

BOOK REVIEWS

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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OREGON:
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This is a remarkable book, not only for its critical analysis of the law for sustainable development, but for the fact that it is, in this reviewer's knowledge, the only book suitable for scholars and students alike that undertakes a comprehensive, comparative approach to unraveling the complexities of the law for sustainable development in a manner that does not leave the reader wallowing in a state of confusion and uncertainty.

The editors have drawn together some of the world's leading environmental law experts in the fields of ethics and human rights, environmental regulation and administration and economics and presented their views on the proper role of law in sustainable development and placed the discussion in the context of both developed and developing countries.

There have been many books on environmental law that present an adequate description of what the law is at a given point in time together with an adequate description of the policy framework within which the law was nourished and developed. What makes this book stand out from others is the way in which it relies heavily on the interdisciplinary focus of its contributors and the recognition throughout the various chapters that the way forward will, to a large extent, be influenced by political, social, economic, cultural and institutional developments across the globe. To present a coherent forecast of how such a fast-moving, sometimes volatile area of law might actually evolve in years to come is a tribute to the expertise and experience of the authors of the individual chapters, each of whom has approached the assigned topic with the mandate to provide a logical, well-reasoned blueprint of future directions.

The book is organized in a format that allows even the novice to embark on an understanding of what environmental sustainability entails and how such an

important concept has become embedded in the modern concept of environmental governance. As the Editors state in chapter 1:

The relationship between environmental law and sustainability operates in at least two directions. First, environmental law may have an impact on sustainability, in terms of whether it helps to move societies toward ecologically sustainable patterns of production and consumption. Secondly, sustainability – both as an idea and as a set of practices – may have an impact on environmental law, for instance leading to a preference for some legal doctrines, institutions or instruments over others. It is easier to trace the latter kind of effects than the former, but given the complexity of socio-legal phenomena, it is difficult to assess either with any certainty. The contributions to this book nonetheless explore both of these dimensions in fruitful and imaginative ways.

The book is divided into four parts. Beginning with environmental regulation and administration it proceeds to deal with issues involving ethical and human rights, economic and business dimensions and concludes with part 4 entitled *International and Comparative Perspectives*. Each part is comprised of three articles or chapters with a comprehensive index at the end of the book.

This will be a useful reference for specialist topics, such as Indigenous Peoples, law and the environment and public participation in environmental decision-making as well as being suitable as a text in a foundation environmental law course.

On a subject as extensive as this, it is always possible to omit topics or detail. However, this book does an excellent job of covering the broad landscape of environmental law for sustainability and it is highly recommended.

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