

broader and deeper explanations of three key flashpoints in the agrifood system moving forward. Up until the present, these flashpoints have typically been characterised as either/or propositions: industrial versus small-scale farming; GMOs versus traditional seed breeding; and global versus local food systems. This collection underlines the need for new work to chart and deconstruct these over-simplified 'alternatives' in order to move the debate on how to build a better governed and more sustainable food system into more productive territory. Finally, to build upon the findings presented by Clapp and Fuchs, policy-oriented researchers should endeavour to develop strategies to contain the negative effects of corporate power and prevent the exercise of oligopoly and oligopsony power.

In my opinion this collection has only one crucial shortcoming: it does not devote enough space to the obvious disjuncture between conventional agricultural systems and operations that have been certified as organic by qualified third parties. A focus on the ways that corporate power has either impeded organics or fostered their mainstreaming down to the present would have added additional value to this book. Overall then, Corporate power is an exceptionally strong volume that I recommend highly without hesitation.

Adam Sneyd
University of Guelph, Canada

Uncertain Risks Regulated,

edited by Michelle Everson and Ellen Vos.
Oxford/New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2009,
456 pp., £90.00, hardcover.

This volume tells sophisticated stories about risk regulation, and it tells them well. The book contains case and country studies grouped around the themes of 'food regulation' and 'biotechnology regulation', and pays plenty of attention to transnational, supranational and international dimensions. The introduction by the editors provides an excellent overview of the state of risk regulation studies and the

challenges the field is currently facing. At this stage it is needless to dwell on previous research done by the editors, who have built a steady and sophisticated research agenda at the interface of science and law. Concepts such as the 'uncertainty paradox' are now part of the common frame of reference of those who theorise about risk regulation.¹ Many of the insights that this research agenda has produced relate to the problematic role of law in regulatory areas that are highly politicised and at the same time penetrated by science. The answers, also given in this book, can be found in a pluralist approach to global risk governance.

The introduction could have elaborated a bit more on the various models of risk regulation that the book claims to compare. These models are mentioned, but it does not become entirely clear what their features are, in what sense they are 'pluralist' and how the reader might recognise them throughout the book. We find a deliberative form of 'the common good orientation' inspired by the Klinke chapter, 'sound science' as a second model set by Kuiper and thirdly Fisher's 'administrative constitutionalism' approach.² Divided over part I and part IV (a division apparently created especially for Fisher's contribution) there are a couple of well-written chapters that could also easily have served as introductions in their own right. This also means that they are self-sufficient, introducing their own paradigms (Fisher), stories (Everson), approaches (Van Asselt, Vos & Rooijackers) and governance theories (Klinke) while their place in the volume is not always clear.

Indeed, the book sets an ambitious aim. In doing so it faces a fundamental tension. On the one hand, the book is clearly placed in the tradition of pluralism, leading to the inevitable disclaimer that it is "not possible to provide clear-cut models of risk regulation." On the other hand, the book sets the intellectual bar high by suggesting a future 'Constitution' be established for risk governance that should secure "the vital independence and transparency of scientific advice" (p. 16) but also guarantees public participation alongside rational inputs. This tension is closely linked to the authors' approach to legitimising risk regulation, one that we might call a 'third way' as it essentially seeks to reconcile two different worlds. It ties in with the wide-spread acknowledgement of both the necessity of rationalistic input and the vulnerability of participatory decision-making in this area. In some instances that approach will look like a compromise, in others it will amount

1 Van Asselt, M. B. A. & Vos, E., The Precautionary Principle and the Uncertainty Paradox, *Journal of Risk Research* (2006), 9:4, 313–336.

2 Fisher, E., *Risk Regulation and Administrative Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Hart Publishing 2007).

to an eclectic approach, and in yet further cases it will require a balancing of different types of input. For the moment it remains under-theorised. In this light, it becomes apparent that the challenge for risk regulation studies is really to identify patterns, side-effects and to fix scope conditions in order to help develop a 'third way' that neither relies exclusively on scientific evidence nor proclaims public participation to be the holy grail.

Accordingly, a true 'comparison of various models of risk regulation' would have required an operationalisation that could have served as guidance to the authors of individual chapters. The diverse backgrounds of the contributors is certainly an advantage, but one that could have been exploited further had the national and case study chapters followed more of a template. After the wealth of material presented in these chapters (in parts II and III of the book), we would have liked to see the conceptual chapters in part IV draw on that rather more. Or perhaps a concluding chapter by the editors, which is now missing, could have tied the loose elements together. This would have been especially interesting given the high ambitions and relevant dilemmas formulated by the editors in the introduction. At the end of the book there are several blank pages – undoubtedly for production reasons. A contribution along the lines of 'lessons learned' or 'outline of a future research agenda' would have been very fitting to fill them.

As risk regulation attempts to unite science, law and politics more and more, the mutual level of understanding between the actors from those different spheres is still lagging behind. The urgency of this communicative need is illustrated by the European Commission's intention to appoint a 'chief scientific adviser'.³ *Uncertain Risks Regulated* makes a useful contribution on this front, even if not explicitly so. The book is not a handbook on risk regulation, but it is a useful read for people looking for some background analysis concerning the myriad of complexities of the role of science in law, or for an entry point into certain regulatory regimes featured in the book. The intended audience remains somewhat unclear, but that is not necessarily a disadvantage as it keeps the debate open and perhaps emphasises the pluralistic nature of the risk regulation community. The practising lawyer who takes an interest in risk regulation and is confronted with a limited amount of legal literature on the subject (compared to the amount of political science literature) will find this

book a helpful addition. There are two pitfalls here. First, the amount of reading he or she will have to do even to begin to get a grip on the material. Second, the absence of a chapter on how the European courts deal with risk regulation, science-driven arguments of parties, fact finding, evidence and expert opinion. Indeed, the contributions by Scott, Everson and Joerges relating to the case law on the precautionary principle and by Walker on the US approach to judicial review of 'administrative proceedings' leave us wanting for more.

The book undoubtedly provides a challenging opening to the next step in the interdisciplinary debate, namely the development of a blueprint for global risk governance. This brings us back to the curse that comes with a pluralistic approach: to move from 'stories', 'paradigms' and 'tensions' to a 'future Constitution' – as called for in the introduction (and spelled with a capital 'C') – would go against the essence of that approach. However, perhaps a midpoint in between eclectic story telling and constitutional principles is indeed possible. In line with the aforementioned comment on the desirability of a 'wrap up' chapter, a tentative set of 'terms of reference' for such a 'Constitution' would have made the book even more interesting.

Peter Kugel
Attorney at law, Brussels &
Anne Meuwese
University of Antwerp

The Global Food Crisis: Governance, Challenges and Opportunities, edited by Jennifer Clapp and Marc J. Cohen. Waterloo, Canada: Wilfred Laurier University Press and Centre for International Governance (Studies in International Governance series), 2009, 288 pp., \$44.95, paperback.

The 2007–2008 global food crisis was a watershed moment in the history of the modern world food system. As a result of the crisis an unprecedented one billion people are going hungry. Despite major advances in food production, storage and distribution technology and the increased international trade in food, policy-makers continue to struggle to make world food security a reality. The Global Food

3 Speech by European Commission President Barroso, European Parliament, Strasbourg, 15 September 2009.