

## NATURAL PERCEPTION

Images of nature abound in the practice of international environmental law, but their significance in law is unclear. Drawing on visual jurisprudence, and interpretative methods for visual art, this book analyses photographs for their representations of nature's aesthetic value in treaty processes that concern world heritage, whales and biodiversity. It argues that visual images should be embraced in the prosaic practice of international law, particularly for treaties that demand judgments of nature's aesthetic value. This environmental value is in practice conflated with natural beauty and ethical and cultural values, and displaced by economic and scientific values. Interpretations of visual images can serve instead to critique and conceive sensory, imaginative and emotional appreciations of nature from different cultural perspectives as proposed by philosophers of environmental aesthetics. Addressing questions of value and the visual, this landmark book shows how images can be engaged by nations to better protect the environment under international law.

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# Natural Perception

ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGES AND AESTHETICS  
IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

**ALICE PALMER**

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*For my family*

The Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation are the first owners of the lands and waters that inspired this book. I pay my respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders – past, present and emerging – and am hopeful that the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* will lead to the lawful acknowledgement of their continuing sovereignty.

*First Nations peoples are advised that this book contains the names and images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have passed away.*

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