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BOOK REVIEW

The Earthscan Reader: World Transport Policy & Practice

Edited by John Whitelegg and Gary Haq

This book makes an excellent introduction for anybody studying transport issues in both the developed and developing world. Case studies encompass subjects from uncontrolled road growth, to the dilemma of automobility, to the loss of life on trans-Israeli highways, to the extreme transport crises observed in many cities today.

Overall, the book consists of 25 papers that examine transport problems around the world. Seven of the articles have been purposely written for the Reader and the others were previously published in the journal *World Transport Policy and Practice*.

Whitelegg and Haq emphasise that transport problems are the same no matter what country or city you live in and they pay particular attention to what policies work as well as the ones which have failed tremendously. The usual suspects include land take, increasing demand for road space, misuse of resources, air and noise pollution, costs to society, loss of life, and general mismanagement when applying Western policy to non-westernised places. In short there is a dominant theme of re-inventing transport policy to shift towards a more ethically and sustainable policy along with some key steps that need to be put into place to reach that equitable vision. These steps are outlined expertly in the final chapter and include

- examples where cities or countries have become less automobile dependent;
- land use planning to reduce the demand for transport;
- a fuller internalisation of external transport costs towards the end users by changing the taxation; and
- ending of subsidies into certain sectors (such as automobile and aerospace industries).

To sum up, I would warmly recommend this book to those interested in the topic at hand as it covers all the main obstacles to reaching a sustainable transport vision by a sensible use of critical statistics and vivid case examples by specialists in their field.

The Earthscan Reader on World Transport Policy and Practice

edited by John Whitelegg and Gary Haq

London: Earthscan, 2003.

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