Foreword

This is the fifth and final book ensuing from the work of the research network called the Concerted Action on Market Based Instruments, funded by the European Union.

In the work of this network, we tried to provide a benchmark for research ongoing in a range of areas at the interface between environmental policy and economics, including competitiveness, emissions trading, effectiveness, and politics and institutions, all in the context of mobilising the market to achieve environmental objectives.

This spirit also animates this final volume, which focuses on an area that is relatively little addressed in the environmental economics literature, namely, the use of budgets as an instrument for environmental policy. And this relative inattention is surprising: energy, water and agriculture for example often benefit from subsidies that are damaging and environmentally destructive. There are opportunities for public investment in environmentally enhancing activity that is also economically efficient. Public purchasing policy can be shaped to advance environmental objectives. But policy is constrained by what is politically feasible, and in particular by the power that can be mobilised by the beneficiaries of subsidies.

This book is designed to shed light on this area, to provide relevant theoretical frameworks, and to bring facts to the analytical and policy table.

I hope that for those policy practitioners who have a substantive interest in mobilising budgetary policy to enhance economic and environmental performance, this book will be a source of inspiration and insight. And for those scholars wishing to initiate or intensify their work in the area, I expect that it will provide a base of existing work from which to draw.

Anyone who has edited a book to completion knows that in the final stages a nervous breakdown or worse looms, as delinquent authors and aberrant technology combine to ruin the best-laid plans. Since this is the final volume in this series, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the editors – Mikael Skou Andersen, Terry Barker, Peter Clinch, Jonathan Köhler, Kai Schlegelmilch, Jim Skea, Steve Sorrell, Rolf-Ulrich Sprenger, Thomas Sterner and Ursula Triebswetter – who steered the various volumes to successful completion. Editing such collections requires combinations of patience,

meticulousness and scholarly insight not given to many. Peter Clinch has been particularly assiduous in bringing this final volume to fruition.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of the team at Edward Elgar Publishing, who agreed to the concept of a series, and encouraged us at every stage. Dymphna Evans has been a constant source of help throughout.

Finally, a word of gratitude to the European Commission, which funded our endeavours, and to our 'minders' from DG Research, successively Bill Watts, Jonathan Parker and Katri Kosonen, who made sure we did far more work than we were paid for, and provided constant encouragement and support.

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