

Preface

Before the late 1980s, the range of conceptual approaches in the literature on the international relations of the environment in general, and the international political economy (IPE) of the environment in particular, was quite limited. During the past ten years or so, however, the literature has grown in quantity and quality. The goal of this book is to introduce a critical approach to the IPE of the environment—an approach that focuses on the historical development and framing of environmental problems and solutions and that seeks to understand the social priorities or purpose that differing problems and solutions reflect.

This effort is motivated by our sense that many scholars and practitioners assume that, while there may be some disagreement about solutions, we do know what the problems are. The authors of this book agree with other critical thinkers who argue that the investigation of the emergence and framing of both problems and solutions remains a central endeavor of the IPE of the environment. In our view, problems and solutions are intimately related. The ways in which problems are framed delineate the kinds of solutions that will be entertained; complementarily, the kinds of solutions that are deemed desirable often shape the ways in which problems are framed. Moreover, a closer investigation of the politics associated with the historical emergence and framing of environmental problems and solutions will help reveal which standpoints, values, and preferences shape international environmental politics and policies and which are marginalized—in short, will help us to understand their social purpose.

In late 1997, we called for chapter proposals. Those who expressed interest received a *précis* specifying the general directions and goals of the book. During the early part of 1998, the selection process was completed and the contributors were asked to prepare

their individual chapters. These chapters were circulated to all contributors before the 1999 International Studies Association (ISA) convention and were discussed in two panels and in an ISA workshop that took place during the convention. The fact that each contributor read most or all of the draft chapters and that we had the chance to discuss them individually as well as collectively has given the book cohesion and synergies.

We reviewed the first drafts, as did Kurt Burch (representing the series editors) and one or more anonymous reviewers. We want to thank Kurt for his crucial advice at this stage. The revised chapters were also reviewed. Finally, the full manuscript was reviewed by the series editors and by an anonymous reviewer. We are grateful to Mary Ann Tétreault for her detailed editorial and substantive comments and to the anonymous reviewer for providing us with a well-informed and constructive report.

A great number of people have our appreciation. We first want to thank the series editors—Kurt Burch, Bob Denemark, Mary Ann Tétreault, and Kenny Thomas—for entrusting us with this book. We want to recognize the ISA for its support and ISA's International Political Economy Section for its continued sponsorship of the *Yearbook* series. The participants in the fall 1998 International Environmental Politics research seminar at Colorado State University—Sasha Charney, Lisa Dale, Julie Payne, Lori Poloni-Staudinger, and Christina Sherman—and the anonymous reviewers of the chapters and the full manuscript also deserve our thanks. Our colleagues Kathryn Hochstetler, Brad Macdonald, Stephen Mumme, and Mary Van Buren were always willing to discuss various issues throughout this process. Susan Smith, the graduate secretary of the Political Science Department at Colorado State University, went well beyond the call of duty in preparing the manuscript; we are in her debt for making this a better book. We also wish to extend our appreciation to Earlene Bell, the secretary of the department, who assisted Susan and shouldered additional departmental work while we claimed Susan's time. Our thanks to Lynne Rienner, Sally Glover, Lesli Athanasoulis, Liz Miles, Dorothy Brandt, and Kate Bowman of Lynne Rienner Publishers, for their help and advice in preparing the book. Finally, Dimitris Stevis would like to extend his deep gratitude to his parents, and Valerie Assetto to her family, for their support and love.

—D. S.

—V. J. A.