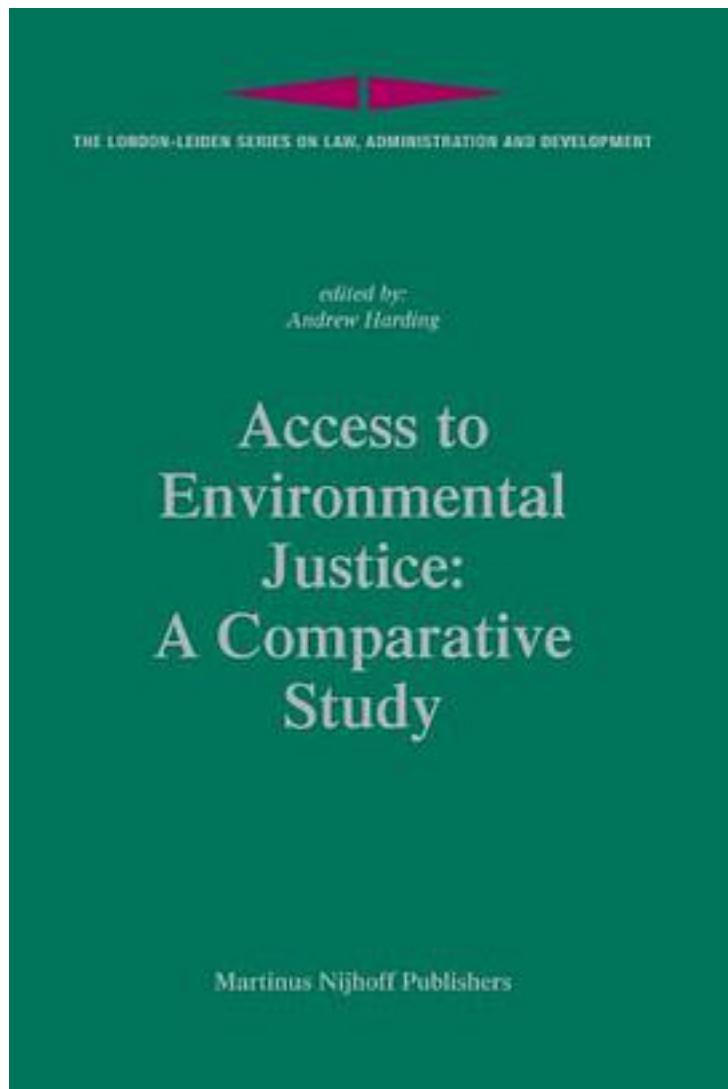


Access to Environmental Justice



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Although it is commonly asserted that enhanced citizen participation results in better environmental policy and improved enforcement of environmental standards, this hypothesis has rarely been subject to testing on a comparative basis. The contributors to this book set out to study the extent to which citizens can and do exert influence over their urban environments through the legal (and extra-legal) 'gateways' in eleven countries spanning several continents as well as different climates, levels and type of economic development, and national legal and constitutional systems, as well as exhibiting a different set of environmental problems. One interviewee questioned about access to environmental justice, dryly remarked that in his city there was no environment, no justice and no access to either. Yet this view, as will be seen, requires to be nuanced. While few people will be surprised by the finding that legal gateways to environmental justice are largely ineffective, the reasons for this are revealing; but also the richness of detail and the comparisons between the different countries, and also the positive aspects which surfaced in several instances, were indeed both encouraging and sometimes surprising. This book presents the first comparative survey of access to environmental justice, and will be of considerable use to lawyers, policy-makers, activists and scholars who are concerned with the environmental issues which so profoundly affect and afflict our habitat and conditions of social justice throughout the world.

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