



ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Kes McCormick

*International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE), Lund University, P.O. Box 196, 221 00 Lund, Sweden,
Tel: +46 46 222 02 00, Fax: +46 46 222 02 10, Email: _kes.mccormick@iiiee.lu.se*

Abstract

Ecological economics is an emerging field that offers significant room for creativity and innovation at the conceptual level on how to operationalize sustainability. It integrates economics with ecology and many elements from both the natural and social sciences to provide an integrated perspective on environment-economy interactions. A major policy dilemma that ecological economics addresses is how policy-makers can influence markets, so that they receive the ‘right’ signals from the natural world and do not erode life support systems. This discussion paper identifies the key aspects of ecological economics in the form of themes, including: issues of scale; limits to growth and substitution; ‘correct’ prices; evolution of systems; weak and strong sustainability; technical progress; altering preferences; and the role of democracy. These aspects or themes are then applied to better understand the sustainability challenges facing transport systems.

Keywords: ecological economics, transport systems, sustainable development
