

Editorial

The present issue of the Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies includes three articles and a review of a comprehensive book about planning in Iceland. It covers subjects ranging from the success criteria for producing national State of the Environment reports, the emergence of new images of the market and their implication for EU environmental policy, and the impact of the deposition of fine sediment into spawning gravels in streams and possible management strategies.

In the article “Producing Multidisciplinary State of the Environment Reports: Two Tales from Finland”, Jari Lyytimäki explores the key factors of success for producing national State of the Environment reports. The study is based on the author’s own experience and insider knowledge related to preparing two such reports in Finland. Drawing on his experience of international environmental assessments, the author discusses practical problems related to report’s initiation and context, science-policy interaction, participation and capacity. The author also touches on the role and the usefulness of social capital in developing the practices of State of the Environment reporting.

Christian Frankel’s article “Why has technical standardization become a tool for environmental policy?” analyzes how the market has been imagined and how its image has been changed in the European Community since the late 1950s. The analysis focuses on the political semantics related to barriers appointed as the problem to create a common market. In the analysis, three different images of the market are identified: the naturally given market, the politically constituted market, and the transnationally negotiated market. Based on the changes in the relationship between state and market, the author indicates that new images of the market, such as the sustainable market, may emerge and become institutionalised, which in turn may have serious implications for the common environmental policy.

The third article “The Negative Impacts of Sedimentation on Brown Trout (*Salmo Trutta*) Natural Recruitment, and the Management of Danish Streams” by John Conallin is based on an examination of the deposition of fine sediment into the spawning gravels of two streams located West of Copenhagen. The study shows that the sediment levels are well above the critical limit in both streams despite differences in agricultural land use. The author outlines short-term sediment reducing strategies to aid natural recruitment levels of brown trout, and argues for a more holistic approach taking the cumulative effects of stream management into consideration.

The fourth and final contribution is a review by Erling Bondesen of Trausti Valsson’s comprehensive book on “Planning in Iceland from Settlement to the Present Time”.

As TES is a transdisciplinary journal, the editors would like to initiate discussions about more visionary approaches to understanding and managing the environmental challenges of the new millennium. The fatigue that marks the public debate about the environmental questions could indicate that it is time for reflection and for taking a critical look at the way environmental problems are conceptualised and not least how the appropriate regulatory solutions are identified. We would like to offer our readers a platform for an open-minded discussion of environmental questions and how to go about their regulation or management from a transdisciplinary perspective. In a recent study Shellenberger and Nordhaus (2004) make a problem of the environmental movement’s conceptualisation, design and choice of tactics in relation to modern environmental problems. The author’s argue that the root causes of environmental problems are defined too narrowly and that the crafted technical policy solutions are not taking into consideration the support of the

public or other potential allies. In their report “The Death of Environmentalism” the two authors question the viability of the approach to environmental problems when it comes to modern environmental ones such as global warming, and they argue that a more visionary approach needs to replace technical policy fixes. The question is whether there is a need for a new way of conceptualising environmental problems and identifying possible regulatory solutions? The editors welcome papers exploring and critically reflecting upon the environmental challenges of the new millennium from a transdisciplinary perspective.

Bente Kjærgård, Co-editor

References:

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus (2004): The Death of Environmentalism: Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World. 37 pp. http://www.thebreakthrough.org/images/Death_of_Environmentalism.pdf