Koivurova's approach differs from existing textbooks in international environmental law on at least two grounds. First of all, Koivurova promotes the book as a "popularized presentation" in contrast to some of the weightier tomes on international environmental law that require a thorough training in the broader principles of international law before they can be tackled. Secondly, rather than approaching the different sub-topics of international environmental law in independent chapters, as is done in other textbooks, such as the well-worn Birnie, Boyle and Redgwell[1] or the lighter Beyerlin and Marauhn,[2] not to mention the Oxford and Edward Elgar Handbooks[3] (which compile specialised articles by different authors), Koivurova attempts to provide an overview of the common principles of international environmental law rather than the details of any sub-topic. In this way, he hopes to train the reader in the necessary skills to continue independently to study and analyse the legal instruments and literature pertaining to particular issues.

The text is full of examples which readily illustrate environmental challenges that have been overcome, and how, such as the restoration of the Earth's ozone layer. These provide hope that solutions too can be found for the difficulties currently facing the Earth and its inhabitants. Of all the issues in international environmental law, by far the most attention is paid to climate change and this is particularly evident in the later chapters. Koivurova justifies this focus on the basis that anthropogenic changes to the Earth's climate constitute by far the most dangerous environmental threat facing the human population today and remain one of the most difficult to mitigate.

Does Koivurova achieve his aims? Is the text accessible to a reasonably intelligent reader with no legal background and does he provide a fair account of how international environmental law works? On the first point, there is no doubt that international environmental law is a complex subject that it is impossible to approach without a sound knowledge of the fundamentals of public international law, in particular, who creates international law and how. Koivurova provides this in chapter three in a concise account of the subjects and sources of international law and argues – convincingly – that although states remain at the heart of international law, when it comes to the environment, the relevant actors are much broader than in most other fields of international law. Throughout the rest of the text, when discussing legal norms, Koivurova reminds his readers of these basics so that

they can understand the legal status (bindingness) of the instruments at hand. This is crucial as any glance at the comments page of a "quality" newspaper article on environmental issues will immediately display a wealth of ignorance as to, for example, the role and powers of the United Nations and the jurisdiction of international courts. Nevertheless, even with its gentle style and lively examples, *Introduction to International Environmental Law* does not make for light reading and could be difficult to digest without having read a basic introductory textbook to public international law. (Koivurova addresses this in his preliminary note to the reader and recommends some core textbooks in international law.) This is not a fault of the book but rather reflects the complexity of international environmental law; a text that gave a very simplistic account would be no text at all. It is almost impossible to understand the gaps in international environmental law, its slowness, its failures to deal with some of the most pressing global problems, including climate change, without a sound appreciation of how international law works – or does not work.

On its second aim, to provide an overview of international environmental law and to present it as a system, *Introduction to International Environmental Law* is unique. International environmental law is highly fragmented as Koivurova readily admits, but nevertheless, he attempts to find some coherent threads through it. Other textbooks encourage a reader to dip in and read on the sub-topic that interests her – shared watercourses, marine pollution, atmospheric pollution, biodiversity, etc. – and present each almost as a self-standing subject. *Introduction to International Environmental Law* leaves a reader with the sense that international environmental law is, after all, a single discipline, albeit incomplete and often highly unsatisfying.

It is always dangerous to conclude a text with a chapter entitled the "future" of anything, but in the "Future of International Environmental Law," Koivurova allows himself the space to imagine how environmental problems might be resolved, going rather beyond the foreseeable into the realm of the ideal. He discusses the potential for a global environmental organization, a World Environmental Organisation. Such a body might be little more than the development of the existing United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) into a fully fledged specialised agency; but Koivurova also explores the potential for a powerful environmental body, analogous to the World Trade Organization, with the power to resolve disputes, even if this latter option would require a sea-change in the current governance priorities of states. He concludes by returning to climate change with a hope that

notwithstanding all the pressures pointing towards increased rather than decreased use of fossil fuels, the realities of the consequences of climate change will force human communities to reassess fundamentally their world-view and make the necessary changes before it is too late. Although, I struggle to share Koivurova's optimism, it is at least heartening to end a text that repeatedly reminds us of the myriad of ways in which we continue to kill ourselves on a positive note.

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[1] Patricia Birnie, Alan Boyle and Catherine Redgwell, *International Law and the Environment* (Oxford UP, 2009)

[2] Ulrich Beyerlin and Thilo Marauhn, *International Environmental Law* (Hart Publishing, 2011).

[3] Daniel Bodansky, Jutta Burnnée and Ellen Hey (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of International Environmental Law* (Oxford UP, 2008); Malgosia Fitzmaurice, David M Ong and Panos Merkouris (eds), *Research Handbook on International Environmental Law* (Edward Elgar, 2011).