discussion questions.

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## Preface

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Studying the global politics of the environment is a complex, sometimes challenging, but always illuminating, task. Those who study this area approach it from many different directions: political science, economics, sociology, law, and ecology, to name but a few. For my own part, I first heard about climate change from my high school biology teacher in the mid-1980s; shortly thereafter, we all found out about the ozone layer as all the hairsprays, deodorants and other aerosol products containing ozone-destroying chlorofluorocarbons (or CFCs) vanished from store shelves. As an undergraduate studying economics I learned about “externalities,” “public goods,” and other ways that unregulated capitalism leads, in the absence of intervention, to environmental damage – including damage that travels across national borders. I carried these interests on to graduate school and PhD work in political science, without really expecting to be able to study them in the context of an advanced degree in international relations theory. This all changed following the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro. The Earth Summit, as it is often called, brought into focus a whole network of international treaties and agreements set up to manage international environmental problems – and proved to be a watershed moment for an emerging academic field of international environmental politics, particularly the study of international cooperation among nation states for global environmental protection. These days, as a professor in an interdisciplinary environmental studies department, and an active participant in the academic field of global environmental politics, I encounter perspectives outside the political science field that explain the deeply pervasive nature of global environmental change and advocate a range of political solutions above and beyond international diplomacy.

Today's students were born into a world with serious and widespread environmental challenges, with literally thousands of international agreements, organizations, partnerships, networks, and initiatives attempting to meet these challenges. They also know that many global environmental trends are in the wrong direction, and serious structural and institutional



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changes are likely to be needed in order to address them. There are no optimal solutions to global environmental degradation, and many will be grappling with these problems for decades to come. All who work in the field of international environmental politics face a constant tension between the normative aspects of our work – we do, after all, want to save the world and the world's environment for future generations – and the analytical: the need to understand and explain real-world political dynamics, which often fall short of anyone's ideal. This book is informed by the idea that in order to move forward we must understand the shape and dynamics of the governance systems we have now, and it is inspired by the efforts of my students to marry hope to political realities.

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Attempting to distill a vast and ever changing body of literature into a single volume is no easy task. Many people helped me along this journey. I'd like to thank John Haslam, Carrie Cheek, Jodie Barnes, and Hywel Evans from Cambridge University Press for their patience, encouragement, and enthusiasm, as well as three anonymous reviewers for their comments. For reading drafts, helping out with ideas, and general support, thanks to Jörg Balsiger, Elizabeth Havice, Alastair Iles, Sikina Jinnah, Kristen McDonald, Mark Philbrick, Emily Polsby, and Stacy VanDeveer. The online GEP-Ed community is a never-failing source of discussion, literature, and debate, so many thanks to them. My students on my undergraduate and graduate courses were also subjected to early drafts, and have helped transform my thinking about the politics of the global environment over the ten years I've been teaching at UC Berkeley. Finally, this book is dedicated to my husband, Peter, for his boundless enthusiasm and support for this project, and his never-ending quest to shorten my sentences.

## Commonly used abbreviations

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BINGO	Business International Non-Governmental Organization
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	Convention to Combat Desertification
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSA	Canadian Standards Association
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CTE	Committee on Trade and the Environment
ENB	Earth Negotiations Bulletin
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEP	Global Environmental Politics
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
G77	Group of 77 Developing Countries
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IEP	International Environmental Politics
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPE	International Political Economy
ISO	International Organization for Standards
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature, now the World Conservation Union
LRTAP	Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement

Commonly used abbreviations

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MNC	Multinational Corporation
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NSMD	Non-State, Market-Driven (Governance)
NTB	Non-Tariff Barrier
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes, formerly the Pan-European Forest Certification Scheme
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice
SFI	Sustainable Forests Initiative
SIR	System for Implementation Review
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards
SRI	Socially Responsible Investment
STS	Science and Technology Studies
TRIPS	Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development
UNCHE	UN Conference on Humans and the Environment
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
WBSCD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WCD	World Commission on Dams
WEO	World Environment Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature, formerly World Wildlife Fund