

## Acknowledgments

Since I left China for graduate school 10 years ago to study international relations, I keep pondering how the world understands my home country and how China can contribute to global common goods. Hence, my initial motivation for this research is to understand China's interaction with the rest of the world. From the very beginning, I decided to focus on environmental sustainability, as I believe this is the most critical challenge that our world faces in the twenty-first century. I have found a strong interest in governance at the transnational level gradually building, in which China's involvement should be important but has yet to receive sufficient scholarly attention.

But finishing this book has been a long journey filled with joy and frustration. I am lucky to have not been alone in this effort. I am tremendously indebted to several mentors who have guided me through this intellectual adventure. Liliana Andonova, my doctoral supervisor and the person who brought me to the field of environmental politics and transnational governance, deserves special thanks for her advice and long-standing support during and after my PhD. She consistently encourages me to think broadly and analyze rigorously. I cannot describe in words how much I have gained from her mentorship. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Thomas Hale for serving as my thesis co-supervisor and having provided critical comments. Tom always reminds me to think about the big picture question on China's role in this changing world, and his comments helped me significantly improve this work. Ben Cashore is another mentor that I thank for his support of this project and suggestions on how to refine my argument. It was my honor to be Ben's postdoc, although for a relatively short time, and to learn from him how to become an outstanding and generous scholar.

This work would also be not possible without the suggestions and help of many other great scholars. My gratitude goes first to the Earth System Governance Series editors Frank Biermann and Oran Young. Their encouragement and support have been indispensable for me to turn my doctoral thesis into a book. I am also thankful to Stacy VanDeveer, D. G. Webster, and Peter Haas for their participation in my book workshop in New Haven and their very helpful comments on an early version of the manuscript. The book would not be in its current form without those comments. During my PhD, Graeme Auld and Jonas Pontusson gave kind suggestions on the design of this project, and James Hollway and Jörg Balsiger as my committee members also provided useful comments. This work has greatly benefited from conversations and exchanges with several collaborators and also friends, who not only generously shared their thoughts and experiences but also gave important moral support to me to carry on this project. They include Michael Bloomfield, Lukas Fesenfeld, Janina Grabs, Philip Schleifer, and Hamish van der Ven. Hamish and Michael also provided with me useful tips on book writing and publication.

Moreover, I thank the Swiss National Science Foundation for their generous financial support for the research of this book through the Doc.CH grant as well as their Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship for giving me a peaceful time to prepare the manuscript. I have finished the research for this book while being affiliated with the Centre for International Environmental Studies (CIES) at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. I benefited from the interdisciplinary environment at CIES and from inspiring discussions with its staff and associates. During my postdoc at Yale, this project received additional support from the Governance, Environment, and Markets Initiative (GEM) in the erstwhile School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. I am especially grateful to Nora Moraga-Lewy and Evelin Toth for their research assistance. I finished the final revisions of the manuscript at the University of Bath, where I have found a new home in the Department of Social and Policy Sciences and the International Development group. My colleagues at Bath have given me the warmest welcome. My head of department Joe Devine and my mentor Roy Maconachie have helped me complete a smooth transition to a tenure-track position.

At several points, I found this research project to be an impossible mission. Fortunately, it turned out to be possible with the kind support of many people I met during my fieldwork. I am tremendously grateful to

all practitioners who accepted my interview requests. Many of them, especially those working for Chinese organizations, had little knowledge about or experience with academic research, but they all spent precious time to help me as much as they could. Special thanks to Xiao Qiang at the Tea Research Institute of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, who introduced me to a range of stakeholders in China's tea industry, and also thanks to Sophia Lin and James Gu for sharing their contacts for stakeholders in China's seafood and palm oil sectors. I also appreciate my friends Tim Fang and Zhengxiang Jiang for having hosted me during my research stays in Beijing.

This journey does not only consist of research efforts, but also of life experiences in the past 7 years in four countries and three continents. Therefore, I thank many friends that I have made in Geneva, New Haven, Bath, and China as well as through the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* for sharing happiness and anxieties in life, work, and hobbies. I cannot list all names here, but I express my sincere gratitude for your company in the past. Carse Ramos deserves special thanks for reading much of my work and providing careful editorial suggestions.

I have been very pleased to work with Beth Clevenger at the MIT Press. I thank Beth for her continuous support and patience. Two anonymous reviewers provided kind and thoughtful suggestions, which helped me improve the final manuscript.

This book is dedicated to my family. I thank my mom for always being supportive in every way of my intellectual endeavors. I am indebted to my maternal grandparents with whom I grew up, as they allowed me to be extremely curious and helped me develop critical thinking skills from the beginning. I am also thankful to my parents-in-law for their understanding.

My progress in this journey would have been impossible without the support of my love, Guang Yang. As my partner and my best friend, she always challenges me to think more critically and encourages me to step out of my comfort zone. She has the magical power to make our life beautiful. I feel blessed for having my beloved Guang accompany me on this journey.

This journey has made me realize that all human endeavors for understanding and changing our world are endless. So, this is not the end but just a new beginning.

