

**International Society for Ecological Economics
Internet Encyclopaedia of Ecological Economics**

**The Early History of *Ecological Economics* and the
International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE)**

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1. Introduction

While interest in bridging the gap between ecology and economics dates back at least to the 1960's in the work of Kenneth Boulding and Herman Daly (Boulding 1966, Daly 1968) the first formal efforts to bring ecologists and economists together occurred in the 1980's.

The first of these was in 1982, when Ann-Mari Jansson organized a symposium in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden funded by the Wallenberg foundation on "Integrating Ecology and Economics" (Jansson 1984). The forty eight participants at this meeting included many of those who would later be involved in establishing the *Ecological Economics* journal and in forming ISEE, including Robert Costanza, Herman Daly, Charles Hall, Bruce Hannon, Ann-Mari Jansson, H.T. Odum, and David Pimentel. Seventeen of the participants from this meeting ultimately served on the editorial board of *Ecological Economics*.

While this first meeting was certainly stimulating for all involved, it also led to the perception that the gap between ecologists and economists had become quite large indeed. Part of the reason for this perception had to do with the specific ecologists and economists who were invited. The ecologists were mainly ecosystem ecologists while the economists (with the notable exception of Daly) were mainly mainstream environmental economists (i.e. d'Arge, Dasgupta, Maler, Freeman, Kneese).

Partly as a response to this meeting, Robert Costanza and Herman Daly (who were both then at Louisiana State University) began to pursue the idea of starting a new journal. As a first step, they decided to edit a special issue of the journal *Ecological Modeling* on the topic of ecological economics (Costanza and Daly 1987a), to test the water and see if there would be enough interest for a full journal. This special issue included invited contributions from several scholars who would later become central to the journal and to ISEE, including Cutler Cleveland, Robert Goodland, Richard Norgaard, David Pearce, and Rufie Hueting. The special issue included an

introductory article (Costanza and Daly 1987b) that laid out both the need for and the basic agenda of ecological economics. The response to this special issue was sufficiently enthusiastic to warrant going forward with the creation of a new journal. The first book with “Ecological Economics” in the title (Martinez-Alier 1987) also appeared in this year, adding further momentum to the movement to start a journal.

After planning meetings in Lidingo, Sweden and Warsaw, Poland involving Ann-Mari Jansson, Joan Martinez-Alier, and Thomas Zylicz, a second workshop on “Integrating Ecology and Economics” was held in Barcelona, Spain, on September 26-29, 1987, sponsored by the European Centre for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences. This meeting was organized by Juan Martinez-Alier, and included several individuals who had been at the earlier meeting in Sweden or who had contributed to the special issue of *Ecological Modeling*, along with several new people who would also figure prominently in ecological economics. In addition to Joan Martinez-Alier, other prominent attendees at the Barcelona meeting who had not been involved in the earlier activities included Charles Perrings, Martin O’Connor, Sylvio Funtowicz, John Proops, Jerry Ravetz, René Passet, Matthias Ruth and Enzo Tiezzi.

A consensus emerged from this meeting that the idea of creating a new journal was a good one and should be further pursued, with several of the papers presented at the meeting serving as initial submissions.

During 1987 and early 1988, Robert Costanza and Herman Daly negotiated with several potential publishers for the journal, finally deciding on Elsevier Science. Robert Costanza took on the role of chief editor, with Herman Daly, Ann-Mari Jansson, and David Pearce as the initial Associate Editors and a broad ranging editorial board. The first issue was published in February, 1989.

During the negotiations with Elsevier, it became clear that the only way to get reasonably priced subscriptions to the journal for individuals would be to form a society. Therefore, during 1988 the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE) was formed and incorporated in Louisiana, with Robert Costanza as the first president. Shortly thereafter, both Robert Costanza and Herman Daly left LSU. Costanza moved to the University of Maryland and established the editorial office of the journal and the secretariat for ISEE there. Daly moved to the World Bank.

A third workshop was held in La Valletta, Malta, in April 1988, again sponsored by the European Centre for Research and Documentation in Social Sciences on “Environmental Training of Economists” which also helped to move the ecological economics agenda forward and provide initial submissions for the journal.

Once the journal was under way and ISEE was created, it was clear that there should be meetings of the society. Robert Costanza organized the first meeting of ISEE (with funding support from the Pew Foundation) in May 1990 in Washington, DC. Through the efforts of Herman Daly and Robert Goodland, the World Bank provided in-kind support by donating meeting space at the Bank. About 200 attendees were expected, but almost 400 showed up. A report on the conference was carried in *Science*.

The conference was followed by a 3-day workshop at the Aspen Institute's facilities on Maryland's eastern shore, attended by 38 invited participants, most of whom were plenary speakers at the Washington conference. The result of this workshop was an edited volume representing the state and goals of the emerging field of ecological economics, the research agenda, and policy recommendations (Costanza 1991).

Since then, ISEE has held biannual meetings in Stockholm, Sweden, San Jose, Costa Rica, Boston, MA, Santiago Chile, Canberra, Australia, and Sousse, Tunisia. The maximum attendance at these meetings has been over 1500.

The journal has progressed from an initial 4 issues per year to 12 issues per year, with an impact factor now ranking it in the top quarter of all academic journals.

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society. Blackwell, Cambridge, MA.

Appendix 3. List of participants at the Barcelona Meeting (Sept. 26-29, 1987)

Ing-Marie Andreasson, Stockholm
Jean-Marie Boisson, Montpellier, France
Bora, Budapest
Floor Brouwer, IIASA, Laxenburg, Austria
Paul Christensen, New York N.Y.
Michael Common, Univ. of Stirling, Scotland
Robert Costanza, LSU, Baton Rouge
Herman Daly, LSU, Baton Rouge
Silvio Funtowicz, Sheffield, England
Mario Giampietro, Cornell Univ, Ithaca NY.
Alison Gilbert, Amsterdam
Jacques Grinevald, Geneva
Mario Giampietro, Cornell Univ. Ithaca NY
Bruce Hannon, Urbana Ill.
Robert Herendeen, Champaign Ill.
Roefie Hueting, Amsterdam
Ann Mari Jansson, Stockholm
Thomas Kalberger, Stockholm
Ralph Kinnear, Vienna
Matthias Kramer, Osnabruck, Germany
Reiner Kuemmel, Wuerzburg, Germany
JMA, Barcelona
Werner Meissner, Frankfurt, Germany
Takeshi Murota, Tokyo
Richard Norgaard, Berkeley. CA
Martin O'Connor, Paris
Frank Oldfield, Liverpool
René Passet, Paris
Charles Perrings, Auckland , New Zealand
Gonzague Pillet, Geneva
Patrick Point, Bordeaux, France
John Proops, Univ. of Keele, England
Jerry Ravetz, Sheffield, England
Barbara Rhodes, Vienna
Matthias Ruth, Heidelberg
William Stigliani, IIASA, Laxenburg, Austria
Enzo Tiezzi, Siena
Ferenc Toth, IIASA, Laxenburg, Austria
Tomasz Zylicz, Warsaw