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Abstract

Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan entered United Nations climate change negotiations with encouragement from developed countries. Each of these post-Soviet states stood to benefit from the flexible mechanisms and incentives to reduce emissions embodied in the Kyoto Protocol, and the global environment would benefit as well. However, the effectiveness of the climate change regime depends on two preconditions: entry into force of the treaty, and establishment of credible domestic structures to regulate the use of flexible mechanisms in each member state. Both of these preconditions have proven problematic, but all three states have continued to participate in the process and have enjoyed some successes both internationally and domestically.

This paper examines the evolution of climate change policy in each of the three states. Topics considered include each country's role in international negotiations; the sources and changes in government leadership on the issue; the roles of non-governmental organizations; and the international financial assistance provided for climate policy. The policies and practices of these states are evaluated comparatively, with an eye towards distinguishing the differences in their approaches, as well as key policy successes and failures.