

The chapters in this volume are current to 2019. Since that time there have been a number of noteworthy developments, but they do not diminish the value of this book. From September 2018 to August 2019, there were three meetings of the BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference but the final meeting, scheduled for March 2020, was postponed due to COVID-19. In the intervening months, government officials participating in an unofficial capacity have been meeting virtually with intergovernmental and nongovernmental experts, a form of diplomacy known as track 1.5 dialogues, but no formal negotiations have occurred to advance a treaty text, and Barnes's warning that apparent progress on some aspects of the BBNJ agreement "conceals deeper currents of discord" (p. 125) still appears to be valid. As noted above, the ISA has not yet completed its mining exploitation regulations but the two-year rule has been invoked. The dispute between Nicaragua and Colombia over their maritime boundary is still pending at the ICJ. This may suggest that international law moves too slowly for our times. Yet, while this review was being written, the Arctic Ocean fisheries moratorium came into force, a sign that nations are still able to take timely steps, informed by science, to manage human activities and protect Earth systems.

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