



Wicked Environmental Problems: Managing Uncertainty and Conflict

Peter J. Balint, Ronald E. Stewart, Anand Desai, Lawrence C. Walters

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"Wicked" problems are large-scale, long-term policy dilemmas in which multiple and compounding risks and uncertainties combine with sharply divergent public values to generate contentious political stalemates; wicked problems in the environmental arena typically emerge from entrenched conflicts over natural resource management and over the prioritization of economic and conservation goals more generally.

This new book examines past experience and future directions in the management of wicked environmental problems and describes new strategies for mitigating the conflicts inherent in these seemingly intractable situations. The book:

- reviews the history of the concept of wicked problems
- examines the principles and processes that managers have applied
- explores the practical limitations of various approaches

Most important, the book reviews current thinking on the way forward, focusing on the implementation of "learning networks," in which public managers, technical experts, and public stakeholders collaborate in decision-making processes that are analytic, iterative, and deliberative.

Case studies of forest management in the Sierra Nevada, restoration of the Florida Everglades, carbon trading in the European Union, and management of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania are used to explain concepts and demonstrate practical applications.

Wicked Environmental Problems offers new approaches for managing environmental conflicts and shows how managers could apply these approaches within common, real-world statutory decision-making frameworks. It is essential reading for anyone concerned with managing environmental problems.

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