



The Political Economy of the Environment

James K. Boyce, Professor of Economics and Program Director for Development, Peacebuilding, and the Environment, Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, US

In a provocative and original analysis, James K. Boyce examines the dynamics of environmental degradation in terms of the balances of power between the winners and the losers. He provides evidence that inequalities of power and wealth affect not only the distribution of environmental costs, but also their overall magnitude: greater inequalities result in more environmental degradation. Democratization – movement toward a more equitable distribution of power – therefore is not only a worthwhile objective in its own right, but also an important means toward the social goals of environmental protection and sustainable development.

‘Professor Boyce’s work is an excellent example of how ecological economics can be done in an objective, evidence-based approach that can put issues on the agenda in a manner where they will be taken seriously by other scholars. . . This is a well-written and provocative book that should encourage further research on all these important issues.’

– David I. Stern, International Journal of Social Economics

‘This succinct and sometimes provocative book sets out to document, quantify and explain the ways in which inequalities of wealth and power create an uneven apportionment of environmental costs across the world. It offers a combination of theoretical analysis and empirical evidence to support the author’s central contention that greater democratisation and changes in society’s relationship with nature are paramount for achieving the dual goals of environmental protection and sustainable development. . . This book is immensely well written. . . makes for a fascinating read.’

– Ian Bailey, European Spatial Research and Policy

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