

# OSTROM WORKSHOP COLLOQUIUM SERIES

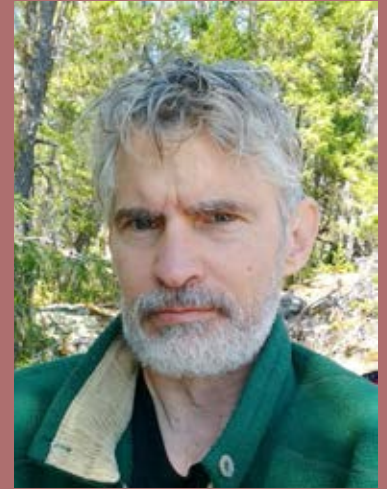
## Benjamin Cashore

*School of Forestry and Environmental Studies  
Yale University*

“The Tragedy of the Diffusion of the Commons Metaphor: Bringing the Environment Back in to Environmental Studies”

**Monday, April 23, 2018**

12:00 – 1:00 p.m. • Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park



Elinor Ostrom's work challenging prevailing metaphors about how to solve “tragedies of the commons” had two profound impacts. First, it demonstrated that working inductively from the nature of the problem in question can generate innovative policy solutions to enduring problems. Second, the CPR metaphor straightjacketed scholarship and pedagogy by reinforcing the conversion of environmental problems into economic challenges. To overcome this tragedy, we identify four ideal-type problem conceptions: win-win; win/lose optimization; win/lose compromise; and win/lose priority. We show the utility of these lenses for describing the shift away from Type 4 understandings of environmental problems dominant in the 1970s that justified the creation of environment schools and strict conservation laws, toward Type 1, 2, and 3 conceptions that emphasize the “science” of compromise and cost-benefit analysis. We conclude with suggestions to reverse these trends if environmental schools are to train students to address “super wicked” Type 4 problems such as climate change.



**Benjamin Cashore's** major research interests include non-state market driven (NSMD) systems, comparative public policy, and global environmental governance. He is curious about how, in the global era, governments, non-state actors, civil society, and firms might travel policy pathways across multiple levels of governance, public and private, to produce durable global environmental governance and sustainability solutions. He pursues this approach through thematic efforts: policy change and learning; climate change as a “super wicked” problem & forest policy and governance ([website](#)).

Presentations are open to the public and are live streamed (see our website for URL and papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon ([sturgeon@iu.edu](mailto:sturgeon@iu.edu); 812/855-3151).