

Introduction

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We are very excited about Issue 19-2, as it breaks new ground in a number of areas. The issue kicks off with a special section edited by Hannah Hughes, Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya, and Alice B. M. Vadrot, which challenges our understanding of how to study environmental negotiations and what can be learned at these events. The editors describe their intriguing collection of articles this way:

The development of this methods project, and the articles in the special section, started from a simple shared observation: the concepts for studying global environmental agreement-making did not fit with what we—researchers in this area of study—have observed in practice. This observation raised two critical questions: first, what constitutes a site of global environmental agreement making, and second, which actors and forms of power shape the negotiation dynamics and final agreed text?

Reconsidering what constitutes a negotiating site in global environmental politics emerged from research into the practices of intergovernmental assessment production and adoption within the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Although these assessment-making bodies are typically not considered or studied as sites of global environmental agreement-making, when you gain access and observe the production of intergovernmental text, it becomes possible to compare and connect these sites—and the knowledge they produce—with the negotiations they are designed to inform. Exploring these intergovernmental scientific processes as negotiation sites enables us to empirically investigate the processes through which actors seek to uphold or contest the knowledge and authority that underpins global environmental action.

Second, which actors are identified as significant and what constitutes their power remain bounded by an accepted convention that agreement-making happens between state actors. While scholarship on NGO participation, among other work, has already challenged this convention, our conceptualizations of power continue to overlook the effects of the participation of marginalized groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, in global environmental negotiations. To adequately study the multiple sites of agreement-making and identify the influence of all actors invested in its products, we need new conceptual and methodological apparatus. The articles in this special

section begin the process of designing and testing this new apparatus, with the aim of challenging who, what and how we explore the processes of negotiating the collective response to environmental degradation.

The special section is followed by a set of equally interesting articles that examine less-well-explored dynamics that are crucial for understanding and pursuing climate and environmental governance while recognizing the complexity of the challenge.

We begin with an examination of deforestation in Brazil. Whether the focus is on the fate of rainforests in a changing global climate or the role of deforestation in contributing to climate change, the intersection of tropical rainforests and climate change is an area of serious public and scientific concern. In their forum article, “Catastrophic Climate Risk and Brazilian Amazonian Politics and Policies: A New Research Agenda,” Joana Castro Pereira and Eduardo Viola argue that these intersections have garnered less attention in social science circles, with potentially dire consequences. They issue a clarion call to heed the political-economic drivers and feedbacks contributing to the increasing probability of the “savannization” of the Amazon, especially the influence of agribusiness in Brazilian politics and decreasing public concern and engagement with environmental issues. They offer guidance on the research agenda that is needed if social scientists are to contribute to efforts to avoid negative tipping points in the Amazon. This includes a focus on the role and dynamics of environmentalism and coalition politics as well a better understanding of interlinkages across social, economic, and environmental policy-making—suggestions that are applicable well beyond Brazil.

The research articles that follow all address connections and intersections—public and private, intersectionality and energy transitions, security and resilience—that make climate and energy governance so complex and so crucial.

Peter Ferguson, in his article on discourses of resilience in the climate security debate, seeks to expand our understanding of climate change governance by connecting the study of climate with security. Owing to the different ways in which security and insecurity are understood, he investigates four different ways in which resilience is articulated in climate security discourses—strategic, neoliberal, social and ecological—and how these different conceptualizations shape perceptions of climate risks and responsibilities for harm as well as remediation.

Carbon storage strategies have an increasingly prominent place in policy discussions and scientific reports outlining pathways to achieving the Paris targets. Debates around (geologic rather than biologic) carbon capture and storage tend to focus on costs and technological feasibility. In their article “The Political Economy of Carbon Capture and Storage Technology Adoption,” Elena V. McLean and Tatyana Plaksina provide a welcome and important addition to the discourse that specifically examines the politics of carbon capture and storage—asking under what political-economic conditions we should expect to see its deployment. Through quantitative analysis, they find that the critical

factor is public-private cooperation. We are most likely to see carbon capture and storage deployed in countries with advanced oil and gas industries that have high research and development capacity *and* governments, often left-leaning, committed to supporting technological and industrial innovation.

Finally, Benjamin Brown and Samuel J. Spiegel use the case of coal-fired power plant phaseouts to demonstrate that energy transitions implicate complex tensions as transnational alliances who pursue just transitions interact with disparate communities affected by them. They bring to bear a range of critical insights, especially from the energy humanities and cultural politics literatures, to examine how the quest for transitions at once have renewed critical debates around colonialism and capitalism and implicate issues of race, gender and economic justice. Bringing these literatures into conversation allows them to combine a place-based and humanistic analysis of communities affected by transitions with a critical engagement of the broader political economy context, dominated by an extractivist and growth-oriented paradigm, and ultimately to explore resistance to it and alternatives that must, they argue, reappraise cultural values inherent in this paradigm, and more broadly.