research issues and five on NRM challenges at farm level. The methods and results are described in sufficient detail to enable the reader to determine their efficacy in assessing economic, social and environmental impacts, and the returns to research investment made. The third part analyses the main lessons learned from the cases, and looks at the way ahead for NRMR impact assessment.

The main contributors to the book are economists, which flavours the methods used, the presentation of results and their analysis. Social impact is considered, but given insufficient weight. It is also difficult to discern the replicability and scaling-up potential of the CGIAR projects. No indication is given of the cost of impact assessment, or of the capacities required to carry them out. More discussion of the implications for project design would have been useful. Notwithstanding, this is an extremely useful book for researchers, research managers and development practitioners looking for ways to assess objectively the impact of research projects.

Barry Pound

Irrigation Systems – Design, Planning and Construction. By A. Laycock. Wallingford, UK: CABI (2007), pp. 320, £65.00. ISBN 978-184593-263-3. doi:10.1017/S0014479708006522

'Over a quarter of a billion hectares of the planet are irrigated. Entire countries depend on irrigation for their survival and indeed for their very existence.' These words, from the author's preface, set the scene for this extensive and informative book, which draws on his 40 years of experience worldwide.

The engineering coverage is encyclopaedic, concentrating on 'surface irrigation', where water flows to the fields via channel systems. However, beyond consideration of just about every engineering aspect of canal design and construction, there are also chapters headed Troubleshooting – Feedback from the Field, and Costs and Economics.

The author takes a broad view of the social and political contexts in which surface irrigation operates in the early 21st century, whilst linking such topics to engineering practicalities. This is an important contribution, following a period when irrigation planning has been (too?) heavily dominated by socio-economic approaches.

The text pages are well illustrated with diagrams, design drawings and photographs. However, there is also extensive additional image material – listed separately in the book – which may be downloaded from the author's own website (at no charge) or, in higher definition, via a separate CD (at cost of £100) – obtainable from the publishers. The reader without access to the Web (or the CD) will have plenty to absorb from the book itself, as the 'extra' material is additional to the main themes. The book, although not cheap, is to be recommended to (as the publisher rightly suggests) 'engineers, technicians, agriculturalists, economists, students and policy makers'.

Henry Gunston

Fairness in Adaptation to Climate Change. Edited by W. N. Adger, J. Paavola, S. Huq and M. J. Mace. Cambridge, Mass. USA: The MIT Press (2006), pp. 319. £16.95. (paperback). ISBN 0-262-51193-2. doi:10.1017/S0014479708006534

The award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 to the IPCC and Al Gore has helped to refocus the world's attention on global climate change. Moving from arguments of concentration on mitigation of climate change to a more realistic adaptation to the expected changes, this collection of articles explores how poor countries could argue the social justice aspects of the steps they need to undertake to finance the adaptation. The developing countries may well bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change – they are the most vulnerable from a climatic point of view, from a financial and technological point of view, and with fragile production systems. But the developing countries also possess natural resources that if suitably mobilized may greatly contribute to the global efforts not only to adapt to but also mitigate climate change. The book contains a wide variety of arguments for seeing efforts on climate change in the context of social justice and not only technology. It is a most useful supplement to the current debate and provides pointers to mechanisms that may unite the industrialized and the developing countries as international conventions on climate change will be revisited in the coming years.

Stein W. Bie