

Review: Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment

By James Gustave Speth (Ed.)

Reviewed by M. Tayyeb Javed
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James Gustave Speth (Ed.). *Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2003. 180 pp. ISBN 1-55963-998-9 (cloth); 1-55963-999-7 (paperback). US\$45.00 cloth; US\$22.50 paperback. Acid-free paper.

Globalization, "in its simplest sense . . . refer[ring] to the widening, deepening and speeding up of global interconnectedness ..." (p. 91), is one of the profound phenomena experienced in the current era, and has affected the economic, environmental, and social aspects of every nation on this globe. Due to both positive and negative effects on the life of people everywhere, it is one of the most discussed topics of this century. *Worlds Apart: Globalization and the Environment*, edited by James Gustave Speth, is one of the pioneer efforts on the delicate issue. This collection consists of eight essays by world-renowned scholars with the editor's short summary, as well as two opening and closing chapters by the editor. Views of globalization's opponents and supporters are very beautifully elaborated. Two themes, "the rise of environmental concern on the international level" and "economic globalization and its impact on environmental quality" are presented in an excellent manner by prominent scholars.

In his opening essay Speth elaborates on the evolution of global environmental governance and the relationship between the globalization of the economy and the transition to a sustainable society. Marine biologist Dr. Jane Lubchenco discusses threats to global environmental quality that face humanity according to six global scale indicators. Maurice Strong presents the recent history of the international environmental movement. Dr. Jose Goldemberg discusses anthropogenic impacts caused by current energy systems worldwide. A global environmental mechanism to resolve environmental problems worldwide is suggested by Daniel C. Esty and Maria H. Ivaova. Globalization and transition towards sustainability is examined by Dr. Robert W. Kates. Jerry Mander, president of the International Forum on Globalization, discusses intrinsic negative effects of economic globalization through WTO, TRIPS, and IMF on the global environment and local communities. Stephan Schmidheiny, an international business leader in wood products, shares his experiences of eight major trends in the sustainable forestry. Further strengthening Mander's view, Dr. Vandana Shiva touches on other negative issues of globalization such as undemocratic treaties, unsustainable development, global trade's destruction of local

markets, the spread of genetically modified crops, and the struggle to prevent the rollback of many early successes in environmental laws and practices.

Lastly Speth concludes the discussion with a brief review of the World Summit for Sustainable Development and presents some personal views on environmental governance in the wake of the increasing impacts of globalization. The book is of deep interest for all those who think about mankind and the globe where we live.

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