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Monetary Valuation of Environmental Goods: Alternatives to Contingent Valuation

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Preface

It all started in the fall of 1993. After I graduated from university, Professor Jan Lambooy who had supervised my graduation paper, invited me to become a PhD student (an a.i.o.). And indeed, in January of 1994, I did become an a.i.o. under his supervision. So, my first words of thanks are to him. It is a special thank you, since he was not only my PhD supervisor but he also financed the project and he allowed me to plunder his department funds. Professor Lambooy has taught me about the many economic theories that exist besides the standard theory. He has motivated me to get to know economics in a broad perspective. The rather sizeable bibliography at the end of this thesis is at least partly due to his influence.

In 1996, I met Professor Bernard van Praag. I was happy when he agreed to be my second PhD supervisor. From Professor Van Praag I have learned a great deal about empirical economics, from designing questionnaires to performing econometric analyses. Moreover, his critical comments made me rethink and reconsider my own thoughts, and from time to time we had some tough negotiations about the exact wordings of my texts.

My two PhD supervisors formed a very instructive duo and I would like to thank them both for their many suggestions, remarks and discussions.

Furthermore, I would like to thank a few others who have helped me with this thesis. Needless to say that this short list is not complete.

Peter Hop, Ingrid Overtoom and Marie-Louise Kok helped with the empirical analyses in the thesis. Peter helped with parts of the IJburg study (chapter 5), and Ingrid and Marie-Louise with the Schiphol study (chapter 6). They all work or worked at the Foundation of Economic Research (SEO), and I look forward to working with the team of the SEO in the near future.

Professor Jaap de Wit has helped me to get the Schiphol study (chapter 6) off the ground. I thank him for his kind efforts and support.

Ada Kromhout has been very helpful on many occasions, for instance with the fieldwork of the IJburg study, the bibliography and the corrections of the English texts. I will miss the cups of tea, the sweets and our talks.

I am grateful to my parents, who have provided me with both the genes and the means necessary to be educated at university and eventually obtain a PhD degree.

Finally, I would like to extend a word of thanks to my love and two sons, Olav, Maarten and Jelle, or the 'drie heren De Lange' (the three Messrs. De Lange) for short. Most of the time they distracted me from my work. For instance, when the latter two were born, but also in our daily life, when all three of them ask for a great deal of attention, which I love to give them. My life would have been empty if the 'drie heren De Lange' had not been there to distract me, and I doubt very much if this thesis would have been completed if it were not for their distractions.

Barbara Baarsma

Amsterdam, February 2000