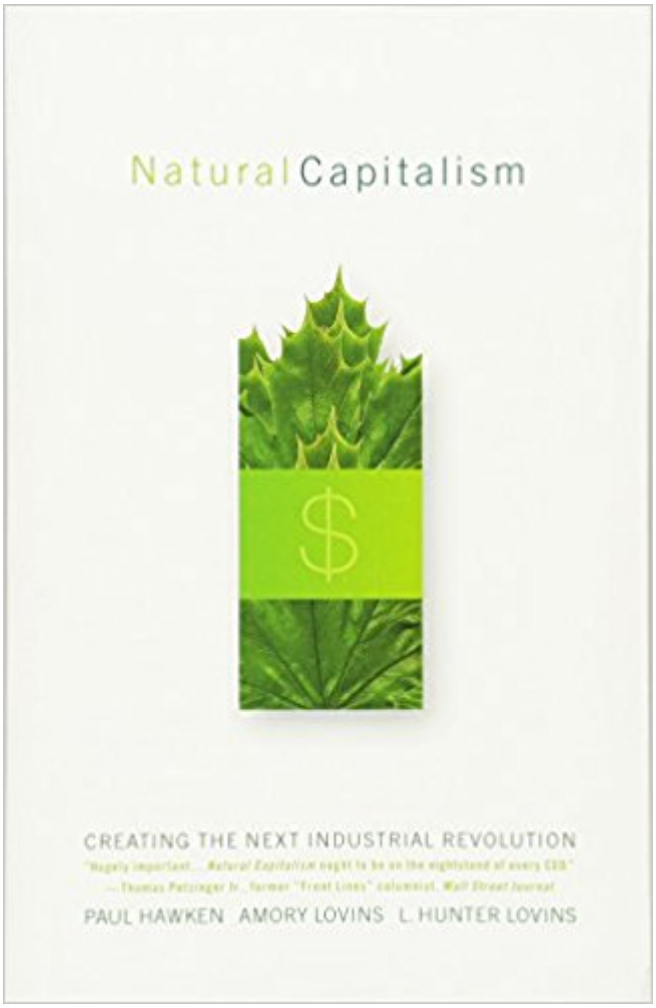
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Natural Capitalism: Creating The Next Industrial Revolution



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Synopsis

This groundbreaking book reveals how today’s global businesses can be both environmentally responsible and highly profitable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In Natural Capitalism, three top strategists show how leading-edge companies are practicing "a new type of industrialism" that is more efficient and profitable while saving the environment and creating jobs. Paul Hawken and Amory and Hunter Lovins write that in the next century, cars will get 200 miles per gallon without compromising safety and power, manufacturers will relentlessly recycle their products, and the world’s standard of living will jump without further damaging natural resources. "Is this the vision of a utopia? In fact, the changes described here could come about in the decades to come as the result of economic and technological trends already in place," the authors write. They call their approach natural capitalism because it’s based on the principle that business can be good for the environment. For instance, Interface of Atlanta doubled revenues and employment and tripled profits by creating an environmentally friendly system of recycling floor coverings for businesses. The authors also describe how the next generation of cars is closer than we might think. Manufacturers are already perfecting vehicles that are ultralight, aerodynamic, and fueled by hybrid gas-electric systems. If natural capitalism continues to blossom, so much money and resources will be saved that societies will be able to focus on issues such as housing, contend Hawken, author of a book and PBS series called Growing a Business, and the Lovinses, who

cofounded and directed the Rocky Mountain Institute, an environmental think tank. The book is a fascinating and provocative read for public-policy makers, as well as environmentalists and capitalists alike. --Dan Ring --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Hawken (The Ecology of Commerce) and Amory and Hunter Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute, an environmental think tank, have put together an ambitious, visionary monster of a book advocating "natural capitalism." The short answer to the logical question (What is natural capitalism?) is that it is a way of thinking that seeks to apply market principles to all sources of material value, most importantly natural resources. The authors have two related goals: first, to show the vast array of ecologically smart options available to businesses; second, to argue that it is possible for society and industry to adopt them. Hawken and the Lovinses acknowledge such barriers as the high initial costs of some techniques, lack of knowledge of alternatives, entrenched ways of thinking and other cultural factors. In looking at options for transportation (including the development of ultralight, electricity-powered automobiles), energy use, building design, and waste reduction and disposal, the book’s reach is phenomenal. It belongs to the galvanizing tradition of Frances Moore Lapp?’s Diet for a Small Planet and Stewart Brand’s The Whole Earth Catalog. Whether all that the authors have organized and presented so earnestly here can be assimilated and acted on by the people who run the world is open to question. But readers with a capacity for judicious browsing and grazing can surely learn enough in these pages to apply well-reasoned pressure. Charts and graphs, with accompanying CD-ROM. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins and L Hunter Lovins predict a new industrial revolution where farsighted companies will respond to environmental limitations and climate change by developing new technologies and approaches that solve environmental problems rather than causing them. The authors describe several innovative technologies that address environmental problems and discuss general principles for sustainable capitalism. After outlining their principles, they provide several examples of these principles at work. It is an interesting and important book

This book is a little old so some of the infomation is out dated, but the ideas are still radically new for many people. There is a lot to be take from this book on both the micro and macro models, all of which are about creating greater efficiancy in the markets, and lowering the cost to consumers, all the while creating new jobs and reducing pollution. The book tells people how to help reduce their

energy costs through simple changes in everday living. It also goes into great detail about market failures, government failures, and the compounding problem of global warming. This book is about the facts no ideological stance, with the authors saying that fossil fuel use is not going to go away anytime soon, but fossil fuels are only one small part of the entire picture. You will not be bored while reading this book, and should be mad after learning how much more money we are spending on goods of lesser quality.

Just a couple comments and caveats to add not covered in the in-depth Spotlight Reviews. First, this book is absolutely loaded with stats and data and provides a more rigerous, academic treatment of working towards more sustainable way to grow businesses and communities. The fact that the references at the end go on for 55 pages attest to this level of detail!). Given that the authors are from one of the most prominent "think tanks" of eco-capitalism - The Rocky Mountain Institute - explains this level of detail and expertise. But, it really can come across as a "brain dump" where every fact the authors knew of are piled into the chapters (whose origins are earlier position papers). So, if you really need hard data and lots of factoids, this book is a top, well-researched and dependable reference.Another missed opportunity is its rather ineffective and non-visual layout - just page after page of small text (uhh). So much more could have been done to lay out the chapter divisions in an easier-to-read format. Like mining gold nuggets from tons of ore, extracting the main points from this tapestry of various position papers takes sifting through tons of text - and it is a voluminous text. But, if you are serious about this topic, this is one of the prominent, "must-have" references.Alternatively, a somewhat less detailed, more headlined overview of "eco-capitalism" (the environmental crisis, renewable energy, hydrogen economy, eco-efficiency, sustainable cities and overall environmental economics) is ECO-ECONOMY by Lester R. Brown. It gives the reader an excellent overview of the problem and potential solutions along with a strong dose of both reality and inspiriation. Not all experts make great writers, but Brown seems to be both.

Having just graduated from an Ivy League business school and reading Natural Capitalism, I was shocked this book was not part of the required reading at my school. It represents the next iteration in thinking about economics, specifically to think of the earth as not just a valuable and limited resource, but as a willing cocreator of a positive future. The examples ranging from real estate to factory production to product design to urban planning all highlighted a way of thinking not necessarily akin to wealth creation so much as they provided a context to apply multilateral thinking to business problem solving. For the cold hard facts on how to evolve our economy into one which

makes more sense, please pick up a copy of this book.However, this book is only part of the story. In addition to progressive economics and systems thinking, we also need next generation leaders who care enough to go this extra mile. Natural Capitalism does an excellent job of outlining the path and reasons to think differently, however it stops short on how we find the people to take this initiative. For this I recommend, Are You Ready to Succeed? by Srikumar Rao. Throughout this journey Dr. Rao evolves present day capitalists into the leaders of the future, full of purpose, drive and creativity. Are You Ready to Succeed and Natural Capitalism are a natural fit as one develops the human qualities required for the future and the other lays out the road map.

It’s about efficiencies. In most cases the savings and efficiency gains are vastly overrated.

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