



Sophisticated Interdependence in Climate Policy

Federalism in the United States, Brazil, and Germany

Vivian E. Thomson

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Description

This book offers a desperately needed framework for climate-change policy in the US, acknowledging the crucial role of coherent state–federal relations.

Since the Kyoto Protocol's signing in 1997 the United States has been the world's most prominent climate change outlaw. In the United States, air pollution policymaking starts and ends with the states, whose governmental units implement federal programs.

But we find ourselves in uncharted waters in the United States when it comes to state–federal relations in climate change: many states have developed climate change and renewable energy policies ahead of the national government, and lacking an overarching climate change law, the US Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to employ a little-used part of the Clean Air Act – which revolves around state plans rather than uniform national standards – to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from large stationary sources like power plants.

Taking on these challenges, Thomson proposes a framework for climate change policy in the United States called “sophisticated interdependence” that will help foster the coalition-building so desperately needed in the US climate change arena. This framework rests on a nine-state analysis of state-level economic and political forces in the United States and on comparative descriptions of climate change and renewable energy programs in Germany and Brazil, both strong federal democracies and key players in the global climate change policy arena.

Readership: This book would be useful to students of environmental policy at an undergraduate, postgraduate and advanced research levels, to climate-change policymakers and to the well-informed public.

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About the Author

Vivian E. Thomson is an associate professor in the Departments of Environmental Sciences and Politics at the University of Virginia and directs the university's unique BA program on Environmental Thought and Practice, whose graduates have assumed a variety of leadership positions in the public and private sectors worldwide. She is an environmental policy expert with 30 years of practical and academic experience at the local, state, national and international levels. She has been vice chair and member of the Virginia State Air Pollution Control Board and senior policy analyst and manager at the US Environmental Protection Agency. Thomson has published in journals covering law, environmental management, natural science and ethics. Her first book, *Garbage In, Garbage Out: Solving the Problems with Long-Distance Trash Transport*, has been hailed as an original and outstanding contribution to the field of environmental policy.

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