

# Preface

From hunter-gatherer lifestyle to Knowledge Society, the human race has traveled a long way and in the process, learnt to utilize the resources available on the Earth. From learning to use simple stone tools, the human race has advanced to power itself, by crop cultivation, learning to use metals, learning to make alloys, modification of the natural environment and so on. However, with the advent of industrial era and open economy, a paradigm shift has occurred over the rate and quantum of utilization of the Earth's natural resources. Owing to the finite nature of these resources, if exhausted, the very survivability of human race along with other flora and fauna would be under threat. These impacts would be at aggravated level in developing countries like India, where dependence on natural resources is higher than other comparable countries.

With a focal theme of Earth's Resources, an international conference and Humboldt Kolleg was conducted at Salem, India. Out of 108 papers presented in the conference, 34 papers were short-listed; peer-reviewed, edited and are presented in this book. This book is an effort to sensitize the students on various facets of the Earth, its resources, and the current research trends on the sustenance of Earth's resources. This book presents papers on the Earth's resources and the problems being faced by the mankind in sustaining the benefits drawn from natural resources. Articles of varying themes such as energy from ocean, palaeoclimate, nuclear fuel reprocessing and waste disposal, mine waste treatment and food processing stand testimony to the intricately intertwined nature of the task of sustaining the requirements of life on the Earth. Considering the overlapping nature of the articles, though it could be possible to classify them into litho, hydro, bio and atmospheric resources, intentionally it has not been attempted.

A cursory perusal of the papers would reveal that while efforts are being made to find newer sources of resources, drives for effective utilization and reprocessing of available resources are also simultaneously being worked out. The importance of sustainable utilization is being realized not only by the research community but has also permeated the community of planners and administrators.

The intention of publication of selected papers presented in the conference in the form of this book would be served if the readers spread awareness among common people and those concerned with the wellness of the Earth and sustainability of its resources.

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