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Introduction

CJIL Editors

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Introduction

As mounting evidence has made doubting the existence of climate change all but impossible, the policy debate has shifted from whether global warming is an actual phenomenon to ways to address it. The articles in this issue of *The Chicago Journal of International Law (CJIL)* explore the international component of climate change. It is not possible to discuss climate change without confronting the necessity of an international solution to stop it, or at least to slow it.

The articles contained in this volume respond to and build off of ideas in the book *Climate Change Justice*, by Eric A. Posner and David Weisbach. On May 11–12, 2012, the book was the subject of a conference held at The University of Chicago Law School that brought together prominent scholars from the fields of environmental law, public policy, and climate science.

In this issue, scholars like Martha Nussbaum discuss why questions of justice are an essential component of the climate change discussion. Other authors, like Daniel Farber, address whether efforts on the national—or “subglobal”—level could provide a path to an eventual international solution to global warming. Some articles, including one by Matthew Ranson and Robert Stavins, delve into the specifics of how international climate policy might be structured, including the use of cap-and-trade and permit systems. Finally, several articles address the thorny issue of how to calculate responsibility for countries’ future, current, and past emissions, including those made before climate change was known to be a significant environmental problem.

These questions of justice and the optimal route to address climate change are not solely academic. The ideas contained in this issue offer important and potentially impactful policy options for those who will decide whether tackling climate change is a priority as we move further into the twenty-first century and, most agree, toward potentially irreversible adverse effects on the atmosphere.

CJIL’s board would like to thank Omri Ben-Shahar for organizing the conference, as well as the Institute for Law and Economics at The University of

Chicago Law School for sponsoring the conference and funding publication of this issue.

The University of Chicago Law School
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