



## U.S.-EU Environmental Politics At A Crossroads, Professor Says

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DURHAM, N.H. - Although the United States and European Union face common environmental and energy challenges, they often have taken different approaches to solving them, according to Stacy VanDeveer, associate professor of political science at the University of New Hampshire.

VanDeveer is the co-editor of the new book "Transatlantic Environment and Energy Politics," (Ashgate, 2009) which analyzes climate change, product standards, chemical regulations, renewable energy policies, food safety, and genetically-modified organisms to examine areas of conflict and cooperation in the transatlantic relationship.

"The EU and the U.S. face many common environmental and energy challenges, such as the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce toxics emissions and exposure, regulate electronic waste, develop policies on genetically modified organisms, and food and agricultural safety issues," VanDeveer says.

"But in recent years they have often taken very different approaches to regulating them – at different levels of government. Where the United States was the usual global leader on environmental and consumer safety regulation, the EU has now caught up and often taken the lead with more stringent regulation," he says.

According to VanDeveer, this means the European Union increasingly influences global standards more than does the United States, and the EU regulations increasingly force U.S. companies operating in Europe to abide by EU rules.

To improve the transatlantic relationship regarding environmental and energy policies, the book suggests that policy makers on each side of the Atlantic pay more attention to environmental and trade politics at multiple levels of government.

"In other words, while Washington and Brussels may have persistent differences, environmental leaders and some private sector organizations often have substantial agreements, and they are often in frequent contact," VanDeveer says.

The European Union and the United States are the world's two largest economies. With approximately 12 percent of global population in 2008, the United States and European Union together account for nearly half of global economic activity. As a result, they have significant influence on international decision making in economic, social, energy, resource and environmental outcomes around the globe. The policy positions adopted by the EU and the United States affect policy opportunities and choices in other parts of the world.

"The Obama administration has increased agreement around broad goals related to climate change, though there are many differences in terms of details. Also, both sides have moved closer together on issues such as agricultural safety and combating livestock diseases, and they tend to learn a great deal from one another around renewable energy issues and some waste and toxics standards. If the U.S. Congress and the Obama administration prove more willing to actually ratify treaties that the U.S. signs, it might also improve cooperation," VanDeveer says.

The book has received accolades from those who study environmental and energy issues around the world.

Christoph Knill, at the University of Konstanz, Germany, said the book "...offers an outstanding collection of cutting-edge research on environment and energy politics. Due to its both international and comparative focus, it is of great interest for academics as well as professionals and policy analysts. The book includes valuable insights not only for those interested in these policy areas, but also for readers interested in global governance more generally."

Andrew Jordan, at the University of East Anglia, UK, said, "There is an assumption amongst environmental policy analysts that European laws and policies are much stronger than those in North America. This comprehensive, coherent and thought provoking volume brings together a strong team of scholars from both sides of the Atlantic to assess whether this widely shared view has any basis in reality."

Stacy VanDeveer is an associate professor of political science at the University of New Hampshire. His research interests include international environmental policymaking and its domestic impacts, the connections between environmental and security issues, and the role expertise in policy making. He has authored and co-authored numerous articles, book chapters, and working papers and reports. He has co-edited three books: "Transatlantic Environment and Energy Politics," (Ashgate, 2009), "EU Enlargement and the Environment: Institutional Change and Environmental Policy in Central and Eastern Europe" (Routledge, 2005), and "Saving the Seas: Values, Scientists, and International Governance," (Maryland Sea Grant College, 1997).

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