

## BOOK REVIEW

**Global Biodiversity. Status of the Earth's Living Resources.** Brian Groombridge (editor). World Conservation Monitoring Centre. London: Chapman & Hall, 1992. 29.95 Pounds Sterling. ISBN-0-412-47240-6.

There are numerous aspects that immediately characterize this masterful production: its encyclopaedic coverage; the expertness throughout of the topics treated; the skillful tying together of the many concepts relevant to global diversity of life and environmental diversity; the easy-to-consult presentation of the material; and the stress on the interdisciplinary nature of conservation studies. It would indeed be difficult to exaggerate the utility of this outstanding volume which, for years to come, will be of great value to many individuals and organizations working in scientific, sociological and economic aspects of global biodiversity and of conservation of natural resources in general. Nothing remotely resembling this *Report* has ever been available; this novelty as well as its interdisciplinary character and coverage assure acceptance for many years amongst a great diversity of individuals in scores of academic, commercial and industrial fields—even many not directly concerned with biodiversity or environmental conservation.

As Dr. Robin Pellow, director of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), writes in the Preface: "In your hands, you now hold the most comprehensive review of global biodiversity ever compiled. It represents the product of numerous scientists, consultants and research institutes, each of whom has generously contributed data or assistance to the compilation of this *Report*, together with the substantial information holdings that WCMC already manages."

There are several brief initial essays: How to use the book; the WCMC; Acknowledgements (including the names of more than 225 individuals who either made major contributions or who assisted in the compilation of the book); Preface and Biodiversity—an Overview.

The greater part of the volume is admirably organized into three major Parts: I) Biological Diversity; II) Uses and Values of Biodiversity; and III) Conservation and Management of Biodiversity. Each of the Parts is divided into sections offering detailed discussions of numerous pertinent and specific topics; the total number of these sections reaches 157.

Part I has four principal subdivisions: Systematics and Diversity; Species Diversity; Species Loss; Habitats; and Ecosystems.

The two major subdivisions of Part II are: Uses of Biological Resources; and Valuing Biodiversity.

Part III comprises three subdivisions: National Policies and Instruments; International Policies and Instruments; and Biodiversity Convention.

Throughout the book each of the 35 essays has a list of references. The volume is extremely well illustrated with figures, graphs, maps and tables.

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