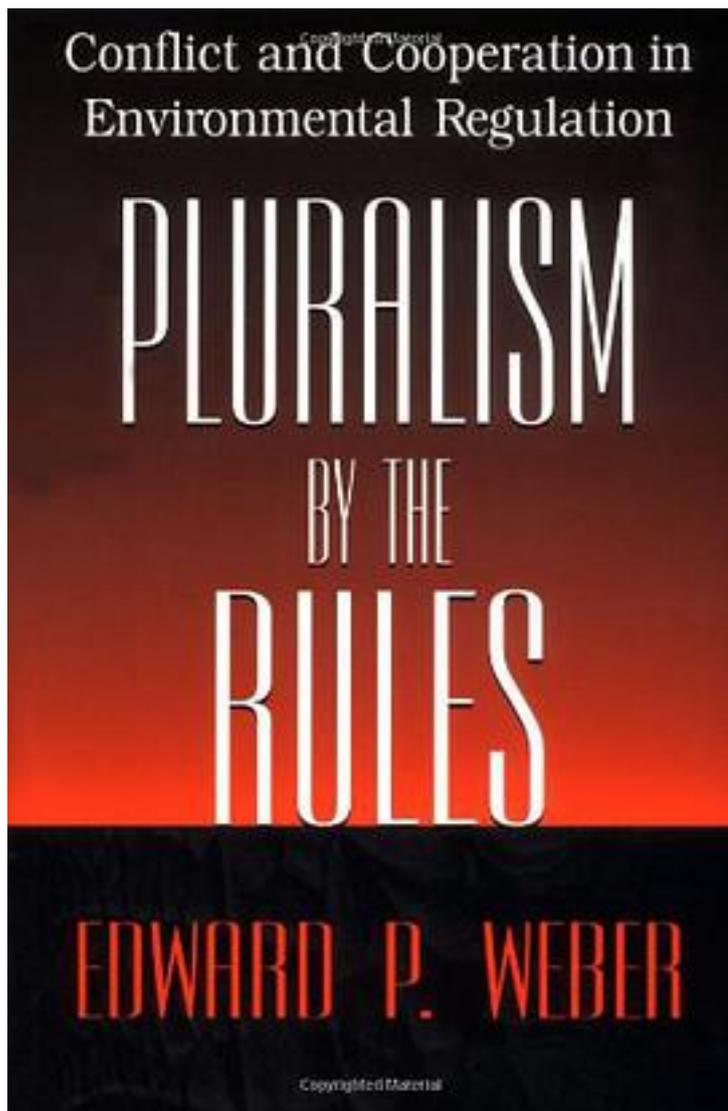


# Pluralism by the Rules



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出版者:

出版时间:1998-1

装帧:

isbn:9780878406722

Despite America's pluralistic, fragmented, and generally adversarial political culture, participants in pollution control politics have begun to collaborate to reduce the high costs of developing, implementing, and enforcing regulations. Edward P. Weber uses examples from this traditionally combative policy arena to propose a new model for regulation, "pluralism by the rules," a structured collaborative format that can achieve more effective results at lower costs than typically come from antagonistic approaches. Weber cites the complexity and high implementation costs of environmental policy as strong but insufficient incentives for collaboration. He shows that cooperation becomes possible when opposing sides agree to follow specific rules that include formal binding agreements about enforcement, commitment to the process by political and bureaucratic leaders, and the ensured access and accountability of all parties involved. Such rules establish trust, create assurances that agreements will be enforced, and reduce the perceived risks of collaboration. Through case studies dealing with acid rain, reformulated gasoline, and oil refinery pollution control, Weber demonstrates the potential of collaboration for realizing a cleaner environment, lower compliance costs, and more effective enforcement. Challenging the prevailing view that endless conflict in policymaking is inevitable, "Pluralism by the Rules" establishes a theoretical framework for restructuring the regulatory process.

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