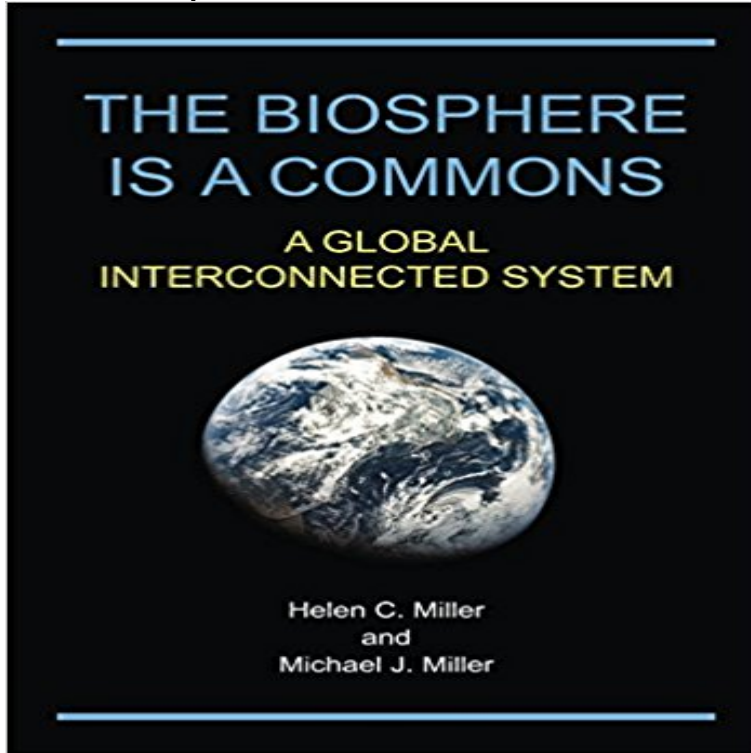


# The Biosphere is a Commons: A Global Interconnected System



The biosphere is the thin skin of life clinging to the surface of our planet that includes all of earth's animals, plants and ecosystems and their interactions. Because all humans and other creatures on earth depend equally on the biosphere for survival, The Biosphere is a Commons proposes that the biosphere and each of its components can be considered as commons: the common property of all who live on the planet. This perspective is explained along with how a commons can be ruined by overuse while the different aspects of the biosphere and the history of humanity's interaction with it are overviewed. After chapters of About a Commons and the Human Population, there are chapters on Climate, The Atmosphere, Oceans and Freshwater, Changing Water by Pollution, Chemicals in the Biosphere, Soils and Desertification, Wildlife as a Commons, and Forests as a Commons. The last chapters overview Public Lands and Special Places and The Role of Environmental Organizations, and the book ends with a short epilogue about A Sustainable Global Commons and an appendix about Legislation Enacted to Prevent Ruin of a Commons. Information about these aspects of the earth and human history can be found spread among environmental science textbooks or other sources, but the authors provide a broad, yet detailed overview of these subjects that is integrated into a uniquely compact and readable book. It tells the amazing story about how in a few centuries humans have changed a large proportion of the biosphere. It also explains what we have done to slow down the destruction of parts of the global web of life contained within the biosphere in an effort to begin to find a sustainable path into the future. Some maps provide additional information, and there is imagery to inspire us about the beauty of earth. The perspectives contained in The Biosphere is a Commons

will provide understanding of this subject for all types of readers and it contains some details that even students and experts in the field of environmental science will likely find interesting. By seeing the biosphere as a commons that we all need for our survival, and by understanding how we are changing this system, we can more easily begin to work together to live harmoniously and sustainably on this small, beautiful blue planet we call Earth.

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