

## Editorial 2015

**Agni Kalfagianni**

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I joined International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics (INEA) as Managing Editor in late 2010 taking over from Harro van Asselt who was then moving to Oxford. I had just arrived at the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM) of the VU University Amsterdam after accepting the position of assistant professor in Global Food and Environmental Governance and was excited to take over the management of a rising international peer review journal in the field of environmental governance.

It has been an extremely interesting, educational and, let's admit, at times, daunting task. I would like to thank first and foremost the Editor-in-Chief Joyeeta Gupta for her inspirational leadership to this journal and the exceptional members of the editorial board, authors, reviewers, and publisher. Now it is time to hand over the managing role to Courtney Vegelin of the University of Amsterdam (UvA), wish her all the best, and enjoy my new role as member of INEA's renewed Editorial Board.

In this Editorial, I would like to briefly reflect on my 4 years as managing editor of INEA and the developments that took place during this time.

When I first undertook the management of this journal, it was still quite small, with limited but well-respected contributions and no impact factor. The radical change came when after 10 years of waiting, we finally received an impact factor for the first time in 2011. It was an exhilarating moment which we celebrated enthusiastically. Since then the submission rate has increased exponentially and so has our responsibility in handling all submissions effectively and in a timely fashion. Our pool of authors and reviewers has expanded, and our online system has systematically improved and been professionalized.

Since becoming managing editor, INEA has published 16 issues on a variety of topics from politics, law, and economics. Four of these were dedicated to special issues on the subjects of agency in earth system governance; energy and global climate policy;

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hegemony and symmetry in transboundary river basins; and an issue to celebrate Prof. Oran Young's contribution to scholarship on institutions and global environmental governance.

It is with great satisfaction that progressively, INEA has established its readership in five continents with the top three in Europe, Asia-Pacific, and North America. And its impact factor has risen for three consecutive years, a quite remarkable achievement, attributed to the hard work of its authors and reviewers, its dedicated editorial board, and the Springer publishing team.

A closer look at the articles published in the past 4 years shows that they are remarkably diverse. Even though climate change and the management of fresh water resources appear more prominently than other issues, we have managed to expand our attention to issues including transboundary pollution, food security, genetic resources, desertification, and forest conservation but have also covered issues of nuclear safety and shipping. In addition, we see increasingly more empirical work originating from Asian countries, in particular China including Hong Kong, Japan, and Malaysia.

Analytically, it is impossible to summarize the range of approaches, frameworks and methodologies used and developed by INEA's authors. I would like to note in particular three recurring questions that I consider fundamental both for the past as well as the future of global environmental governance.

First, the question of power and power shifts from the west to the east, and from state to non-state actors, in particular business, civil society organizations, and, potentially, citizens, is important. How can we understand power shifts in the context of international environmental negotiations, agreements within the broader context of global governance? Which forms of power are particularly influential? Who has power, how is it concentrated and can it be challenged?

Second, questions of effectiveness remain perplexing. How can we improve the effectiveness of particular environmental agreements, regimes, but also broader governance architectures? Which institutional arrangements and designs have proven to be more effective than others? And, particularly when global environmental problems are addressed, a key question is for whom has it been effective and with what consequences; who has lost out in the process?

Third, questions of democracy and justice are becoming increasingly relevant. Who participates in environmental decision-making, why, and under what conditions? How are benefits and burdens from international environmental cooperation, including private cooperative arrangements, distributed in a north-south context, a transatlantic context or even in a multi-level context and among particular socioeconomic groups? How is environmental justice interpreted and are all interpretations equally valid? And which are the potential tensions between democracy, justice, and effectiveness of environmental governance?

I expect these and other sets of questions to continue to be addressed in the interdisciplinary and intellectually rich and diverse tradition of this journal. As I complete my 4 years, we have also updated our Editorial Board to invite active reviewers and scholars in the field to join us. I would like to welcome Aarti Gupta (Wageningen University), Itay Fishhendler (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Sylvia Kalrsson-Vinkhuyzen (Wageningen University), Maria Rusca (Unesco-IHE), Steinar Andresen (Fridtjof Nansen Institute), Onno Kuik (VU University Amsterdam), and Thijs van der Graaf (Ghent University). I would also like to thank some of the outgoing members of our Editorial Board, namely Ogunlade R. Davidson (University of Sierra Leone), Madhav Gadgil (Indian Institute of Science), Catrinus J. Jepma (University of Groningen), Akio Morishima

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(Institute for Global Environmental Strategies), Alejandro Nadal (El Colegio de México), Emil Salim (Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation), Nigel Haigh (Institute of European Environmental Policy), and Sung Wang (Chinese Academy of Sciences) for the enormous contribution they have made to the Journal during its first 15 years.

I would like to end by reiterating that it has been my great honor and privilege to serve as its managing editor.