

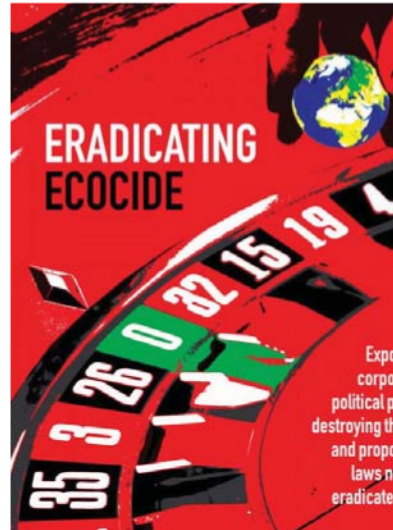
Harmony, by HRH The Prince of Wales Reviewed by Raymond Payne

A stark warning is given by the Prince in this new book called Harmony, written in collaboration with Tony Juniper and Ian Skelly, that the Earth is under threat from the demands of rampant consumerism.

Nature is in danger of being exploited beyond her means and without there being an urgent 'Sustainability Revolution' taking place we have only a short time left before it is too late. Nature must be put back into the heart of our way of living once more, as she was before the start of the Industrial Revolution. Right action alone is insufficient; there needs also to be right thinking.

In this magnificent book, a jewel in the Crown, Prince Charles explores in depth the philosophy lying behind how past civilisations lived in harmony with Nature and traces man's departure from this state to the thoughtless exploitation of Nature in the modern era. Beautiful and poignant photographs illustrate graphically throughout the book the uncovering of Nature's and Man's works as the journey through time, ideas, religious and economic thought and scientific discoveries proceeds.

Hope and future prosperity are expressed at the end of the book with many examples cited of enlightened right-thinking individuals, companies and societies treating Nature with her proper respect and working to sustain her by living within her and her laws. As the Prince points out, the change in our view of Nature is epitomised by the subtle change from the Common Prayer Book version of the Lord's Prayer of "Thy Will be done in earth" to the modern version of "Thy Will be done on earth". A one-word change changes all. Perhaps "Harmony" will be the word to change us all to "A New Way of Looking at the World". Everyone should read this book.



Eradicating Ecocide by Polly Higgins Reviewed by Robin Smith

This excellent book's title suggests that corporations and politicians are committing a crime by murdering the thing that gives all humans life. The earth. And that by changing the law we can eradicate the criminals. Would a change in the human law go deep enough I wondered as I started to read? The book gives a wealth of information on how corruption of natural laws within both the private and welfare state is the root cause of destruction. This lines up well with Georgist ideas.

The book in general is a thorough exposition of the litany of seemingly mindless pollution and destruction that no one can deny is happening. It demonstrates how small changes in the law can bring about large effects and how the law was adapted step by step to prevent people from literally suffocating.

Most interestingly for me was how some time ago law was changed to allow corporations to be "fictional persons". The problem here being that when you want to apply the law you cannot lock up a piece of paper. The book calls it to make ecocide a crime against a person not a corporation. I struggled with this because all people make choices at the ballot, in what they buy and by who they work for, so all people have obligations and responsibilities determined by free choice. Exactly how and why they are compelled to make irrational choices against the good of the planet might be a further consideration for the crime of ecocide.

In the end the nagging question about free people, making bad choices a crime, remained. What is this force that compels us to destroy the thing that gives us life? If that force is more powerful than human law, how might we provide a remedy? The question is still open.