



5-5-2016

Letter from the Editor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/psr>



Part of the [Environmental Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2016) "Letter from the Editor," *Penn Sustainability Review*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 8 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/psr/vol1/iss8/1>

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. <https://repository.upenn.edu/psr/vol1/iss8/1>
For more information, please contact repository@pobox.upenn.edu.

Letter from the Editor

DEAR READERS,

Sustainability has travelled a long way over the last 50 years. Early activists, inspired by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, focused on the direct impact of human on the natural world. Pesticides, extinctions, peak oil, and flaming rivers were the initial focal points. Now we think bigger. Climate change, modernisation, and economic theory now dominate our perspectives. The scale of the challenges have grown, along with international engagement with environmentalism and sustainability.

Just look at the 2015 Paris Agreement. 195 countries came together, debated and negotiated this complex, comprehensive international treaty. By no means was it easy. As Rita Wegner (p.14) points out, 'There is little incentive for a single country to take action if there is little international consensus'. Yet, after decades of discussions, the treaty is now in effect. COP21 is not the final step on fixing climate change. It is but the beginning.

This issue, my last as the Editor-in-Chief of the Penn Sustainability Review, seeks to dig deep into this critical area of 'Politics'. Far from the activists of the 1960s, climate action has now become an arena of international negotiation and economic policy. Sustainability now dictates how countries, rich and poor, approach their basic infrastructure. Environmentalists now touch every part of our country.

'Politics' is really at the crux of such environmental, sustainability and energy policy. It's what drives, or deters action. It's what prevents the USA from fully tackling the 'loaded gun of Methane Clathrates' (p. 22), and causes the dictates the complex challenges with water usage in the West Bank (p.46). It dominates the actions and views for Royal Dutch Shell's Marvin Odum when he considers the future of the giant energy firm (p.6).

Politics allows us to unpack the fascinating challenge of using India's vast mountains of trash to create energy (p.40) and the unique approach of Vietnam towards climate change (p.51). Using an impressive array of clearly presented data, Thomas Lee seeks to debunk politically-motivated myths about renewable energy (p.33). We even ask whether the fundamental basis of our economic system is capable of handling environmental factors (p.28).

This issue is our biggest yet. It proved the efficacy of our peer review system, where past writers and editors picked apart a vast number of submissions to find these articles. None of this would have been possible without the fantastic PSR board, our advisors and sponsors. After two fantastic years, I have nothing but gratitude to the 57 people I have had the pleasure to work with.

Only by questioning, reading, and in our case, writing can we become more informed. Only by being more informed can we work to alter the world to be a better place.

Thank you for reading and being part of our journey to a more sustainable planet.

Sustainably yours,
Sasha Klebnikov