

The Conflicting Economic and Environmental Logics of North American Governance: NAFTA, Energy Subsidies, and Climate Change

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NAFTA promised the development of a green economy throughout North America. Provisions against downward harmonization, the respect for state autonomy in environmental regulation, and the creation of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation gave hope to North Americans that an environmentally sustainable trade regime was possible. Despite good environmental intentions, the agreement inhibits the achievement of cleaner energy trade by allowing and encouraging the subsidization of fossil fuel development, by preventing governments from regulating the rate of resource depletion, and by entrenching neo-conservative, deregulatory values favoring the priorities of transnational corporations over those of conservation and environmental protection