Preface

This book is a co-publication between Edward Elgar and the OECD Environment Directorate. It has arisen from the proceedings of an OECD workshop on the 'Distribution of Benefits and Costs of Environmental Policies: Analysis, Evidence and Policy Issues' held at OECD Headquarters, Paris, in March 2003. The workshop was organised by the National Policies Division, Environment Directorate, as part of the work programme on the 'Social and Environment Interface' which is one of the key priorities of the OECD's Environmental Strategy for the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The book builds upon earlier work undertaken by the OECD on the distributional effects of environmental policy, which has mainly concentrated on the financial impacts of the use of economic instruments. In contrast, the workshop and this book focus upon distribution impacts associated with both the distribution of environmental quality, and with the distribution of financial effects. Moreover, it looks at such impacts across a broad range of environmental policies.

The objectives of this book are threefold:

- to provide a conceptual framework to better understand the disparities in the distributional effects (environmental and financial) of environmental policy;
- to review empirical evidence on the distribution of environmental quality and in the distribution of financial effects of environmental policy; and,
- to assess the policy implications by reviewing some of the challenges facing policy-makers as they seek to design environmentally effective and economically efficient environmental policies, while ensuring that social concerns such as distributional effects are simultaneously addressed.

For their contribution to the fulfilment of these objectives – in addition to the authors of the book chapters – the editors would like to thank OECD government delegates to the Working Party on National Environmental Policies, as well as Christine Bae, Arno Bouwman, Paul Herrington, Hanneke Kruize, Susan Scott and Silvia Tiezzi.

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On behalf of all of the contributors to this volume we would like to pay tribute to David W. Pearce, who suddenly passed away on 8 September 2005. David played an important role in the preparation of this publication, not least by providing a conceptual framework to analyse distributional issues associated with environmental quality. As with all of David's work, the insights provided and the clarity with which they are expressed serve as an inspiration to us all. More generally, David contributed to the work of the OECD Environment Directorate for more than thirty years, in the course of which he made significant contributions to environmental economics.

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