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### A Welcome

Michael I. Sovern

*Columbia Law School*, [msovern@law.columbia.edu](mailto:msovern@law.columbia.edu)

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## A Welcome

Though my offering here is more ceremonial than intellectual, I accepted with alacrity the editors' invitation to submit a brief, welcoming essay for Volume 1, Number 1 of the Columbia Journal of Environmental Law. I write, first, to symbolize our School's deep and abiding commitment to environmental studies, a commitment evidenced by the extraordinary number of Columbia students, faculty and alumni who have contributed and are contributing to the development of environmental law. Professors Grad, Jones, Murphy, and Rosenthal; Russel Train, David Sive and Jerome Kretchmer; and the editors of this Journal, among many others, come quickly to mind. I write too because of my conviction that student-edited law journals deserve special support. When they achieve the level of quality we expect of the Columbia Journal of Environmental Law, they make a significant contribution to the literature of our profession. To say that less pompously, they help us to understand. At the same time they serve as invaluable training grounds, with each generation of highly motivated students helping the next to learn their craft.

This is a good time for the Journal to begin. We have passed the long, dark years when those concerned with the environment were regarded as kooks. I suspect that we have also passed the time of greatest alarm over the deteriorating quality of our air, water, and natural beauty. The era of rhetoric is largely behind us; the years of professionalism have begun. The mass of legislation enacted during the past decade, together with new uses of old doctrine in the traditional areas of nuisance, property, and riparian law require careful analysis, evaluation and presentation in order to meet the needs of the legal community. A body of law is being built, and more than ever we must use our considerable professional skills too insure that the results are wise and effective. This Journal is an important step in that direction.

A while ago, in an orgy of housecleaning, I threw away the first issue of a long-gone New York newspaper—The P.M. By now, it has doubtless been recycled. I am confident that no such fate awaits Volume 1, Number 1 of the Columbia Journal of Environ-

mental Law. On behalf of all of us at the Columbia School of Law, I thank the Editors of the Journal for enhancing our professional environment and wish their progeny a long and useful life.

MICHAEL I. SOVERN

*Dean of the Faculty of Law  
Columbia Law School*