

**Induction of Robert N. Stavins**  
**Fellow of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists**

Comments by Professor Kathleen Segerson, President  
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AERE Luncheon, ASSA Meetings, Atlanta, Georgia, January 4, 2010

Rob Stavins needs no introduction. He probably has as much, if not more, name recognition than any other environmental economist. And it is hard to over-state his impact on the integration of principles from environmental economics into public policy debates. One supporter writes: “It is difficult for me to think of another environmental economist who has had such a positive – and important – impact on public policy as Rob.” Another says: “In my view, no other environmental economist can match Rob in the ability to work effectively with policy makers...I cannot think of another current environmental economist who straddles more effectively the academic and policy communities.” Finally, another states: Rob “has probably done more than any other single environmental economist to bring the idea of tradable emissions permits (“cap and trade”) to the attention of policy-makers as a viable alternative for the management of pollution levels.” Clearly, Rob has made his mark!

Rob began his campaign to improve the efficiency of environmental policies back in the 1980’s, when he directed Project 88, which laid out the first influential case for market-based instruments to be used in actual environmental policy in the U.S. Shortly thereafter, the 1990 Amendments to the Clean Air Act established the trading program for sulfur dioxide, which embodied the principles that the project had promoted.

Since those early days, Rob has focused much of his efforts on what once appeared to be a daunting task, namely, infusing consideration of economic logic and principles into debates about climate change policies. The fact that cap-and-trade is such an integral part of the current negotiations is a testament to his efforts. He has been a master at recognizing the political realities that often shape the climate change debates, and working to promote policy approaches that acknowledge and embody those constraints. His recent work on the global “architecture” for international climate change agreements is a case in point.

Although much of Rob’s most visible contributions stem from his writings on climate change policy, Rob has also made a number of other key research contributions, and is one of the most highly-cited economists in our profession. For example, his paper on transactions costs and permits has been widely cited, as

has his work on the impact of regulation on competitiveness in the U.S. And his paper on carbon sequestration by forested wetlands is one of the first attempts to measure the marginal cost of abatement for carbon dioxide emissions.

Rob has been an outstanding contributor through numerous other channels as well. He plays an integral role in graduate education at Harvard, serving as director or chair of several programs. He has been on a long list of advisory committees and boards, including chairing the EPA's Environmental Economics Advisory Committee and serving as a lead author for the IPCC. He writes frequently for periodicals such as *The Environmental Forum* and writes a blog on current environmental policy issues. He was a co-founder of the *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy* and served as its editor for the inaugural three years. He has also held numerous other editorial positions, including his current position as editor of the *Journal of Wine Economics*.

For his remarkable efforts and success in promoting the use of market-based approaches to environmental policy, in general, and, more specifically, his influential role in elevating the concept of cap-and-trade to its current prominent role in the debates over climate change policy; his uncanny ability to straddle the academic and policy communities, and to communicate research results to the policymakers; and his many contributions to graduate education and extensive service to our profession, we hereby induct Robert N. Stavins as a 2009 Fellow of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists.