

that arguments are made polemically and readers need to restrain the temptation merely to be rude in return.

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Ecosystem Management: Adaptive, Community-based Conservation

Meffe, G. K., Nielsen, L. A., Knight, R. L. and Schenborn, D. A. 2002
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FOR those wanting to place Australian perspectives on community-based conservation in an international context, Gary Meffe, Larry Nielsen, Richard Knight and Dennis Schenborn have released a new book called *Ecosystem Management: Adaptive, Community-based Conservation*, which examines the application of scientific principles of conservation biology to real-world problem solving. It is intended as a textbook for postgraduate courses in ecosystem management, or as extension material for advanced undergraduates.

The book is structured into three main parts. Part I incorporates chapters 1 to 4 and provides a background of ecosystem management using basic models and concepts. In these first four chapters, there are comprehensive definitions of various concepts such as traditional management versus ecosystem management and some misconceptions about ecosystem management. Examples of past ecosystem management and the different methods of application are used to illustrate many of the concepts covered in those chapters. Part II (chapters 5–9) of the book provides the readers with ecological and biological background. These five chapters cover topics such as genetic diversity in ecosystem management, principles of populations (MVP and PVA estimations) and different management levels ranging from single-species management to landscape-level considerations. Part III (chapters 10–12) explores the ideas of incorporating various human dimensions for the implementation of ecological processes. There are numerous examples in the three chapters of why natural resources cannot be managed effectively without the support of the community, government and interest groups.

This book has over 300 pages of fully illustrated text. In each chapter, there are at least six exercises and discussion questions, and a good range of thought provoking examples of ecosystem management are used to illustrate the complexity of the subject. Even if the book is not set as a text, these exercises are useful inspiration for lecturers in ecology or conservation biology looking for novel approaches to use in workshops and tutorials.

The book will work well for guided student reading. The use of well illustrated figures throughout assist the reader in the explanation of the concept of ecosystem management in a real world, while the background and concepts from the first four chapters give useful revision for experienced students and a clear introduction for those new to the discipline. The complexity of ecosystem approaches from ecological, socio-economic and institutional perspectives are well demonstrated from the examples used in parts I and II. In part III, various techniques and strategic approaches are examined in great detail, providing valuable information on the problems to be confronted and the different objectives and tactics and for their solution. The emphasis on practical applications will silence those students whose most popular question is: "What is the real-world relevance of this and how do we manage it as a community?"

Community-based conservation is in its early stages and this book provides a realistic approach to combining the scientific applications with socio-economic and institutional demands of today's society. It deserves a place in university libraries for background reading and lecturers in need of inspiration for teaching ideas may be keen to buy a personal copy. Those still hunting for a textbook in ecosystem management that takes an applied problem-solving approach may find the solution here.

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