

Knowledge Co-Creation in Climate and Marine Governance

Edited by
EVA JULIA LOHSE,
MARGHERITA PAOLA POTO,
and VIOLETA S. RADOVICH

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Preface

This book is the result of two international workshops, funded by the DAAD under its programme “Hochschuldialoge mit Südeuropa”, which allowed us to continue and expand our ongoing research and teaching cooperation between the Universities of Bayreuth, Turin, Tromsø and Bari (Sede di Taranto). We would like to thank the DAAD again for funding this kind of endeavours which do not always fall within the conventional platforms of academic exchange in law and which allowed us to include manifold trans- and interdisciplinary perspectives from economy, political and social sciences, communication sciences, education, marine biology and geology, bio-chemistry, environmental engineering, as well as practical work in sustainable development.

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Bayreuth, Buenos Aires, Tromsø

Eva Julia Lohse, Violeta Radovich, Margherita Paola Poto

Contents

Preface	V
 <i>Eva Julia Lohse, Margherita Paola Poto and Violeta S. Radovich</i>	
Chapter 1: Introduction: Co-creation as a Legal Methodological Approach for Inclusive Climate and Marine Governance	1
 <i>Jebby Gonza, Elia Mwanga and Omondi Owino</i>	
Chapter 2: Regional Community Courts as Engines for Co-creation and Climate Change Governance: Climate Change Litigation in the East African Court of Justice	25
 <i>Violeta S. Radovich and Giuliana Panieri</i>	
Chapter 3: Extreme Environments: Emerging from Ocean into Outer Space Regulation – introducing Ocean-Space Sustainability	37
 <i>Annamaria Bonomo, Nicolo Carnimeo, Eva Julia Lohse and Margherita Paola Poto</i>	
Chapter 4: New Horizons of Administrative Law and Participation through Co-creation: A Focus on Blue Governance	51
 <i>Laura Vita and Margherita Paola Poto</i>	
Chapter 5: Ocean Literacy for All: From Theory to Practice	61
 <i>Annamaria Bonomo and Francesco Blasi</i>	
Chapter 6: Participation (and Co-creation) in the Marine Renewable Energy Framework	73
 <i>Violeta S. Radovich</i>	
Chapter 7: Marine Areas beyond National Jurisdiction or Marine Areas within Natural Jurisdiction and beyond National Jurisdiction? An Ocean-centred Perspective: Rights of Nature (RoN) and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ (IPLC’s) Knowledge Integration	87

María Valeria Berros
Chapter 8: Ecological Justice, Protection of the Oceans and Co-production:
Some Tools for Thinking about the Links Between Them 101

Isabelle Zundel
Chapter 9: Perspectives from the East African Crude Oil Pipeline:
Participation and Co-creation in the Nexus of Energy Access,
Climate Change and Human Rights 109

Margherita Paola Poto, Eva Julia Lohse and Violeta Radovich
Chapter 10: Concluding remarks: Research and Policy Making on
Co-creation Towards and Beyond 2030 121

List of Contributors 125

Chapter 10

Concluding remarks: Research and Policy Making on Co-creation Towards and Beyond 2030

Margherita Paola Poto, Eva Julia Lohse and Violeta Radovich¹

Abstract: This book highlights co-creation as a legal methodological approach for tackling contemporary challenges in climate and marine governance. By evolving from traditional participation to a more inclusive framework, co-creation integrates diverse knowledge systems, including Indigenous and local insights, which is crucial for effective climate change governance. The book emphasizes the interconnectedness of human and natural systems, moving from the hypothesis that co-created governance models help address climate and environmental challenges to the analysis of successful case studies where co-creation has already been embedded in educational curricula and legal studies. Moving from co-creation in climate governance to the analysis of co-creation in ocean governance, the study focuses on case studies where ocean-related research (crossing law, ocean literacy, space law and geosciences), co-creation and participatory governance have led already to significant knowledge shifts in legal research and educational programs. As we look towards the future of co-creation in climate, sea and ocean governance post-2030, this study sets the stage for a more participatory approach, not only in legal research and education but also in policy-making, climate law and sea governance, fostering resilient systems that prioritize nature and community well-being.

The diverse contributions in this book illustrate how co-creation in climate and sea and ocean governance is steadily consolidating as a methodological approach in legal research and education. While still in its early stages, this approach is beginning to emerge as a promising tool for enhancing the effectiveness of participation in decision-making and policy development.

The chapters collectively underscore the transformative potential of co-creation, evolving from traditional participation to a more inclusive and collaborative framework that integrates diverse knowledge systems, including indigenous and local community insights. This approach is particularly significant in the context of climate change governance, as illustrated by the East African Court of Justice's role in climate litigation and the innovative regulatory frameworks proposed for ocean-space sustainability.

By emphasising the interconnectedness of human and natural systems, the book marks a shift towards a legal research approach that, focusing on co-created govern-

¹ *Acknowledgments: Margherita Paola Poto, Eva Julia Lohse and Violeta Radovich equally contributed to the design, drafting, editing and final revision of the chapter.*

ance models, can effectively address the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation, resulting in biodiversity loss. More specifically in the field of ocean governance, the book highlights the critical importance of integrating ocean literacy and participated practices where co-creation and trans-disciplinarity are central concepts in ocean governance-related research.

Through case studies and practical applications, such as the Ocean Incubator Network and the development of marine renewable energy projects, the chapters analyse the different applications that co-creation can have and demonstrate how co-creation can enhance public engagement, ensure equitable access to marine resources and guarantee protection, conservation and restauration of marine eco-systems. The exploration of various legal frameworks and stakeholder actions described by law, from the East African Community Court and supreme/constitutional courts in Latin America to EU directives and regulations to international treaties, from regional human rights to administrative law, reveals the necessity of embedding co-creation principles in legal and policy processes to achieve ecological justice and protect marine biodiversity. It also shows that (successful) co-creation is not restricted to the local realm as has often been claimed,² but happens in wider state, regional and even international contexts, if the legal provisions governing this field encourage participatory instruments and the introduction of “non-bureaucratic” knowledge.³ As the preliminary conclusions in the introductory chapter suggest, the future of co-creation in climate and marine governance lies in its ability to bridge disciplinary divides, empower diverse stakeholders, and foster resilient and adaptive governance systems that prioritize the centrality of nature and the well-being of all communities. The legal research on co-creation presented in this book aligns closely with the evolving trends observed in European Union (EU) projects, as evidenced by recent studies and guidelines. The EU has increasingly recognized the value of co-creation and co-governance, particularly in the context of nature-based solutions, as highlighted in the recent publication titled “Guidelines for Co-Creation and Co-Governance of Nature-Based Solutions”⁴ and has included provisions that encourage co-production of knowledge between science/experts, lawyers and community knowledge bearers. This alignment underscores a broader shift towards participatory and inclusive governance models that prioritize stakeholder engagement and the integration of diverse knowledge systems. The EU’s emphasis on co-creation reflects a commitment to fostering collaborative approaches that can effectively address complex environmental and societal challenges.

The desirable convergence between academic research and (EU and international) policy initiatives should suggest a growing recognition of the importance of co-crea-

² Ansell/Torfin, *Policy&Politics* 49,2 (2021), 211 (216).

³ On this term see Prager/McKee, *International Journal of Rural Law and Policy* Special edition 1 (2015), 1 (1–2).

⁴ Andersson/Ferreira/Arlati/et al., in: Ferreira/Lupp/Mahmoud (eds.), *Publications Office of the European Union*, 2023, available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/157060>.

tion as a methodological framework that can enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of governance processes. It is expected that, by embedding co-creation principles into legal and policy frameworks, both researchers and policymakers collaborate and strengthen each other efforts towards more resilient and adaptive systems that can respond to the dynamic challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability.

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