



Planetary Rent as an Instrument for Solving Global Problems

Aleksandr Bezgodov

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Its innovative, visionary ideas make Planetary Rent a book of vital importance.

Planetary Rent by Aleksandr Bezgodov is a visionary manifesto promoting an innovative way of managing the planet's resources.

Envisioning a broad, unified solution to global problems may seem to be an insurmountable challenge, but that does not deter Bezgodov, who heads the Planetary Project, a nonprofit research organization. In this sweeping, detailed, research-based book, the author boldly proposes an unusual concept he calls "planetary rent," which is the notion of collecting rental income to fund a "planetary budget" whose purpose is "to address environmental and other global problems of nature and society."

In order to justify and validate the revolutionary idea of planetary rent, the author first discusses the distinctions between planetary ownership and planetary rent. He then provides an in-depth history of the creation and implementation of rent and the assessment of rental income. This background, while somewhat dry, is essential in laying the groundwork for the subsequent discussion, which explores how rent can be applied on a global basis.

Bezgodov builds the case for planetary rent by demonstrating in large part why individuals, institutions, and nation-states have not done a sufficient job of managing the resources of the planet. The author references some of the most basic, serious deficiencies, such as "the problem of oxygen destruction and its growing shortage," to dramatize the impact of human consumption of the Earth's precious resources. Rather than perpetuate control of these resources by corporations and countries, the author contends that "all the inhabitants of the Earth have the natural right to use planetary resources."

Bezgodov does not limit the definition of resources to common understanding, however; he defines them broadly as natural resources, atmospheric resources, social resources, and intellectual resources, each of which he discusses in detail. All of these resources, writes the author, should be owned by the people of the planet.

The last three chapters of *Planetary Rent* are certainly the most intriguing, because they describe the concept of planetary rent and demonstrate how it would be implemented as part of a "new economic system." Bezgodov sees the economy of the future as based on an urgent need:

to save the Earth and humans by creating the architecture of global survival; and moving to a managed harmony between people and nature on the basis of a new paradigm of life support.

The author is careful to emphasize, however, that a system of "planetary management" based on planetary rent that feeds into a planetary budget "does not seek to suppress national sovereignty and interests." While he does broadly describe how such a system would work, one cannot help but wonder about its feasibility and practicality.

Planetary Rent is textbook-like in its presentation and its heft—over five hundred pages long. It is generally

comprehensible, yet at times the audience may struggle with some of the dense, formal language and mathematical formulae used in support of the book's premise. Numerous charts and tables are helpful in clarifying some of the material.

The uniquely creative and novel notion of a single, centralized solution to avert global crisis is so provocative as to be breathtaking. It is this innovative, visionary idea that makes *Planetary Rent* a book of vital importance.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (November 13, 2017)

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