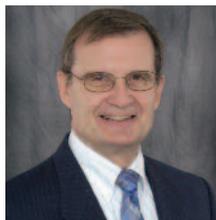


## RFF's Expanding Focus on Public Health



PHILIP R. SHARP, PRESIDENT

This issue of *Resources* highlights ongoing work at RFF on public health. Malaria control and eradication, the effectiveness of antibiotics, alcohol taxation, the detection and reporting of emerging pandemics, and the health impacts of air pollution in developing countries are just some of the issues being addressed at RFF's newly established Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics, and Policy (CDDEP), led by Senior Fellow Ramanan Laxminarayan.

This center is bringing together economists, epidemiologists, ecologists, legal scholars, and experts from other disciplines to develop novel approaches to understanding and crafting policy solutions for some of the most urgent challenges facing the United States and the world.

Although CDDEP is new, work on health at RFF is not. Decades ago, RFF researchers worked on diverse health topics such as schistosomiasis control in China and fertility issues in Asia. One of the earliest and most famous epidemiological studies in air pollution was by Lester Lave and Eugene Seskin in 1970, whose influential work linked air pollution to mortality. And epidemiological studies, using the relatively advanced statistical tools of economists, were used in the 1980s to support standard setting under the Clean Air Act.

In fact, the underlying structure of many current global public health challenges is very similar to the environmental and natural resource issues that RFF has focused on throughout its history. The problems of common property and open access resources are as pervasive in public health as they are in the environmental domain. RFF's traditional strength in economic analysis is generating important insights for public health policy.

One of the contributors to this issue is Senior Fellow Maureen Cropper, a former lead economist at the World Bank, who describes her recent work on air pollution in China. Maureen is one of many scholars joining RFF. We recently launched a program to expand our research base with the addition of established scholars based at other institutions, whose work complements our core mission. Our new nonresident fellows, who are all at the top of their fields, are profiled in these pages; they include John List, University of Chicago; James Sanchirico, a former member of the RFF research staff and now at UC-Davis; and Stephen Salant, University of Michigan.

In addition, we are very happy to welcome new Fellows Carolyn Kousky and Shanjun Li, and Senior Fellow Robertson Williams, along with Visiting Scholar Sheila Olmstead.

Great institutions export talent and we have recently done our fair share, with numerous RFF alumni taking senior positions in government. But new scholars and initiatives like CDDEP are ensuring that RFF remains a vital, dynamic institution.



### RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE

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