

# Acknowledgements

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Having outlined my plan of work it is now my pleasant duty to acknowledge the help and encouragement I received over the years from many individuals and institutions. It is not possible to list them all, and their help will be revealed by reference to private correspondence, memoranda and other citations to be found scattered throughout the book. But I would be remiss if I didn't mention in particular those who have been backing my views especially when I was trespassing for the first time on virgin territory trying to feel the ground. In the forefront of supporters I must mention Herman Daly and Robert Goodland, friends and former World Bank colleagues, on whom I tried earlier drafts, and who have been most obliging with valuable suggestions. I have not always heeded their advice so they cannot be blamed for the shortcomings that remain. From the beginning Herman signalled his endorsement in the book he authored with John Cobb (*For The Common Good*, 1989) where my method was described rather generously as 'elegant and parsimonious'. The latter adjective was meant to refer to the economy of data required for estimating my user cost. And Robert, among his many environmental accomplishments, was the one who had spotted my paper on 'Absorptive Capacity' (*Journal of Energy and Development*, 1981) where I had introduced my formula for estimating income from revenue realized in natural resource extraction, and persuaded me to join the then ongoing UNEP-World Bank International Workshops that led eventually to the development of green accounting.

As to helpful institutions I cannot over-praise the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which sponsored the green accounting initiative from the beginning, and kept supporting it in a variety of ways over time. In this regard I must mention UNEP officials Mostafa Tolba, the late Yusuf Ahmad and also Hussein Abaza who merit special recognition. Hussein kept me involved in the difficult process of re-integrating the 'economic' and the 'environmental' for many years after I retired from the World Bank, treating me as if I were a UNEP insider. Besides UNEP, the World Bank must be credited with enormous support for the green accounts initiative, providing my time and covering international travel costs in addition to giving me the opportunity of exchanging views with

gifted colleagues on its staff. Its contribution has also included making its premises available in Washington and Paris where crucial green accounting issues were debated. It was certainly my twenty-year spell at the Bank, working mostly as a macroeconomist and being involved in shaping 'country macroeconomic policies' that ignited my interest in having the SNA reformed. Natural resources, upon which the prosperity of many developing nations rest, had tended to be *terra incognita* to the Bank's economists, particularly those working on the macroeconomics of individual developing countries. Along with non-Bank economists many of them would perceive economic reality through the fogged-up lens of the inadequate national accounts available.

Among World Bank friends and colleagues with whom I discussed aspects of my work over the years, and who have been most sympathetic to my views, have been the late Michael Ward and also Ann Harrison, both national income specialists; Stanley Fischer, at one time World Bank Chief Economist; Vinod Dubey and the late Enzo Grilli. There were also many others whom I am not mentioning by name or who just slipped off my memory, but who would recognize their contribution in the following pages. But I must not forget the role played by the late Barber B. Conable, President of the World Bank 1986–91, who had a genuine interest in the environment. He enthusiastically added his name to that of Mostafa Tolba, then Executive Director of UNEP below the Foreword I had drafted for *Environmental Accounting for Sustainable Development—A Joint UNEP-World Bank Symposium* (World Bank, Washington DC, 1989). Outside the Bank although my method had many detractors it found strong support from various scholars throughout the world including Eric Neumayer, Jeroen van den Berg, Philip Lawn, and intermittently, though with occasional caveats, Jeffrey Vincent, Partha Dasgupta and also many others who took the trouble to apply the user-cost method in empirical studies. I must also add Neva Godwin's group at Tufts University, notably Jonathan Harris, who showed profound understanding of the user-cost method and helped to spread its message. It goes without saying that one of the greatest debts I must acknowledge is to the late Professor Sir John Hicks who had supervised my doctoral dissertation at Oxford in the 1950s with wisdom and encouragement, and who was to maintain interest in my career afterwards. Readers will not fail to notice that his name imbues practically all aspects of the current book. I am duty bound too to name the late Professor Zaki Hasan, Chartered Accountant and Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Alexandria University, Egypt, where I took my first bachelor degree. It was he who kindled my interest in accountancy at an early age and had wished me to be an accountant.

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**For**  
**Susan Hubert**

