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## Introduction

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## INTRODUCTION

New perspectives of earth as a spaceship have led us to urgently consider the global dimensions of threats to the environment.

The triumverate of land, water and air are bound together by the laws of nature, not to be repealed or amended by the laws and political boundaries of man. Pollution is no respecter of artificial political boundaries, often established by historical accident. As some satirist has said, pollution requires no visa to cross international boundaries.

With the growing awareness of the interdependencies and the global dimensions of international environmental problems, a new challenge and opportunity is presented for the development of international law. The UN Conference on the Human Environment has given further impetus to the need for the development and maturation of international environmental law.

We need the refinement and further elaboration not only of substantive rules of law, but also of procedural rules for resolving international environmental disputes. And beyond the development of norms of international behavior, we must design international institutions to plan and develop environmental policy on an ongoing basis.

The task of scholars and lawyers in this effort is to plot what have been the trends of international practice and project those trends into the future, while at the same time suggesting policy alternatives that may or should be adopted to better preserve and improve the quality of life. The contributors to this special issue have attempted to carry out those tasks. It is an effort to contribute to the development of international environmental law.