

Sustainable Development: The Present for the Future!

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More Than a Textbook - A Scientific Framework for a Sustainable Future

When I accepted the authors' invitation to write the foreword to *Sustainable Development: The Present for the Future!* I expected a high-quality university textbook that would comprehensively present contemporary knowledge on sustainable development. After reading the manuscript from cover to cover, however, it became clear that this work is far more than that.

This is neither merely a textbook nor another publication on environmental issues. It is a comprehensive interdisciplinary volume that successfully integrates the natural, technical, social and legal sciences while presenting sustainable development as the defining development paradigm of the twenty-first century. In my opinion, this is a landmark publishing achievement that will become essential reading not only within universities but also among researchers, professionals, policymakers and everyone engaged in shaping sustainable public policies.

Interdisciplinarity as Its Greatest Strength

Across more than 800 richly illustrated pages, complemented by over 350 photographs, figures, tables and schematic diagrams, the authors successfully integrate ecology, environmental protection, economics, law, public policy, natural resource management and sustainable development into a coherent and logically structured whole.

One of the book's greatest strengths lies in its consistent demonstration that environmental issues can no longer be considered separately

from human health, economic development and social resilience. Climate change, air, water and soil quality, biodiversity loss, circular economy principles and environmental governance are presented as interconnected processes that collectively determine the quality of life of both present and future generations.

From the perspective of the water sector, the book is particularly valuable because it approaches sustainable development through an integrated natural resource management framework, linking water, energy, food systems, ecosystems and climate change into a single development perspective. This approach moves beyond traditional sectoral boundaries and clearly demonstrates that water, food and energy security cannot be achieved without preserving ecosystem integrity and resilience. The book consistently reflects contemporary international concepts of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) Nexus, now widely recognized as one of the fundamental pillars of European and global sustainable development policy. Its ability to connect scientific evidence, public policy and practical governance models represents one of the work's greatest contributions, making it a valuable reference for scientists, engineers, policymakers and practitioners involved in sustainable development planning.

From Theory to Implementation

One of the book's most significant qualities is that it does not stop at identifying problems. Instead, it offers practical solutions.

From international conventions and European legislation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the European Green Deal, ESG principles, environmental management systems, circular economy approaches and numerous examples of best practice, the book provides readers with practical tools for understanding and implementing sustainability.

This rare combination of scientific rigor and practical applicability is undoubtedly one of the defining strengths of the publication.

A Regional Response to Global Challenges

I was particularly impressed by the authors' ability to translate global sustainability challenges into a regional context.

The Western Balkans are often perceived primarily through the lens of political transition and developmental constraints. This book offers a different perspective, demonstrating that the countries of the region possess the knowledge, natural assets and professional capacity required to successfully implement sustainable transition.

The examples drawn from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and neighboring countries serve not merely to illustrate existing challenges but to demonstrate how sustainable development can become a catalyst for institutional reform, economic innovation and more responsible management of natural resources. For this reason, the significance of this publication extends well beyond national boundaries.

Recognition by the Scientific Community

The scientific relevance of the book is further confirmed by the assessments of several distinguished scholars from different disciplines.

Academician Ferdo Bašić emphasizes that the authors approach sustainability not as an abstract ideal but as an ethical imperative of contemporary society. Academician Hamid Čustović highlights the book's ability to bridge

scientific knowledge and strategic policymaking, creating a genuine link between knowledge and action. Professor Zoran Vojinović considers the publication to be an important reference work for researchers, professionals and decision-makers engaged in building more sustainable communities. Professor Zdenko Herceg (WHO/International Agency for Research on Cancer) further emphasizes its importance for understanding the intricate interdependence between environmental quality and human health, describing the book as both a scientific framework and a moral compass for more responsible and sustainable future development.

I fully share these assessments.

Conclusion

We live in an era in which climate change, environmental degradation, increasing pressure on water resources and widening health inequalities are no longer future challenges—they have become part of our everyday reality.

Such circumstances require knowledge capable of connecting disciplines, sectors and governance levels.

This book accomplishes precisely that.

Sustainable Development: The Present for the Future! Is far more than a university textbook.

It is a scientific guide to one of the defining challenges of our time. At the same time, it is a call to responsibility. Sustainability is neither an individual choice nor a privilege reserved for developed societies. It is our shared responsibility. For these reasons, I wholeheartedly recommend this book to students, academics, researchers, healthcare professionals, engineers, policymakers and all those who believe that a sustainable future can only be built upon knowledge, responsibility and cooperation.

With this outstanding work, the authors have made a significant contribution to the advancement of science and to promoting a

culture of sustainability-not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, but throughout the

wider European academic and professional community.



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Publisher: University of Mostar (Co-publishers: Synopsis Ltd., Zagreb and Buybook Ltd., Sarajevo)

Year of Publication: 2026

Extent: 819 pages, featuring more than 350 full-colour illustrations