

honors non-majors' environmental science course or an undergraduate topics course (with supplemental readings from the primary literature). Portions of the text would also be suitable as assigned readings in a wide array of courses, especially Chapter 6.

#### REFERENCE CITED

- National Research Council. 2002. *Predicting Invasions of Nonindigenous Plants and Plant Pests*. National Research Council, Committee on the Scientific Basis for Predicting the Invasive Potential of Nonindigenous Plants and Plant Pests in the United States. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C.

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**Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge: Equitable Partnerships in Practice.** Sarah A. Laird (ed.). 2002. People and Plants Conservation Series. Earthscan Publications, Ltd., London. Pp. 288. \$40.00 (paper). ISBN 1-85383-698-2

The primary aim of this outstanding book is to provide a broad overview, synthesis, and open discussion of practices and processes concerning fairness and equitable partnerships between north and south in biodiversity research and bioprospecting. The book is primarily oriented toward the applied social and natural scientists. The authors stress the need for addressing the practical use of concepts of equity developed in recent years and understanding the dynamic, rapidly changing contexts in which these concepts continue to evolve. The authors do not downplay the complexity of the issues.

The authors address questions such as: "What does equity mean?" and "How is equity practiced?" It is not an instruction manual, but rather a synthesis of information for informed experimentation, planning, and learning by stakeholders involved in the practice of ethnobiology. The chapters consistently provide well-written, balanced perspectives with thorough discussion of the issues, and they demonstrate a fine-tuned development of ideas. Clarity of expression and the use of well-defined policy terminology make the book accessible to a wide range of readers. It provides in-depth analysis of the complexities and challenges of globalization, intellectual property rights, and benefit sharing, yet the tone remains hopeful at a time when some are exiting the bioprospecting field in frustration.

The section on biodiversity research relationships—the longest in the book—lays the foundation for much of what follows. It covers topics such as codes of ethics, research guidelines, examples of policies, publication issues, balancing concerns, and "giving back" guidelines. The section emphasizes the need for biodiversity researchers and bioprospectors to re-evaluate their assumptions and ethical standards and to participate in the creation of national and international policy. Many sidebars and case studies from a diverse set of institutions flesh out

the section very well, while real life discussions of experiences by field researchers, such as William Milliken, greatly enrich the usefulness and liveliness of the text.

The section on research and prospecting in protected areas examines the issue of how research programs can be integrated with and complement local informational needs. There is excellent and insightful advice for protected areas managers and other relevant decision makers. A section on commercial uses of biodiversity features interesting and useful information on the value of biodiversity, much of which will be familiar to readers of the previous book by Laird and Kate (2000) on commercial uses of biodiversity.

The book also includes useful information on core elements of equitable research relationships, the need for written research agreements, contracts, trust funds, international agreements, and the development of national policy.

This book is eminently practical and succeeds in its intended purposes. It treats the subject matter with holism, with not-overly-specialized text, and with specific examples and case studies that make it interesting and informative. The overall excellence of the book makes it difficult to criticize, but a bit more advice for indigenous peoples interested in learning how to write their own agreements would certainly have been a useful addition.

*Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge* is an excellent work that should be required reading for everyone involved in these fascinating and complex issues.

#### REFERENCE CITED

Laird, Sarah A. and Kerry Ten Kate, eds. 2000. *The Commercial Use of Biodiversity: Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit-Sharing*. Earthscan Publications, London.

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