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Editors' Foreword

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Editors' Foreword

On behalf of the UC Law Environmental Journal editorial board and staff, it is with great pride, gratitude, and joy that we present the Summer Issue of Volume 30 of the UC Law Environmental Journal (UCLEJ). With thirty years of history, this journal has not only served as an academic platform but as a home to generations of environmental law students beginning their legal careers. Students' efforts, past and present, have contributed greatly to the global field of environmental scholarship, evident by our journal's roughly 135,000 article downloads to date. As issues such as climate change and environmental justice become more prominent, the need for this work continues to grow. During our tenure, we have seen 30,000 downloads of our articles and we believe that next year the number will continue to rise.

Historically known as *West-Northwest*, and later, the *Hastings Environmental Law Journal*, this volume reflects yet another pivotal transition in our history. Founded in 1878, UC Law San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings) recently recognized its namesake to hold a legacy steeped in the atrocities of genocide. In 2023, it acted to distance itself from this association by removing the "Hastings" moniker. In solidarity, our journal has been renamed and will henceforth be known as the *UC Law Environmental Journal*.

This issue takes as its theme the pursuit of international environmental justice. These four articles explore the question of how to environmentally achieve just solutions to challenges that cross sovereign boundaries. Our authors consider the oppressive legal regimes that indigenous groups and sovereign nations must navigate to advance their interests or, in many cases, to simply survive.

Our issue begins with the scholarship of Bradly DeMoll. In "**Who Will Speak for the Trees?**", DeMoll provides a close reading and balanced appraisal of the "Save Our Sequoias Act" as proposed in the U.S. House of Representatives. He foregrounds the voice of the Tule River Indian Tribe and shows how the threat of wildfire poses an existential risk to the heritage of that people. DeMoll demonstrates that in this case, land management policy and the empowerment of the Tribe are truly intersectional aspects of international environmental justice.

Using a similarly thorough approach in "**Arizona v. Navajo Nation and the Fight for Natural Resources in Indian Country**," Katherine Hanson investigates the history and the future implications of a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision. This article shows how the labyrinthine legal status of the Navajo Nation, a sovereign entity trapped within an unequal "trust" relationship with the federal government, continues to result in the denial of the Tribe's most basic necessity of life in their arid region, water.

The following two articles broaden the scope of our environmental justice theme and situate these issues at the international level. Jackson Moffett, in "**The Disproportionate Burden on Vulnerable Communities in the Trade of Plastic Waste**," highlights the conspicuous lack of environmental justice considerations in the United Nations' past attempts to address the plastic waste crisis. He assembles substantial evidence to demonstrate the gravity of the problem and argues for the necessity of explicit language in future treaty instruments.

Lastly, Margaret Von Rotz explores another frontier in international environmental justice by focusing on the growing problem of climate change-

induced displacement. In “**Honoring Indigenous Sovereignty and Consent**,” Von Rotz responds to the current absence of legal frameworks designed to protect and empower the sovereignty of Indigenous groups faced with displacement. In the process, she develops a radical critique of many of the basic presumptions of international law.

Together, these authors provide a wide-angle view of the state of many vital questions of international environmental law today. We would like to thank them for their scholarship, diligence, and insight. We would also like to thank our whole editorial board and our faculty advisors for their commitment. It has been a genuine joy working together and we could not have asked for a better team.

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