

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 Jorges 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.

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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.

Crisis: Governance Challenges and Opportunities edited by Dr Jennifer Clapp, CIGI Research Chair in International Governance, and Marc J. Cohen, a senior researcher at Oxfam America, is a timely and comprehensive study of the recent global food crisis. The editors set out three major objectives: to identify the causal factors behind the recent crisis; to examine the challenges and opportunities for reforming the governance of the world food system; and to suggest proposals to promote a sustainable world food system less prone to systemic risks exemplified by the recent crisis.

The sixteen contributed chapters to the *The Global Food Crisis* are based on a workshop held in Waterloo, Canada in December 2008, supported by the Centre for International Governance Innovation and co-organized with the Washington D.C. based International Food Policy Research Institute.

The book is divided into four thematic sections. The first section introduces the controversial debate around the causes of the global food crisis. The editors purposefully (and refreshingly) ensure that throughout the book all sides of the debate receive due consideration. This section provides a good balance between more introductory pieces that explain the contemporary triggers and underlying structural conditions that lead to the food crisis and stand-alone analytical chapters focusing on some of the more novel aspects of the global food crisis. Two key chapters in this respect are Jennifer Clapp's chapter on the role of the broader global economic processes that are related to forces behind the food crisis. In particular, she describes the way commodity prices are influenced by financial speculation and shifts in the value of the US dollar, which receive too little attention in conventional policy debates. In addition, Kimberly Ann Elliot's chapter provides a rigorous analysis of US biofuel policies (a major cause of the crisis), highlighting the complex policy dilemma at the heart of the food versus fuel debate and the alignment of political forces supporting the continued expansion of biofuel programmes despite the upward pressure these policies are exerting on world food prices and acknowledged limitations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The second section of the book addresses the immediate governance challenges facing agriculture and food. The majority of the chapters in this section examine potential reforms to international food aid, which is essentially the front line of the war on global food insecurity. The contributors to this

section, all leading food aid scholars and practitioners, examine the benefits of more flexible food aid programming by donors, the potential and limits of (re)establishing food reserves at the local and regional levels, and the need for mainstreaming food aid based on insurance and risk mitigation strategies. An interesting observation from these authors points to the obstacles to food aid reform emanating from the fact that food aid policy continues to be dominated by US domestic agricultural interests, and that global food aid regulation has become enmeshed in a complex web of institutional arrangements, including the outcome of the current Doha Round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO). Raymond Hopkins' chapter on the evolving policy models driving the international food aid system is particularly illuminating, as it demonstrates the importance of norms and aligned political forces in driving food aid regime change. Hopkins argues that, in the current global political context, food aid reform is more likely to occur if it is explicitly linked to national security objectives. In addition, Hopkins suggests food aid programming must shift from a reactive humanitarian aid-based system to one premised on an insurance-based approach in order to minimise the risk of food insecurity in developing countries.

The third section of the book examines the longer-term implications of climate change, industrial agriculture models and bio-technological fixes for achieving world food security. These chapters highlight the major role that climate change is having on local food systems, particularly in developing countries where soil erosion, water scarcity, and ecological degradation are rapidly diminishing the ability of hundreds of millions of small-scale farmers to meet their basic nutritional needs. Geographer Tony Wies provides an unsettling analysis of how fossil fuel-based modern industrial agriculture systems and the increasing "meatification" of diets produce greater systemic risks to the food system through the intensification of processes that are ecologically destructive and diminish biodiversity. On a positive note, he argues that systemic crises provide opportunities for bottom-up change of the food system towards more sustainable production methods and consumption patterns.

The book's final section examines the way forward for reforming agriculture and food governance. It covers a wide variety of themes, including a discussion of the reforms of the UN Food and Agri-

culture Organization (FAO), the prospects for urban agriculture as a food security strategy in the North and South, and the types of institutional reforms at the national and international levels needed to implement the recommendations of the recent International Assessment on Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD). For scholars of international institutions and UN history, Daniel Gustafson and John Markie's chapter provides an insider's account of the recent FAO reform process. This chapter argues that successful international reform to modernise the global agriculture and food architecture requires buy-in and leadership from states rather than simply allowing them to be driven by the UN bureaucracy. Marcia Ishii-Eiteman's chapter on the challenges involved in implementing the recommendations of the IAASTD is an important contribution as it draws attention to the power imbalances that pervade the global food system. As Ishii-Eiteman notes, while there is growing consensus that small-scale sustainable agriculture and human-rights based approaches to food security policy are most attuned to reducing hunger and poverty in the context of greater economic and ecological uncertainty, these policies continue to face stiff resistance from a constellation of major food exporters and biotechnology and agro-businesses which favour the widespread implementation of biotechnology and greater privatisation of Southern agriculture systems.

The book's major strength lies in the breadth and depth of its contributors. Contributors include leading academics from various disciplines, researchers from the major international agriculture policy institutes, and experts from NGOs involved in food policy. This provides the reader with a diversity of well-informed but competing perspectives that help in understanding the causes of the global food crisis and the appropriate reforms. A distinctive asset of the book is the balance between contributions from

practitioners and academics. The mix of case studies, policy report-styled summaries and theoretically inclined contributions provides insight into the challenges of agriculture and food governance at two levels: on the ground with the practitioner and at a broader level of systemic analysis provided by scholars. To this end, the book could have benefited from a concluding chapter to pull these different strands of analysis together. Although the range and diversity of perspectives represented in the book would have made this a challenging task, a systemic synthesis of the various contributions and their implications for governance and a future research agenda would have been useful to inform the ongoing policy debates surrounding the post-global food crisis multilateral response agenda.

Overall, *The Global Food Crisis* provides scholars, students and policy-makers with a thorough volume explaining why the crisis occurred and how international and national governance reforms could play a key role in averting any such crisis in the near future. The book fills a significant void in the literature by providing a transdisciplinary contribution examining the linkages between governance institutions, modes of agricultural production, food assistance policies, biotechnology, climate change and hunger eradication. As such, the book would be of considerable interest to scholars of international political economy, global governance, environmental studies, development, health and public policy. Scholars of contemporary global governance would benefit significantly from this book as it makes a most welcome addition to the study of global governance by bringing agriculture and food to the forefront of governance debates. For far too long, agriculture and food have been pushed to the margins of global governance studies, and here this book provides a pioneering rectification.

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