Acknowledgments

The origins of this book lie in my previous professional work as a lawyer in the fields of human rights and climate change. As a delegate of the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law to the 11th, 12th, and 13th sessions of the UNFCCC COP held in Montreal in 2005, Nairobi in 2006, and Bali in 2007, I had the opportunity to witness the emergence of REDD+ in the international climate negotiations as well as the enthusiasm and controversy that it generated among the delegates in attendance. Next, at the 15th session of the UNFCCC COP held in Copenhagen in 2009, I served on the first (and last) delegation sent by Amnesty International to the international climate negotiations. During the negotiations, I participated in the first meeting of what would later become the Human Rights & Climate Change Working Group, an informal network of lawyers and activists working to integrate human rights standards and principles into international climate law. I also had the opportunity to discuss the role and relevance of human rights to the governance of REDD+ with a number of civil society and government delegates throughout the negotiations. This experience, along with fortuitous encounters with a number of graduate students from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies attending the climate negotiations in Copenhagen, led me to apply to pursue a PhD in environmental studies at Yale University. In fact, I prepared and submitted my application to Yale while sitting on the floor of the overcrowded Bella Centre in anticipation of the start of a negotiating session that would never take place due to the collapse of the talks in Copenhagen.

From 2010 to 2015, I had the opportunity to complete a PhD in environmental studies at Yale, which proved to be a more intellectually enriching and academically ambitious journey than I could ever have envisioned. The support of numerous individuals and organizations was critical to my progress along the way. At Yale, I benefited immensely from the encouragement,
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