

Radioactive Waste Disposal at Sea - Public Ideas, Transnational Policy Entrepreneurs & Environmental Regimes

Most studies of environmental regimes focus on the use of power, the pursuit of rational self-interest, and the influence of scientific knowledge. Lasse Ringius focuses instead on the influence of public ideas and policy entrepreneurs. He shows how transnational coalitions of policy entrepreneurs can build environmental regimes and how global environmental nongovernmental organizations can act as catalysts for regime change. This is the first book-length empirical study of the formation of the global ocean dumping regime in 1972 and its subsequent development, which culminated in the 1993 global ban on the dumping of low-level radioactive waste at sea. Ringius describes the structure within which global ocean dumping policy, particularly policy with regard to the disposal of radioactive waste, is embedded. He also examines the political construction of ocean dumping as a global environmental problem, the role of persuasion and communication in an international setting, and the formation of international public opinion. He does not argue that the influence of ideas alone explains how regimes develop, but claims that it is necessary to understand how actors, interests, and ideas together influence regimes and international environmental policy.

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