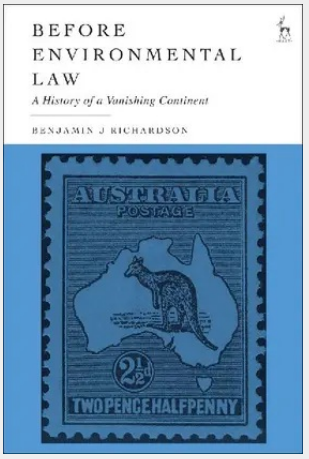
Richardson

Before Environmental Law

A History of a Vanishing Continent



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This open access book unveils the history of defending Australia's natural environment and examines the subject's legal and political contexts from the birth of the nation in 1901 until the advent of the so-called modern era of environmental regulation in the late 1960s. It rejects the mythology that Australia lacked environmental law before the late 1960s in revealing how many of today's environmental laws, from pollution control to nature conservation, emerged from precedents or events much earlier in the 20th century. This history however reveals a discrepancy between lawmakers' greater efficacy to exploit rather than protect the environment, a discrepancy that grew as nature's backlash intensified in a rapidly degrading continent colonised to build the Australian nation. In exploring these dynamics, the book offers a rich tapestry of case studies illustrated with historic photographs that show the origins of Australia's environmental laws and how they borrowed from international precedents or furnished lessons for other nations. Through its multi-disciplinary enquiry, the book offers scholars and students of environmental law, legal history and the environmental humanities a unique story about the failures and successes in the making of environmental law. The ebook editions of this book are available open access under a CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 licence on Bloomsbury Collections.

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