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978-0-521-74300-6 - Governance for the Environment: New Perspectives

Edited by Magali A. Delmas and Oran R. Young

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GOVERNANCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

We live in an era of human-dominated ecosystems in which the demand for environmental governance is rising rapidly. At the same time, confidence in the capacity of governments to meet this demand is waning. How can we address the resultant governance deficit and achieve sustainable development? This book brings together perspectives from economics, management, and political science in order to identify innovative approaches to governance and bring them to bear on environmental issues. The authors' analysis of important cases demonstrates how governance systems need to fit their specific setting and how effective policies can be developed without relying exclusively on government. They argue that the future of environmental policies lies in coordinated systems that simultaneously engage actors located in the public sector, the private sector, and civil society. *Governance for the Environment* draws attention to cutting-edge questions for practitioners and analysts interested in environmental governance.

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P R E F A C E

This book is a product of our collaboration in the unique setting of the Donald Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California (Santa Barbara). Unlike mainstream, discipline-based departments, which often create barriers to collaboration across the boundaries of established disciplines, the Bren School facilitates and actually encourages such collaborative efforts. So, first and foremost, we are grateful to the School for providing an academic setting conducive to our work on new developments in understanding both the nature and the role of governance in various realms.

What has made this project particularly productive for us is that new thinking about governance is developing rapidly in several different research communities that so far have had relatively little contact with one another regarding new ideas about governance. In this project, we have brought together contributors from the fields of economics, management, and political science. Lawyers also participated in the workshop on which the book is based, although none of the chapters that make up the text of the book was prepared by a lawyer.

What this effort has revealed is interesting and challenging on two counts. It is clear that there is sufficient overlap in the thinking of researchers working in these fields on the nature of governance – treated as a social function rather than a specialized organization in society – to allow for fruitful exchanges and to open up the prospect of developing a unified body of knowledge about governance. But, also, there are enough differences in the thinking of those coming from the different disciplines to provide an important research agenda for all those concerned with the creation of the governance systems needed to address a broad range of issues grouped together under the rubric of sustainable development. This is particularly good news in a period in which, as we explain in the book's Introduction, the demand for governance is rising rapidly but confidence in the mechanisms we are used to relying on to supply governance is waning.

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We owe several debts of gratitude and it is our pleasure to spell them out here. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund provided a grant to the Program on Governance for Sustainable Development at the Bren School that made it possible to gather an outstanding group of researchers working in this field for a workshop held in Santa Barbara on October 12–14, 2006. The Bren School itself provided support both in cash and in kind that made it possible to navigate the transition from earlier drafts to revised drafts of the individual chapters in the book as well as facilitating the administrative tasks involved in transforming a collection of papers into a coherent book.

We are grateful to John Haslam of Cambridge University Press for taking an interest in the project and for arranging for several anonymous reviews that helped us to clarify and strengthen a number of elements of the book. We are also pleased to acknowledge the services of Peter Rooney, who prepared the index. Above all, we are grateful to Maria Gordon, the chief of staff of the Program on Governance for Sustainable Development, for an extraordinary variety of services, ranging from organizing the workshop itself to providing high-quality editorial advice regarding many aspects of the text of the book.

From its inception, this project has been rooted in a collaboration between a researcher working in the field of corporate environmental management and another specializing in environmental politics and governance. One of the major payoffs for us from the project is the opportunity it afforded us to work together and sharpen our understanding of many aspects of governance.