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Sustaining Life on Earth

Environmental and Human Health through Global Governance

Edited by Colin L. Soskolne

This book brings together experts from relevant disciplines and, under the shrewd pen of its editors, the text is distilled to read as if from a single author. The idea of bridging, and thereby reconnecting the role of humans and their institutions to the global ecology, is shown to be critical if solutions are to be found that will help us to preserve ecosystems and thus more ensure a sustainable future for human populations. Assembling such varied information from multiple authors is the very kind of contribution needed for policy-makers and students alike to help save us from ourselves. The contribution of this book to sustaining life on Earth is unique. Reading it is an enlightening experience and I strongly advise it to anybody. —Roberto Bertollini, Director, Special Programme on Health and Environment, World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe

As global warming, famine, and environmental catastrophes have become daily news items, achieving a sustainable environment to maintain the future of life on Earth has become a global concern. *Sustaining Life on Earth* is an important contribution toward assessing such problems and making the Earth hospitable to life for generations to come. With an interdisciplinary team of international scholars, this masterfully edited collection approaches the problems facing sustainability from a perspective of global governance. To date, powerful economic forces have misguided decision-making processes in favor of short-term gain rather than long-term sustainability. As global awareness has increased and individual citizens have begun to alter their lifestyles to be more environmentally conscious, it is also necessary for governing bodies to take these concerns seriously.

Sustaining Life on Earth makes the case that, for all the recent neo-liberal emphasis on the autonomous individual, humanity has collective problems, and it is only through collective action that solutions will be found. It shows that the global community is beginning to acknowledge the interdependencies among population, affluence, and technology. In the book, analysts from many disciplines advance solutions that could shift us away from growth-bound status quo development approaches toward more ecologically responsible and socially equitable ways of living. They suggest ways to move forward that would ensure health and well-being for all in both present and future generations. While success necessarily entails many changes at all levels, the book highlights one soft-law instrument that reflects many of the values and principles necessary to set humanity onto a sustainable path: The *Earth Charter* of 2002. *Sustaining Life on Earth* is a ground-breaking contribution to the burgeoning study of sustainability. Designed for a general non-specialist readership in the first year of university or beyond, this book will be of interest to anyone concerned with the impacts of global change on human well-being and the ecosphere, including people in environmental NGOs and those working in public policy.

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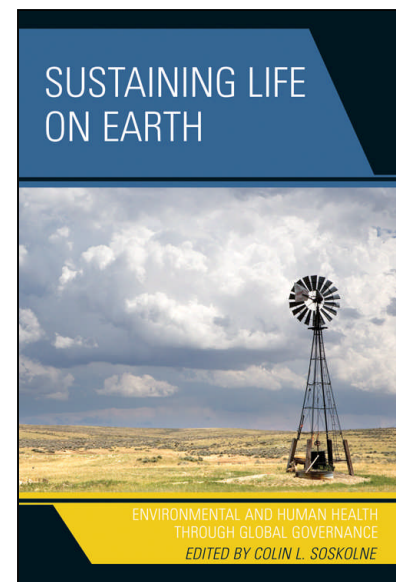
November 2007, 482 pages

ISBN 0-7391-1730-0 / 978-0-7391-1730-9

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