

# EDITORIAL

*Party politics is not the task of this journal, but those who had hoped for a change in the environmental policy of the US are disappointed. Not only with respect to the Kyoto Protocol but also with regard to the unfulfilled promises concerning the Law of the Sea and the Liability Protocol for the Antarctic and several other aspects. But we have to be realistic and are still optimistic of being able to achieve our goals, if need be without the United States. Indeed, President Putin has already been helpful in one respect.*

*In Europe, there has also been a softening of environmental regulations. For example, the Italian Senate has supported in a confidence vote initiated by the Government environmental legislation which, among other things, will enable Prime Minister Berlusconi to avoid prosecution for non-approved construction work to his villa in Sardinia.*

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*For some months, the United Nations has been calling for concerted action to deal with the plague of locusts in West Africa. Recently, the UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs expressed bluntly that the world community had not listened to its warnings. As a result, at least \$100 million will now be needed to deal with the damage wreaked on the three to four million hectares of land occupied by the locust swarms, instead of the \$9 million initially requested last May.*

*Could necessary action in such cases be achieved in the future if, as called for by the President of the General Assembly, the Organisation can be strengthened and structural reform can be undertaken?*

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*This issue of EPL brings another year to a close. We would like to think that we have fulfilled our readers' expectations, even if we have had difficulties in deciding what to include in the space available and what to omit. However, in this regard we are glad to report that it has been a long time since we received a critical letter regarding the content. We shall continue to do our best as lawyers, even if we are not professional journalists.*

8 November 2004

*- Wolfgang Breyer -*