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Electronic Green Journal

Title

The World and the Wild

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2ck2p8wm>

Journal

Electronic Green Journal, 1(16)

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Publication Date

2002

DOI

10.5070/G311610477

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Review: The World and the Wild

By David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus (Eds.)

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David Rothenberg & Marta Ulvaeus (Eds.). *The World and the Wild*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2001. 232 pp. ISBN 0-8165-2063-1 (paper). US\$19.95. Acid-free, archival quality paper.

Normally viewed as a western concept, books on wilderness are more often focused on those countries that can afford to preserve their wild areas. *The World and the Wild* moves the philosophical discussion of wilderness to non-western countries. Edited by David Rothenburg and Marta Ulvaeus, and with a foreword by Vance G. Martin, Director of the WILD Foundation, this book brings together a collection of papers previously published in a variety of sources in anticipation of the Sixth World Wilderness Congress held in Bangalore, India, in October 1998.

Professor Rothenburg introduces the book by asking how much the concept of wilderness preservation is an extension of colonialism, and how much is a true desire to protect landscapes and resources in ways that will benefit those peoples who rely on them to the value of all. He argues that wilderness protection should not be a substitute for basic human values and fairness, that it is a concept of concern for all nations worldwide. He expresses a need to bring all voices together to share unique experiences and ideas, and, together with his co-editor Martha Ulvaeus, has achieved a solid beginning in producing this anthology.

The chapters that follow Rothenburg's introduction express visions of what wilderness means to other cultures. Sixteen contributors from a variety of backgrounds and countries share ideas and experiences from their familiar locales, from places as diverse as Nepal and Kenya, Borneo and Brazil, Papua New Guinea and Chile, and the United States and South Africa. Because of this, writing styles and substance differ significantly, adding to the flavor and character of the volume.

Throughout the book, the theme of observing local expertise when constructing plans for wildland conservation is present. It can be enlightening reading to those of us living in the more privileged environments to learn that other countries do not share our righteous views on conservation.

We listen to stories that express wisdom brought about by local experience, such as the dialog between Tularam and Pramod in "How Can Four Trees

Make A Jungle?" by Pramod Parajuli, whose theme is that nature and society together create the ecology of a place. There are examples of preservation initiatives that are working with the help of the locals and an understanding of history ("In the Dust of Kilimanjaro" by David Western). In "Restoring Wilderness or Reclaiming Forests?" Sahotra Sakar uses examples of how the relationship between the land and its inhabitants can conserve a landscape as he pits American-style conservation biology against Indian-style social ecology.

The reader is given examples of landscapes that change after traditions are destroyed once contact with the outside is established, or when fragmentation of cultures occurs after boundaries change. Kathleen Harrison illustrates how first-world developments are opening up lands in developing countries for the benefit of corporations from the developed world, not the local people, in "Roads Where There Have Long Been Trails."

Other chapters do not focus on stories or experiences, but provide an author's philosophy about land preservation and people ("Mapping the Wild" by Edward Whitesell). Ideas from music and art are explored as well for ways to live harmoniously with the wild. Still other chapters address the need to preserve species at all costs, or save both endangered species and endangered cultures. John Terborgh argues in his chapter, "Why Conservation in the Tropics is Failing," that the experience of indigenous peoples isn't enough by itself, but enforcement codes and strong management are necessary.

The diverse and unique focus of this book make it an essential read for those involved or interested in conservation and development of wildlands and resources, providing as it does a perspective from countries throughout the world struggling to raise living standards and gain financial stability.

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