

Centennial Anniversary of *Land Economics*: A Bibliometric Retrospective

Mohammad Sadegh Khorshidi *Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, School of Computer Science, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia; msadegh.khorshidi.ak@gmail.com*
José M. Merigó *Professor, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, School of Computer Science, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia; Jose.Merigo@uts.edu.au*
Amara Atif *Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, School of Computer Science, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia; Amara.Atif@uts.edu.au*
Anna M. Gil-Lafuente *Professor, Department of Business Administration, University of Barcelona, Spain; amgil@ub.edu*
Finn Kydland *Professor, Department of Economics, University of California–Santa Barbara; kydland@econ.ucsb.edu*
Luis Amiguet *Professor, Department of Communication, Rovira i Virgili University, Tarragona, Spain; lamiguet@lavanguardia.es*

ABSTRACT *Spanning 1925–2024, we map Land Economics (LE) using the Web of Science Core Collection and Scopus with VOSviewer, Bibliometrix, and SciVal. Analyses of documents, authors, and themes show LE as a central node linking environmental, agricultural, and urban economics. Seminal strands—property rights, contingent valuation, discrete choice, and hedonic pricing—anchor long-run influence. Keyword co-occurrence and thematic mapping confirm persistent emphases on valuation models, impact assessment, and policy applications alongside emerging work on ecosystem services, climate change, and the water-energy nexus. Trend-topic and SciVal clusters reveal growing attention to disaster management, green innovation, and behavioral economics with uneven recent citation performance across topics and time. (JEL A14, C88)*

name in 1948 to emphasize a focused commitment to land, resource, and environmental issues (Weiss 1989). Rooted in the institutional tradition of the University of Wisconsin, *LE* has maintained a sustained scholarly platform for exploring the economic dimensions of land use, environmental governance, agricultural systems, and public utilities. From its inception, the journal has embodied Ely's view that economic inquiry must engage with societal concerns, such as land reform, urbanization, and public infrastructure. This orientation (Dykstra 1942) was reaffirmed under the editorial leadership of Mary Amend Lescohier (1942–1974) by its 50th anniversary retrospective (Lescohier 1974) and further developed during Daniel W. Bromley's 44-year editorial tenure (1974–2018), which prioritized governance systems, sustainability, and institutional change. Under the current editor-in-chief, Daniel J. Phaneuf, *LE* continues to expand its reach in ecosystem valuation, conservation finance, and sustainable land use economics.

The journal is published quarterly by the University of Wisconsin Press and is indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection and Scopus, categorized under the subject areas of economics and environmental science.¹ Its current metrics include an impact

1. Introduction

Founded in 1925 by Richard T. Ely, *Land Economics (LE)* is among the longest-running journals in applied economics. It was originally titled the *Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics* before adopting its current

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¹The WoS Core Collection is available at <https://clarivate.com>; the Scopus database is available at <https://www.scopus.com>.

factor of 1.3, a SCImago journal rank of 0.685, and an H-index of 103.² *LE* is recognized as one of the leading journals in this field, together with other top-tier outlets such as the *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, and *Ecological Economics* (Ma and Stern 2006; Rousseau, Verbeke, and Rousseau 2009; Kube et al. 2018).

LE's long-standing thematic coherence makes it a valuable corpus for bibliometric analysis. While multidisciplinary journals often fluctuate in scope, *LE* has consistently concentrated on institutional- and policy-focused economic issues using diverse methods, including econometric modeling, institutional analysis, and empirical evaluations (Roulac et al. 2005). The journal's inaugural issue features Ely's (1925) call for pragmatic economic inquiry and Harland Bartholomew's (1925) work on economic urban planning, initiating a tradition of applied research on zoning, land taxation, deforestation, and ecosystem services. Notable articles include Schlager and Ostrom's (1992) property-rights taxonomy and Train's (1998) discussion of mixed logit recreation demand models. Note that Elinor Ostrom was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009.

Throughout its evolution, *LE* has paralleled key shifts in environmental and resource economics. Under Bromley's leadership, the journal reinforced its policy focus, broadened its methodological base, and implemented rigorous peer-review standards. With Phaneuf's tenure, these editorial standards have been modernized, with enhanced emphasis on data transparency and reproducibility. In 2025, *LE* celebrated its 100th anniversary. Motivated by this centennial celebration, the journal has created a dedicated set of web pages that provide historical context, highlight leadership and special issues, and showcase open access content.³

Journal-level bibliometric retrospectives have become common at milestone anniversaries, typically combining performance

analysis with science mapping. Representative examples include the *Journal of Political Economy* (Amiguet et al. 2017), *Resources Policy* (Merigó et al. 2024), and the *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* (Figuerola-Wischke et al. 2024). These works show how longitudinal bibliometrics recover intellectual structures and thematic shifts—an approach we adopt for *LE*.

In the context of a fragmented and pluralistic economic discipline, *LE* plays a cohesive role by sustaining attention to specialized but policy-critical themes such as land tenure, real estate, zoning, environmental valuation, and common-pool resources. As documented by Card and DellaVigna (2013), mainstream journals increasingly prioritize experimental and empirical methods, marginalizing less trendy but vital domains. *LE* provides a counterpoint by giving persistent visibility to areas often underrepresented in generalist outlets.

This article conducts a comprehensive bibliometric review of *LE* from 1925 to 2024, addressing six research questions:

1. What is the current position of *LE* in the scientific community?
2. Which are the most cited articles in *LE*?
3. Which documents are cited in *LE* most frequently?
4. Who are the most productive authors, institutions, and countries publishing in *LE*?
5. What is the co-citation and bibliographic coupling structure of *LE*?
6. What is the keyword and topical structure of *LE*?

The analysis uses data from the WoS Core Collection and Scopus, covering all content published in *LE* during the target period. We apply a combination of performance indicators (total publications, citations, H-index, citations per paper) and structural mapping techniques, including co-citation analysis (Small 1973), bibliographic coupling (Kessler 1963), and keyword clustering (Callon et al. 1983) using VOSviewer (Van Eck and Waltman 2010; Yazdanjue et al. 2025)⁴ and Bibliometrix (Aria and

² See <https://clarivate.com>; <https://www.scimagojr.com>.

³ See the journal's centennial microsite at <https://le.uwpress.org/page/centennial>.

⁴ The VOSviewer software tool is available at <https://www.vosviewer.com>.

Cuccurullo 2017), aligned with protocols in recent bibliometric literature (Donthu et al. 2021).

Our analysis is situated within broader discussions about the evolution of economic research with a special focus on environmental, resource, urban and agricultural economics. Bibliometric studies have traced how subfields such as health economics (Wagstaff and Culyer 2012), behavioral economics (Costa, Carvalho, and Moreira 2019), agricultural economics (Beilock and Polopolus 1988; Burton and Phimister 1996; Rigby, Burton, and Lusk 2015), and ecological economics (Ma and Stern 2006; Hoepner et al. 2012) have expanded in both output and citation complexity. Within this landscape, *LE* occupies a unique thematic corridor, bridging the policy relevance of applied economics with the analytical tools of environmental science (Roulac et al. 2005).

2. Methods

This study adopts a structured bibliometric methodology to provide a comprehensive analysis of *LE* using a multistep process grounded in established bibliometric theories and best practices. This is framed through the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, which organizes systematic literature reviews in a structured and reproducible format (Donthu et al. 2021; Paul et al. 2021). The conceptual underpinnings draw from seminal definitions in bibliometrics (Pritchard 1969; Broadus 1987; Rousseau 2014) and the foundational work of Garfield (1955) on citation indexing, explained in Bensman (2007).

We implemented a detailed data retrieval strategy through the WoS Core Collection database. The search was restricted to publications under the titles *Land Economics* and its predecessor, the *Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics*. The query, conducted in May 2025, initially returned 5,552 records. To ensure temporal consistency, we excluded publications from 2025, as their inclusion would reflect incomplete annual data with limited indexing coverage and unstable citation counts. Eliminating these also avoids

biases associated with partial-year bibliometric indicators. A second filter limited the corpus to articles, reviews, and notes, leading to a final dataset comprising 4,399 documents published between 1925 and 2024. This refined corpus formed the basis for all subsequent performance and network analyses. To contextualize the journal's standing, we collected additional metadata and journal metrics from the WoS Core Collection's Journal Citation Report, Scopus, and SciVal.⁵ These data sources enabled comparative benchmarking and strengthened the robustness of the analysis.

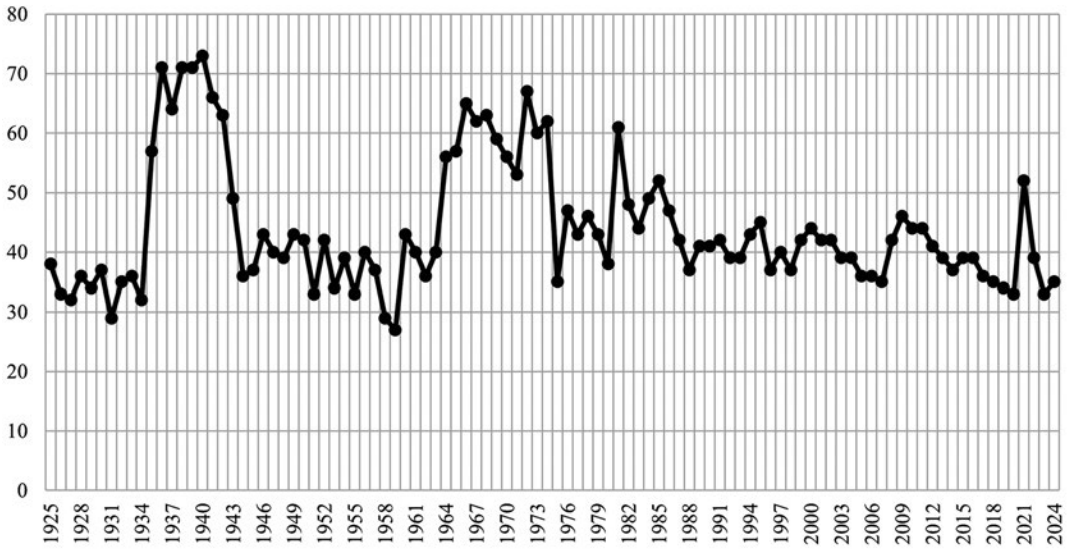
Performance indicators computed for this study include total publication and citation counts, average citations per paper, H-index (Hirsch 2005), citation velocity (citations per year), and normalized indicators such as publications and citations per capita (Waltman 2016; Figuerola-Wischke et al. 2024; Khorshidi et al. 2025). These were calculated using Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny (Aria and Cuccurullo 2017), supplemented with Microsoft Excel for cross-validation and consistency checks. These indicators serve to characterize the temporal and spatial dynamics of *LE*'s publication record, offering insights into productivity trends and influence within the field.

Beyond performance analysis, the study incorporates science mapping techniques to uncover structural patterns in *LE*'s intellectual and thematic development. Co-citation analysis (Small 1973) identifies foundational literature clusters and traces the journal's conceptual evolution. Bibliographic coupling (Kessler 1963) maps current research affinities among documents based on shared references, while keyword co-occurrence analysis (Callon et al. 1983) detects thematic clusters and emerging topics. We executed these techniques using VOSviewer (Van Eck and Waltman 2010) and Bibliometrix, allowing for a fine-grained examination of the journal's epistemic landscape and evolution.

We organized the study according to the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, whose operational

⁵ See the SciVal reference guide, at <https://scival.com/>

Figure 1
Annual Publication Volume in *Land Economics* (1925–2024)



phases are described in [Appendix Table A1](#). The assembling phase focused on identifying the scope of the review and formulating six research questions centered on *LE*'s scientific position, most cited documents, citation sources, productive contributors, knowledge structures, and keyword evolution. The acquisition phase involved data extraction and triangulation using Scopus and the WoS Core Collection's Journal Citation Report. The arranging phase included two filtering steps to exclude documents beyond 2024 and to retain only articles, reviews, and notes, resulting in the final analytic corpus. The assessing phase applied bibliometric indicators and graphic methods, while the reporting phase involved tabular and visual presentation of results and a discussion of key limitations, such as the coverage scope of the WoS Core Collection and the temporal variability of bibliometric indicators. [Appendix Table A1](#) operationalizes the methodological workflow and links each procedural stage to its bibliometric function. The analytical rigor ensured by the SPAR-4-SLR framework enables reproducibility and consistency and provides a replicable model for journal-centric bibliometric evaluations.

3. Results

Publication and Citation Structure of *LE*

The temporal distribution of publications in *LE* reflects the journal's responsiveness to institutional transitions, editorial policies, and evolving research priorities across nearly a century. From its inception in 1925 through 2024, *LE* has published 4,399 documents, exhibiting distinct phases of expansion, stabilization, and variability aligned with broader disciplinary and editorial developments. In this section, we investigate annual publication volumes and citation metrics to uncover the journal's historical productivity, knowledge diffusion, and intellectual relevance.

Figure 1 illustrates the annual number of papers published in *LE* over the period 1925–2024. The data reveal three major waves of publication intensity. The first wave occurred in the mid- to late 1930s, exceeding 70 documents annually, coinciding with heightened discourse on land reform and public infrastructure during the interwar period. The second wave in the late 1960s to early 1970s reflects increased academic attention to environmental

Table 1
Decadal Citation Distribution of *Land Economics* Papers (1925–2024)

Year	TP	TC	Number of Papers by Citation Threshold (\geq)							T50
			≥ 200	≥ 100	≥ 50	≥ 20	≥ 10	≥ 5	≥ 1	
1925–1934	342	371	0	0	0	2	2	14	157	0
1935–1944	621	450	0	0	0	1	5	17	211	0
1945–1954	392	661	0	0	1	3	9	42	169	0
1955–1964	381	2,054	1	3	8	16	36	79	227	1
1965–1974	604	3,062	0	2	10	30	79	160	411	1
1975–1984	454	8,284	5	18	42	105	169	255	406	5
1985–1994	423	13,864	8	33	73	160	238	304	390	11
1995–2004	407	21,510	15	56	149	272	334	371	399	21
2005–2014	400	15,827	7	32	101	235	325	367	398	11
2015–2024	375	4,109	0	2	9	65	138	218	344	0
1975–2024	2,059	63,594	35	141	374	837	1,204	1,515	1,937	48
% 1975–2024	100	—	1.70	6.85	18.16	40.65	58.47	73.58	94.07	—
Total	4,399	70,192	36	146	393	889	1,335	1,827	3,112	50
% total	100	—	0.82	3.32	8.93	20.21	30.35	41.53	70.74	—

Note: T50 = number of documents in the top 50 most cited papers in *Land Economics* ([Appendix Table A3](#)); TC = total citations; TP = total papers.

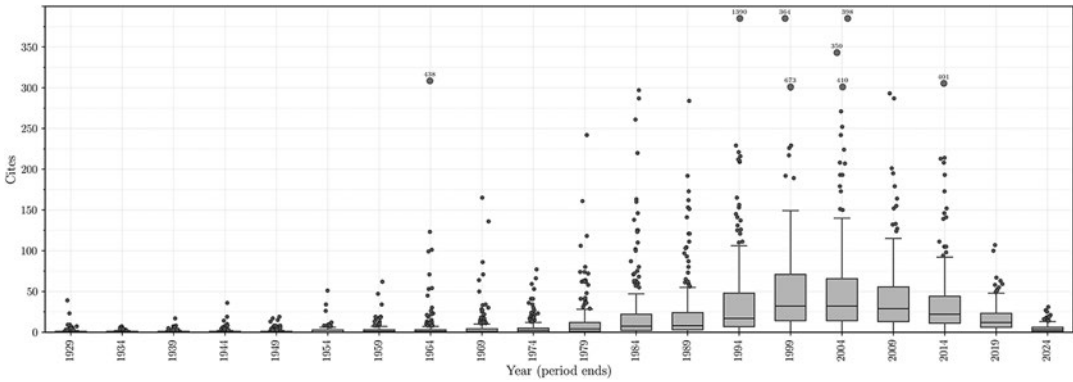
policy and urban planning. The third wave, though less pronounced, appears in the early 1980s and again in the mid-2000s, consistent with *LE*'s broadened focus on resource economics and institutional governance. Since the 2010s, the journal has published a slightly small number of papers per year, fluctuating between 30 and 40, with a brief spike in 2021 likely due to backlog effects from COVID-19-era disruptions. Overall, *LE*'s publication trajectory shows adaptability to shifting academic landscapes while maintaining thematic continuity.

Table 1 and [Appendix Table A2](#) present the decadal and annual citation distribution of *LE*, showing totals, citation thresholds, and presence in the journal's 50 most cited papers. Table 1 captures decade-scale impacts, and [Appendix Table A2](#) shows annual data. The citation dynamics show a distinct acceleration beginning in the late 1970s, with cumulative citations rising sharply from 8,284 (1975–1984) to a peak of 21,510 during 1995–2004. This period also exhibits the highest density of highly cited publications, including 15 papers with more than 200 citations and 56 with more than 100, aligning with *LE*'s expanded reach in applied environmental and resource economics. Notably, the years 1995–2004 alone accounts for 30% of all papers that received over 50 citations and 42% of *LE*'s top 50 most cited articles.

In contrast, earlier decades (1925–1964) generated limited citation traction, with most publications receiving fewer than 20 citations and no representation in the top 50 list. While the publication volume in these periods was nontrivial, their relative citation inertia underscores shifts in scholarly visibility and archival longevity. The 2005–2014 cohort maintains high impact, contributing 367 papers cited at least five times, although fewer exceeded the 100-citation threshold compared with the prior decade. More recent years (2015–2024) show a natural drop-off in citation counts due to temporal lag but already include 218 papers cited at least five times, reflecting *LE*'s continued citation potential. Only 0.82% of *LE*'s papers have surpassed 200 citations, while 70.74% have been cited at least once, confirming broad reach but selective deep influence.

Figure 2 visualizes the annual citation dispersion of *LE* papers using a box-whisker plot, capturing medians, interquartile ranges, and outliers (Tukey 1977; Hussain et al. 2025). The figure confirms that citation inequality intensified during *LE*'s most impactful era, 1990–2010, marked by frequent outliers above 200 citations and interquartile ranges widening beyond 100 citations per paper. Schlager and Ostrom's (1992) seminal article is at the top, with 1,389 citations, followed by other highly cited works from Train (1998), Dalhuisen et al. (2003), and Irwin (2002).

Figure 2
Annual Citation Distribution of *Land Economics* Papers (1925–2024)



Prior to the 1960s, citation distributions were compressed below 50, reflecting limited long-term academic uptake. Post-2010 publications show narrowing dispersion, consistent with shorter citation windows and delayed accrual. The median citation per paper has also declined since 2015, indicating a temporal lag in postpublication impact rather than a shift in relevance.

Table 2 presents the longitudinal bibliometric positioning of *LE* in the Journal Citation Reports and Scopus from 1997 to 2023, encompassing key indicators of scholarly impact and journal visibility. *LE*'s impact factor steadily increased from 0.68 in 1997 to a peak of 2.08 in 2020, followed by a decline to 1.3 in 2023. Its five-year impact factor similarly peaked in 2018 at 2.91, reflecting sustained citation momentum. The article influence score, which normalizes citation impact using eigenvector centrality as proposed by Bergstrom et al. (2008), ranged between 0.64 and 1.04, confirming a consistent performance for much of the 2010s.

While *LE* remained in the top quartile of economics journals for several intervals (1998–2000, 2002, 2004, 2009–2010, 2015–2016), its relative rank has declined in recent years, dropping to the third quartile by 2021. This is reflected in its percentile ranking, which dropped from above 75% during its peak years to 46.3% by 2023. Similarly, CiteScore (Scopus) fluctuated between 2.6 and 3.4, with the best percentile achieved in the

two categories that index *LE* (Economics and Econometrics) (83-EC in 2018). Despite competitive pressures and expanding journal landscapes, *LE* has remained a solid journal with periods of upper-quartile performance, particularly when policy-relevant environmental research surged.

Influential Papers in *LE*

Understanding the intellectual contribution of a journal requires examining its most cited outputs, which often shape its disciplinary identity and external recognition. The citation performance of individual documents offers insight into the thematic foci, methodological innovations, and policy relevance that resonate most with the academic community. In *LE*'s case, highly cited papers span diverse domains—from property rights and conservation valuation to land use modeling and environmental regulation—revealing a citation landscape deeply embedded in applied economics and environmental governance.

[Appendix Table A3](#) lists the 50 most cited papers published in *LE*, with citations ranging from 165 to 1,389. Schlager and Ostrom's (1992) seminal paper on property-rights regimes is at the top; this is a foundational text for institutional and common-pool resource analysis and is cited over 1,300 times, with an annual average exceeding 42 citations. Other standout contributions include Train's (1998) modeling of recreation demand heterogeneity

Table 2
Longitudinal Performance Metrics of *Land Economics* in Its Journal Citation Report (Web of Science Core Collection) and Scopus

Year	TC	IF	5YIF	ImIn	AIS	RE	QE	PE	CS	PB
1997	575	0.68	—	0.32	—	50/161	Q2	69.25	—	—
1998	730	1.63	—	0.18	—	14/161	Q1	91.61	—	—
1999	743	0.87	—	0.21	—	39/165	Q1	76.67	—	—
2000	813	0.98	—	0.11	—	34/166	Q1	79.82	—	—
2001	925	0.80	—	0.04	—	50/165	Q2	70	—	—
2002	838	0.90	—	0.09	—	38/166	Q1	77.41	—	—
2003	932	0.84	—	0.05	—	49/169	Q2	71.3	—	—
2004	1,011	1.01	—	0.15	—	42/172	Q1	75.87	—	—
2005	1,083	0.97	—	0.05	—	47/175	Q2	73.43	—	—
2006	1,272	0.92	—	0.02	—	66/175	Q2	62.57	—	—
2007	1,388	1.04	1.75	0.28	0.95	53/191	Q2	72.51	—	—
2008	1,571	1.02	1.69	0.14	0.82	73/209	Q2	65.31	—	—
2009	2,051	1.55	1.88	0.26	0.97	46/247	Q1	81.58	—	—
2010	1,915	1.37	1.85	0.45	0.84	71/305	Q1	76.89	—	—
2011	1,946	1.30	1.79	0.18	0.92	87/321	Q2	73.05	2.8	82-EC
2012	1,910	1.26	1.50	0.63	0.80	100/333	Q2	70.12	2.6	78-EC
2013	2,221	1.36	2.00	0.30	0.96	86/333	Q2	74.32	2.8	79-EC
2014	2,168	1.33	1.78	0.32	0.92	86/333	Q2	74.32	2.9	78-EC
2015	2,199	1.44	1.88	0.30	0.86	86/345	Q1	75.22	3.1	80-EC
2016	2,700	1.89	2.37	0.28	1.02	68/347	Q1	80.55	3.3	81-EC
2017	3,193	1.50	2.61	0.38	1.04	123/353	Q2	65.3	3.1	80-EC
2018	3,409	1.64	2.91	0.25	0.94	132/363	Q2	63.77	3.4	83-EC
2019	3,173	1.62	2.33	0.23	0.88	152/373	Q2	59.38	3.1	77-EC
2020	3,812	2.08	2.48	0.53	1.00	172/376	Q2	54.39	3.0	71-EC
2021	3,808	2.03	2.34	0.32	0.83	192/381	Q3	49.74	3.4	71-EC
2022	3,359	1.4	1.9	1.1	0.64	263/380	Q3	30.9	2.9	61-EC
2023	2,941	1.3	1.9	0.6	0.72	323/600	Q3	46.3	2.6	51-EC

Note: AIS = article influence score; CS = CiteScore (Scopus); IF = impact factor; 5YIF = 5-year impact factor; ImIn = immediacy index; PB = best percentile in Scopus among the two categories (Economics and Econometrics [EC]) that index *Land Economics*; PE = journal impact factor percentile in economics; QE = quartile in economics; RE = ranking in the Economics category in the Web of Science Core Collection; TC = total citations.

(673 citations) and Huff's (1963) early work on spatial analysis in trade areas (438 citations), both highlighting the journal's reach across applied microeconomics and regional planning.

A prominent cluster of papers appears in the early 2000s, including Dalhuisen et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis on water demand elasticity (409 citations) and Irwin's (2002) investigation of property values and open space (398 citations). These papers reflect *LE*'s sustained engagement with valuation techniques and environmental economics. More recent impactful works include Abdulai and Huffman's (2014) econometric study on conservation adoption (400 citations) and Di Falco and Veronesi's (2013) climate adaptation analysis (213 citations, see [Appendix Table A3](#)), illustrating that *LE* continues to

generate high-velocity citations even in the last decade.

The listings in [Appendix Table A3](#) demonstrate thematic breadth, covering land tenure, hedonic pricing, contingent valuation, urban land use modeling, and environmental policy design. Multiple entries by authors such as Stephen Polasky, John Loomis, and Riccardo Scarpa further suggest the journal's ability to foster influential, policy-relevant research over time. This influential corpus underpins *LE*'s epistemic identity and reinforces its role as a reference venue in applied environmental and land economics.

Table 3 presents the 40 most referenced studies in *LE*, encompassing a range of scholarly works that have significantly shaped the field's intellectual foundations. The cited papers span a broad temporal range, with

Table 3
Top 40 Most Cited Foundational Works Referenced in *Land Economics*

Rank	Year	Author(s)	Reference	Vol.	Page	Type	Total Citations
1	1974	Rosen	J Polit Econ	82	34	A	89
2	1989	Mitchell and Carson	Using Surveys Value	—	—	B	63
3	1984	Hanemann	Am J Agr Econ	66	332	A	56
4	1979	Bishop and Heberlein	Am J Agr Econ	61	926	A	46
5	1986	Krinsky and Robb	Rev Econ Stat	68	715	A	44
6	1960	Coase	J Law Econ	3	1	A	41
7	1979	Heckman	Econometrica	47	153	A	40
8	1975	Taylor	Bell J Econ	6	74	A	38
9	1956	Tiebout	J Polit Econ	64	416	A	38
10	1954	Gordon	J Polit Econ	62	124	A	34
11	1988	Cameron	J Environ Econ Manag	15	355	A	32
12	1966	Lancaster	J Polit Econ	74	132	A	32
13	1983	Maddala	Ltd Dependent Qualit	—	—	B	31
14	1969	Muth	Cities Housing	—	—	B	31
15	1979	Freeman	Benefits Env Improve	—	—	B	30
16	1964	Alonso	Location and Land Use	—	—	B	30
17	1931	Hotelling	J Polit Econ	39	137	A	30
18	2007	Carson and Groves	Environ Resour Econ	37	181	A	29
19	1980	Halvorsen and Palmquist	Am Econ Rev	70	474	A	29
20	1971	Kmenta and Klein	Elements Econometric	—	—	B	29
21	1967	Krutilla	Am Econ Rev	57	777	A	29
22	2017	Johnston et al.	J Assoc Environ Reso	4	319	A	28
23	1988	Cropper, Deck, and McConnell	Rev Econ Stat	70	668	A	26
24	1979	Kahneman and Tversky	Econometrica	47	263	A	26
25	1976	Nordin	Bell J Econ	7	719	A	26
26	1985	Seller, Stoll, and Chavas	Land Econ	61	156	A	25
27	1980	White	Econometrica	48	817	A	25
28	2010	Kuminoff, Parmeter, and Pope	J Environ Econ Manag	60	145	A	24
29	1998	Allen et al.	FAO Irrigation and Drainage	56	—	B	24
30	1980	Billings and Agthe	Land Econ	56	73	A	24
31	1978	Dillman	Mail Telephone Surve	—	—	B	24
32	2002	Irwin	Land Econ	78	465	A	23
33	1995	Besley	J Polit Econ	103	903	A	23
34	1993	Swait and Louviere	J Marketing Res	30	305	A	23
35	2009	Angris and Pischke	Mostly Harmless Econometrics	—	1	B	22
36	2014	Freeman, Herriges, and King	Measurement Env Reso	—	—	B	22
37	1992	Kahneman and Knetsch	J Environ Econ Manag	22	57	A	22
38	1967	Ridker and Henning	Rev Econ Stat	49	246	A	22
39	2009	Train	Discrete Choice Meth Simul	—	—	B	21
40	—	—	9 documents ^a	—	—	—	21

Note: A = article; B = book.

^a This entry is for the nine documents in the records that have 21 citations.

classics dating to the early 20th century—such as Hotelling’s (1931) seminal article on exhaustible resources—and extending to more contemporary empirical and theoretical contributions, such as Johnston et al.’s (2017) discussion of best practice in stated preference modeling. This mix of citations demonstrates *LE*’s dual role as both a disseminator of cutting-edge knowledge and a venue that builds on historically rooted economic thought.

Rosen’s (1974) hedonic pricing model article in the *Journal of Political Economy* is the highest-cited paper, with 89 citations, highlighting its lasting impact on environmental valuation and property economics. Mitchell and Carson’s (1989) book *Using Surveys to Value Public Goods* follows, with 63 citations. A foundational reference for the contingent valuation method, it reflects *LE*’s engagement with stated preference techniques. Classic theoretical contributions are

well represented: Coase's (1960) theory of social cost (41 citations), Tiebout's (1956) local public goods model (38 citations), and Gordon's (1954) model on common-property resources (34 citations) have each deeply influenced the environmental economics literature. Similarly, the consistent citation of Lancaster's (1966) consumer theory and Hotelling's (1931) resource pricing indicate *LE*'s reliance on fundamental microeconomic frameworks.

The list also includes several methodological cornerstones, such as Maddala's (1983) limited-dependent and qualitative variables in econometrics and White's (1980) heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors, attesting to *LE*'s methodological rigor. Influential econometric texts by Kmenta and Klein (1971) and Angrist and Pischke (2009) are also frequently cited, pointing to a strong econometric foundation across *LE* research.

Importantly, several works in the list are published in *LE* itself, including Irwin (2002), Billings and Agthe (1980), and Seller, Stoll, and Chavas (1985), affirming the journal's own contribution to core debates in land valuation, hedonic pricing, and nonmarket valuation. Moreover, interdisciplinary reach is visible in references such as Allen et al. (1998) on crop evapotranspiration and Dillman's (1978) survey methodology, which expand *LE*'s empirical breadth across agricultural and environmental applications.

Citing *LE* Articles

To identify how *LE* has influenced the broader academic discourse, we extracted all citing documents from the WoS Core Collection. By selecting the Citing Articles option under *LE*'s journal profile and clicking the citation count (45,608), we obtained the complete set of documents that reference *LE*. To ensure consistency with prior filtering criteria, we applied the same parameters: including only articles, reviews, and notes (reducing the pool to 41,131), excluding Early Access records (resulting in 40,709), and eliminating papers published in 2025 to avoid incomplete citation tracking (yielding a final set of 40,709 citing documents). This dataset provides a robust

Table 4
Most Active Contributors Citing *Land Economics* Papers, Categorized by Unique Papers and Individual Authors

Rank	Year	Unique Papers	Author	Total Papers
1	2024	1,959	Loomis, J. B.	159
2	2023	2,128	Hanley, N.	136
3	2022	2,376	Johnston, R. J.	88
4	2021	2,386	Whitehead, J. C.	86
5	2020	2,276	Scarpa, R.	82
6	2019	2,141	Smith, V. K.	78
7	2018	2,107	Barbier, E. B.	75
8	2017	1,956	Berrens, R. P.	69
9	2016	1,773	Shogren, J. F.	69
10	2015	1,590	Brouwer, R.	67
11	2014	1,616	Boyle, K. J.	66
12	2013	1,561	Pascoe, S.	66
13	2012	1,421	Polasky, S.	62
14	2011	1,323	Managi, S.	59
15	2010	1,178	Plantinga, A. J.	58
16	2009	1,141	Bateman, I. J.	57
17	2008	1,010	Wu, J. J.	57
18	2007	895	Cho, S. H.	55
19	2006	746	Hynes, S.	55
20	2005	649	Asche, F.	54
21	2004	568	Jacobsen, J. B.	50
22	2003	483	Mendelsohn, R.	49
23	2002	447	Khanna, M.	48
24	2001	458	Smith, M. D.	48
25	2000	434	Adamowicz, W. L.	47
26	1999	383	Alberini, A.	47
27	1998	377	Czajkowski, M.	47
28	1997	348	Earnhart, D.	47
29	1996	313	Lupi, F.	47
30	1995	302	Nayga, R. M.	47

empirical foundation for assessing *LE*'s intellectual reach through author-, institution-, and country-level citation metrics.

Table 4 presents the most active contributors citing *LE* papers, categorized by unique citing papers and individual authors. At the individual level, John Loomis leads the list, with 159 unique citing publications, reflecting his sustained output in nonmarket valuation and environmental economics. Prominent scholars such as Nick Hanley, Robert Johnston, and John Whitehead follow closely; all are known for their contributions to stated preference methods and environmental policy analysis. These frequent citers are not only prolific in volume of unique citing papers but also highly central in shaping discourse around valuation techniques, ecosystem

Table 5
Leading Journals in Web of Science Core Collection Categories Citing *Land Economics*

Rank	Journal	Total Papers	Category	Total Papers
1	Ecological Economics	1,472	Economics	15,472
2	Land Economics	1,224	Environmental studies	12,992
3	Land Use Policy	882	Environmental sciences	8,385
4	Sustainability	805	Ecology	3,271
5	Environmental Resource Economics	737	Urban studies	2,982
6	J Environmental Economics Management	661	Regional urban planning	2,551
7	J Environmental Management	607	Geography	2,395
8	American J Agricultural Economics	548	Agricultural economics policy	2,322
9	Forest Policy and Economics	446	Water resources	1,985
10	Marine Policy	343	Green sustainable science technology	1,790
11	Urban Studies	314	Forestry	1,737
12	World Development	305	Development studies	1,590
13	Water Resources Research	299	Business	1,330
14	Land	286	Energy fuels	1,138
15	Energy Policy	280	Sociology	976
16	J Cleaner Production	270	Engineering environmental	877
17	Energy Economics	254	Management	876
18	J Urban Economics	254	Business finance	861
19	Resource and Energy Economics	249	Biodiversity conservation	825
20	PLOS One	247	Multidisciplinary sciences	683
21	Environment Development Economics	234	Engineering civil	653
22	Applied Economics	224	Fisheries	630
23	Environmental Management	218	Geosciences multidisciplinary	595
24	Regional Science Urban Economics	203	Hospitality leisure sport tourism	582
25	J Regional Science	201	Meteorology atmospheric sciences	577
26	Landscape and Urban Planning	200	Law	570
27	J Environmental Planning Management	192	Agriculture multidisciplinary	558
28	J Agricultural Resource Economics	190	Transportation	541
29	Growth and Change	185	Political science	534
30	J Agricultural Economics	185	Public administration	510

services, and behavioral responses to environmental policies.

The year-level distribution complements the author-level statistics by showing when these citations have been the most numerous, indicating that the prominence of these contributors aligns with the broader upward trend in citing activity. The temporal distribution of unique citing documents suggests an upward trajectory over the last decade, with 2024 (1,959), 2023 (2,128), and 2022 (2,376) showing the highest-citing volumes. This trend signals *LE*'s continued intellectual vitality and relevance to emerging topics such as climate adaptation, conservation policy, and sustainable land use.

Table 5 illustrates the disciplinary and journal-level landscape of scholarly outputs that cite *LE*, offering insights into the scope of its intellectual influence. At the journal level, *Ecological Economics* ranks first, with

1,472 citing articles, reflecting the strong conceptual and methodological alignment between ecological-economic integration and the themes central to *LE*. Interestingly, *LE* itself is the second most common source of self-citation (1,224), indicating both internal continuity and self-referential theoretical development. Other leading journals, such as *Land Use Policy* (882), *Sustainability* (805), and *Environmental and Resource Economics* (737), reinforce *LE*'s prominence within environmental policy, valuation, and interdisciplinary land studies.

Notably, high-impact applied journals, such as the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* (661) and the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (548), also appear prominently, underscoring *LE*'s connection to both theoretical innovation and empirical modeling within environmental and agricultural domains. The breadth

of citing journals, including *Marine Policy*, *World Development*, *Energy Policy*, and *PLOS One*, points to *LE*'s interdisciplinary integration and cross-sectoral reach.

At the level of the WoS Core Collection categories, Economics (15,472) and Environmental Studies (12,992) are the most dominant, which together account for over two-thirds of all citations. This is consistent with *LE*'s dual focus on economic theory and applied environmental policy. The third-highest category, Environmental Sciences (8,385), and others such as Urban Studies (2,982), Agricultural Economics and Policy (2,322), and Forestry (1,737) reveal a disciplinary intersection that spans both the social and the natural sciences.

Additionally, categories such as Development Studies, Business, Sociology, Law, and Political Science suggest that *LE*'s impact extends beyond traditional environmental economics, influencing institutional analyses, governance, and human-nature interaction frameworks. The presence of specialized categories, such as Water Resources, Fisheries, Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism, indicates thematic versatility and practical relevance in sector-specific research.

The journal and category-level patterns affirm that *LE* occupies a central position in the academic ecosystem of environmental and land economics. Its citing literature reflects a convergence of theoretical rigor and applied relevance, with citations emanating from both domain-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge spaces. This diverse citation base is indicative of *LE*'s ability to inform debates across environmental governance, spatial planning, ecosystem valuation, and sustainability transitions.

Leading Authors

A comprehensive understanding of *LE*'s intellectual development requires examining the contributions of individual scholars and their affiliations over time. By analyzing publication volume, citation performance, and historical dispersion, we identified the most influential authors contributing to *LE*'s legacy. Productivity and citation metrics were extracted from the core publication set,

enabling us to identify prolific contributors with diverse scholarly trajectories across different time periods.

Table 6 highlights the 34 most prolific contributors to *LE*, offering a longitudinal and impact-based view of authorship. Among them, V. Kerry Smith ranks first, with 25 publications and a high H-index of 17, accumulating 1,046 citations—an indication of both sustained productivity and substantive scholarly influence. Kevin Boyle and Richard Bishop demonstrate similarly high citation-per-paper (C/P) metrics, with 72.67 and 64.00 respectively, underscoring the quality and visibility of their contributions.

Several authors, including William Evans, Robert Dudley, E. W. Morehouse, and Richard Andrews, were active primarily in the early decades (1925–1974), often without recorded citation data in current databases, reflecting the historical depth of *LE*. In contrast, modern contributors, such as Robert Johnston, John Loomis, Nick Hanle, and Andrew Plantinga, have had significant impacts post-1995, with many of their most cited works appearing between 1995 and 2024. John Loomis and Patricia Champ stand out for their near-90 C/P ratios, highlighting substantial contemporary visibility.

In terms of H-index values, the presence of multiple authors with scores above eight reflects not only productivity but also sustained scholarly influence within *LE*. Additionally, the temporal dispersion across the four defined time periods (D1–D4) reveals evolving participation: legacy contributors cluster heavily in D1, while recent authors dominate D3 and D4, signifying generational shifts in research themes and author demographics.

US institutions dominate the author list, with affiliations such as the University of Wisconsin, University of Maryland, Cornell University, and Arizona State University being repeatedly associated with high-output scholars. Non-US representation includes scholars from the University of Glasgow in the United Kingdom and other international affiliations, though these remain fewer in number, suggesting a historically US-centric authorship base. This observation aligns with earlier findings regarding national dominance in citations

Table 6
Most Productive Authors in *Land Economics*

Rank	Author	University	TP	TC	H	C/P	D1	D2	D3	D4
1	Smith, V.K.	Arizona State U	25	1,046	17	41.84	0	13	10	2
2	Evans, W. H.	Pub Serv Comis Wisconsin	24	0	0	0	24	0	0	0
3	Dudley, R. G.	Pub Serv Comis Wisconsin	19	0	0	0	19	0	0	0
4	Boyle, K. J.	Virginia Polytech Inst St U	18	1,308	15	72.67	0	5	10	3
5	Morehouse, E. W.	Gral Pub Utilit Corp, NY	18	6	1	0.33	18	0	0	0
6	Andrews, R. B.	U Wisconsin	17	149	6	8.76	17	0	0	0
7	Tough, R.	Hunter College, NY	17	23	2	1.35	17	0	0	0
8	Wehrwein, G. S.	U Wisconsin	17	18	2	1.06	17	0	0	0
9	Hoyt, H.	U Chicago–Hoyt Inst	15	123	6	8.2	15	0	0	0
10	Glaeser, M. G.	U Wisconsin	15	14	2	0.93	15	0	0	0
11	Johnson, V. W.	US Dep Agriculture	15	10	2	0.67	15	0	0	0
12	Ostrander, E. D.	Illinois Commerce Comis	15	3	1	0.2	15	0	0	0
13	Bishop, R. C.	U Wisconsin	14	896	11	64	1	8	5	0
14	Groves, H. M.	U Maryland	13	445	11	34.23	0	9	4	0
15	McConnell, K. E.	U Maryland	13	21	2	1.62	13	0	0	0
16	Woodbury, C.	U Wisconsin	13	16	3	1.23	13	0	0	0
17	Harbeson, R. W.	U Illinois	12	17	3	1.42	11	1	0	0
18	Sickler, B. J.	Pub Serv Comis Wisconsin	12	5	1	0.42	12	0	0	0
19	Plantinga, A. J.	U Calif Santa Barbara	11	825	9	75	0	0	8	3
20	Johnston, R. J.	Clark U	11	445	9	40.45	1	0	7	3
21	Swallow, S. K.	U Connecticut	10	343	7	34.3	0	1	6	3
22	Whitehead, J. C.	Appalachian State U	10	319	7	31.9	0	0	5	5
23	Parsons, K. H.	U Wisconsin	10	19	3	1.9	10	0	0	0
24	Simpson, F. R.	California St U–LA ^a	10	2	1	0.2	10	0	0	0
25	Brown, T. C.	Westfield State U	9	897	8	99.67	0	2	7	0
26	Loomis, J. B.	Colorado State U	9	833	8	92.56	0	6	3	0
27	Champ, P. A.	US Forest Serv	9	802	8	89.11	0	0	9	0
28	Lewis, D. J.	Oregon State U	9	535	8	59.44	0	0	5	4
29	Hanley, N.	U Glasgow	9	511	9	56.78	0	0	6	3
30	Howarth, R. B.	Dartmouth College	9	476	8	52.89	0	1	7	1
31	Klaiber, H. A.	Ohio State U	9	160	6	17.78	0	0	2	7
32	Conrad, J. M.	Cornell U	9	158	7	17.56	0	4	4	1
33	Kling, C. L.	Cornell U	9	105	5	11.67	0	5	1	3
34	Holden, A. C.	Amer Inst Architects	9	1	1	0.11	9	0	0	0

Note: All listed universities are in the United States. C/P = cites per paper; D1 = total papers between 1925 and 1974; D2 = 1975–1994; D3 = 1995–2014; D4 = 2015–2024; H = H-index; TC = total citations; TP = total papers.

^a Between 1947 and 1964, California State University–Los Angeles was known as the Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences.

and productivity, reinforcing the centrality of US institutions in *LE*'s scholarly network.

Summary statistics for institutions, countries, and annual trajectories are in [Appendix Tables A5–A8](#).

Comparative Analysis of *LE* with Other Journals in Economics

To contextualize *LE* within its scholarly ecosystem, we conducted a comparative assessment against peer journals with thematic overlaps in environmental, resource, agricultural, and ecological economics. These

journals share disciplinary intersections with *LE*, often attracting similar author communities and contributing to adjacent policy and sustainability debates. By comparing key bibliometric indicators—total publications, total citations, H-index, C/P, and their counterparts for the past decade—this analysis positions *LE* within a broader network of journals that serve as either citation sources or destinations, offering insight into its sustained relevance and bibliometric competitiveness.

Table 7 benchmarks *LE* against 37 related journals based on lifetime and recent bibliometric indicators and according to thematic proximity, including environmental,

Table 7
Publication and Citation Performance of *Land Economics* and Related Journals

Rank	Journal	TP	TC	H	C/P	TP10	TC10	H10	C/P10	Y	YW
—	Land Economics	4,399	70,192	111	15.96	375	4,109	31	10.96	1925	1925
—	Land Economics (1975–2024)	2,059	63,594	110	30.89	—	—	—	—	1975	1975
1	Water Resources Research	19,654	720,712	274	36.67	5,947	162,771	126	27.37	1965	1965
2	J Environ Manage	23,155	678,354	268	29.29	17,716	415,121	124	23.43	1973	1973
3	Ecological Econ	6,298	375,138	246	59.56	2,838	91,815	116	32.35	1984	1994
4	Energy Economics	6,791	327,745	225	48.26	4,459	177,976	167	39.91	1979	1979
5	Landscape and Urban Planning	4,639	278,591	217	60.05	2,000	91,324	129	45.66	1986	1986
6	Land Use Policy	6,624	234,284	162	35.37	5,141	151,524	127	29.47	2004	2004
7	American J Agricultural Econ	6,859	167,158	148	24.37	759	17,607	62	23.2	1919	1952
8	J Environ Econ Manag	2,558	135,185	170	52.85	879	26,666	76	30.34	1974	1974
9	Land	9,239	76,631	67	8.29	9,142	74,771	67	8.18	2012	2012
10	Environ Resource Econ	2,392	74,237	114	31.04	1,090	18,297	60	16.79	1991	1991
11	Forest Policy and Economics	2,580	62,759	86	24.33	1,614	29,324	58	18.17	2000	2000
12	Agricultural Economics	1,949	57,187	104	29.34	632	12,447	51	19.69	1986	1991
13	J Environmental Planning Management	1,859	35,629	76	19.17	1,351	20,245	55	14.99	1992	1992
14	J Agricultural Economics	1,844	35,231	79	19.11	432	8,124	43	18.81	1928	1991
15	Resource Energy Econ	951	30,909	85	32.5	379	6,067	39	16.01	1978	1993
16	European Rev Agricultural Economics	964	25,353	74	26.3	399	6,779	40	16.99	1973	1993
17	Applied Economic Perspectives Policy ^a	1,091	22,853	67	20.95	609	10,182	47	16.72	1961	2003
18	Rev Environmental Economics and Policy	317	18,988	78	59.9	189	7,781	44	41.17	1994	2007
19	Environment Development Economics	797	18,744	63	23.52	322	4,027	31	12.51	1995	1995
20	Australian J Agricultural Resource Econ	887	17,714	60	19.97	393	5,101	33	12.98	1997	1997
21	J Agricultural Resource Economics	1,019	16,985	55	16.67	229	2,105	21	7.04	1997	2003
22	Annual Review of Resource Economics	368	13,478	62	36.63	235	7,459	47	31.74	2009	2009
23	Canadian J Agricultural Econ	932	12,698	48	13.62	279	4,379	27	15.7	1952	1983
24	J Assoc Environmental Resource Econ	385	9,627	48	25.01	366	8,443	45	23.07	1979	2014
25	Journal of Forest Economics	418	7,422	41	17.76	212	2,159	23	10.18	1995	2005
26	Marine Resource Economics	402	7,369	40	18.33	205	2,495	25	12.17	1984	2007
27	Environmental Economics and Policy Studies	467	5,075	32	10.87	316	3,184	28	10.08	1994	2005
28	Int Rev Environmental Resource Econ	173	3,706	233	21.42	89	1,185	17	13.31	1991	2005
29	Econ Energy and Environmental Policy	240	3,097	30	12.9	185	1,769	22	9.56	2012	2012
30	Water Resources and Economics	229	3,068	29	13.4	195	2,284	24	11.71	2013	2013
31	J Environmental Economics and Policy	308	2,816	24	9.14	256	2,205	23	8.61	2012	2012
32	Agricultural and Food Economics	202	2,030	22	10.05	202	2,030	22	10.05	1957	2019
33	J Agricultural and Applied Economics	293	1,966	21	6.71	293	1,966	21	6.71	1969	2016
34	Agricultural and Resource Economics Rev	218	1,449	16	6.65	218	1,449	16	6.65	1998	2016
35	Water Economics and Policy	243	1,387	18	5.71	243	1,387	18	5.71	2015	2015
36	China Agricultural Economic Review	604	920	44	15.93	412	6,756	41	16.4	2008	2009
37	Int J Ecological Economics and Statistics	270	401	7	1.49	270	401	7	1.49	2002	2015

Note: Abbreviations are available in Table 6, except TP10, TC10, H10, C/P10 = total papers, citations, H-index and cites per paper in the past 10 years (2015–2024); Y = year of origin; YW = year of first indexation in the Web of Science Core Collection.

^a Formerly the *Review of Agricultural Economics* (1991–2009), *North Central Journal of Agricultural Economics* (1979–1990), and *Illinois Agricultural Economics* (1961–1978).

agricultural, and resource economics. Note that many other journals could have been included if considering more than 37 journals, especially from the WoS Core Collection categories of Economics, Agricultural Economics and Policy, and Regional and Urban Planning. Additionally, note that *LE* is well connected to many of the leading general economics journals.

LE, founded in 1925, occupies a good position in total citation count (70,192) but is significantly lower than *Water Resources Research* (720,712) and the *Journal of Environmental Management* (678,354), both of which benefit from broader interdisciplinary scopes and substantially higher annual publication volumes (e.g., > 23,000 papers for the latter). Nonetheless, *LE* maintains a relatively compact publication base (4,399 papers) while achieving an H-index of 111, indicating consistent historical influence across nearly a century. Note that it is the second oldest journal in Table 7, behind the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, which was first published in 1919.

Journals such as *Ecological Economics* ($C/P = 59.56$) and *Landscape and Urban Planning* ($C/P = 60.05$) obtain better citation efficiency, likely due to their larger interdisciplinary readership that connects with environmental and social sciences. Meanwhile, *LE*'s C/P of 15.96 is modest in comparison, but its longevity and foundational status in land and resource economics justify its continued citation traction. Considering the publications of the past 50 years (1975–2024), the cites per paper of *LE* is 30.89. Notably, recent performance metrics (2015–2024) show that *LE* published 375 papers with 4,109 citations ($C/P10 = 10.96$), trailing behind journals like *Energy Economics* ($C/P10 = 39.91$) and the *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy* ($C/P10 = 41.17$), reflecting the growing attention to climate policy and energy transition topics.

Some emerging open access journals (e.g., *Land*) have shown rapid volume growth but exhibit relatively low average impact per paper, suggesting quantity-driven strategies without proportional citation gains. In contrast, *LE* continues to balance selectivity and tradition, sustaining a higher historical

H-index than several newer journals (e.g., *Forest Policy and Economics*, *Marine Resource Economics*).

The comparative landscape illustrates a shift in thematic emphasis across the environmental-economics spectrum, but *LE*'s classical orientation persists, and its moderate to high citation efficiency in the last decade reaffirms its relevance. Yet journals focused on energy, urban planning, and ecological transition are now dominating citation dynamics. This underscores the need for *LE* to further engage with emergent environmental-economic paradigms without losing its legacy contributions to land use policy and institutional economics.

Mapping *LE* with VOSviewer and Bibliometrix

Co-citation Analysis of LE

To uncover the intellectual structure of *LE*, we conducted a co-citation analysis using VOSviewer (Van Eck and Waltman 2010), focusing on journals most frequently cited together in *LE* documents. Co-citation analysis reveals the epistemic alignment of a journal by identifying how frequently it is co-cited with others in the literature, reflecting its theoretical anchoring and disciplinary proximity. This method allows the mapping of *LE*'s citation behavior and its embeddedness within intersecting scholarly communities. The analysis applied a minimum threshold of 30 citations and 200 co-citation links to identify robust, recurrent citation relationships among journals.

Appendix Figure A1 visualizes the co-citation network of journals most frequently cited together in *LE*.⁶ The journal occupies a central node in the citation space, tightly clustered with the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, and *Ecological Economics*, highlighting its disciplinary entrenchment in environmental and agricultural economics. These journals share

⁶ To preserve the use of color and accommodate layout considerations, many of the figures and tables are provided in the [Appendix](#).

thematic emphases on valuation, land use, resource governance, and policy-oriented economic modeling, forming a densely connected citation core.

The figure reveals five major co-citation clusters. The red cluster is anchored around the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Ecological Economics*, *Environmental and Resource Economics*, and *Land Use Policy*, indicating *LE*'s proximity to agricultural economics, sustainability science, ecological valuation, and environmental policy literature. The blue cluster includes the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* and classic economics and econometrics journals such as *Econometrica*, the *American Economic Review*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, and the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, suggesting *LE*'s methodological engagement with mainstream economic theory and quantitative modeling.

Another notable group—the yellow cluster—features journals focused on urban and regional studies (*Journal of Urban Economics*, *Urban Studies*, *Regional Science and Urban Economics*), indicating that *LE* also contributes to and draws from literature at the intersection of land use, spatial planning, and regional development. The green cluster is more dispersed. It contains outlets such as the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, the *Economic Journal*, and the *New York Times*, pointing to *LE*'s engagement with public policy and governance as well as regulatory economics.

Peripheral nodes, such as *Nature*, *Science*, and *World Development*, show occasional but strategic co-citations, reflecting interdisciplinary extensions toward environmental science and development economics. These weaker connections underscore *LE*'s role as a bridge between core economic theories and applied sustainability studies.

Table 8 presents the most frequently cited journals in *LE* globally and over three temporal windows. *LE* itself ranks first in all periods, with 3,592 total citations and steady citation counts across decades, reflecting strong self-referencing and thematic continuity. The *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* (2,374 citations) and the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*

(2,164) consistently hold second and third positions, demonstrating *LE*'s close alignment with environmental and agricultural economics. Their stable citation levels across all decades confirm their foundational role in *LE*'s discourse.

Core economics journals—the *American Economic Review*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, and *Econometrica*—remain prominent, though their relative share declines over time, indicating a shift from theoretical to more applied and interdisciplinary references. *Ecological Economics* and *Environmental and Resource Economics* show upward citation trends, especially post-2005, highlighting *LE*'s growing engagement with ecological valuation and sustainability science. *World Development*, *Water Resources Research*, and the *Journal of Urban Economics* also gain ground, pointing to *LE*'s expanding thematic scope.

In contrast, earlier citations to *Forest Science*, the *Journal of Regional Science*, and the *Bell Journal of Economics* have diminished, indicating a shift away from traditional land use and natural resource management sources toward policy-oriented and interdisciplinary outlets. The citation pattern reflects *LE*'s dual anchoring in economic theory and policy application, with increasing integration into environmental, urban, and development studies over the past two decades.

Appendix Figure A2 presents the co-citation network of individual papers most frequently cited together in *LE*, offering a granular view of the journal's intellectual scaffolding. The clusters align with the most cited papers in Table 3 and reveal five main citation communities.

The green cluster is centered on seminal works in nonmarket valuation and environmental demand modeling, with Hanemann (1984), Mitchell and Carson (1989), and Cameron (1988) forming the backbone. These foundational papers underpin much of *LE*'s focus on contingent valuation, discrete choice models, and stated preference methods.

The blue cluster reflects econometric theory and empirical strategy, with classics such as Heckman (1979), Coase (1960), Hotelling (1931), and *Econometrica*-based papers forming tight methodological anchors.

Table 8
Most Cited Journals Globally in *Land Economics* (1995–2024)

Rank	Global			2015–2024			2005–2014			1995–2004		
	Journal	Cit.	Journal	Cit.	Journal	Cit.	Journal	Cit.	Journal	Cit.		
1	Land Econ	3,592	Land Econ	891	Land Econ	846	Land Econ	760	Land Econ	760		
2	J Environ Econ Manag	2,374	J Environ Econ Manag	716	J Environ Econ Manag	690	J Environ Econ Manag	629	J Environ Econ Manag	629		
3	Am J Agr Econ	2,164	Am J Agr Econ	588	Am J Agr Econ	589	Am J Agr Econ	499	Am J Agr Econ	499		
4	Am Econ Rev	1,539	Ecol Econ	540	Am Econ Rev	289	Am Econ Rev	297	Am Econ Rev	297		
5	J Polit Econ	1,006	Environ Resour Econ	438	Ecol Econ	283	Ecol Econ	155	J Polit Econ	155		
6	Ecol Econ	942	Am Econ Rev	415	Am Econ Rev	231	J Urban Econ	148	J Urban Econ	148		
7	Econometrica	851	J Polit Econ	214	J Urban Econ	224	Econometrica	147	Econometrica	147		
8	J Urban Econ	825	J Urban Econ	200	Environ Resour Econ	221	Rev Econ Stat	143	Rev Econ Stat	143		
9	Rev Econ Stat	814	Rev Econ Stat	193	Rev Econ Stat	200	Water Resour Res	122	Water Resour Res	122		
10	Environ Resour Econ	699	P Natl Acad Sci USA	192	Econometrica	182	Ecol Econ	113	Ecol Econ	113		
11	Q J Econ	477	Econometrica	186	World Dev	140	J Econ Perspect	79	J Econ Perspect	79		
12	Water Resour Res	429	World Dev	155	J Econometrics	114	J Public Econ	78	J Public Econ	78		
13	J Land Public Utility ^a	406	Q J Econ	145	J Public Econ	103	Q J Econ	75	Q J Econ	75		
14	World Dev	367	Land Use Policy	131	J Real Estate Financ	91	Econ J	71	Econ J	71		
15	J Public Econ	346	J Assoc Environ Reso	127	Q J Econ	88	J Law Econ	69	J Law Econ	69		
16	Science	346	Science	127	Science	85	Rev Econ Stud	67	Rev Econ Stud	67		
17	J Law Econ	293	Water Resour Res	123	J Regional Sci	76	Science	64	Science	64		
18	Econ J	288	J Environ Manage	113	Water Resour Res	74	World Dev	63	World Dev	63		
19	J Regional Sci	287	Resour Energy Econ	109	J Law Econ	70	J Econ Lit	46	J Econ Lit	46		
20	J Econometrics	284	J Public Econ	106	J Econ Perspect	69	Forest Sci	44	Forest Sci	44		
21	Rev Econ Stud	275	J Dev Econ	105	J Agr Resour Econ	66	Bell J Econ	42	Bell J Econ	42		
22	Bell J Econ	271	J Econ Behav Organ	100	J Dev Econ	65	J Regional Sci	41	J Regional Sci	41		
23	J Econ Perspect	239	J Econometrics	92	Econ J	64	Environ Resour Econ	40	Environ Resour Econ	40		
24	J Am Stat Assoc	230	Energy Policy	87	Resour Energy Econ	62	Urban Stud	37	Urban Stud	37		
25	P Natl Acad Sci USA	227	Reg Sci Urban Econ	83	Reg Sci Urban Econ	61	J Econometrics	36	J Econometrics	36		
26	J Econ Lit	220	J Agr Econ	82	Conserv Biol	60	J Risk Uncertainty	36	J Risk Uncertainty	36		
27	J Dev Econ	209	J Econ Perspect	82	Forest Sci	59	Nat Resour J	36	Nat Resour J	36		
28	J Environ Manage	207	Mar Resour Econ	80	J Environ Manage	58	Nature	36	Nature	36		
29	Natl Tax J	206	Econ J	79	Rev Econ Stud	58	J Dev Econ	31	J Dev Econ	31		
30	Resour Energy Econ	198	Rev Env Econ Policy	79	J Econ Lit	56	3 Journals	31	3 Journals	31		

Note: Cit. = citations.

^a *Land Economics* was titled the *Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics* from 1925 until 1947.

This illustrates *LE*'s continued reliance on structural microeconomic theory and identification strategies in policy evaluation. The yellow and blue clusters combine land use and institutional economics with contributions from Schlager and Ostrom (1992), Demsetz (1967), and Carson and Groves (2007), linking resource governance with behavioral and institutional frameworks—a reflection of *LE*'s interdisciplinary leanings.

The red and orange clusters include Rosen (1974), Tiebout (1956), Alonso (1964), and Muth (1969), establishing the theoretical foundation of urban economics, spatial land valuation, and location theory. These citations continue to inform *LE*'s urban and regional policy analyses.

The light blue cluster connects studies from the *Bell Journal of Economics* and *LE* itself (e.g., Taylor 1975; Billings and Agthe 1980), signaling the internal dialogue within *LE*'s historical core on hedonic pricing, property valuation, and empirical land market studies. The map underscores how *LE*'s cited literature draws on a mix of applied empirical methods, spatial economic theory, and valuation frameworks, cementing its role at the interface of environmental, agricultural, and urban land economics. The clustering also confirms that highly co-cited documents tend to be those that combine robust methodological contributions with strong policy relevance.

Appendix Figure A3 presents the co-citation network of authors most frequently cited together in *LE*, offering insight into the intellectual alliances that shape the journal's knowledge base. The clusters reveal distinct thematic communities. The green cluster is centered on nonmarket valuation and stated preference methods, with key figures including W. Michael Hanemann, Robert Mitchell, Richard Carson, John Loomis, Kevin Boyle, and Wiktor Adamowicz. Their high co-citation density reflects *LE*'s deep engagement with contingent valuation, choice modeling, and environmental valuation techniques.

The purple cluster includes V. Kerry Smith, Richard Bishop, Alan Randall, Kenneth McConnell, and David Brookshire—authors associated with early contributions to resource valuation and the development of benefit-transfer methods. Their foundational

work provides the empirical grounding for land and environmental economics. The blue cluster comprises Daniel Bromley, James Heckman, Christopher Clark, and Elinor Ostrom, representing institutional economics, property rights, and dynamic resource use. These authors form the theoretical core of *LE*'s exploration of common-pool resources and environmental governance.

In the red cluster, we observe classical economists such as Charles Tiebout, Gary Becker, Kenneth Arrow, and A. Myrick Freeman, signifying *LE*'s historical grounding in welfare economics, public finance, and foundational theory. Governmental authors and institutions (USDA, US Census Bureau) are also embedded here, indicating *LE*'s engagement with applied policy literature. Last, a yellow cluster connects applied land and urban economics contributors such as Sherwin Rosen, Raymond Palmquist, Elena Irwin, and Nicolai Kuminoff, reflecting *LE*'s long-standing concern with hedonic pricing, spatial equilibrium, and urban land use. This author-level co-citation map confirms *LE*'s positioning at the intersection of environmental valuation, institutional economics, and applied land use theory. It reveals a stable intellectual architecture grounded in both economic theory and empirical policy tools while increasingly bridging to interdisciplinary and methodological advances.

Bibliographic Coupling of *LE*

To uncover the thematic interconnections within *LE*, we conducted a bibliographic coupling analysis. This technique groups documents based on shared references, revealing structural similarity in cited knowledge. By analyzing highly cited documents (≥ 100 citations, ≥ 100 links), the coupling map highlights influential internal discourse and clusters of research themes central to *LE*.

Appendix Figure A4 identifies distinct thematic clusters among *LE*'s most influential documents. At the center, Train (1998), Dalhuisen et al. (2003), Irwin (2002), and Hewitt and Hanemann (1995) form a tightly connected core around water demand, land use, and discrete choice modeling—reflecting

LE's methodological backbone. In the upper right, the largest and most distinct cluster centers on Schlager and Ostrom (1992) and Copes (1986), anchoring institutional economics, property rights, and common-pool resource governance. The lower-left red and blue clusters, including Carson et al. (1996) and Cesario (1976), are dedicated to nonmarket valuation and stated preference methods, aligning with *LE*'s environmental valuation focus. A distinct green and pale blue clusters link works such as Deininger, Ali, and Alemu (2011), Di Falco and Veronesi (2013), and Abdulai and Huffman (2014), reflecting land tenure, agricultural adaptation, and climate resilience in developing countries—signaling *LE*'s increasing global policy relevance.

Other clusters include urban planning and housing (Mahan, Polasky, and Adams 2000; Bin and Polasky 2004), conservation programs (Ferraro and Simpson 2002; Uchida, Xu, and Rozelle 2005), and forest/environmental service schemes (Alix-Garcia, Shapiro, and Sims 2012; Arriagada et al. 2012). The coupling network reflects *LE*'s thematic breadth—anchored in valuation and choice modeling, expanding into institutional governance, land tenure, and spatial-environmental planning.

Keyword and Topic Analysis of *LE*

Keyword and topic analysis provides insights into the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of *LE*. Using co-occurrence mapping of Keywords Plus from the WoS Core Collection dataset, this analysis identifies core concepts, methodological approaches, and topical clusters that have shaped *LE*'s scholarly discourse. [Appendix Figure A8](#) illustrates the co-occurrence network of terms, revealing major thematic axes and their interrelations. It depicts the co-occurrence map of Keywords Plus in *LE*, with node size reflecting term frequency and color representing the average year of appearance (blue = earlier focus, red = recent emphasis).

Central nodes, such as “models,” “values,” “demand,” “policy,” “management,” and “choice,” anchor the network, underscoring the journal's sustained engagement with quantitative analysis, valuation techniques, and decision-support frameworks. The clustering

of “contingent valuation,” “willingness to pay,” and “benefits” highlights the prominence of stated preference methods in environmental and resource economics. Terms like “property rights,” “deforestation,” “cost,” and “conservation” connect governance and ecological management topics, while “prices,” “market,” and “property values” point to *LE*'s focus on the interface of land markets and environmental quality.

The temporal gradient shows how recent research (warmer nodes) increasingly integrates “choice experiments,” “ecosystem services,” and “incentives,” indicating a shift toward multidimensional valuation and policy tools. Meanwhile, enduring blue nodes (e.g., “land use,” “externalities,” “efficiency”) reflect *LE*'s foundational contributions to classical environmental-economic problems. [Appendix Figure A8](#) reveals *LE*'s balanced thematic profile: firmly rooted in valuation economics and land use policy while progressively embracing ecosystem services, behavioral insights, and experimental methods.

[Appendix Table A9](#) offers a detailed view of the most frequent Keywords Plus in *LE* globally and across three decades, illustrating the journal's thematic evolution and intellectual priorities. The term “model” is the most frequent globally (166 occurrences), maintaining its leading position across all periods. This highlights *LE*'s solid foundation in quantitative frameworks and methodological rigor, with models being central to analyses of land use, valuation, and policy impacts.

“Impact” ranks second globally (124 occurrences) and becomes the most frequent term in the 2015–2024 period (73 occurrences). This shift reflects a growing focus on evaluating the effects of environmental policies, land use changes, and conservation interventions, aligning with contemporary demands for evidence-based decision-making. Valuation-related terms, including “values” (85 occurrences), “price” (84), “contingent valuation” (75), and “willingness to pay” (59), consistently appear in the top ranks. These terms signify *LE*'s sustained attention to methodologies for estimating economic values of land, environmental goods, and ecosystem services, reinforcing its role as a key outlet for work on nonmarket valuation and resource pricing.

Table 9
Leading Topics in *Land Economics* (2014–2023), According to SciVal (Scopus)

Rank	Topic	TP	FWCI	PP
1	Willingness to pay, discrete choice, logit model	28	0.9	96.81
2	Hedonic price index, real estate price, housing market	22	0.84	95.55
3	Travel cost, recreational activity, cost-benefit analysis	19	0.58	87.06
4	Willingness to pay, contingent valuation, cost-benefit analysis	15	0.76	94.27
5	Fisheries management, quota system, natural resource	13	1.17	84.74
6	Land market, farmland, land use planning	13	0.7	71.67
7	Land tenure, right to property, land use planning	11	0.66	91.14
8	Decision-making, agricultural policy, adoption	9	0.81	96.92
9	Risk management, climate change, flood	7	1.35	93.74
10	Land use, urban planning, housing market	7	0.84	88.65
11	Environmental economics, land use, auction	7	0.84	73.10
12	Housing market, real estate price, climate change	6	1.04	83.22
13	Climate change, forest management, deforestation	5	1.13	90.79
14	Causality analysis, labor market policy, causal inference	5	0.78	89.31
15	Water supply, resource allocation, irrigation	5	0.45	85.79
16	Water supply, price elasticity, pricing	5	1.78	83.07
17	Public goods, social norms, charity	5	0.31	82.90
18	Environmental management, corporate social responsibility, industry	5	0.32	80.34

Note: FWCI = field-weighted citation impact (data from Scopus); PP = worldwide prominent percentile (according to Scopus and FWCI); TP = total papers.

prominence, indicating the journal's alignment with advanced econometric modeling and sustainability discourse. The sustained presence of "willingness to pay," "impact," and "risk" highlights *LE*'s consistent focus on valuation and policy-relevant environmental economics. This figure effectively captures *LE*'s progression from foundational valuation and market analysis to contemporary topics in ecological economics, choice modeling, and climate policy.

Appendix Figure A10 presents a thematic map of *LE*, generated using Bibliometrix and the walktrap clustering algorithm (Pons and Latapy 2006). The map plots themes based on centrality (relevance) and density (development), offering insights into the intellectual structure of *LE* research. The motor themes (upper right quadrant) include "model," "economics," "management," "choice," "demand," "impact," "cost," "growth," "efficiency," and "land." These are highly relevant and well developed, indicating their core role in structuring *LE*'s discourse. The niche themes (upper left quadrant), such as "values," "contingent valuation," "willingness to pay," "benefits," and "choice experiments," are specialized and internally cohesive but less connected to

other topics. In the basic themes (lower right quadrant), no distinct clusters appear beyond the motor themes, suggesting a concentration of foundational topics within core clusters. The emerging or declining themes (lower left quadrant), represented by "property rights" and a cluster around "price," "market," "risk," and "amenities," exhibit lower development and relevance, possibly signaling declining or underexplored areas.

Table 9 highlights the most prominent topics in *LE* research between 2014 and 2023, based on Scopus data accessed via the SciVal platform. The analysis integrates the field-weighted citation impact (FWCI)—a normalized metric that accounts for subject, year, and document type (Purkayastha et al. 2019)—and the worldwide prominent percentile (PP), which reflects topic visibility relative to global outputs (Klavans and Boyack 2017).

The top-ranked topic cluster ("willingness to pay, discrete choice, logit model") led with 28 papers, an FWCI of 0.9, and a PP of 96.81, demonstrating broad recognition despite citation impact slightly below world average. The "hedonic price index, real estate price, housing market" cluster follows, with 22 papers, FWCI 0.84, and PP 95.55, emphasizing the

journal's focus on property valuation and urban economics. Other notable clusters include "travel cost, recreational activity, cost-benefit analysis" (19 papers; FWCI 0.58; PP 87.06) and "willingness to pay, contingent valuation, cost-benefit analysis" (15 papers; FWCI 0.76; PP 94.27), reflecting *LE*'s strong tradition in environmental valuation methods. Clusters addressing natural resource and risk topics, such as "fisheries management, quota system" (FWCI 1.17) and "risk management, climate change, flood" (FWCI 1.35), stood out for achieving above-average citation impacts, highlighting their global relevance. The distribution of topics illustrates *LE*'s multidimensional scope, spanning valuation, land use, climate policy, housing markets, and natural resource management. The presence of clusters with high PP but modest FWCI suggests that some *LE* topics are highly visible yet may lag in citation impact, indicating opportunities for future engagement and influence.

4. Conclusions

General Findings

This bibliometric study provides a comprehensive, multidimensional analysis of *LE*, a journal with nearly a century of contributions to the fields of environmental, agricultural, and urban economics. Using data from the WoS Core Collection and Scopus with advanced analytical tools such as VOSviewer and Bibliometrix, the investigation uncovers *LE*'s intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and scholarly influence at multiple levels—document, author, institution, country, and topic.

The citation analysis shows that *LE*'s most influential contributions stem from seminal works on property rights, contingent valuation, discrete choice modeling, and hedonic pricing, with key papers such as Schlager and Ostrom (1992), Train (1998), and Huff (1963) remaining foundational references. The journal has also significantly shaped methodological debates, especially in environmental valuation, land use change modeling, and market-based conservation strategies. Co-citation maps reveal tight intellectual linkages

with journals such as the *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, and *Ecological Economics*, confirming *LE*'s central role in connecting environmental and resource economics with urban and regional studies.

Keyword and thematic analyses show that *LE*'s research portfolio is anchored in core topics such as models, impact assessments, policy, management, and valuation techniques. Notably, contingent valuation, willingness-to-pay studies, and choice experiments constitute recurring focal points, while newer areas such as climate change, ecosystem services, and water-energy nexus topics are gaining prominence. Thematic maps indicate that models, economics, and management represent basic themes, while impact, cost, and growth emerge as motor themes with high centrality and density.

Trend-topic and SciVal cluster analyses further demonstrate *LE*'s responsiveness to evolving societal challenges. While classic themes on land markets and resource management maintain continuity, newer clusters such as disaster management, water-energy nexus, pro-environmental behavior, and green innovation indicate adaptation to contemporary policy and environmental issues. Nevertheless, the FWCI across topics and clusters remains mixed, reflecting both areas of high international influence (e.g., water distribution FWCI = 1.67; climate change and disaster management FWCI = 1.27) and areas with opportunity for greater global resonance.

These findings position *LE* as a key journal at the intersection of environmental, agricultural, and urban economics with enduring contributions to valuation science and policy-relevant research and an evolving thematic focus that aligns with global sustainability challenges.

Practical Implications

The results of this bibliometric analysis provide several practical insights relevant to researchers, practitioners, and policy makers engaged in environmental, land, and resource economics. First, the identified core

themes—contingent valuation, willingness to pay, land use change, and hedonic pricing—offer a clear map of methodological and topical areas where *LE* has historically provided evidence to inform policy. This reinforces the journal's role as a critical knowledge source for designing and evaluating market-based instruments that are increasingly central to sustainable land and resource management strategies (e.g., payments for ecosystem services, conservation auctions, and resource pricing).

The prominence of applied topics such as housing markets, urban planning, risk management, and climate change adaptation in both document-level and topic cluster analyses highlights the journal's capacity to contribute to pressing global challenges. These areas are directly relevant to the formulation of policies on disaster risk reduction, climate-resilient urban development, and sustainable agricultural transitions.

For research funders and academic institutions, the diverse profile of *LE*'s themes—ranging from basic models to applied environmental policy—underscores the value of supporting multiscalar, policy-relevant investigations. The analysis of the FWCI and worldwide PP metrics indicates that while *LE*'s work is often influential within its domain, certain clusters (e.g., green innovation, pro-environmental behavior) show room for broader international engagement and higher citation impact. This provides a practical benchmark for researchers aiming to align their work with high-visibility and high-impact streams within the field.

The mapping of motor themes (e.g., impact, cost, growth) and basic themes (e.g., model, economics, management) suggests priority areas for policy advisory bodies and consulting organizations seeking rigorous scientific backing for interventions in land use planning, natural resource governance, and environmental regulation. The thematic evolution detected in *LE* points to the importance of integrating emerging topics such as water-energy nexus, climate change-disaster management linkages, and behavioral economics in resource use into policy development and academic curricula to ensure relevance to contemporary sustainability agendas.

Limitations and Future Research

While this bibliometric study offers a detailed and multilayered view of *LE*, several limitations merit acknowledgment, which simultaneously provide avenues for future research. First, the analysis is constrained by our reliance on data from the WoS Core Collection and Scopus, which, despite their comprehensive coverage, do not include all relevant citations, particularly from non-English sources, regional journals, and gray literature. This may underrepresent contributions from certain geographic regions (e.g., Latin America, Africa, parts of Asia) and emerging interdisciplinary fields that are not fully indexed in these databases.

Second, citation-based metrics, such as total citations, FWCI, and worldwide PP, provide valuable but incomplete proxies for scholarly influence. These measures favor older publications and may not fully capture the societal, policy, or practical impacts of more recent or applied research outputs. Furthermore, co-citation, bibliographic coupling, and co-occurrence analyses reflect structural patterns of knowledge use but do not address the qualitative depth, methodological rigor, or originality of the cited works.

The study's temporal coverage (1925–2024) allows for long-term trend analyses, but the dynamic nature of scientific discourse means that some emerging topics (e.g., water-energy nexus, green innovation, climate risk and social media) identified in the last decade are still in the early stages of citation accumulation. Future research could apply complementary methodologies, such as altmetrics or full-text semantic analysis, to capture broader impacts and nuanced thematic development beyond citation counts.

Moreover, while the study mapped authors, institutions, countries, and themes, it did not deeply investigate gender diversity, interdisciplinarity at the individual paper level, or the evolution of specific methodological paradigms (e.g., agent-based modeling, machine learning applications in land economics). Future investigations could integrate these dimensions, along with comparative analyses across journals in adjacent domains (e.g., urban planning, environmental policy,

sustainability science), to contextualize *LE*'s role more fully within the broader scientific landscape.

Finally, expanding bibliometric studies of *LE* to include citation contexts (e.g., how and why a paper is cited) and impact on real-world policy (e.g., references in legislation, reports, or guidelines) would enhance our understanding of the journal's applied influence. Such future work would provide a richer, more integrated assessment of *LE*'s contributions to science and society.

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