Smith, Richard J. 2009. *Negotiating Environment and Science: An Insider's View of International Agreements, from Driftnets to the Space Station*. Washington, DC: Resources for the Future.

Reviewed by Stephen Bocking
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Richard Smith has been a close observer, and architect, of the emergence of science and the environment in global affairs. Beginning in the 1970s he held a series of positions in the Department of State, including, between 1985 and 1994, that of principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. A major part of the job was negotiating international agreements. In *Negotiating Environment and Science* he tells his story. Practical, frank, and displaying a diplomat's ability to get to the heart of the matter, he writes from the perspective of an experienced practitioner. Although Smith relies mainly on memories, notes, and working papers, and does not relate his account to the relevant scholarly literature, what he has to say should be of interest to both scholars and students.

The book has a straightforward organization: eight chapters, each devoted to a specific negotiation undertaken during the 1980s or 1990s, and for most of which Smith led the US negotiating team. Each chapter takes a similar approach: Smith describes the scientific and political issues at stake, the development of the American position and negotiating strategy, the process of negotiation itself (both setbacks and progress), and the lessons the episode holds for international negotiations. Together, these chapters constitute both a how-to guide to negotiating, and a kind of history of efforts to share the commons. The issues covered include the ozone layer, ocean fisheries (driftnets, and an international fishery), transboundary issues (acid rain, and a binational caribou herd), human rights and the environment, and cooperation on science and on the space station. He concludes with practical advice regarding climate negotiations that is sensible enough that one could only wish it might have been applied in Copenhagen.

Smith distils from his experience several lessons. Perhaps most important is the critical role of domestic issues. Much of a diplomat's work takes place before he or she ever flashes a passport. International issues are placed on or pushed off the table by local constituencies: Alaskan salmon fishers complained about driftnets; industry opposed action on CFCs. Fiercely defended interests require that a diplomat work with those affected and their representatives in Congress. Rivalries between agencies must also be managed: the sharply divergent views of the Departments of State and Defense regarding international cooperation remind us that no government speaks as one. Yet, following the old adage that politics ends at the water's edge, out of this discord the diplomat must fashion a single position that can absorb criticism, be adjusted as necessary (without eroding its core principles), and then, once the treaty-making is done, be defended as representing the best interests of the nation. In Smith's

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view, such challenges make seasoned professionals all the more important, working within a State Department that functions as an honest broker, assembling from diverse domestic interests the national position. This traditional view of diplomacy has been somewhat obscured by recent attention to the global roles of activists and industry groups, and by the episodic interventions of political leaders. Yet Smith makes a persuasive case for its continued relevance.

He also makes interesting observations about science: its role in establishing the need for agreements, and the requirement to ensure flexibility in treaties so as to allow for new information (as demonstrated, he notes, by the Montreal Protocol). More generally, Smith demonstrates that diplomats must understand the scientific dimensions of issues, and the implications of the science, for interest groups, negotiating positions, and adversaries.

Other observations from a lengthy career also point to the importance in negotiations of identifying common ground; the subtle role of all-night sessions (helpful in showing the home crowd that their interests were defended to the last minute); the value of conversational pauses as a negotiating tactic; and the need to avoid getting bogged down in plenary session, when progress more often comes through informal working groups. It is also interesting to see the play of chance and serendipity. This role can be momentous, as in the coincidence of negotiating European human rights even as the Berlin Wall was falling; or it can be ridiculous, as when a Reagan official suggested sunglasses as sufficient protection against ultraviolet radiation, thereby discrediting opposition to CFC controls.

Finally, Smith draws interesting lessons for current climate affairs. In his view the Kyoto Protocol and subsequent climate efforts are a textbook example of how not to proceed. American climate negotiators did not develop a productive dialogue with Congress and domestic groups; there was no sustained effort to overcome hostility and skepticism towards action. This failure also reflected a widespread, yet highly problematic notion, evident in the exaggerated hopes for Copenhagen: that international agreement will compel domestic action. Other, more successful cases suggest that the reverse is true. For example, domestic acid rain legislation preceded agreement with Canada. Experience with the Montreal Protocol, in which the negotiations encompassed close relations with affected industries, provides another useful lesson. Statecraft may be essential, but international action also depends on getting the politics right. And, as ever, all politics is local.

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