

CGD SEMINAR



DATE: Tuesday, 17 January 2017

TIME: 11 a.m.

LOCATION: NCAR, 1850 Table Mesa Drive
Mesa Lab, Main Seminar Room

TITLE: Policies for managing the global commons: The case of marine protected areas in Antarctica

SPEAKER: Cassandra Brooks, Stanford

ABSTRACT:

On October 28, 2016, after more than a decade of international negotiations, the Commission responsible for managing Antarctic marine living resources, CCAMLR, adopted the world's largest marine protected area (MPA) in the Ross Sea, Antarctica. To evaluate the barriers and facilitators of the CCAMLR MPA process, I completed an in depth case study that included participant observations of six CCAMLR meetings from 2012-2016, interviews with CCAMLR diplomats and scientists from the 24 Member States, and compiling a diverse suite of other documents and secondary sources from 1982-2016. Results indicate that economic interests, geopolitics, and lack of a defined policy process created institutional inertia within CCAMLR and thus stalled CCAMLR's ability to establish MPAs. Worldwide, the Antarctic harbors some of the last regions of unexploited marine living resources, including krill and lucrative toothfish. The MPAs proposed would displace some fishing access, limit potential future access to Southern Ocean resources and set a major precedent for global management in the Antarctic and high seas. Tense international relations (e.g., Crimea) can stall the entire process, as occurred during the 2014 CCAMLR meeting. However, between 2015 and 2016, CCAMLR achieved a political window of opportunity and reached consensus on adopting an MPA in the Ross Sea spanning 1.55 million km². Despite the vast size of this MPA, the boundaries were drawn to largely accommodate fishing interests and the MPA contained multiple political concessions, including a sunset clause. Future research will explore the efficacy of the Ross Sea MPA and the potential policy impacts of CCAMLR's MPA process on other ocean commons.