
Preface

The Transatlantic Alliance has been the linchpin of relations between the United States and Europe since World War II. It not only ensured western solidarity in containing the communist threat east of the Berlin Wall, but also encouraged the nations of western Europe to build a strong European Community (EC) to foster economic growth and international trade. Indeed, by the mid-1990s the new “single market” of the fifteen-member European Union (EU) had come to rival that of the United States. Although comprising only one-tenth of the world’s population, the US and EU accounted for half of global production and an even greater share of consumption. Moreover, the two economic giants had also led the world in enacting new legislation to control pollution and in promoting international agreements to mitigate the impacts of human development on the global environment. They were, relatively speaking, the planet’s “green giants.”

Yet in the new world of the twenty-first century, relations between the US and Europe have reached their lowest point in more than half a century. Much of this deterioration is the result of the new foreign and security policies of the Bush administration, especially regarding the dangers posed by Iraq. But in many areas, the divergence across the Atlantic precedes the current administration and appears to lie in changing values and priorities within the politics of the United States and the European Union. This book is motivated by a concern that growing differences between the two sides over environmental policy will not only make transatlantic cooperation increasingly difficult, but will seriously weaken the capacity of the international community to deal with a host of global environmental problems. We thus believe there is an urgent

need for a new strategic dialogue between the US and EU to clarify and strengthen our common interests in protecting the planet.

Although there is a rich literature on the environmental law and policies of both the United States and the European Union, relatively little comparative analysis has yet been done. This volume attempts to break new ground in comparing the two systems. We have brought together a distinguished group of environmental scholars and practitioners from different backgrounds on both continents to analyze key similarities, differences, and trends in environmental policy and regulation in the EU and US. They have attempted not only to clarify policy differences, but to assess whether developments in different fields of policy are diverging, converging, or (in the apt phrase of Jonathan Wiener) undergoing “hybridization” through joint learning and exchange. They also examine past and ongoing policy dialogues within Europe and across the Atlantic. Overall, the contributors present a mixed picture in which there are numerous common trends in domestic regulatory practices while at the same time there is clearly a growing divergence over a number of international issues and the principles for addressing them. The patterns are thus dynamic and complex, but nevertheless troubling for the future of transatlantic relations and international environmental protection.

We hope this book will help scholars, professionals, and policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic to better understand current tensions between the United States and Europe and that it will stimulate new efforts to rebuild cooperation between the “green giants.” The book should thus be of interest to all who care about the global environment, as well as students of comparative politics, comparative federalism, international relations, and environmental policy.

We are indebted to many people who have made this project possible. We especially thank the contributors for their patience, good will, and splendid cooperation throughout the lengthy production of the book. We also owe special gratitude to Mark Pollack and the BP Chair in Transatlantic Relations of the Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence for hosting a two-day conference in December 2001 at which first drafts of most of the chapters were discussed and refined. We acknowledge the support of our colleagues at Carleton College and Maastricht University. Michael Faure

owes special thanks to his secretariat at the Maastricht European Institute for Transnational Legal Research (METRO) for editorial and communications assistance. Norman Vig thanks Carleton College for travel and research support and Tricia Peterson of the political science department for invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscript for publication. Finally, we both express our appreciation to Clay Morgan of the MIT Press for encouragement and advice and to the anonymous referees for their helpful suggestions for revising the manuscript. Any remaining errors are, of course, the authors' own responsibility.