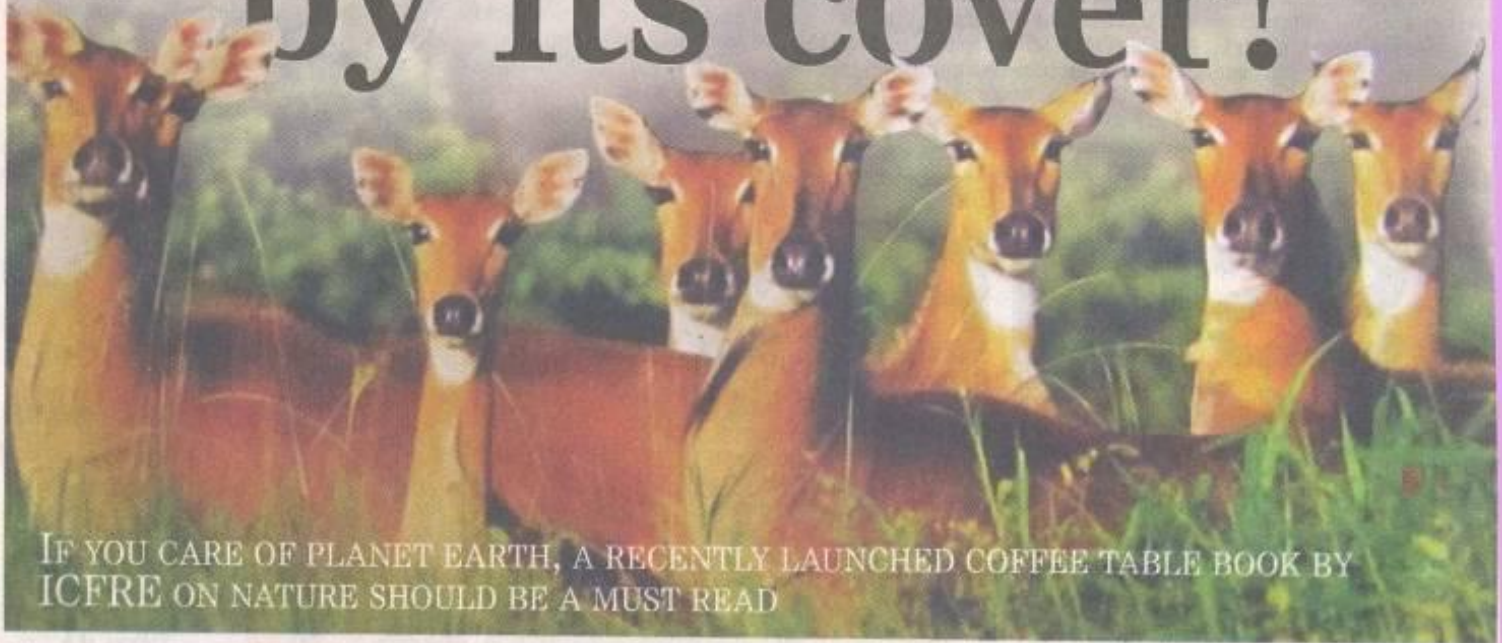


Judge this book by its cover!



IF YOU CARE OF PLANET EARTH, A RECENTLY LAUNCHED COFFEE TABLE BOOK BY ICFRE ON NATURE SHOULD BE A MUST READ

Anjali Nauriyal

If you love life with a rare passion, then you are bound to love this coffee table book that celebrates the life-nurturing forests that are an integral part of each human being's life. To start with what attracts you to the book is the amazing cover picture by nature lover Mohit Dang, that sparkles with energy, representing the life force that animates our very existence, and sets the right mood for what follows in the inside pages.

The book demonstrates a love for life and for forests in full measure. Titled 'Forest Biodiversity in India' the book, brought out by ICFRE (full form?) has generous contributions from foresters, nature lovers, environmentalists and the like by way of pictures and content. They have all shared their material, photos, ideas in support of the greater cause of environment. It is with environmental reason that the book is printed on 50 percent recycled paper that is chlorine free and made from pulp derived from environment certified forests.

The editorial team led by Dr VK Bahuguna includes names such as Saibal Dasgupta, Dr Renu Singh, and Dr Shilpa Gautam. The book is the first of its kind in the country, and in the words of PM Dr Manmohan Singh as expressed in the fore note celebrates "nature as a source of nurture and not



>> Cover Pic by nature lover Mohit Dang

as a dark force to be conquered and harnessed to human endeavour".

The book is a must read for all those who want to make a career in forestry as it is a source of valuable information. The authors say it would serve as a right initiation given the very many issues it has touched upon. It encompasses details from entire India and displays astounding pictures that are visual delights apart from having deep informative import depicting as they do the various facets of India's biodiversity.

The range includes Shivalinga Peak in Gangotri National Park, Scrub vegetation of Suru Valley in Kargil, Rhododendron forest in Western Himalayas, Asiatic Lion to cite a few. Researchers, planners, and academicians too would enjoy flipping through the pages of the book and update their ex-



pertise considerably. Also it gives pride of place to the indigenous tribes for whom forests have served as lifeline and who in turn have for years lived in harmony with it and through their cultural practices and religious beliefs preserved its sanctity.

DG ICFRE VK Bahuguna points out that the book is significant particularly in the context of continual growth of human population and the resultant demand on natural resources, leading to unsustainable exploitation of the rich bounty of mother earth. The book aims to give a message to the younger generations to value the fact that our country ranks amongst top 10 species-rich nations of the world with 20 per-

cent of recorded species of world and global biodiversity hotspots with high degree of endemism.

According to Bahuguna, the book "draws attention on the different dimensions of biodiversity including benefits drawn by human societies in a myriad ways. It presents spectacular visual work and successfully highlights the message of biodiversity conservation for human well being". The book has received financial support from the National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai and has come at a crucial time when the global community is poised to moot proposals for shaping a new road map for biodiversity conservation.