

to the first half, and very rarely even makes reference to it. While chapters 12 to 22 are undoubtedly useful for biophysical scientists, it is hard to see how they add value in a book that supposedly deals with decision-making analysis.

The puzzle of this bifurcation is possibly solved by a reading of the Preface, where it is made clear that the book is a collaboration between a managerial scientist with a business orientation, and a biophysical scientist

with an interest in the environment. Unfortunately, I do not think that the collaborators worked hard enough at integrating their material. Often the book felt as though it was a collection of unrelated lectures.

This is a Springer hardback book, so may be expensive for students. If this were not the case, I would still recommend it for the excellent introduction to environmental decision analysis contained in parts 1 and 2.

Reducing personal ecological footprint

Angus Morrison-Saunders

A Lighter Footprint: A Practical Guide to Minimising Your Impact on the Planet by Angela Crocombe

Scribe, Melbourne, 240 pages, 2007, US\$24.95, ISBN-13 978-1-921-21559-9

Assessing individual environmental impact at the citizen level along with self-implementation of appropriate mitigation measures is essential for sustainability. It was on this basis that I was keen to review this book. Perhaps it is unfair of me to review this general interest book with either of my academic or environmental impact assessment (EIA) professional 'hats' on, but it provided food for thought about how we as impact assessment practitioners might assist in reaching out and tackling the issue of personal impact as opposed to our normal focus on the activities of proponents of major new developments.

Whilst we write EIAs for a general public audience, we usually have a reasonably defined stakeholder group as determined by the scope or location of the proposal at hand. These stakeholders are provoked into engaging with the EIA documents and process by their direct personal interest or concern about local matters. How would we write in order to appeal to a far more voluntary readership and where any decision-making is going to be entirely internalised? This book seeks to do that; in the words of the author, it "is a practical handbook for everyone to use, regardless of your knowledge of climate change" (page 16).

In an EIA, we are very careful to define technical terms appropriately and to provide evidence to back up our claims and studies. Also, we have a fairly

standard approach to scoping and laying out documents so as to build a coherent picture of the proposal, its setting, impacts and management aspects.

So I found the very informal and casual way this book tackled these matters frustrating and disappointing. For example, the opening paragraphs of the Preface assume some knowledge or understanding of "global warming" and "greenhouse gas emissions", whilst many many issues, such as claims that nuclear power does not stack up (to cite only one such example) are simply put forward as fact with no supporting evidence at all (page 51). If an EIA report were written like that, it would quickly be condemned along with the development proposal being advocated!

This raises the question of what information and level of debate should we put forward order to address major issues relating to individual ecological footprint and the carrying capacity of the earth? For instance, is it enough to encourage people to cut back on resource consumption (for instance, less car use coupled with carbon offsetting, practising water and energy conservation at home, eating locally produced food) as this book tends to, or do we actually require a more radical agenda?

In my experience most analyses of how we can tackle global warming advocate a variation on the 'business as usual' theme, whereby living ostensibly the same (western) lifestyle but consuming a bit less is considered to be good enough. For example, it is all very well to use less electricity at home or work, but if that electricity is generated by burning fossil fuels, then perhaps these savings are not enough to turn the situation around. What if more fundamental change is necessary? Should we also be advocating (relatively radical) policy reform through direct political action? This book does have a chapter entitled "Be an activist" but nowhere does it provide clear guidance or a vision of what should be attained or at least attempted.

Angus Morrison-Saunders is Senior Lecture in Environmental Assessment, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch 6150, Australia; Email: a.morrison-saunders@murdoch.edu.au

The author's motivation to write the book came about after she calculated her ecological footprint using a freely available on-line calculator and discovered it would take 7.7 planet Earths to accommodate all humans if everyone lived according to her then lifestyle (page 12). Later on she reported that, through taking steps such as those advocated in the book, she had reduced this to 1.5 planets (page 17); whilst this a little depressing on the face of it, it does at least demonstrate that environmental impact reductions of up to 80% can be achieved by westerners in practice without dramatically changing existing standards or modes of living.

This then leads into the question of what targets should apply to individuals. This book provides hundreds of examples of where efficiencies can be made in terms of environmental footprint, but, for instance, with respect to greenhouse emissions should these not be tied in to the identified global reduction targets of the order of the 60–70% of current emissions that are now being mooted? In other words, should a practical guide not only promote good practices but also prescribe how much should be achieved? I have some concerns with the ecological footprint model here (especially the simplified version included in the book (pages 18–19)) as it is often a rather generalised or 'blunt' instrument.

The issue of targets ties in with matters of motivation. The general public are motivated to

participate in EIA processes because of a vested self-interest (for instance, attempt to stop a perceived undesirable project from going ahead or at least change it into something that is acceptable). What is the motivation to reduce individual environmental footprint? If there is no target to achieve, then an individual can never do enough; presumably their efforts would tend to wax and wane over time but, more importantly, highly committed individuals would always feel guilty that they were not doing enough. In addition to having targets to meet, perhaps some kind of positive incentive needs to be incorporated too so that individuals can justly somehow reward themselves when they achieve certain milestones.

In case I seem to be harshly judging this book, I should point out that it did motivate me to make some immediate changes to my lifestyle including signing up for 'green power'. The book covers a vast range of environmental issues that individuals can address. It is written in an engaging fashion with judicious use of images, sections, summary boxes containing 'top tips' to reduce personal ecological footprint, as well as directions for follow-up to learn more or to make personal change (aimed at an Australian audience). It certainly got me thinking about the challenge of how we international impact assessment practitioners can influence broader personal and societal values and behaviours. Like the author herself (page 17), I am still working on it.

Unique contribution to the siting literature

Kathleen Van Vlack

Facilities Siting Risk, Power, and Identity in Land Use Planning edited by Åsa Boholm and Ragnar Löfstedt

Earthscan, London, 2004, 256 pages, £55.00/US\$108.65, ISBN 1-84407-146-4

Facilities Siting: Risk, Power, and Identity in Land Use Planning is a book edited by Åsa Boholm and Ragnar Löfstedt. This volume is the product of a 2001 international conference on risk and facility siting. Published in 2004, the book is still highly relevant after six years as it is unique in its overall approach and faces no parallel in recent titles.

The conference brought together professionals from a broad range of disciplines to discuss the core themes of the siting process. This volume examines issues such as benefits for individuals and their communities, the potential for new risks, trust and legitimacy of those involved in planning and management, and possible compensation for negatively affected stakeholders.

Facility siting as an event brings forth the strengths and weaknesses in public decision-making, communication, and deliberation processes. This book is useful for those involved and interested in the social impact assessment process, such as researchers in the university and private sectors and graduate students who want to gain knowledge in this area. It could be used in undergraduate courses were it in paperback.

This book is comprised of 11 chapters (256 pages with 18 figures and five tables). Chapters cover a variety of issues from nuclear waste siting

Kathleen Van Vlack, MA, is in American Indian Studies, Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, Haury/Anthropology Building, Room 316, PO Box 210030, The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721-0030, USA; Email: kvanvlac@email.arizona.edu; Tel: +1 520 621 2462.