

Mini Review

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Book Review 'Ecology of Sulawesi'



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Abbreviations: EMDI: Environmental Management Development in Indonesia; KLH: Indonesian Ministry of State for Population and Environment; SRES: School for Resource and Environmental Studies; CIDA: Canadian International Development Agency; UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

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Written by Tony Whitten, Greg S. Henderson and Muslimin Mustafa, Indonesia, with its large population and vast and varied natural resources, must strive for economic development at the same time as protecting and enhancing the environment. Development must involve a harmonious relationship between Man and God, Man and his fellow man, and Man and Nature. This book has been written as one important element in the incorporation of environmental thinking into development activities on Sulawesi. It provides important ecological information which will assist government planning agencies and project developments in including ecological considerations in development activities. The Ecology of Sulawesi is part of a series of books on the ecology of Indonesia. The first book in the series, The Ecology of Sumatra, was published in 1984 and is now in its third printing. A continuing demand for books in the series is evident.

The Ecology of Sulawesi has been written with the involvement of scientists from the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at Hasanuddin University, Ujung Pandang. The books in this Ecology of series serve not only to provide basic information on the environment. The process of preparation of the books also allows for training and technology transfer in environmental research between the authors and the junior scientists at the university environmental study centers. It is hope that scientists will be encouraged by this book to pursue further research on the ecological conditions in Sulawesi, and to apply the results of this continuing research to solutions to the environmental challenges posed by development in Sulawesi. This book was produced within the Environmental Management Development in Indonesia (EMDI) Project, implemented by the

Indonesian Ministry of State for Population and Environment (KLH) and the School for Resource and Environmental Studies (SRES) at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The project is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The book has been born out of the experience of producing The Ecology of Sumatra which was financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between 1982 and 1984.

The Ecology of Sulawesi provided a summary of the current knowledge of the island at that time. There was no argument about the thoroughness of the book; if a topic wasn't mentioned in The Ecology of Sulawesi, it probably hadn't been studied. Sulawesi has a diverse system of parks and nature reserves that were set up to provide sanctuary for the island's biodiversity, free from hunting, and habitat destruction. The island boasts three national parks, including Lore Lindu National Park, a World Heritage Site, two marine parks, nineteen nature reserves, and an assortment of tourist parks and wildlife refuges.

These areas cover most major habitats, contain populations of most endemic species, and several are large, all good qualities for reserves design. But in today's climate, the subject of reserve design is largely one of academic debate. Sulawesi's parks are not safe and although most of the protected areas have staff, the areas function as little more than paper parks. The question of what percentage of species will become extinct in 50, 500 or 5,000 years' time is not of great relevance when it is by no means certain how much of its reserves will be intact in even 25 years time. In Sulawesi today the major priority is simply to maintain the integrity of reserves against legal and illegal forms of habitat disturbance and resource exploitation.



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