



*Cahiers d'économie
politique Papers in
political economy*

Economics and the Environment since the 1950s:

History, Methodology, and Philosophy

Call for papers for a special issue of the journal *Cahiers d'économie politique / Papers in political economy*

(to be published in 2020)

Environmental concerns emerged in the field of economics during the 1950s. Some economists had focused on these issues before, but it was not until then that the environment became an autonomous subject of economic study. During this period of strong demographic and economic growth in industrialized countries, this progressive recognition of environmental issues by economists was caused by natural resources depletion, ecosystems degradation, and pollution and its harmful effects, such as the first smog in Los Angeles or the chemical contamination of Minamata Bay.

This special issue is devoted to the contemporary history of environmental economic thought, and to the transition from the marginal specialization of a few pioneers to an established academic field. This new field has however branched into separate theoretical approaches: environmental economics, which partly grew out of the new welfare economics and distinguished itself from the economics of natural resources; and ecological economics which has been inspired by ecology while trying to develop new analytical tools. This evolution thus raises important issues from different perspectives: economic theory (e.g., the concepts and analytical frameworks used), philosophy (e.g., the status given to nature, the weight given to future generations) and policy (e.g., the way new environmental policies finally prevail).

Contributions to the special issue could focus on the following issues:

- How has environmental economics emerged since the 1950s as a field separate from natural resources economics? What has been the role of American economists, whether they were specialized in this field (Ayres, Kneese, D'Arge) or not (Galbraith)? How has ecological economics been driven by both ecologists (Commoner, Odum) and economists (Fisher, Dasgupta, Mäler, Boulding, Georgescu-Roegen, Daly)? How have Marxist, post-Keynesian and institutional schools of economics addressed these issues?

- From a methodological point of view, how have these new issues been managed by existing theoretical frameworks? Environmental economics has adapted the neoclassical framework and concepts, notably those borrowed from the new welfare economics (market failure, externality,

collective good, cost-benefit analysis, natural capital) to new environmental issues. By contrast, ecological economics has sought to find new analytical approaches while being at the same time affected by the same epistemological controversies that one can observe outside this field.

- From a policy point of view, how have these methodological propositions and different policy recommendations been institutionalized? When it was decided to design environmental policies, what were the policy demands addressed to economists? Inversely, by what means have recommendations by economists been treated by government or agencies? What has been, for example, the influence of institutions like Resources for the Future in the USA and the OECD, or different agencies whose role has been to manage environmental issues at a national level?

- What have been the philosophical issues in terms of intra- or intergenerational justice (for example concerning the choice of discount rates), or in terms of the commodification of nature and more widely its monetization (through the valuation of damages or more recently of ecosystem services, or through allowance or permit markets)?

Papers, in French or English, that focus on these issues from a historical perspective, from the 1950s onwards, are welcome. The special issue will be published by the French journal *Cahiers d'économie politique / Papers in Political Economy* (Hermann ed.) at the end of 2020.

Anonymous proposals (maximum 10,000 words) need to be sent to wscep2019@gmail.com, with name, institution, abstract (maximum 700 words) and three keywords on a separate page.

Deadline for submission: November 1st, 2019.

Reply from the scientific committee by the beginning of February.

Publication at the end of 2020.

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