Towards a New System of Environmental Governance

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Summary
Planning, the 'visible hand' of government, is the resource allocation sphere that has the potential to prevent destructive conflict over resources, by creating a long term, rational, ethics-based and participatory decision-making process. Other public decision-making systems (the market, legal and political arenas), by their very nature, cannot adequately protect the environment or ensure sustainable development. However, as presently conceived, Planning cannot do so either. Reform has been impeded by an ideological bias which defines Planning as diametrically opposed to the market, such that creative alternatives to the two systems of social choice have not been developed.

To address this problem, a new tripartite structure of environmental governance is proposed. Based on an ecofeminist paradigm, it is primarily designed to constrain the potential for the abuse of power, and allow society to address environmental (ethical) as well as social (distributional) and economic (efficiency) issues. In a sense, it 'rationalises' the social decision-making system by re-aligning rights, wants and needs with the appropriate decision-making forum (representative democracy, the market and Planning respectively). The model exposes the need to redesign all these institutions so that they better correspond to their logical functions within the resource allocation system. However, this paper focuses on the Planning system itself.

Introduction
This paper examines the relation between the public environment and land use planning system (Planning)* as an institution and the other major arenas for resource allocation: the legal, political and market systems. An ecofeminist paradigm is used to expose how false dualisms conceal hierarchal power relationships in the resource allocation system. In particular, this paper draws some connections between how people are taught to perceive the decision-making framework for resource allocation and the inevitability of environmental destruction. It is concerned with how these institutions have come to destroy the values they were originally meant to protect. In addition, the paper offers a reform proposal for discussion. As this topic could easily fill many more pages, only an overview is provided, and some points developed elsewhere are incorporated by reference. First, a snapshot of the argument is presented.

The existing resource allocation system transfers public resources to powerful corporate, industrial, military and bureaucratic interests (CIMBIs), often below actual cost to the public, let alone the replacement cost (as if 'public goods', such as wilderness, were replaceable). On several continents, for example, logging companies are clear felling public land at a net loss to the taxpayer. Tasmania provides a case in point. Here, the Forestry Commission has a debt of US$350 million, financed by a local population of less than 500,000 citizens. The debt has been partially incurred by allowing transnational corporations to remove old

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+ Planning (when capitalised) is shorthand for those fields called land use, environmental, natural resource or development planning. Planning is not capitalised when referring to the activity of planning. It encompasses the two traditional divisions within the profession: advance/strategic and implementation/statutory planning.
growth forests with subsidies amounting to over US$35 million per year. Another major factor contributing to the debt was that in the late 1980s, the Liberal State Government used the Forestry Commission as a borrowing agent to circumvent limitations imposed by the Loans Council, thereby obscuring the source of the debt. Over the last 20 years, over 5,000 jobs in the industry have been lost, while the annual cut has increased dramatically (Saddler, 1991). Elsewhere, as for instance in the United States, timber rights are sometimes sold off for an amount less than the transaction costs of preparing for the sale, let alone the public cost of growing the forest. United States taxpayers could save US$100 million annually just by not selling these forests (Repetto, 1988). Similarly, the Australian Conservation Foundation has established that the forest industries in Western Australia received a US$100 million subsidy by way of the forestry department over a ten year period (see, Repetto, 1988; Repetto and Gillis, 1988).

Fig. 1 The conventional resource allocation model (descriptive).

Benefit of the few) is a function, not just of policy, but of intrinsic characteristics of the resource allocation and planning system. External power relations, such as capitalism, direct corporate influence and/or political corruption are here ignored. Instead, the paper focuses on how the resource allocation system is conceptualised, through 'Patriarchal' ideology and language construction. In the feminist vernacular, 'Patriarchy' nominally refers to male-dominated family and State institutions and their underlying perceptual framework and values. That is, 'Patriarchy' has come to be understood in its broader meaning as an umbrella term which stands for the logic of oppression contained within the dominant cosmology, ideology and structures of modernity. This ideological model serves the interests of the CIMBI s, who, not coincidentally, have the greatest access to the means of shaping public perceptions.

This ideological model is centred on two ideas. The first is that elected representatives stand above the market and bureaucracy (hierarchy). The second idea is that the Planning system is diametrically opposed to the market system or at least seen as constraining economic growth or development (dualism). The sharp distinction in Patriarchal society between public and private spheres creates a bias against Planning—the resource allocation arena that can allow a long-term perspective. This