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Special Topic II: Economy and Environmental Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA)

Introduction

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The two papers presented here were commissioned by the Economy and Environment Program for Southeast Asia (EEPSEA). Established in 1993, EEPSEA supports training and research in environmental and resource economics. It uses a networking approach to provide financial and technical support to researchers in its ten member countries. The network meets in Singapore in May and November of each year. EEPSEA's current sponsors include Canada (IDRC & CIDA), Sweden (Sida), the MacArthur Foundation, and the Foreign Affairs Ministries of Denmark, Holland, and Norway.

These papers were first presented at two of EEPSEA's biannual workshops. These workshops are a central feature of EEPSEA's program and include presentations of proposed and on-going research by SE Asian researchers, as well as presentations by international resource persons. The former take place in small working groups and tend to be empirical case studies; the latter are discussed in the opening and closing plenary sessions and cover a wide range of issues.

Plenary papers have included literature surveys; step-by-step explanations of research methods; explorations of emerging issues in environmental economics; and discussions about how research findings can be implemented for policy impact. EEPSEA hopes that they are useful both to educators and to researchers in search of topics and methods.

John Whalley's paper surveys a long-standing literature on public finance, highlighting its findings and its relevance to the emerging literature on environmental tax reform. It also questions the validity of some of the conventional wisdom in public finance, in light of issues raised by environmental economists.

David O'Connor surveys another large body of literature on the use of economic instruments [EIs] for environmental protection. While

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economists have long advocated the use of such instruments and demonstrated their advantages, governments have yet to employ them extensively. Dr O'Connor explores some of the practical problems in implementing EIs and suggests ways in which researchers could address them.

These papers were presented first to an Asian audience but their relevance is in no way confined to that region. I hope that EDE's readers in other parts of the world will also find these contributions of interest.

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