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**Low-Carbon Land Transport: Policy Handbook, D. Bongardt, F. Creutzig, H. Hüging, K. Sakamoto, S. Bakker, S. Gota, S. Böhler-Baedecker. Routledge, Abingdon (2013). £49.00 (hardback), ISBN: 978-1-84971-377-1 [Book review]**

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# Low-Carbon Land Transport: Policy Handbook

**Daniel Bongardt, Felix Creutzig, Hanna Hüging, Ko Sakamoto, Stefan Bakker, Sudhir Gota, and Susanne Böhler-Baedecker**

Low-Carbon Land Transport: Policy Handbook is a book that does what it says on the cover – that is, it provides practical advice for policy makers with environmental sympathies and an interest in addressing transport issues without resorting to investing significant resources in trying to build their way out of trouble.

This is a book with several positives. Thus the content benefits from being solidly based on some fascinating examples from all over the world; the overall structure makes sense and is straightforward; and there are some excellent diagrams and some well-presented illustrations and photographs.

On the other hand, whilst individual paragraphs generally read rather well, the storyline linking these together within each chapter is often rather 'bitty'. Meanwhile some of the diagrams (e.g. Figure 0.1) and tables (e.g. Table 2.1) do not quite work in terms of how they present the data, and others suffer slightly from being too small and being greyscale (e.g. Figures 1.7 and 1.12).

Looking in more detail, after a short introduction the book is formed of four main chapters.

Chapter 1 defines low carbon transport, examines how close this is to being a reality, and presents a pathway of 'how to get from here to there'. This actually has some rather interesting nuggets buried in it relating to future transport trends and such, but is one of the most 'jerky' sections to read in terms of storyline, whilst Box 1.1 happens to be mislabelled.

Next, Chapter 2 devises a 'toolkit' of practical policies and measures to align with this low-carbon future pathway. Whilst this does present some useful content – being the 'guts' of the book in many respects – this is also the weakest section in terms of structure. Particularly, the book misses the opportunity to put the measures together as 'packages'; the lists of measures are rather randomly organised; and a sub-section on 'responsibilities' falls in a strange place.

Chapter 3 meanwhile introduces a range of evaluation techniques for measuring the effectiveness of the 'toolkit' measures once implemented. This chapter again holds the attention and the summary sections in particular are most useful – a feature that would have added to the readability of the other chapters. One criticism here is that only carbon measurement techniques are covered (in line with the aim of the book). Even better, would have been to read about other environmental, social and economic indicators and methods too.

Finally Chapter 4 sets out the strategy to manage the change from 'as is' to the low carbon future, and is by far the best, with some very pertinent observations made. Unfortunately, it comes to a rather abrupt finish (notwithstanding Table 4.7 providing a wonderful summary in its way). Indeed, there are no real conclusions that pull the book together, and this seems to be rather a wasted opportunity.

Overall, this well-written, nicely-illustrated and (mostly) well-structured handbook is one which will certainly be of interest and of practical use to its intended audience of policy makers and practitioners with responsibilities for addressing transport concerns. Students of transport and the environment too, would learn much from the 'bite-sized chunks' of good practice examples from around the world. Indeed my only real disappointment in the

usefulness of this book for its stated audience, was in the lack of ambition in the aim of the book, and as such is actually a compliment. Why just focus on the challenge of carbon dioxide emissions? Why not also address other environmental issues, or even look more broadly still at social and economic concerns – to which the vast majority of measures proposed by the authors would also contribute? Sustainable transport is nothing if not a holistic and comprehensive vision after all, whilst the siren call of “action now on climate change” by no means dominates the thinking of most policy makers for even a significant minority of the time. In my view, to be truly effective such a handbook needs to be designed to be relevant for more of the time, which surely means ‘whatever the issue de jour’ and not just pushing one single issue ‘button’.

*Low-Carbon Land Transport: Policy Handbook*, by Bongardt D, Creutzig F, Hüging H, Sakamoto K, Bakker S, Gota S, and Böhler-Baedecker S. 2013, Abingdon: Routledge. £49.00 (hardback). ISBN 978-1-84971-377-1.

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