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*The Environment and International Politics* seeks to challenge the prevailing dichotomy that separates humans from animals, in a quest to encourage us to enter a new era of ecological thinking. The theoretical part of the book situates the debate about the human-animal dichotomy in the teachings of Kant and Descartes. It proposes Heidegger’s discussion of *Dasein* or ‘Being’ as a way to overcome this dichotomy and move humankind toward a more encompassing view of nature and its complexity.

Seckinelgin argues that in order to take an ecological approach to managing the environment we must move away both from viewing humans as separate from nature and also from our reliance on the sovereign nation-state as the key institution to tackle environmental crises. But Seckinelgin stops short of advocating a solution to foster global approaches to ecological problems; his goal is primarily to challenge us to think about nature as a whole rather than as humans versus the environment.

He defines ecology as “an awareness of the interrelation and interconnectedness among the species in nature themselves (including human beings); and between species and the physical components of nature where species are located and on which their existence depends” (p. 5). This understanding of ecology presents an important discursive problem for international relations. When ecological challenges arise, the response within international relations is always through the nation-state and its interest, not from the perspective of how the ecological challenge can best be solved from the perspective of the entire planet and its people.

In developing his theoretical argument, Seckinelgin uses the Third United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS III) as an empirical study to illustrate his argument, with a concentrated focus on the shortcomings of the Convention to adequately protect highly-migratory tuna fisheries in the South Pacific. UNCLOS III allowed states to create 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), which created artificial borders in the ocean that violate the ecological realities of the complex ecosystem the tuna inhabit. Tuna, and other migratory stocks, present an interesting challenge to the system of sovereign states in that they do not respect the artificial 200-mile boundary imposed by states and hence the only way to manage the stock is through international cooperation.

Seckinelgin argues that territorializing the ocean into 200-mile EEZs thwarts management based on ecological issues. The South Pacific is described as a success story in most academic literature, with success defined as the ability of distant water fishing nations and South Pacific island states to sign cooperative agreements, rather than whether the tuna stocks improved as a result of these agreements. In the South Pacific, the problem of management is com-
pounded by the fact that small island states gained legal control over vast ocean areas they themselves have not been able to utilize. Most of the tuna is therefore caught by distant water fishing nations, such as Japan, Taiwan and the United States.

It is surprising that Seckinelgin’s discussion of UNCLOS III and the highly migratory tuna fisheries in the Pacific does not mention the 1995 United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the Convention Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, which entered into force in 2001. The agreement grew out of the realization that UNCLOS III did not adequately address the problems of managing straddling and highly migratory stocks. While the Straddling Stocks Agreement is not perfect, it is an improvement over UNCLOS III as it acknowledges the complexity of the ecosystem. For example it calls for states managing highly migratory stocks to consider “the best scientific evidence available” and take “into account fishing patterns, the interdependence of stocks” (Article 5.b.). It also emphasizes that states should assess the impact of fishing and other human activities on “target stocks and species belonging to the same ecosystem” (Article 5.d) and, finally, “adopt, when necessary, conservation and management measures for species belonging to the same ecosystem or associated with or dependent upon the target stocks” (Article 5.e).

This omission is unfortunate, and leads to an unnecessarily bleak view of the ability of the system of sovereign states to solve ecological issues. The Straddling Stock Agreement shows that, on paper at least, countries can learn from earlier mistakes. Any successful management of straddling and highly migratory species depends nevertheless on cooperative management that requires negotiations among states. As evident from a number of fisheries agreements in the North Atlantic, considerations of a complex ecosystem are often hard to achieve in practice. But as increasing attention to integrated ocean management shows, the future may hold some promise for the ability of nation-states to manage complex ecosystems.