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Preface

Biosphere Reserves are not only a contribution in the search for greater sustainability, but they also correspond to an important tool to confront the challenge of new forms of territorial organization, which permit facing deterioration of resources and ecosystems, whose capacity for recuperation has been threatened by the level and velocity of human intervention and by the over-valuation of market mechanisms that assign resources in a geographic space. The value of Biosphere Reserves as tools in the search for a new territorial order is associated with their characteristics and importance: they are destined to protect natural and cultural landscapes with a great ecological and heritage value.

Biosphere Reserves, which began in 1976 with the goal of protecting our vital space, do not have a geopolitical sense but rather are for life support and fulfill functions of conservation of landscapes and ecosystems, sustainable development and logistical support for scientific research. As a tool, they not only permit a geographic place to be put into value, so well-illustrated in the case of Chile, but also to define core, buffer and transition zones that allow the maintenance of biological and cultural diversity, as is discussed in Part 1 of this book's first chapter.

Chile is under a development model that tends rather to standardize its very diverse geography, which frequently appears dominated by short-term economic return or a single vision constructed from a central state that in the practice translates into stock answers in the area of public policies, thereby sharpening the lack of harmony between the forms of occupying space and the possibilities and limitations that our geography offers. The second chapter highlights the biogeographic representation of the current Biosphere Reserves in Chile, which while it embodies a strategic support for the country does not impede the creation of new reserves with the goal of widening said representation.

This book makes manifest the contribution of geography and the need to strengthen the richness represented in the network of Biosphere Reserves, in an effort to re-construct the society-nature relationship. By gathering and reporting in ten chapters from Part 2 the situation of our Biosphere Reserves, starting with Lauca, passing by Fray Jorge, La Campana-Peñuelas, Juan Fernández, Nevados de Chillán-Laja Lake, Araucarias, Southern Andean Temperate Rainforest, San Rafael Lake, Torres del Paine and finally Cape Horn, in which for each case the authors refer to the distinct key questions, this work will be an important contribution for the researchers, students and general public.

En Part 3 of the book, very correctly labeled as perspectives and challenges, in the last two chapters explores the condition of true "natural laboratories" for the effects of landscape and territorial planning with the aim of education for sustainability.

Finally, it is important to point out that this book is the result of a joint effort between institutions and researchers, and without doubt represents a contribution for the valuing of the geographic diversity of Chile and the construction of more sustainable territories.

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