

Fixing the Climate: Strategies for an Uncertain World

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In *Fixing the Climate*, David G. Victor and Charles F. Sabel note that international climate change accords have not initiated the sweeping changes and deep decarbonization needed to avert environmental catastrophe. Thus, a different administrative and problem-solving framework is needed.

As an example, the book outlines the successful 1987 Montreal Protocol, which tackled the deterioration of the ozone layer. The Protocol's experimentalist governance among nations and industries involved flexible but strict standards for ozone-causing chemicals. Collaborative, ongoing research and the evaluation of progress encouraged innovation and created alternative products and industry-wide standards that repaired atmospheric damage. The status quo of ozone depletion was soon not an economically wise option: laggards were left without markets for their products and faced more regulation, termed as penalty defaults.

By contrast, the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and subsequent accords relied on different institutional machinery, wherein diplomatic negotiation and global consensus rules. Victor and Sabel note that without the problem-solving contributions of academic and industry experts, and without incentives and penalty defaults, industrial sectors had no economic reason to invest in technological alternatives. This has only deepened climate change divisions between advanced and developing nations.

The book examines several American case studies of experimentalist governance, utilizing scientific and industry peer review and regulatory flexibility in limiting automobile and sulfur emissions and spurring innovation with electric vehicles. It later investigates Ireland's management of agricultural pollution, California's innovations in decarbonizing the electric grid, and efforts to combat deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon. These examples highlight that deep decarbonization must be adapted to local conditions and be able to be flexibly managed.

While its subject matter is dense, *Fixing the Climate* shares an important perspective on means of shifting international climate change efforts into high gear.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (May / June 2022)

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