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### **Author**

Mirza, Umar Karim

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## **Review: Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy**

By Natalia Mirovitskaya and William L. Ascher, eds.

Reviewed by [Umar Karim Mirza](#)

*Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Pakistan*

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Natalia Mirovitskaya, & William L. Ascher (Eds.). *Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001. 391 pp. ISBN 0-8223-2745-7 (paperback). US\$34.95. Alkaline paper.

*The Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy* is a work by 25 contributors coming from varying backgrounds and institutions, some of them from outside the United States.

The table of contents is very extensive followed by a short introduction to the guide and brief biographical descriptions of contributors. There are six main chapters that have been divided into sub-chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to development and environment while the second one discusses sustainability. Major factors behind development and environmental change are highlighted in the third chapter.

Chapter four talks about the international political economy of environment and development. The concept of decision-making has been elaborated in chapter five. Chapter six is devoted to the presentation of major problems of environmental degradation and development. A list of references has been provided before the index marking the end of the book.

The beauty of this guide is the thorough treatment of terminology and definitions related to global environmental and developmental issues, which makes it a really useful resource. There is a wealth of information on policies, models, and analysis of environmental problems. The focus is global rather than local. This is a welcome change since most of the literature published in the United States on this topic so far has discussed only local perspectives. *The Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy* is multidisciplinary in nature and tackles environmental issues in the light of a variety of disciplines such as economics, demography, policy, and governance.

Some important issues like the role of lending agencies and prominent national environmental policies have not been covered in much detail in this guide, but that is not unexpected. That would have made the guide deviate from the main objective of concentrating on a global environmental perspective.

Overall this resource is expected to serve as a roadmap for the perception of issues and concerns associated with the fields of environment and development. Educators, students, researchers, policymakers, activists, and journalists will find much to their liking in this guide. The chapters on sustainability and major environmental problems are recommended reading for the general public, too, because without the involvement of the masses, we cannot achieve the dream of a sustainable world.

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Umar Karim Mirza <[mensan152@yahoo.com](mailto:mensan152@yahoo.com)>, Ph. D. Scholar, Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences, P.O. Nilore, Islamabad 45650, Pakistan. TEL: 92-51-2207381, FAX: 92-51-9223727.