

# A BETTER PLANET

Forty Big Ideas  
for a Sustainable Future

Edited by Daniel C. Esty;

Foreword by Ingrid C. Burke

A practical, bipartisan call to action  
from the world's leading thinkers on  
the environment and sustainability

Sustainability has emerged as a global priority over the past several years. The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change and the adoption of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals through the United Nations have highlighted the need to address critical challenges such as the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, water shortages, and air pollution. But in the United States, partisan divides, regional disputes, and deep disagreements over core principles have made it nearly impossible to chart a course toward a sustainable future.

This timely new book, edited by celebrated scholar Daniel C. Esty, offers fresh thinking and forward-looking solutions from environmental thought leaders across the political spectrum. The book's forty essays cover such subjects as ecology, environmental justice, Big Data, public health, and climate change, all with an emphasis on identifying pathways to sustainability. The book focuses on moving toward a sustainable future through actionable, bipartisan approaches based on rigorous analytical research.

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**Daniel C. Esty** is Hillhouse Professor of Environmental Law and Policy at Yale's School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and Yale Law School. He served as head of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection from 2011 to 2014 and in several leadership roles at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from 1989 to 1993. He has authored or edited 12 books including the prizewinning volume, *Green to Gold: How Smart Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate, Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage*.

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## Praise for *A Better Planet*

“*A Better Planet* offers new approaches to the world’s most pressing environmental problems. It’s a timely and urgently needed volume.”—Elizabeth Kolbert, author of *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*

“Sustainability represents the overarching challenge of our day, which must be met with a commitment to a spirit of progress across the global community. *A Better Planet* offers an array of ideas for helping to deliver the ecological transition that is now an imperative.”—Emmanuel Macron, President of France

“Pressing the reset button, this book brings together refreshingly new and profoundly compelling approaches to environmental policy and action in the USA and beyond.”—Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary UN Climate Change Convention 2010-2016

“*A Better Planet: 40 Big Ideas for a Sustainable Future* creates 40 opportunities to start accelerating the transition to a better planet today. The direction is clear; now we need to work together, at scale.”—Peter Bakker, President and CEO, World Business Council for Sustainable Development

“A remarkable collection of essays by leading environmental scholars and practitioners, *A Better Planet* offers great wisdom and powerful practical insights into the urgent task of ‘reigniting environmental progress’ for the twenty-first century. Its central message about the need to think and act systemically and its compelling case studies provide invaluable insights for every reader.”—Jeffrey D. Sachs, University Professor at Columbia University, Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and author of *The Age of Sustainable Development*

“A comprehensive overview of the case for system-wide transformation—combined with the kind of breakthrough ideas needed to make it happen—*A Better Planet* offers a compelling manifesto for change.” —Alan Jope, CEO of Unilever

“No one can criticize Dan Esty and his talented colleagues for not thinking big: there are ideas in this book that will appeal to anyone—and maybe a couple that will raise your hackles. It’s the kind of spirited, discipline-crossing, deep-dive that will help reorient a sometimes-stale environmental debate!”—Bill McKibben, author of *Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out?*

“Comprehensive, balanced, thought-provoking, thorough and, above all, readable! This book will become a must-have for anyone who wants to understand what has happened, and is happening, to our environment, why we should care, and what we can do about it.”—Christine Todd Whitman, Governor of New Jersey, 1994-2001, and Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, 2001-2003

“*A Better Planet* offers lucid, honest, wide-ranging, and diverse perspectives that strive to move us beyond political divides toward renewed actions to secure private-sector innovation, public engagement, and better policies for a better planet. Bravo!”—Lynn Scarlett, Global Vice President of Policy, The Nature Conservancy