

Preface

Biodiversity and ecosystem services are central to sustaining life on Earth and play an important role in realizing sustainable development goals. India, a megadiverse country with only 2.4 % of the world's land area, harbors 7–8 % of all recorded species including over 45,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals. At the same time, India, with 17 % of the world's population and 15 % of the global cattle population, faces severe pressure on land. About 50 million people are directly dependent on forests for their subsistence. The transition path to sustainable development, meeting the aspirations of 1.25 billion people in India, will require decoupling socioeconomic development from the unsustainable use of bioresources. Poverty eradication is the greatest challenge to India as 48 % of Indian children are stunted due to chronic undernutrition. Conserving the diversity of crop plants for food and nutritional security and sustainable livelihood forms the core section of this book. The book aims to explore the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental – and its interlinkages at the regional level for a sustainable consumption pattern. The section on access and benefit sharing (ABS) with chapters contributed by experts in the field focuses on the Nagoya Protocol and its key provision on the equitable sharing of benefits leading to improved local economies, livelihoods, and the sustainable utilization of bioresources. The Indian experience of different models of biodiversity governance from protected area network to community conservation and decentralized governance promotes conservation and development and is relevant in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. The empowerment of local institutions for effective biodiversity governance is important for the long-term sustainable management of natural resources, and the initiatives of biodiversity management committees at the local level illustrate this.

The book *Biodiversity and Sustainable Development* is targeted at a wide range of readers including policy makers, researchers, students, and nongovernmental institutions working for the cause of biodiversity conservation. We hope that this publication will further strengthen the effectiveness of biodiversity governance at different levels for a sustainable future. We extend our sincere thanks to all nationally and internationally renowned contributors for providing an in-depth study of

the Nagoya Protocol in the Indian context, which is the backbone of this book. We are also thankful to Springer for accepting the publication and for timely support in reviewing the book. We are grateful to all the staff of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board for their valuable inputs and cooperation in completing the book on time.

Kerala State Biodiversity Board
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India
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K.P. Laladhas
Preetha Nilayangode
Oommen V. Oommen

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Laladhas, K.P.; Nilayangod, P.; V. Oommen, O. (Eds.)

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