Green Taxation in East Asia

Edited by Richard Cullen, Visiting Professor, The University of Hong Kong, Jefferson VanderVolk, OECD Centre for Tax Policy and Administration, France and Yan Xu, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The core concern of this book is the potential use of taxation and related measures to foster climate-helpful, large-scale change within East Asia.

The contributing authors examine key issues such as how Greater China, for instance, confronts severe environmental problems which are a direct product of several decades of remarkable economic growth. The detailed analysis in this book identifies a range of green taxation guidelines for East Asia as it seeks to drive down striking levels of environmental degradation – and tackle the climate change challenge.

‘Detailed coverage of the use of tax to manage environmental impact is in acute shortage. When the focus is narrowed to the critical area of East Asia, there is even less. This book steps in to fill the gap and does so most admirably.’
– Nolan Sharkey, University of New South Wales, Australia

‘The broad sweep of “green taxation” – pollution, carbon, resource and land taxes, and tax incentives for environmental goals – makes it complex to analyse. Green Taxation in East Asia is a timely and valuable comparative contribution to an expanding literature. Its scholarly country studies show how green taxes aim to modify behaviour, correct externalities, regulate, or raise revenue. As environmental policy and tax policy move closer together, green taxes become feasible, but are always, as the editors say, “shaped by local political, economic and social circumstances”.
– Miranda Stewart, University of Melbourne, Australia

‘In today’s world, environmental challenges grow apace and the impact of taxation measures on these will prove critical. Green Taxation in East Asia addresses those challenges. It draws on world-wide experiences (including those from North America and the EU) by analysing and critiquing how green taxation can inform, develop and implement environmental policies in East Asia (and beyond). This is not a sterile tax debate. The authors of this work, all leading scholars in their respective jurisdictions, combine economic, social and local political perspectives on what should work and what should not. The debate is too important to ignore in a world where Kyoto seems a long way from Washington, the fragrant harbour is no longer, and even in the lands down-under, long white clouds and pristine beaches are no longer taken for granted. Taxation is not a panacea for curing environmental ills; but it is, as this book admirably shows, part of the answer.’
– Andrew Halkyard, University of Hong Kong

‘The right of East Asia to grow its economy and provide its citizens with living standards enjoyed elsewhere is as undeniable as the risk to the global environment from this growth. A volume that contrasts current initiatives in China and Hong Kong to reduce that risk with lessons from international experience presented by leading international experts from four continents, is more than just timely; it can make a key contribution to the development of contemporary thinking on taxation and the environment. This work fits the bill perfectly.’
– Rick Krever, Monash University, Australia

‘The authors of the jurisdictional chapters in this book are, of necessity, more focussed on analyzing the interaction, today between taxation (and related fiscal measures) and the environment. From these studies it is clear that a great deal is amiss in the way this interface works at present across all the jurisdictions under review. But this research also shows positive
steps being taken – and great scope for further, positive tax policy development. We can see
from this research how smart policy innovation can start right now – and also how it can build
better foundations for the introduction of more comprehensive, globally effective policy
frameworks such as those advanced by Hansen and Sandor. Time is of the essence. The
scholarship in this volume shows that lawyers and tax experts are engaged in finding solutions.
Can green taxation make a difference? The answer is a resounding “yes”.
– From the foreword by Christine Loh