Introduction to the Issue

Welcome to the fourth volume of the *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*, with its set of articles, symposia, and features. The *Review* is one of the two official journals (JEEM being the other) of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE), the international association for professionals in the important field of environmental and natural resource economics.

With this issue of the *Review*, we have made some changes in the structure of the editorial office. We have always planned to rotate the editor and co-editor positions every few years. In the first such changing of the guard, I have taken over as editor from Rob Stavins, who has now become a co-editor. Carlo Carraro continues as a co-editor, and we have added a third co-editor, Prof. Matthew Kahn of the University of California, Los Angeles. Maureen Cropper continues as “Policy Monitor” editor. Suzy Leonard remains at the helm as managing editor. She plays an invaluable role in making the *Review* what it is. And we appreciate it.

It is clear that Rob Stavins has done a remarkable job as editor. Carlo Carraro has also played a very important role during the formative years of the *Review*. It was only three years ago (January 2007) that we published the first issue of this journal. The *Review* is now firmly established as a key source for highly readable and timely treatments of important issues in environmental economics and policy. It is worth noting that the 2008 Myrdal Prize was awarded to Thomas Sterner and Martin Persson for the Swedish version of their 2008 REEP article “An Even Sterner Review: Introducing Relative Prices into the Discounting Debate.”

In this issue we continue our tradition of offering scholarly yet widely accessible articles on specific topics of interest to the academic and policy community. The first article in this issue, on the environmental Kuznets curve (EKC), addresses a highly controversial but important question in the environment and development arena: how are income and environmental quality linked? Richard Carson provides a thorough and balanced review of this issue. In the second article, Jos Delbeke and co-authors examine the use of economics in the formulation of recent environmental policy at the European Commission. This is the second in a series of articles we will be featuring in the *Review* on the role of environmental economics at various policy-making organizations around the world. The Winter 2008 issue addressed this topic in the context of the World Bank. Future issues of the *Review* will explore the role of environmental economics at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the European Environmental Agency (EEA). The third article in this issue of the *Review* discusses the economics of water quality. This is the first of two articles by Sheila Olmstead on the economics of water. In an upcoming issue she will examine the economics of managing scarce water resources.

The symposium for this issue of the *Review* concerns international trade and the environment, always an important issue, but particularly germane today as countries seek
to curb greenhouse gas emissions without adversely affecting their competitive positions. Arik Levinson, who coordinated the symposium, addresses the question of whether the United States is moving production of pollution-intensive goods overseas. The article by Josh Ederington discusses whether or not trade agreements should include a provision concerning environmental protection. And Carolyn Fischer’s article focuses on another controversial issue—whether openness to trade tends to exhaust or conserve natural resources.

In addition to articles and symposia, every issue of the Review includes several regular features. Maureen Cropper edits “Policy Monitor,” which reviews policy developments that are of particular interest to environmental and resource economists. In this issue, Bryan Hubbell and co-authors take a retrospective look at the landmark U.S. air pollution legislation, the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act.

Each issue of the Review also includes the “Reflections” column. Authorship of this column rotates among four distinguished environmental economists. In this issue, Geoffrey Heal surveys and discusses the literature on the economics of renewable energy.

Finally, the “Announcements” feature offers updates on conferences, workshops, calls for papers, and other relevant news from the world of environmental and resource economics. The content of this feature depends upon submissions from our readers. So please send us any relevant announcements from your institution.

As always, we hope you find this issue of the Review of Environmental Economics and Policy to be interesting and useful. We appreciate very much the proposals we have been receiving for articles and symposia, and we encourage you to continue sending them. Finally, we remain very interested in hearing your thoughts and reactions to any and all aspects of the Review. The Review is a new journal and our policies and structures are constantly being reexamined. We welcome your input.

Charles D. Kolstad, Editor