I would have preferred the title to have been '*Climate Change*', but the subject of this book is of continuing interest and concern to all. Those who doubted the long-term changes and those who doubted man's implication in the phenomena of climate change are being shown by the accumulating evidence that their doubts were unjustified. This book presents interesting examples from across the range of evidence to show that progressive changes are occurring, that there is considerable variation in our weather both spatially and temporally (uncertainty), the causes leading directly and indirectly to climate change, and many examples of the less direct consequences of the changes.

The author avoids esoteric accounts of the causes of climate change and of the simulations used to estimate future conditions and instead provides explanations and descriptions which are appropriate to the intelligent reader educated in other subjects. The visual aids – graphics, figures, and photographs – are mostly well chosen to aid understanding. While certain accounts, e.g. those of carbon trading and the Kyoto and Montréal Protocols, are little more than apologies for the Western political and commercial systems, and while underlying problems such as population growth, the consumption of resources and food production are given only passing recognition, the book, as a whole, presents a most instructive account of the current and future problems and their causes and does discuss ways to delay their onset.

Donald K. L. MacKerron

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Fire Effects on Soils and Restoration Strategies. Edited by A. Cerda and P. R. Robichaud. Enfield, NH, USA : Science Publishers (2009), pp. 589, £85.00. ISBN 978-1-57808-526-2.

This book (Volume 5 of the 'Land Reconstruction and Management' Series, edited by Martin J. Haigh) reflects over a decade of international research and practical experience on the effect of fire on the Earth's atmosphere, climate and terrestrial ecosystems. Aimed at students, land managers, policy makers and scientists, the book highlights the spatial and temporal variability in the causes, consequences and mitigation of fire events, due to the complex interactions between long-term climate, weather, biota, soil properties and history at any given site.

The editors achieve a balance between the causes and consequences of fire in the landscape, and restoration strategies. Detailed quantitative data and qualitative case studies are included. The book is divided into three themes: Section I deals with the effects of fire on soil properties (physical, chemical, mineralogical and biological), and the impact of these effects on soil functions. Section II considers rehabilitation and restoration strategies, based on scientific research and practical applications. Section III includes case studies from Australia, Canada, Chile, Portugal and the USA, demonstrating the specific nature of fire effects and the need for 'adaptive management' in post-fire land restoration.

The text is well illustrated, with a mixture of black and white, and colour plates, diagrams and figures. The reference lists are extensive. I would recommend this book, both as an academic text book and practical guide. At £85.00, it might be considered too expensive for its student audience, but the breadth, depth and quality of the content makes it a worthwhile investment.

R. J. Rickson

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Understanding Vineyard Soils. By R. White. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2009), pp. 240, US$39.95. ISBN 978-0-19-531125-9.

As a soil text book by a professor of soil science this is an excellent reference book which should be read with pen and notebook in hand.

It is a harder read than need be, owing to very small print and the unbelievably poor quality of illustrations, particularly the photographs. The diagram of 'an arbuscular mycorrhizal fungus' is an illustration in point. You can eventually work out what the illustration is, but it is not readily apparent. The photocopy illustrating