



Lyn Jaggard. *Climate Change Politics in Europe: Germany and the International Relations of the Environment.* London: I B Tauris, 2007. 256 pp. ISBN 978-1-84511-409-1.

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The Climate of Discourse

The subject of climate change resounds around the globe. But environmental and climate change issues only recently gained prominence in the study of international relations. Lyn Jaggard's work analyzes Germany's role and influence within the international relations of climate change. Jaggard focuses on German participation at two major venues dedicated to climate change: the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg in August and September 2002, and the eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in New Delhi in October and November 2002. Jaggard is interested in the values, ideas, and concerns that have influenced Germany's climate change-related policies as well as Germany's influence on international climate change policies.

Apart from literature and documentation, Jaggard bases her analysis on semi-structured interviews and personal correspondence with participants involved in conducting the international relations of the environment from national, international, and supranational administrations; research institutions; and nongovernmental organizations. To trace the intricate ways in which national and international consensus on climate change policies develop, Jaggard analyzes her material according to Jürgen Habermas's discourse ethics with particular attention to the themes of discursive and participatory justice. In other words, Jaggard investigates whether Germany's climate change-related national and interna-

tional policies conform to Habermas's idea of everyone being able to take part in the discourse in order to find universal consensus and make just decisions.

The volume is well structured in eight chapters. Apart from the introduction, conclusion, and a theoretical overview of multiparticipatory discursive processes, the main chapters deal with the evolution of climate change politics and policies since the 1970s (chapter 3), the formulation of the German government aims for the WSSD (chapter 4), the interaction of German and European Union climate change policies (chapter 5), the proceedings and outcomes of the WSSD and COP8 (chapter 6), and Germany's international relations of climate change outside of the WSSD and COP8 (chapter 7).

Jaggard's analysis leads her to the conclusion that Germany is a driving force in environmental and climate change policies on a national, an EC/EU, and a broader, international level. According to Jaggard, "Germany is a leader in climate change politics" (p. 415, cf. p. 137). Since 1971, when Germany introduced its first Federal Environment Program, the principles of German climate change policymaking have been "precautionary measures," "polluter-pays," and "industry-government cooperation"; Germany championed these principles not only at home, but also within the European Union and in the larger international arena. German environmental policymaking was both open to input both from various interested parties—such as research institutions, non-

governmental organizations, and business/industry—and to popular opinion. This openness brought about “discursive inclusiveness” in terms of participatory justice (although Jaggard acknowledges that not all of the elements of Habermasian discourse ethics have been fulfilled).

Environmental issues became mainstream concerns in Germany. This development, in connection with the effectiveness of German domestic environmental policies and the financial support for the staging of the WSSD, has given credibility to Germany’s climate change policies and allowed for a corresponding German influence in the European Union and in the broader international arena in the WSSD and—albeit to a lesser extent—in COP8. Even if not all the German (and/or EU) aims could be reached in the WSSD (for example, targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy use) and COP8, Jaggard argues, “Germany does exert influence in the international relations of climate change” (p. 145). According to Jaggard, in a number of instances, the German position coincided with stances taken and decisions made at the WSSD and COP8 (for example, the call for impetus from the market to promote renewable energy). However, Jaggard concedes that it is difficult to assess Germany’s real influence on the outcomes of the WSSD and COP8 (as well as on EU positions). In addition, Jaggard stresses that German and international or EU policies and aims are reflexive. In Jaggard’s view, Germany also contributes to participatory justice outside the major international conferences such as the WSSD and COP8: for example, by enabling developing countries to participate in the UNFCCC process. Altogether, Jaggard underscores the discursive and consensual character of German climate change policies and international relations while also considering the role played by economic self-interest and power politics in the development of these policies.

Jaggard’s study provides detailed insight into inter-

national climate change relations and German politics within them. The use of interviews and correspondence is the most informative element of the work. Nonetheless, the study has a few weaknesses. To begin with, Jaggard’s comments on the multiparticipatory and consensual character of German politics are cursory. It would have been beneficial to discuss in more detail both the relation of majority and consociational principles on which German democracy is based and the problems raised by the need for joint decision-making in Germany. In this respect, Jaggard’s empirical description of German climate change policymaking in chapters 3 and 4 is more nuanced—and more convincing—than the all too excessive references to indications of discursive and participatory justice. In practice, the principle of consensus is not only the explanatory factor in the success of Germany’s climate change-related policies, but itself a matter that requires explanation. The omission of a more detailed explanation for the German reliance on consensus points out the extent to which Jaggard restricts her analysis to English-language literature, for this factor is more prevalent in German-language analyses of German politics. Finally, Jaggard frequently admits that the coincidence of German aims and the eventual outcomes of negotiations at the WSSD and COP8, for example, do not prove that Germany influenced them. She notes that German influence in these bodies is not quantifiable. Even so, for Jaggard, regular and active German participation in (and ample funding of) the UNFCCC and other climate change organizations points to German leverage in their decision-making. While this rationale is plausible, the evidence here does not always prove the point decisively; for this, more research will be necessary. Nevertheless, Jaggard’s in-depth examination of German conduct in international climate change relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century offers an adequate starting point for further researchers.

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