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The way that humans organize both resource access and resource use is vital to the management of natural resources. Within different contexts, institutional arrangements (such as the rules of common and private property rights) become levers by which human behaviours can be modified and steered towards the goals of sustainable natural resource management. Featuring contributions from leading thinkers in the field, this groundbreaking volume examines institutional dynamics from the perspective of natural resource management. The book is organized into four parts. The first discusses institutional diversity and contextual change. Following this, institutional misfit is analysed with a strong focus on the long-term impacts of colonial structures in the Asia-Pacific region. The book then discusses experiences with institutional dynamics in order to ease the tension of such misfits before examining future research needs. Ultimately, through careful argument and by deploying original research, the authors make the case that institutional arrangements cannot be perceived as a set of parameters that can be optimized and locked in for the most efficient functioning of a system; nor can institutions be evaluated outside the context in which they were developed. This is powerful, thought-provoking and important reading for academics, researchers, policy-makers and professionals in resource, institutional and environmental economics and land use planning and policy across the full range of natural resource sectors from forestry to agriculture. Published with CSIRO. Cover image: Blue Flower of Life (c) Theresa J. Richardson 2006