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In a granite landscape

Colin Price

Here, where the forests lie gently fragmented
by *joki* and *järvi* of different sorts,
sit those from the mainstream, and those who dissented,
to proffer their views and exchange latest thoughts.
There are theorists, modellers, raw-data-lovers;
those who preach dogmas, and those who have none;
one who revisits, and one who discovers
that nothing is *truly* new under the sun.

We begin with the first and the lasting impression
from Professor Richard Vlosky who gave us the key
to competitive schemes to come out of recession
ahead of the rest: which, of course, *all* can be.
And out in the working groups, curious conclusions
have undermined theories we used to rehearse;
e.g. (if I may mention my paper) confusions
on how rising carbon price makes matters worse.
There were studies whose scholarship threatened to oust man-
ic smugness concerning the place we are at:
I had *thought* that Paul Samuelson plagiarised Faustmann,
but the trail of deceit goes back further than that.
For Faustmann himself had failed to cite a
precursor or two; his lit. review fails
to mention some Englishmen and a Dutch writer
whose grandmother came – I conjecture – from Wales.

There were searches for magical numbers that marry
our data to models – or the other way round –
in the markets for roundwood according to Jari;
those factors which clarify, those which confound.
For econometrics is very like raising
our children: the trick lies in keeping them saved
from disaster, through choice and judicious time-phasing –
which make children, like data-sets, more well-behaved.
There was time for free thought – yet not lacking in rigour –
combining the best of the old and the new
for a future of thinking, with hybridised vigour,
about trees fixing carbon like no grass can do.

Some variables given, and others endogic
allowing efficient extraction of betas;
some ecosystemic, some sociological,
broad'ning communal engagement in planning by many, ... many, ... many, ... many metres.
Thus ecologists colonise civil society,
mayors study markets, and to co-integrate,
economists rank ecosystem variety
by giving equivalent euro-based weight.
Cross-elasticity; concepts cross-cultural;

cross-cutting models that move with the times;
and pricing the service of eagle or vulture –
all allow introduction of new paradigms.

Here, where a landscape formed grandly from granite
we foresters do what we can to ensure
that we talk of what future remains for the planet,
and what wood contributes to make it secure.
The landscape reflects presentations revealing
perspectives: philanthropists, sociopaths,
some who tap streams of intuitive feeling,
some who love granite-like logic of maths.

There were visits to masts that record each extreme of
environment for the big project called SMEAR,
with funds that economists only can dream of –
they've got instruments measuring *everything* here:
analysers that render repeated, complete oz-
one values, computers to plot every curve
Else a trip to encounter the local mosquitoes
that infest Siikaneva's swamp nature reserve.

There was honest researching, that aimed to impede o-
ver-zealous claims, like "trees stop earth getting hot":
for there *are* warming models embracing albedo
which suggest that the best thing is, felling the lot.
As for deforestation's ongoing defiance
of Kuznetzian turning points, *somewhere* in time it
must come to an end, given only compliance
with bonds that ensure no bad outcome for climate.

I would like to report on our third, and last, plenary
session: an expert extolling the case
for biomass energy from forest greenery:
but she hasn't yet given it – just watch this space.
Next, we look forward to REDD – plus or minus;
green marketing; values land owners perceive.
And those sessions we'll go to tomorrow, define us
in terms of the things we prefer to believe.

But occasional accidents, lead to a session
on topics we never had thought of before;
serendipity bearing us into possession
of new ways of thinking that open their door.
And so we attack, with all verve and all valour
new problems, and old ones once more re-addressed
from new angles, and when we recall Hyytiälä
we'll remember its having been one of the best.

I'm sorry for all of the papers missed out on –
I couldn't be sitting in three different places.
But their abstracts give plenty we might think about on
the aeroplane, as we return to our bases.
And hence we prepare for departure, excited
by mainstreams of thinking – and other-than-these;
here, where land-fragments lie nicely united
by forests of gently eccentric tall trees.