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INTRODUCTION

Legal management of environmental concerns is widely acknowledged as a necessity for contemporary international community and features prominently on the agendas of increasing number of various sectors of society. As is usually the case also with many other legal developments of great importance for the international community of States, but even more so for individuals (e.g. development of international humanitarian law, human rights, international criminal law), the scholarly works on legal aspects surrounding environmental matters predominantly focus on the views of legal experts, sometimes including those of political scientists. However, very few attempts were made so far to address the broad spectrum of environmental concerns holistically, including not only perspectives of legal scholars and practitioners, but also experts in the field of natural sciences, philosophy, economy, political and social sciences. The added value of such an all-inclusive interdisciplinary approach, engaging also experts from all around the globe, is understanding the reality that different approaches and potentials from various disciplines may provide important contributions not only to the quest for a legally sound normative framework and institutional mechanisms, but may also effectively contribute to needed solutions for long-term global environmental equilibrium in the interest of humankind as a whole. The work in front of you was prepared with the vision to help fill this gap.

By offering a broad overview of the relevant topics and proposing interpretative approaches, this book aims to bring increased clarity to this complex and important subject and to support further discussions both in academia as well as in practice at national, regional and international levels.

The book is generally structured around four main substantive parts: general one, presenting basic theoretical and practical developments, followed by area-specific chapters, then turning to judicial remedies and concluding with more economically oriented chapters. While

elaborating on many recent developments in general, many of the contributions offer also an insight into otherwise not so easily available domestic legislations and relevant practices. The *first* Chapter of the book introduces the reader to contemporary views on conceptual evolution of environmental law, addressing issues of legal regulation in times of peace as well as in situations threatening the international peace and security. The contributions of the *second* Chapter elaborate on the interrelationship between environment and environmental rights, touching upon issues of dignity, intergenerational justice, and gender perspective. The *third* Chapter is structured around substantive and procedural issues surrounding the Aarhus Convention and its implementation in practice, on both a general, as well as a country specific level. Chapter *four* recognizes institutional developments in environmental governance and highlights the role of non-state actors. Chapter *five* is devoted to climate change and discusses the concept of climate diplomacy, presents the African responses to global climate change threats and links the climate change and the air pollution challenges. In Chapter *six*, various aspects of biodiversity and forests management are assessed through the lens of environmental obligations. Chapter *seven*, following the International Year of Water Cooperation in 2013, devotes attention to the management of water resources, while addressing also issues of oceans and law of the sea. A special chapter, Chapter *eight*, is devoted exclusively to issues that are closely interlinked, namely the 'environmental refuges' and environmental rights of indigenous peoples. After these area specific chapters, Chapter *nine* focuses on possibilities of international adjudication of environmental cases. Last, but by no means least, the final three chapters of the book address the economic related aspects of environmental legal regulation. Chapter *ten* focuses on the GMOs and invasive alien species, Chapter *eleven* turns to developmental challenges in connection to environmental issues, while Chapter *twelve* concludes the book with the behavioural economics insight to international environmental law and analysis of sustainable management of energy resources and regulation of chemicals.

The authors of the book are renowned experts and engaged early stage researchers selected from a wide range of backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of disciplines as well as the international composition of the group of authors. Special thanks go to each one of them for the efforts made in delivering their papers whilst busy in many other professional activities. It is a special privilege that the book is published by a leading Slovenian legal publishing house, thus many thanks to all responsible at the GV Založba (GV Publishing House), in particular Boštjan Koritnik, for all of their support in dealing with this publication. Finally, we are most indebted to Tina Korošec for laborious work on the many editing details and style of the chapters, and most importantly for the Index included at the end, which will hopefully make this voluminous piece much more user friendly.

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