

tional management from a general and pragmatic point of view, it will not satisfy those who seek to explain or address these issues at a deeper/structural level.

Everard, Mark. 2011. *Common Ground: The Sharing of Land and Landscapes for Sustainability*. London: Zed Books.

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Common Ground is a thoughtful blueprint for boosting public benefits from land use and landscapes. The book is ambitious, but stays grounded in nascent efforts to reshape landscapes and land use governance with the *common good* as a guiding star. Everard keeps it a concise 170 pages by focusing primarily on two elements of the challenge—the implementation of creative policies and projects to improve landscapes, and the production of “holistic” science in support of such efforts. The book is not a complete roadmap to justify environmental subsidies, promote adoption of policies, or navigate political complexities, but rather a concise discussion of how to design effective landscape governance and support it with scholarship.

Everard’s go-to strategy for common ground is payment for ecosystem services (PES). He demonstrates an adroit command of PES literature and PES practice, but this book occupies a niche distinctly separate from previous works on the theme. It does not grapple much with the technicalities of ecosystem valuation, nor does it discuss the design of policies to minimize transaction costs for implementing PES or obsess over potential pitfalls of utilitarian environmental governance. Instead, Everard explores procedural determinants of effectiveness, frameworks for exploring complex environmental tradeoffs, and the suitability of institutions to deliver common ground.

Scholars of global environmental politics may appreciate that, for Everard, research on the sociopolitical and institutional context for PES is integral for developing effective PES. He is at his most convincing in describing how the complexity, diversity, and heterogeneity of landscapes merit epistemologically diverse scholarship to identify and develop derivative institutional complexity. These nimble new institutions would have two key characteristics—capacity to assimilate traditional knowledge, and structure to prevent “siloeing” of environmental issues.

Institutions of land governance could be structured to better support their potential function as PES facilitators. However, in an era when, for example, proposals have surfaced to eliminate the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the book could have been stronger if it had addressed whether striving for better institutions could be an enemy of the PES good. He leaves the reader unequipped to consider the tradeoffs of a world in which PES schemes

are implemented under imperfect institutional arrangements, versus a world that lacks PES schemes entirely.

Ultimately this omission reflects Everard's broader choice to use the book to conduct a somewhat rose-tinted thought experiment. For the most part, he seems content writing under the assumption that momentum for public goods from land use is growing and that a crucial task is to make good use of this opportunity; whether the opportunity in fact exists is beyond the scope of the book. While in some ways this unconventional assumption limits the book's usefulness, it is also one of its strengths. It frees Everard to constructively envision and investigate functional PES governance as if PES enjoyed broad political support.

Another key element of the book is Everard's frequent ruminations on how private property and enclosure condition the effectiveness of PES schemes. He expresses doubts that PES can thrive in a world of concentrated property, but he stops well short of calling for land reform or redistribution. Instead, his argument on property traces a nuanced, but ultimately inconsistent, arc in which private lands may undermine the common good, but private holdings of other resources may support "successful" PES. Without a shred of irony, Everard relays how PES is mutually beneficial for the producers of Perrier and the farmers of the French watershed from which this rarified sparkling water springs.

The Perrier case underscores the internal inconsistency between Everard's case analysis and his belief that broad-based participation in land use governance lies at the heart of effective PES. He sees PES as "successful" when all "players" receive "benefits." Such a standard would theoretically brand all business agreements and contracts successful. By Everard's own assertions earlier in the book, the problem with the Perrier deal is that many stakeholders do not have seats at the table and a role in the deal. Securing a supply of pricy bottled water is at best orthogonal to the "common" aims that impassion Everard.

To be fair, he discusses the Perrier case as part of a broader examination of procedures associated with successfully executed PES projects and not as an assessment of the impacts of the projects. It is easy to forget that PES initiatives remain rare and successful PES transactions rarer. The scholarship that Everard calls for and conducts could bolster any future PES project. Studying PES projects with a constructive focus may ultimately generate insights not only about how to get to "yes," but also about the broader impacts and implications of PES.

Everard is well aware that PES governance and the scholarship on which it depends constitute a messy and rapidly evolving business. He also senses the urgency of the safeguarding vital functions of the landscapes for now and for future generations. In his brief discussion of ecological valuation techniques, he argues for transparency above all else. "Provide a clear audit trail of [your] assumptions," he exhorts scholars (p. 107). In compiling *Common Ground*, Everard follows his own advice and, in so doing, elevates the book's scholarly contribution.