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**Sinopsis**

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Taken from the pages of *Science* and supplemented by contributions from the magazine's editors, *State of the Planet 2008-2009* offers contemporary science writing that is sometimes provocative, frequently enlightening, and always authoritative. Published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), *Science* is one of the most respected scientific magazines in the world. With a readership of more than one million people, it offers "hard science" from top scientists to both educated lay readers and scientists alike.

The articles collected here are arranged thematically and each section is introduced by a prominent scientist or science writer. Donald Kennedy, who was Editor-in-Chief of *Science* when these articles appeared in the magazine, contributes a preface and several short essays. Focusing on issues of energy and sustainability, sections of the volume are devoted to the prospects of energy-sparing technologies and alternatives to fossil fuel use, including ethanol and cellulosic digestion. Other sections center on climate change, led by a comprehensive essay on the state of scientific knowledge today and followed by contributions about the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets, as well as the effects of climate change that have been measured to date, including changes in migration and breeding cycles of birds and flowering in plants, changing patterns of hurricanes and extreme weather events, and alterations in forest fire frequency.

Interspersed throughout the book are *Science* news pieces that highlight particular issues and cases relevant to the main scientific findings. A glossary of key terms and concepts helps students and nonspecialists better understand the terminology and the issues.

**About the Author**

Donald Kennedy is the Bing Professor of Environmental Science and President emeritus at Stanford University in Stanford, CA. In 1977 Dr. Kennedy took a 2 1/2 year leave to serve as Commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Following his return to Stanford in 1979, Dr. Kennedy served for a year as Provost and for twelve years as President. He co-directs the Environmental Studies Program in the Institute for International Studies.

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