

Simon Lyster - International Wildlife Law. Grotius Publications Limited, Sales Division, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 4BQ, United Kingdom  
Price: Paperback 12.00 or US\$17.50 Hardback 25.00 or US\$37.00.  
Postage & packing extra: European destinations 2.40, USA by air-mail 4.85 (US\$7.00).

This is an analysis of international treaties concerned with the conservation of wildlife. It is a very significant book and is bound to become a standard publication in environmental law courses.

Lyster, a Cambridge graduate, has worked as a solicitor in England and is also a member of the New York Bar. In recent years he has been active in wildlife conservation in both the UK and USA.

The use of law to protect wildlife is not new. Akhenaten, King of Egypt, for example, set aside land as a nature reserve in 1370 BC. However, the main international legislative activities have only come about in the last few decades as modern developments have suddenly presented a serious threat to wildlife. International trade in ivory and other wildlife products, for example, goes back for several centuries but in the last 25 years it has become a multi-million dollar business.

This book is the first comprehensive review of the expanding international wildlife law. It describes 27 treaties in detail and contains information on many other treaties which have a bearing on this subject. Part I is an introduction to public international law and its importance for the protection of wildlife.

Part II deals with treaties designed to protect either a single species or a groups of species. One important motivation for these treaties has been the recognition of the need to restrict the killing or trading of animals. Among the animals covered are: whales, seals, polar bears, birds and vicuna.

Part III examines four regional nature conservation treaties affecting the Americas, Africa, Europe and Antarctica. In contrast to the immediately preceding chapters, the main emphasis is on habitat protection and (in Antarctica's case) the limitation of fishing.

Part IV deals with the "big four" wildlife treaties, which were all concluded in the 1970s and are open to almost any nation wishing to join them. These treaties - probably the most important four examined in this book - deal with: wetlands, world cultural and natural heritage, trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora, and migratory species of wild animals.

. 2 .

The Appendix contains the texts of the 12 main treaties. The index is very useful.

It is perhaps an indication of just how extensive this topic has become, that this very large book (about 500 pages) has still not been able to cover two related matters: treaties on pollution which may affect wildlife and, except where already noted above, the 50 or so treaties on fishing, which have been covered only in passing rather than in detail.

This excellent book (which is not terribly expensive given the price of most textbooks) is worth buying for four reasons. First, it sets the treaties in their context so that not only does the reader learn about the treaty but the reader also learns why the treaty was considered worth creating in the first place. Second, information is contained on the implementation of each treaty. Third, there is an assessment of how the treaty is being implemented and how valuable (or otherwise) it has been. Finally, there are the texts of the treaties themselves.

Keith D. Suter

Foundation Director

Trinity Peace Research Institute