

## Accomplishing Climate Governance

This book provides a new approach to thinking about the politics and geographies of climate governance. It argues that in order to understand the nature and potential of the range of new responses to climate change emerging at multiple scales, we need to examine how governance is accomplished – how it is undertaken, practised and contested. Through a range of case studies drawn from communities, corporations and local government, the book examines how climate change comes to be governed and made to matter as an issue with which diverse publics should be concerned. It concludes that rather than seeking the solution to climate change once and for all, we need to engage with the ways in which we can channel our intentions to ameliorate the climate problem to more progressive ends. The book will be of interest to researchers, advanced students and policy makers across the social sciences.

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*Durham University*



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*For Jane and Rip Bulkeley  
Who taught me that life is worth fighting for*

... as small and quiet and unimportant as our fighting may look, perhaps we might all work together ... and break out of the prisons of our own making. Perhaps we might be able to keep this fierce and beautiful world of ours as free *for all of us* as it seemed to be on that blue afternoon of my childhood.

Cressida Cowell (2005: 238) *How to Speak Dragonese*,  
Hodder Childrens Books, emphasis in the original

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## Acknowledgements

The idea for this book began, though I did not know it at the time, two decades ago. In the spring of 1995, I was finishing my undergraduate geography degree and hoping for funding to start my graduate studies in the autumn. Applying to the United Kingdom's Social Science Research Council for a project to examine Australia's climate politics across multiple scales, I argued for its relevance to the United Kingdom, where, whilst not so controversial, governing climate change was going to be challenging. They were not so convinced. A decade later, having secured funding for the Ph.D. project and subsequent work exploring how cities were responding to climate change, the question of the United Kingdom's climate governance reemerged. Now that we were beginning to make the argument that the governing of climate change was not confined to the international arena, what were we to make of it appearing everywhere? From celebrities to mayors, supermarkets to petrol chains, climate change appeared to be making the running. What did this mean? How could we understand it? And what were the implications for the social science of climate change?

It was with these questions in mind that I initially approached the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers with a small pilot project examining the transnational politics of climate change. In 2007, I was awarded a Philip Leverhulme Prize by the Leverhulme Trust, through which I continued to develop this work. I am enormously grateful to the Trust for its support, which enabled the empirical work and conceptual thinking to progress incrementally from 2008 to 2012 as I iteratively explored the terrain of the new politics and new geographies of climate change in the United Kingdom without the sense of an impending deadline and a defined list of necessary outputs. During this time, Andrea Armstrong (Durham University) and Sara Fuller (Macquarie

University) worked with me on the project. They conducted interviews, read material, wrote reports and provided a good deal of insight into the projects that they encountered. I would like to express my sincere thanks for their excellent work and good humour throughout this process. The book simply would not have been possible without their input. The last part of the project, writing the book, has been a similarly drawn-out process. It has taken place in between a number of other projects that have competed for time and attention. Matt Lloyd and Holly Turner at Cambridge University Press have been both encouraging and firmly patient during this time, and I would like to express my thanks to them for bearing with me. Over the final year of writing the book, I was partly based at Lund University, supported by the award of the seventeenth King Carl XVI Gustaf's Professorship in Environmental Science and a visiting professorship. This award allowed the final ideas for the book to develop and for the manuscript to come to fruition, and I would like to thank the Swedish Academy of Sciences and HRH King Carl XVI Gustaf for providing this wonderful opportunity.

Whilst this book is ostensibly the work of a single author, it is of course a truism that there is no such thing. Given the lengthy period over which the ideas developed here have gestated, it is perhaps little surprise that they have been provoked and influenced by my encounters with many good friends and colleagues. I would especially like to mention, at the Department of Geography, Durham University, Louise Amoore, Ben Anderson, Gavin Bridge, Nicky Gregson, Cheryl McEwan, Colin McFarlane, Joe Painter, Marcus Power and Simon Marvin, and further afield John Allen, Andrew Barry, JoAnn Carmin, Andrew Jordan, Diana Liverman, Susan Owens, Heike Schroeder, Matt Watson and the members of the Leverhulme International Network on Transnational Climate Change Governance for the time and energy they have spent discussing ideas with me over the years. During this period, I have worked closely with a number of collaborators who have given me much more support than I can ever acknowledge fully. The work here, though they might not recognise it as such, has been very much influenced by Michele Betsill, Vanesa Castan Broto, Robyn Dowling, Gareth Edwards, Matthew Hoffmann, Heather Lovell, Pauline McGuirk, Pete Newell, Matthew Paterson and Gareth Powells, and I would like to thank them for sharing their thoughts, critiques and friendship. I am also grateful to Heather Lovell and Johannes Stripple for reading parts of the manuscript and ensuring that

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I was on the right tracks. It is not a coincidence that many of the formative stages of the work presented here took place in Lund. It was through engaging with Johannes' Ph.D. work that I first started to formulate my ideas around authorisation as practice. Through the COST Action on Transforming Global Environmental Governance, we were able to organise and assemble one of the first gatherings of social scientists concerned with developing more critical theoretical perspectives on questions of climate change at a workshop in Lund in 2011. The outline of this book was sketched one early June morning with the sun coming through the windows waiting for the workshop to start in the White House in the centre of Lund. Through the ongoing work on the collection that came from that workshop and our subsequent collaboration under the King Carl XVI Gustaf's professorship, Johannes has provided both the inspiration and the grounding without which this book would have been neither as developed in its argument nor as much fun to write.

Almost always last on the pages of acknowledgements, but never on a day-to-day basis, are my family. This book is dedicated to my parents, to whom my immeasurable debt becomes ever more apparent as both they and I grow older. At home in Durham, Pete, Elodie and Thea – who are now growing up rather used to the idea of a book in the house – live with ideas as my constant distraction whilst continuing to remind me of all of the more important distractions that life has to offer. Their love, patience and enduring interest, manifest in drawing my attention to the very small and the very big questions in life, enable me to accomplish everything I do.