
Preface

This second edition of *Paths to a Green World* is a highly ambitious book. Thoroughly updated, this revised edition remains the only book to concentrate exclusively on the political economy of the global environment, striving to integrate the debates within the “real world” of global policy and the “academic world” of theory. It moves well beyond the traditional academic focus on international agreements and institutions in an effort to capture the views on politics, economics, and the environment within the halls of global conferences, on the streets during anti-globalization protests, and in the boardrooms of international agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and industry associations. In doing so, it investigates the debates over globalization, environmentalism, economic growth, poverty, consumption, trade, corporate investment, and international finance. It does so from a variety of angles—economic, political, ecological, and social.

The book explicitly does not advocate for a particular perspective on how politics and economics relate to the health of the global environment. Instead, it offers an original typology of worldviews—what we call market liberal, institutionalist, bioenvironmentalist, and social green—to classify the various debates present in political and academic arenas. This typology is, we believe, parsimonious enough for readers to grasp the key threads with ease, yet nuanced enough to rouse vigorous debate. The book fills, in our view, a critical gap in the literature on global environmental change. It meets an immediate need in the field of global environmental politics, by providing comprehensive coverage of the political economy of the global environment that includes policy and corporate views that academics often downplay or ignore. The typology we propose in the book, we hope, will also meet a much more imposing need: to

help scholars, bureaucrats, industrialists, and activists communicate in a common language. This latter goal is perhaps too ambitious, perhaps even naive. But given the enthusiastic response to the 2005 edition of this book, we are encouraged that a second edition will facilitate such dialog even further.

We have tried our best to explain the complexities of the political economy of global environmental change without disciplinary jargon. Naturally, the book uses terminology; otherwise, it could only skim the surface of the core debates. Yet at every turn we strive to explain debates and define terms in ways that transcend disciplines. Our hope is that those from a range of educational backgrounds—including development studies, economics, environmental studies, geography, human ecology, international law, philosophy, political science, and sociology—can use this book for a big-picture snapshot of the core debates.

Like the first edition of *Paths to a Green World*, this one will also function well as a university textbook to introduce the debates on the interface between political economy and global environmental change. Instructors using it as a textbook may want to add case studies of particular global environmental problems. In our own teaching, for example, we add lectures and readings on the political economy of climate change, deforestation, food security, nonrenewable resource extraction, ozone depletion, persistent organic pollutants, and trade in hazardous waste. But other global environmental issues—like acid rain, biodiversity loss, desertification, energy use, overfishing, genetically modified organisms, trade in endangered species, transboundary pollution, and whaling, as well as many others—would work equally well.

Instructors may also want to integrate some literature with more of a disciplinary focus to expose students to the particular terminology and research methods that their discipline uses to analyze the political economy of global environmental change. One of us, for example, teaches in a department of political science and supplements this book with readings that reflect the language and debates in the fields of international relations and global environmental politics. The other teaches both environmental and international studies and supplements the book with readings that reflect the learning of the students in these programs. It is, we believe, worthwhile to encourage students to think

beyond disciplinary boundaries. Yet it is often just as valuable to embed some learning within one or two disciplines, because this can allow for a more erudite analysis of the core questions in a particular discipline.

We trust that all who choose to continue—regardless of the reason for beginning—will read with the curiosity of a true student, so each of the worldviews can spring equally to life in the analysis in the rest of the book.