Preface

Environmental justice is a massive topic. Justice itself means different things to different scholars, and the ‘environmental’ descriptor adds new dimensions. Notably considering the environmental dimension adds the possibility that non-humans may have rights that should be given legal status, and that human interests in the natural world may give rise to unique jurisprudential considerations. Our aim with this book has been to provide a window into treatments of this topic that are of interest to scholars within the environmental law academy of the IUCN. We do not pretend that this group of academics have a unified perception of the scope of environmental justice or the evolving jurisprudence within it. Virtually any sub-topic of environmental justice covered in this edition can easily justify a complete book. Our ambition with this book is to introduce the reader to the diversity and richness of scholarship in this fascinating and strengthening field of investigation. Even given this limited aim, we know that there are dimensions of the topic that we have not touched upon.

The book is divided into four parts, though such subdivision is artificial because many themes and issues are interwoven through the chapters.

1. Part I (Framing the search for environmental justice) considers perspectives of scholars and judges upon the fundamental nature of environmental justice.

2. Part II (Rights-based conceptualisations) takes a pragmatic perspective on the ways in which human interests are being pursued through legal rights, and the implications of this for environmental justice.

3. Part III (Implementation challenges of environmental justice) considers the ways in which approaches to environment governance are (or are not) embracing the concept of environmental justice.

4. The final Part (Recognition of indigenous peoples’ interests) is focused upon indigenous issues and approaches.