

## Stepping Stones towards a New Order of Environmental Governance

This collection of contributions is the result of a fruitful expert meeting organised in the stunning setting of Tromsø during a side event in connection with the Arctic Frontiers conference held in January 2017. Experts and scholars from Norway and all over the world met to celebrate the first sunrise after two months of darkness and to discuss *Good Governance and the Arctic*. The event was funded by the K.G. Jebsen Centre for the Law of the Sea and hosted by UiT, the Arctic University of Norway.

The scope of the meeting was to establish a platform for dialogue on Arctic environmental governance, participatory rights and indigenous peoples, a platform that proved conducive to scholarly conversation on the use of the good governance paradigm in the guise of a tool-kit to deepen the study of environmental governance applied to the Arctic region and beyond. The components of the tool-kit have been identified in the following (not exhaustive) list:

1. A set of good administration principles for looking at corporate governance rules as a model and point of reference in the search for inspirational benchmarks for good governance;
2. A diversified group of public and private actors mutually interacting and equally engaged in relevant public discourse, with a special focus on the participatory approach to environmental decisions;
3. An emphasis on implementation of human rights' provisions favourable to indigenous peoples, indigenous women and, in general, any groups whose rights have been neglected, denied or infringed.

Such components have been scrutinised, and their implementation has been critically assessed in the contributions that follow, marking some stepping stones in the path of a new order based on principles of good environmental governance:

1. The set of game rules, as a result of cross-pollination between the private and public law domains, as well as a natural consequence of an evolved

- model of the global village (respectively illustrated in Lena Schønning's article and in Margherita Poto and Lara Fornabai's contribution);
2. The economic empowerment of Arctic indigenous groups, as a means of maximizing the efficacy of legal achievements (as clearly described in the example of the set-asides procurement for aboriginal groups in Canada, in Carol Cravero's contribution);
  3. The effective engagement of indigenous peoples given permanent positions in decision-making processes, as well as a wide set of participatory tools regarding the rights of indigenous women (as described in Leena Heinamaki and Tahnee Prior's writing).

The privilege of guest-editing the contributions has largely compensated the inevitable efforts to assemble the work in a unique framework.

My heartfelt thanks go to the supportive group of colleagues and friends that contributed with their brilliant and original ideas, to the outstanding professionals that volunteered to join the peer-reviewers' team, to the *Arctic Review* staff that patiently assisted me during the editing process.

There is hope for the rights of all indigenous peoples and ultimately for the protection of the planet when such a precious group of scholars is at work. The first sunrise greeting the Arctic Frontiers' side event and the intense activity that followed bode well for a prosperous future in the direction of a newly established order that has the protection of our environment at its core, in the Arctic Region and beyond.

To conclude, I would like to mention that I have wholeheartedly engaged in this work not because I am indigenous to the Arctic, nor do I belong to any oppressed ethnic minority. I did this work because I am an ally of the earth, and therefore I decided to use this privilege to give voice to the weak and to the unheard.

Tromsø, 23rd June 2017  
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