



“The Natural Advantage of Nations”

– Business Opportunities, Innovation and Governance in the 21st Century,
Edited by Karlson Hargroves
and Michael Smith

Book Review by Terence Jeyaretnam

The Natural Advantage of Nations is a collaborative effort in developing a framework for a more sustainable economy brought together and project managed by The Natural Edge Project (TNEP), a multi-stakeholder, not for profit project housed and supported by Engineers Australia. The book is intended to be a sequel to Natural Capitalism in the words of one of its authors, Hunter Lovins, and is a mammoth effort by four young engineers/scientists.

The book is described as incorporating innovative technical, structural and social advances, and exploring the role that governance can play in both leading and underpinning business and communities in the shift towards a sustainable future. Coupled with a companion website, www.thenaturaladvantage.info, this book builds on from the latest in the business case for sustainability. It shows how in a tripartite world where business government and civil society all have power, how each can best play their part and better work together to achieve win-win outcomes.

Edited by Karlson 'Charlie' Hargroves and Michael Harrison Smith of TNEP, and with forewords from Amory B Lovins, L Hunter Lovins, William McDonough, Michael Fairbanks and Alan AtKisson, the book brings together material, case studies and best practice examples of sustainable development and business cases for sustainability from over thirty sustainability practitioners around the globe. It is written primarily for an Australian audience, but has wider relevance and appeal.

Whilst a superb compilation of a wealth of useful material to students, academics, consultants, business and government, due to its eclectic authorship, it is a sampling pot of information, rather than a focussed and flowing story. Notwithstanding, it is a book that will occupy many a shelf as an authoritative source of present day sustainability solutions. I have one myself.