

# **GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE**

## *Perspectives on the Current Debate*

*Edited by*

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Center for UN Reform Education

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Cover design by Bette Cowles-Friedlander  
The photos on the cover depict two consequences of climate change: drought and flooding.

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## **PREFACE**

**By Walter Hoffmann<sup>1</sup>**

The United Nations Charter does not explicitly mention “environmental protection” as one of the UN’s purposes. Although the UN did sponsor conferences in 1949 on the “Conservation and Utilization of Resources” and in 1954 on the “Living Resources of the Sea,” it was not until the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment that led the General Assembly to adopt the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Twenty years later in 1992, the UN Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro. UNCED led to the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and resulted in two important treaties, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In between Stockholm and Rio, the Center for UN Reform Education was formed (in 1978) by a diverse group of non-profit organizations, all dedicated to promoting a discussion of UN reform proposals to strengthen the UN system. Over the years, the Center has issued 28 publications detailing UN reform concepts, including a “Promptbook” for the Johannesburg Summit in 2002. As interest in UN reform grew, and even became part of the core debate at the UN itself, the Center began to focus more on proposals under active consideration by Member States and Non-Governmental Organizations.

Aware that UNEP had been to some extent overshadowed by the CSD, the Center in the latter part of 2005 authorized preparation of this publication focusing on improving international environmental governance. This book presents different perspectives on why the UN generally has difficulty achieving the results it desires from environmental policies it initiates. Some of the chapters in this book build on ideas developed in earlier proposals: a World Environment Organization, upgrading UNEP into a Specialized Agency (UNEAO); transformation of the Climate Regime by 2012; clustering the Secretariats of the hundreds of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, an Environmental Court, and the proposal to transform the Trusteeship Council into an organ for Global Environmental Governance.

Any recommendations in this book are those of the authors. While the Center supports strengthening the UN system, it does not endorse specific proposals. Rather, it hopes the concepts in this book will stimulate discussion among UN Missions and NGOs, and lead to the strengthening of the UN system for environmental governance.

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## ACRONYMS

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Name in full</i>
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECA	UN Economic and Social Commission for Africa
ECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	UN Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EMG	Environment Management Group
ESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCSA	UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GC	Governing Council of UNEP
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GISP	Global Invasive Species Programme
GMEF	Global Ministerial Environment Forum
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IEA	International Energy Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITLOS	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
IUCN	World Conservation Union
IWC	International Whaling Commission
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SBC	Secretariat of the Basel Convention
SSO	Sahara Sahel Observatory
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA/	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DSD	Division of Sustainable Development

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	UN Forum on Forests
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	UN Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNU	United Nations University
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization