The ultimate goal of environmental policy is reducing pollution. Attention to environmental problems in the social sciences has brought some bold generalizations about causes of good results but almost no systematic cross-national studies that flesh out major theoretical arguments and test those claims with data. This study makes a seminal contribution to that effort in two ways. First, by taking environmental outcomes over the past thirty years as the central dependent variable, it provides a basis for evaluating national performance in reducing environmental problems. Second, by developing a data set including performance in a number of countries and elaborating on major explanations of environmental performance found in the literature, this study provides the most rigorous available analysis of the determinants of environmental performance. In so doing, it challenges what is probably the conventional wisdom in the social sciences. This book will help to place the study of environmental politics on par with other comparative studies such as Gosta Esping-Andersen’s *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Arend Lijphart’s *Democracies*, and G. Bingham Powell’s *Contemporary Democracies*.

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Sustaining Abundance

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE IN INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES

LYLE SCRUGGS
University of Connecticut
For Laura
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Preface

The seed for this book was planted in 1993 while I was working as a research assistant for Margaret McKean at Duke University. What was initially envisaged as a large-scale collaborative project on cross-national energy policy was narrowed into a dissertation investigating correlates of environmental performance among the advanced industrial democracies. When I arrived at the University of Connecticut in 1998, I put the just completed dissertation on a bookshelf and turned my attention to some other ideas. This was done on the advice of some senior colleagues, who suggested that the break would do me good. It was useful advice. Although I did look anxiously at the binder on my bookshelf a few times in the ensuing twelve months, the time off was refreshing. Ultimately, I think it has made the book a better one.

Meg McKean provided great encouragement and helpful criticism (and copious comments) throughout this project, particularly as it developed as my doctoral dissertation. I have not given (and probably cannot give) her enough credit. Others were also kind enough to read and comment on various aspects of the project along the way. David Vogel read a very early version of the manuscript. His comments provided great encouragement. Michael Skou Andersen, Pete Andrews, Peter Munk Christiansen, Robert Keohane, Michael Munger, Sonja Walti, and Albert Weale have all provided very intelligent and helpful advice. To the extent that what follows does not reflect the intelligence of all of these people, it is not for their lack of effort: the responsibility is entirely my own. The political science editor at Cambridge University Press, Lewis Bateman, has been both extremely encouraging and helpful throughout the process. Last but not least, Margaret Levi was very kind to put this book in the Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics series.
Preface

This project would probably not have been possible without the encouraging help from many public officials who provided bits of information, whether in the form of insight into their national regulatory process or details on the pollution problems assessed in this book. On the whole, the experience has reinforced in me the conviction that the inherent ambiguities surrounding social data necessitate fuller, not more circumscribed, comparisons, be they of individuals or countries. Richard Lewis and Wolfgang Gaede provided helpful and friendly support in introducing me to some of these national officials. I also thank the Center for International Studies at Duke University and the Research Foundation at the University of Connecticut for financial support on this project. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Departments of Political Science at both institutions.

I owe a special credit to Peter Lange, my dissertation advisor and a frequent collaborator. He was the one who encouraged me to work on other things upon arriving in Storrs. Peter has provided invaluable advice on this project and beyond. He is a unique and wonderful person and a great friend. Those familiar with Peter's work will probably find his influences all too easily.

Finally, I would like to thank Scott de Marchi and Layna Mosley for their intangible professional and moral support in seeing the project along. Their contributions have been greater than any of us might have realized at the time.