



## Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: Global Governance Challenges edited by Simon Dalby, Susan Horton and Rianne Mahon, with Diana Thomaz

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Fremaux's critique adds depth to our understanding of the Anthropocene and the ways of thinking and acting that the term represents, her critique of ecomodernism could have been contrasted with the previous criticisms of this approach in order to better distinguish the account offered here. Though this critique is well done, the green republican response is the strongest aspect of Fremaux's work. In green republicanism she has identified a valuable resource for thinking through the Anthropocene and to ground an alternative model of politics and economics. The green republican democracy outlined in Chapter 6 and the economy based on green republican principles discussed in Chapter 5 demonstrate the radical possibilities inherent in this approach. Using green republicanism as a lens through which to view the Anthropocene, Fremaux unearths the moral, political and economic fault lines of the environmental crisis, and also shows the continuing relevance of republicanism as a tool for green political theorists. Expanding on these sections would have further demonstrated how an alternative response to the Anthropocene is possible and emphasised the original critical approach that this book offers.

Fremaux's book offers a provocative critique of ecomodernism and will be of value to all scholars of green republicanism and the Anthropocene, and to those interested in the direction of green political thought in these uncertain times.

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**Achieving the sustainable development goals: global governance challenges**, edited by Simon Dalby, Susan Horton and Rianne Mahon, with Diana Thomaz (Routledge Studies in Sustainable Development), London and New York, Routledge, 2019, xii + 240 pp.; index, £115.00 (hardback); £18.50 (eBook), ISBN 978 0 367 13998 8 and 978 0 429 02962 2

Adding to the growing literature on the 17 Goals, 169 targets and 230+ indicators agreed in 2015 by the United Nations to realize its ambitious 2030 Agenda, this book identifies and analyzes key implementation challenges in chapters grounded in political economic and critical social science perspectives – ranging from feminism to pragmatic and technical approaches. Amidst a growing recognition that a much deeper, faster and more ambitious response is needed to realize system-transformation, exemplified by the observations in the 2019 *UN Global SDG Report*, the book places particular emphasis on health, food systems, climate change and migration. Nonetheless, all but five goals are covered extensively, and all three dimensions – the social, economic and environmental – are included

Nearly all chapters include informative syntheses of discussions and developments surrounding key issues, as well as post-goalsetting developments, and thereby go beyond the design of the goals and their underlying governance mechanisms to provide more empirically-based evaluations critically reviewing and identifying factors impeding progress.

In line with earlier publications based on the design of the goals, such as Kanie and Biermann's 2017 *Governing through Goals*, the first and last chapters characterize the Sustainable Development Goals as 'governing through goals', a governance strategy with unique implementation challenges. Chapters on food systems and health as an international issue provide in-depth analyses of their historical evolution, making clear that challenges are not solved by goalsetting itself. To be effective, implementation needs to capture and anticipate existing tensions.

Connecting to earlier publications focusing on the negotiations, the authors elaborate on the way in which the negotiation process and the activities of stakeholders contributed to a standalone goal on gender-equality. Other chapters extend upon this, offering insight into implementation issues surrounding gender equality linked with migration, identifying the need for gender-mainstreaming to stimulate gender equality in global migration governance, and making clear that the absence of a standalone goal on migration leads to the relative neglect of migration issues in general, most likely including those related to gender equality.

Moving to the local level shows tensions surrounding the translation of global goals to the city-level. After showing the tensions between city-level climate change adaptation strategies in Asia and Goal 10 and 11, guidelines for planning and evaluating are proposed to ensure that local strategies contribute to sustainability transformations.

Theoretical insights and inspiration for empirical research include the link between climate, security and sustainability and a new way of scenario building for climate resilience which can inspire scholars studying the prioritization of particular goals. Considering the link between religion and the goals, it is argued that the role of faith-based organizations in the implementation process should be re-evaluated; faith-based organizations should be included as an additional group of actors, changing networks as they have up to this point been visualized. Chapters on finance beyond traditional Official Development Assistance and the inclusion of the banking sector are less theoretical, but provide a starting point for further research on finance for the goals.

The editors share with the creators of the goals the aim to develop new solutions to humanity's critical problems. The term *achieving* in the title of the book implies that the aim of the collection is to provide input and directions for those trying to *implement* the goals. The reader will not find in this work *one* unidirectional, clear-cut solution to the problem of unsustainable development because the individual chapters are grounded in very diverse perspectives.

Most chapters end with suggestions to improve implementation, and clearly postulate the goals as the starting point for *achieving*. Some, however, question and even deny the goals as a solution. Building on the claims that the goals only address the side effects of 'hegemonic developmental thinking' based on economic growth, and that developments based upon them are therefore unsustainable, it is suggested

that the goals are ‘intrinsically flawed’ and cannot *in principle* deliver sustainable development because the global governance perspective underlying it necessitates enormous investments that ‘make no sense in a world of limits’ (p. 185). Although most chapters direct some attention to the need for more active global coordination, it is suggested that global governance might have to be abandoned altogether because it necessitates resources that can better be used locally.

For readers, these diverging definitions of *achieving* will provide welcome input for continued discussion on the appropriate level of governance and underlying norms necessary to achieve sustainable development, and provide a rich collection of suggestions, the concise chapters supplying a background for those going into any of the issues covered. The book can empower a range of actors who might disagree on means, but who all strive towards the attainment of sustainable development.

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**Carbon markets in a climate-changing capitalism**, by Gareth Bryant, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019, xi + 178 pp.; index, £85.00 (hardback), ISBN 9781108421737

Carbon markets have played a central role in sustaining the fossil fuel landscape, deepening the climate crisis produced under capitalism. It is therefore vital to have a clear conceptual and empirical understanding of the contradictions of carbon markets. This is precisely what Gareth Bryant offers in his monograph: a precise articulation of how carbon markets are deepening socio-ecological inequality, maintaining the power of high-carbon industry, and contributing to inertia in climate policy.

The book provides an in-depth account of the historical emergence of carbon markets, including the ideological features of the conceptualisation of climate change as a ‘market failure’ that could supposedly be tackled via cap-and-trade policies. According to the logic that underpins permit trading, governments are expected to refrain from mandating how emissions reductions are achieved, with the state’s role relegated to setting a quantified cap on carbon. As Bryant demonstrates, this ‘economic ideology of nature’ has seeped into European climate policy debates, with industry utilising this perspective in their lobbying efforts, taking the impetus out of proposals to mandate ambitious energy efficiency and renewable energy targets. Moreover, the intellectual foundations of carbon trading give rise to the notion that responsibility for emissions reductions is distributed widely across society,