

then provides a useful reflection on the generic spread of certification as a governance innovation, rehearsing arguments on isomorphism and organizational fields.

One of the key conclusions emerging from Gulbrandsen's book is that the role of public actors (i.e. the state) is crucial for understanding the underlying dynamics of certification. Against the assumption that certification is by and large a 'non-state' phenomenon, Gulbrandsen convincingly argues that states have indeed substantially influenced – through their regulatory system and administrative culture – non-state standard setting initiatives. Paying more attention to the interlinkages between what is perceived to be transnational and international or public and private is one sound recommendation for future analysts.

While the strength of *Transnational Environmental Governance* is its focus on concrete examples and rich empirical illustration, the absence of a broader interpretative frame for making sense of what has been observed might well count as the book's weakness. Most chapters are quite empirical, with relevant theoretical reflections largely limited to the analytical framework presented in Chapter 2. While the discussion of rational and sociological institutionalism is concise, relatively few cross-references are made to these arguments in subsequent chapters. As a result, the book lacks an encompassing theorization that would allow putting its detailed and well-observed findings into perspective. This lack of deeper theoretical reflections (beyond meso-level theories of adaptation, impacts and emergence) might, however, be a generic trademark of much of the contemporary environmental governance research.

## 5. CONCLUSION

What all three books reviewed here have in common is that, while they provide empirically rich and methodologically sound investigations of transnational governance, we are still in need of a constitutive theory of the transnational. While we wait for this theory to emerge, the three books discussed above are well worth a read.

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*Transnational Environmental Law*, 2:2 (2013), pp. 393–395 © 2013 Cambridge University Press  
doi:10.1017/S2047102513000459

*Global Environmental Governance: Law and Regulation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, by Louis Kotzé  
Edward Elgar, 2012, 360 pp, £105 hb, ISBN 9781781002520

In recent years, two concurrent challenges have helped to stimulate alternative and innovative approaches to thinking about solutions for environmental problems. One

has been the failure of attempts to respond to genuine global concerns about climate change and related dilemmas around achieving ecological and environmental justice. The other has been the resurgence of critiques in philosophy around the centrality of human-centred ontology and epistemology. This has spurred developments in a range of post-Heideggerian approaches to understanding objects, which in turn have furthered inquiries into our relationship with nature and natural objects. The impact of these above-described twin challenges on legal scholarship has been a rethinking of environmental law through the adoption of a reference frame that is increasingly referred to as ‘global environmental law’. Global environmental law, as compared with the narrower concept of international environmental law, does not assume the effectiveness of law agreed among and/or imposed by states, and instead pays greater attention to reflexivity and the role of the agent or individual in changing the world. This ensures access to a more diverse body of literature discussing global environmental problems.

It is in this context that the most recent and sustained work by Louis Kotzé, *Global Environmental Governance: Law and Regulation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, stands out as a contribution to developments in environmental law and governance more generally. It introduces and builds on the idea of ‘global environmental governance’ as a new and evolving stage in political ecology. Kotzé sees global environmental governance as a ‘specific application of governance, which seeks to address environmental externalities that occur within and beyond the traditional confines of state borders, authority and influence’ (p. 224). Although the term is used decidedly to address environmental harm, Kotzé recognizes that environmental governance is more than sustainability and is about people’s relationship with nature itself. As such, his work is an exploration of the potential of law as a regulatory force within the emergent global environmental governance paradigm.

The book has nine chapters. Chapters 2 to 6 set the foundations and identify the complexities and caveats that we must be aware of when working with the concept of ‘governance’, with a specific focus on its manifestations at the global level – Kotzé purposefully distinguishes between the terms ‘global’ and ‘international’ in this regard. Chapters 2 to 4 describe the current literature on, and relationship between, concepts such as globalization and governance, exploring and examining what these concepts mean for environmental governance and the environmental movement, and the role they have played in defining these. The role of law in the context of governance is analyzed in Chapter 5. Given that the book relies on and emphasizes environmental law as a mode of regulation, this chapter is pivotal for developing a wider definition of law to include hard and soft law, as well as normative influences emanating from non-state actors.

Chapters 6 and 7 map out and discuss the idea of ‘global environmental governance’, in part by synthesizing and comparing a vast array of scholarship in which the concept is deployed. The literature review thus brings together diverse notions and forms of community, private, and public efforts to protect nature. Chapter 8 then critiques and builds on conceptions of environmental law in the context of the global environmental governance discussion laid out in the preceding chapters. One of the

merits of Kotzé's work is that it aims to increase our reliance on law as a part of governance strategies relating to the environment but it also, vitally, broadens its conception of law and lawmaking in describing that process. This is evident, for example, in the way that this chapter uses global environmental law as a broader matrix for appreciating convergent national and transnational practices around environmental law itself.

Chapter 9 concludes the work by synthesizing a vision and a pragmatic purpose for global environmental governance. This chapter highlights the utility of the global environmental governance language, not just in terms of 'keeping people busy', but also in terms of solving 'unwanted environment-related changes brought about by globalization' (p. 301). The chapter also offers a well-rounded conclusion to the overall book.

This book has many distinctive features and strengths. It is strongly interdisciplinary throughout; this is particularly effective as an approach to define and analyze, in Chapters 2 to 6, the parameters of the project and global governance issues, scholarship and practices. This lends strength and conviction to the scoping and final arguments in Chapters 8 and 9. The breadth of the coverage in Chapters 2 to 6 is impressive and effectively guides the reader through a complex and diverse range of ideas and concepts around (global environmental) governance, by offering a very clearly organized synthesis and critical analysis of the interdisciplinary work carried out in a vast array of different scholarly networks. Through this approach, the book provides the reader with a highly accessible entry point for these various scholarly debates, and Kotzé does a commendable job of bringing clarity to the complex notion of 'global environmental governance'.

Kotzé acknowledges that the environment is a convenient foundation for understanding governance because it is, by nature, a collective or public problem. However – notwithstanding the book's argument that the environmental movement itself has been important and central to the way in which terms like 'globalization' and 'governance' have come to be understood and defined – it is not just about global environmental governance or even environmental governance more generally. It also contributes to the governance literature across the board. One of the main contributions of Kotzé's book is that it emphasizes that global environmental law is bound to be enriched when developed and critiqued in the wider context of governance strategies. This is an important critique and contribution to the burgeoning field of global environmental law literature. *Global Environmental Governance* provides this emergent discipline with a viewpoint to ensure its connection with its central ethical concern of protecting nature and its objects apart from their individual and particularized values for human beings. This presents Kotzé with an interesting opportunity to take this work further and explore the significance of governance for global environmental law in the context of particular situations. Overall, it is an excellent and ambitious book, which presents the reader with a vast array of well-presented ideas and research.

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