

***Global Commons, Domestic Decisions: Comparative Politics of Climate Change.*** Edited by Kathryn Harrison and Lisa Sundstrom. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010. 312 pp. \$26.00 (paper).

The title *Global Commons, Domestic Decisions* succinctly outlines the overall research framework of this comparative political book on climate change policy. The focus of the book, like many others, is on the global environmental problem of climate change; specifically, it focuses on the aftermath of the Kyoto Protocol. Unlike other work done on this topic, especially work with an international relations focus, this book recognizes that the decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol is a domestic one and that states as such cannot be treated as unitary actors. The central contribution, however, is the focus on both the domestic politics and the particular policies that were implemented. As a result, it will appeal to international relations scholars as well as comparativists interested in environmental politics and policy. It also brings insight into two core East Asian cases: Japan and China. For Japan, the symbolism of the protocol named after one of its cities and the divergent responses of two major players (the European Union and the United States) left Japan in a difficult situation. China, however, benefited greatly from the protocol, because it faced few costs but received benefits through the Clean Development Mechanism.

The book identifies four levels of “climate policies” and focuses on two as the dependent variables of the comparative study: whether Kyoto was ratified or not; and domestic climate policies. An analytic framework focusing on self-interest, on ideas or normative commitments of policy-makers, and on political institutions is employed throughout. The contributing authors then take this comparative framework and apply it to a number of key jurisdictions that initially agreed to the Kyoto Protocol but have consequently diverged in their domestic responses. Their conclusions illustrate the difficulty of implementing an international treaty prior to the domestic legwork being done. While the Kyoto Protocol was designed to address issues of equity related to climate change mitigation for an interim period, the division of countries with more and less stringent targets made it difficult for domestic jurisdictions to accept the consequences of the protocol. In the end, of the multitude of factors addressed, no single factor conclusively resulted in positive action with regard to climate change. Rather, each of the factors contributed to or inhibited action on this issue in multiple ways. The result is a poignant concluding statement: “In the end, the cases in this volume demonstrate that it is voters’ sustained normative commitments to the problem of climate change that ultimately matter; arguably they are the only thing that ever has” (p. 286).

The case studies that were chosen for comparison in this book were chosen for specific strategic reasons. Under the Kyoto Protocol, there were three different country categories to which certain criteria applied: Annex I (industrialized countries), Annex II (Annex I countries that had to aid developing countries), and non-Annex countries (developing countries not required to alter greenhouse gas emissions). Of the countries analyzed in the book, two were chosen because they chose not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol (United States and Australia), four were major emitters that did ratify the protocol (Canada, Japan, European Union, and Russia), and one (China) was the largest non-Annex country under the protocol. As a result, the key strength of this text is that it provides a comprehensive analysis of the myriad factors that affect the likely success of international cooperation on complex environmental issues such as climate change. Its overall focus is a historical analysis of past events and so may disappoint some readers seeking insights into domestic political strategies. However, it is an important resource to aid our understanding of the pressures and constraints governments face when trying to adhere to international agreements while simultaneously balancing a complicated array of domestic interests. Overall, the cases chosen provide a balanced and nuanced approach—addressing some of the key players and also highlighting key factors.

Japan and China, countries of utmost interest to this journal, present two interesting cases. Japan (Tiberghien and Schreurs chapter) faced enormous pressure to ratify the protocol due to the “embedded symbolism” of having the protocol named after one of its cities. To reject the protocol would be seen as rejecting something inherently Japanese. However, ratification did not lead to significant policy implementation. This can be seen in part as shrewd political maneuvering on behalf of then prime minister Koizumi, especially in the aftermath of the decision of the United States not to ratify the protocol. Japan felt pressure to choose which to align more closely with: the European Union or the United States. The pull of the United States consequently caused Japan to be hesitant about implementing any substantial climate change policies. This chapter exemplifies well the overall thesis of the book. Japan found itself in a difficult position precisely because of the disconnect between domestic political pressure (supportive of Kyoto due to the embedded symbolism) and international political dynamics (Japan wanting to side with the United States, a major trading partner).

China (Heggelund, Andresen, and Buan chapter), on the other hand, has participated quite significantly in Kyoto Protocol mechanisms—primarily the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). It is no surprise

that China ratified the Kyoto Protocol, as there were no costs associated with such a move. However, China has been hesitant to take any substantial action in reducing its emissions given that the priorities of economic development and massive energy needs to sustain the unprecedented growth China has seen over the last few decades remain key. China continues to highlight its lower per capita emissions in any international negotiations to great effect. The priority on energy growth has also led China to invest heavily in renewable energy sources and to develop institutions to approve CDM projects quite efficiently (2,062 projects in 2010). More recently, China has announced plans for a carbon tax, which goes along with the conclusions of this chapter that China is increasingly willing to confront the issue of climate change, seeing it as potentially threatening its continued economic development and leaving the country potentially vulnerable.

Overall, the book gives a good account of key actors in the international arena on the subject of climate change. The focus on Kyoto helps highlight the power dynamics and, more importantly, the equity issues that arise in attempting to address global environmental problems, as exemplified by the case of China.

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***China in 2020: A New Type of Superpower.*** By Hu Angang. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2011. 213 pp. \$32.95 (cloth).

***Playing Our Game: Why China's Rise Doesn't Threaten the West.*** By Edward S. Steinfeld. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. 265 pp. \$30.95 (cloth).

***China and the New International Order.*** Edited by Wang Gungwu and Zheng Yongnian. New York: Routledge, 2008. 316 pp. \$170.00 (cloth).

Since China's economy took off in the 1980s, debates about the country's development can be labeled as a kaleidoscope. Some people claim that China is going to collapse. Others contend that China's rise will pose severe threats to the rest of the world. Some scholars argue that China is a fragile superpower, while others contend that we are entering an era when China will rule the world. Who is right, and who is wrong? How should we understand China's rise? Is China on track to becoming a new super-