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The Environments of the Poor in Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific

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PREFACE

Southeast Asia and East Asia have been hailed as success stories of economic growth, but poverty, the environment, and climate change remain major challenges. Poverty reduction is often said to compete with efforts to save the environment and respond to climate change. It is also argued that policies on the environment and climate change should not be carried out at the expense of eradicating poverty or promoting economic growth. This book tries to show that it is possible to reduce poverty, protect the environment, and respond to climate change at the same time — if certain policies are followed. The book provides evidence from Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific as a basis for recommending triple-win development policies. To emphasize the relationships between the three “wins”, the book introduces a spatial approach to poverty, one that focuses on the environments in which the poor live, i.e., regions where the environment — often aggravated by climate change — are major determinants of poverty. These areas are flood-prone and disaster-affected lands, uplands, coastlands, dryland, and slums.

“Environments of the Poor” was the theme of a conference which the Asian Development Bank and seventeen development partners organized on 24–26 November 2010 in New Delhi.¹ The papers on Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific at this conference were revised and edited for this publication. The papers on South Asia make up a separate volume, being jointly published by Oxford University Press of India and the Asian Development Bank. A third volume will be published that includes papers of a more general nature, including the conceptual background. The main title shared by all three volumes is The Environments of the Poor.

This volume is published jointly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), with
co-financing from the ADB Institute. Armin Bauer of ADB is editor-in-chief for the whole project, and he also designed the book cover. Assisting Armin Bauer was Paul Bullen, who developmentally edited all the papers. Aris Ananta from ISEAS is the primary editor of the present volume. Myo Thant of ADB helped with the contents and did some copy-editing. Rahilah Yusuf of ISEAS Publishing copy-edited the final manuscript and prepared it for publication.

We would like to thank various development partners who helped to make the original conference and this book a success, i.e. development institutions (ADB, AFD, DFID, GIZ, ILO, JICA, UNDP and UNEP); research networks in the Asia-Pacific region (ADBI, EEPSEA, NCAER, SANDEE, TEEB, TERI); and climate change and poverty related funding facilities and other initiatives (CDIA, GM-EOC, APCF).

The Editors

Note

1. For more information on the New Delhi conference, see the Environments of the Poor website at <http://www.adb.org/themes/poverty/topics/environments-of-the-poor>.
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