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# Green Outcomes in the Real World

Global Forces, Local Circumstances,  
and Sustainable Solutions

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# Foreword

*Green Outcomes in the Real World* brings the concept of a green economy in from the periphery of policy formulation to take centre stage. The result is surprising in that McManners dismantles the edifice of economic globalization, and satisfying, in that the result shows a way forward to solve the most difficult dilemma of our age: reconciling economic aspirations with the imperative to safeguard the environment.

The buzzword of political economy has long been globalization. Neo-liberals have jumped onto this band wagon with their ideology of free market economics. American neo-conservatives have used it to finesse a grab for increased world power for the United States and American corporations. Globalization, they claim, will make us richer, or more successful, or, even, greener.

But there have also long been those who have seen its problems. The wealth has not been shared. There has been very little trickle down and a lot of trickle up. Two pressing current crises have raised further doubts: the desperate sickness of the international financial system after 2008, and the problems that threaten environmental catastrophe, especially the increases in carbon emissions and global warming, with all the tragic consequences that could follow. This book concentrates on the latter, arguing, convincingly, that economic theory has to bend to the higher aim of safeguarding the ecosystem now and for future generations.

McManners ponders ways to achieve a greener planet in which resources are husbanded, environmental problems are dealt with and the interests of individuals are stressed ahead of increasing Gross Domestic Product. He considers an alternative approach to globalization. Solutions can be pursued from the bottom up rather than the top down, and problems are more likely to be solved among neighbours at the local level, for good practical reasons of mutual advantage, rather than through universal rules and principles drawn up in remote international organizations and grand conferences.

McManners calls this a policy of *proximization*. It should be introduced into as wide a range of areas as possible, including trade policy, the supply of food and security in the broadest sense, as well as the more direct limitation of the ecological capacity. The primary attention to the world's problems should be in areas where success is more likely, in viable nation states, or in regions such as the European Union. The relevant principle is that introduced into the European Union in the Treaty of Maastricht, but now to be applied at the global level: the principle of *subsidiarity*.

Leading by example, following the framework of proximization, is likely to be emulated in other places when the results are plain to see. The example that the developed world has set in pursuing the policies of economic globalization has to change. This book should be read and discussed widely to invigorate the debate about the future direction for the economy and society.

McManners has written a valuable critique of the easy assumptions of fundamentalist globalization, especially as they are applied to environmental problems. The arguments are appealing as a practical agenda. If adopted his approach may lead to a less integrated global system, but this is not the point. The world could be more integrated at the local level, where problems are more easily managed and *sufficiently* integrated at the global level. What is needed is a more civilized agenda, a sustainable management of the environment, rather than the mindless pursuit of wealth for the few in a global free market.

This book is to be strongly recommended as a sensitive exploration of ways forward at this point of economic and environmental crisis. It looks beyond the values which at present dominate the economies and societies of the developed world, to a world in which there is a more secure future for everyone.

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