

1993

Book Review: Economic Development & Environmental Protection in Latin America, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin

David Leonard Downie
Fairfield University, ddownie@fairfield.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/politics-facultypubs>

Copyright 1993 Wiley

The final publisher PDF has been archived here with permission from the copyright holder.

Repository Citation

Downie, David Leonard, "Book Review: Economic Development & Environmental Protection in Latin America, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin" (1993). *Politics Faculty Publications*. 30.
<https://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/politics-facultypubs/30>

Published Citation

Downie, David L. (1993) Book Review: Economic Development & Environmental Protection in Latin America, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991). In *Southeastern Political Review*, 21(2):437-439 (Spring 1993).
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-1346.1993.tb00371.x>.

This item has been accepted for inclusion in DigitalCommons@Fairfield by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Fairfield. It is brought to you by DigitalCommons@Fairfield with permission from the rights-holder(s) and is protected by copyright and/or related rights. **You are free to use this item in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses, you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.** For more information, please contact digitalcommons@fairfield.edu.

Joseph S. Tulchin and Andrew S. Rudman, eds. *Economic Development and Environment Protection in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 1991. 143 pp. \$9.95 paper.

This excellent collection offers short, insightful essays on four broad topics: sustainable development, Amazon deforestation, debt-for-nature swaps, and urban air pollution. Written by academic specialists, government officials and environmentalists the papers were originally delivered at a series of seminars conducted at the Woodrow Wilson Center. Each section includes three articles, commentary by a noted authority, and a summary of that seminar's roundtable discussion.

Part one examines the need to balance economic development and environmental protection. Herman Daly of the World Bank stresses the importance of properly defining sustainable development and argues that policymakers must recognize the distinction between economic growth—a raw statistical measure of increased economic activity, and development—a more complex yardstick measuring improved living conditions. Economist Thomas Tietenberg of Colby College advocates economic incentives to improve environmental conditions. Colorado Senator Timothy Wirth also supports market strategies and argues the United States must set an example by better managing its own resources.

In the second section, Kari Keipi, a forestry specialist with the Inter-American Development Bank, Virginia Polytechnic's John Browder, and Brazilian diplomat Tadeu Valadares explore deforestation. Despite important differences, they cite rapid population growth, misguided land use, lack of indigenous ownership, poverty, and several specific policies that encourage deforestation over sustainable use as the primary causes.

Biologist Thomas Lovejoy, who invented debt-for-nature swaps (DFNs) opens the third section, arguing that DFNs are primarily financial mechanisms and will not create massive, unused nature preserves. Illinois Congressman John Porter notes that DFNs are indeed useful financial mechanisms, but that the land to be set aside should be used in a sustainable, productive manner and stresses that DFNs must involve indigenous groups to be successful. Richard Liroff of the Conservation Foundation outlined DFN possibilities in Poland and the similarities and differences such deals would have with their predecessors in Latin America. Bruce Rich, director of the Environmental Defense Fund's International program notes that the Brady plan should allow for more DFNs, and argues that while DFNs are not a solution to the debt crisis, they can make a substantial contribution toward sustainable development if host governments are constructively involved.

In the fourth section, Mexico City's top air-pollution control official, Fernando Menendez Garza cites geography, erosion, and population growth as the primary causes of that city's infamous air pollution and discusses the increasingly stringent programs implemented to combat it. Richard Nuccio of Georgetown University, however, argues that economic policies adopted by the Mexican government in the 1960s are the ultimate cause. Robert Yuhnke of the Environmental Defense Fund discusses air pollution in Los Angeles, offers comparisons to Mexico City, and argues strongly for changing American transportation policy.

Despite the diversity in subject and opinion, several themes tie the paper together. These include: many local environmental problems have become international issues; economic, social and environmental problems are increasingly interdependent and require integrated solutions; rapid population growth is a contributing factor in many environmental problems; many traditional development strategies have produced significant environmental damage that now threatens human health and economic growth; the United States and other developed nations must alter their own resource, transportation, energy and emissions practices to make credible their arguments that developing nations must do the same; to be successful, Washington must be attentive to the needs and concerns of developing nations; environmentally

sound policy and technology can be economically efficient and policymakers in the U.S. and Latin America must be made to understand this; long-term solutions must involve indigenous people, local groups, commitment by Latin American governments and strong international support.

This volume is valuable for individuals interested in environmental protection, international environmental politics, Latin America, and economic development. It is also an excellent book for teaching graduate students and advanced undergraduates.

David Leonard Downie
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill