

ecosystem-based management and devolution of responsibility down to regional and local levels. Two empirical questions are not really answered by Gale: does the FSC actually reduce consumption, unlike industry efforts at green standards to merely preserve market access? And how is forest management at the local level altered by the process of gaining FSC certification? The broader question of whether FSC type activities can be extended to other is, as Gale acknowledges, open to future research.

Who will want to read this book? First of all it is clear that this is not a book for most practitioners and policy-makers, although they might benefit from reading parts of it. There are few recipe book answers to the environmental and social problems of our time and few practical (managerial) suggestions—except Agrawal’s suggestions on how not to work with and advocate “community.” In fact, the volume openly rejects approaching environment as an “issue” to be studied with whatever tools one has. The state as locus of action is also largely rejected. Therefore, this book will be most interesting to those who wish to fathom the relationships between nature, (re)production and power and to act outside the usual channels for changing these relationships, perhaps in modest ways, in our lifetime.

Paul F. Diehl and Nils Petter Gleditsch, eds. 2001. *Environmental Conflict: An Anthology*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

*Reviewed by Steen Nordstrom*  
*University of Aarhus*

The emergence of environmental security studies has led to a great deal of controversy regarding the relevance, scope and methodology of the subfield. *Environmental Conflict* does not aim at settling these discussions but rather at providing an overview of the essential puzzles in the area. The book easily achieves its goal. It is recommended either for readers who want to broadly familiarize themselves with the environmental security literature, or as a text for upper-level undergraduate or graduate courses in environmental security.

The book is divided into three parts, with a total of thirteen chapters. In the first section, the relationship between environmental degradation and conflict is covered. This issue has been heavily debated and since the end of the cold war numerous studies have attempted to clarify if and how environmental factors can cause conflict. Most of the viewpoints that have emerged in the literature are covered in *Environmental Conflict*. For instance, Percival and Homer-Dixon use process-tracing to illustrate a causal relationship between environmental scarcity in some South African Homelands and political violence. The opposite view—that environmental factors rarely cause conflict—is articulated by Goldstone, who suggests an interesting distinction between violent and non-violent environmental/demographic security issues (p. 84). In essence the argument goes that more often than not cooperation, rather than conflict, results

from environmental degradation. These thoughts are explored in depth in the second part of the book, which focuses on the reduction of environmental conflict.

Conflict management and reduction of environmental conflict have been largely overlooked in the literature so far. Thus, the four chapters on the issue constitute a much-needed contribution. Three of these chapters discuss possible ways of increasing cooperation rather than engaging in any formal testing of hypotheses. In particular, Denoon and Brams' easily understandable "adjusted winner" approach to cooperation over the Spratly Islands offers an interesting perspective on conflict management. Another important contribution is Midlarsky's analysis of the effect of democracy on six different environmental problems (p. 162). Theoretically this chapter is interesting because it focuses on state attributes, which are often overlooked in environmental security studies, and thus applies insights from comparative politics and the democratic peace literature in a new way. Empirically, it is noteworthy that the effect of regime type differs between various environmental issues.

*Environmental Conflict* closes with a section that provides different suggestions for a future research agenda and offers plenty of munitions for new debates on theoretical and methodological issues.

In general the book deserves credit for highlighting the cooperative dimension of environmental security. Moreover, the book is unusual in providing the reader with insights offered by a range of methodological approaches, ranging from case-studies over large-N statistical analysis to more game-theoretical approaches. Furthermore, the book has a well organized structure that allows the reader to see the different circumstances under which environmental conflict may occur, before suggestions regarding possible ways and policies to counter such conflict are made.

However, the book has two weaknesses that deserve mentioning. First, Lomborg's contribution fits the structure of the book poorly. In an otherwise interesting chapter, he focuses on whether or not scarcity of resources such as water, minerals, and energy exists or is likely to arise in the future. His main point, that many of these resources are plentiful at an aggregate level, might be valid. Yet the current distribution of resources among nations, groups, and individuals is heavily skewed, making scarcity a fact of life in many places on the globe. This unequal distribution and peoples' perception thereof are the factors environmental security studies needs to focus on when assessing the likelihood of conflict and the ways to prevent it, not the alleged fact that most resources, were they cheaply accessible and easy to distribute, are abundant.

Secondly the book would have gained from more work on the same dependent variable. The part of *Environmental Conflict* that offers different perspectives on the relationship between environmental degradation and conflict operationalizes conflict in three different ways, which muddles the picture. A more limited focus on either intrastate or interstate conflict would leave the reader with greater in-depth understanding of what might be the consequences of resource scarcity.

An anthology always involves trade-offs and these critiques should not detract from the fact that *Environmental Conflict* is an important contribution to the literature. Taking into account that the field is relatively new and that many controversies over theoretical and methodological issues still prevail, it is refreshing to read a book that presents a variety of empirical and theoretical analysis and leaves it for the reader to decide upon the fruitfulness of the paths explored. For this reason I recommend the book for use in classes that explore the various security aspects of environmental politics and for classes on management of environmental conflicts.