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Peer reviewed

Review: *A Survey of Ecological Economics.*

Edited by Rajaraman Krishnan, Jonathan M. Harris, and Neva R. Goodwin

Reviewed by R. Srinivasan
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Krishnan, Rajaraman., Harris, Jonathan M., and Neva R. Goodwin, editors. *A Survey of Ecological Economics*. Washington D.C.: Island Press, 1995. 385 pp. US \$24.95 paper. ISBN: 1-55963-411-1. Recycled, Acid free paper.

How different is ecological economics from any other branch of economics? Is it any different from traditional micro-economic theory? Are there special techniques, concepts, theories, etc. that are specific to the field of ecological economics? How different is it from environmental economics? These are some of the basic issues that need to be addressed when embarking on a study of ecological economics. The diversity of topics inclusive in the field has contributed to the growth of literature in a number of subject areas, including traditional micro-economic theory, environment and ecology, scientific thought, sustainable development, and natural resource economics and management. To this end, a comprehensive review of the field of ecological economics was long overdue.

A Survey of Ecological Economics is the first book in the series, *Frontier Issues in Economic Thought*, edited by Neva R. Goodwin. The book is a product of the Research and Publication project of the program for the Study of Sustainable Change and Development at the Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University. It provides an extensive review of literature in the field of ecological economics. In publishing *A Survey of Ecological Economics* the editors attempt to develop a unified field or discipline despite the obvious differences in views and theoretical perspectives.

A Survey of Ecological Economics is arranged in a sequence that can be easily followed by both novice and specialist in the field: beginning with the historical perspective, then dwelling upon the definitions and scope of the field, and providing an introduction to the theoretical tools and techniques. In addition, the editors introduce specific topics relating to energy and resource flow analysis, and accounting and evaluation. Current controversies relating to international economics, and ethical

and institutional issues are also discussed. The book gains its unique strength through its structure and presentation. Each of the parts is preceded with an overview essay by one of the editors, and includes different perspectives on the issues (see for example, the articles by Bhagwati, p.302 and Daly, p.304 representing contrasting view points on free trade). *A Survey of Ecological Economics* also benefits from the diversity of authors included who represent various walks of life from all over the world. This diversity adds an element of debate to the field, rather than presenting a single biased analysis of issues.

Distinctly, the emphasis of the book is on presenting the breadth of the topic rather than the details of individual topics. The source of the original articles are provided accurately and include full affiliations and addresses of the authors.

The literature in this field has grown quickly, thereby making a condensed comprehensive review invaluable for any beginner interested in this topic. The summaries are done meticulously and reflect the original authors' view point in totality. It is therefore highly recommended as a starting point for all graduate students in the field, and as a ready reference for practitioners.

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