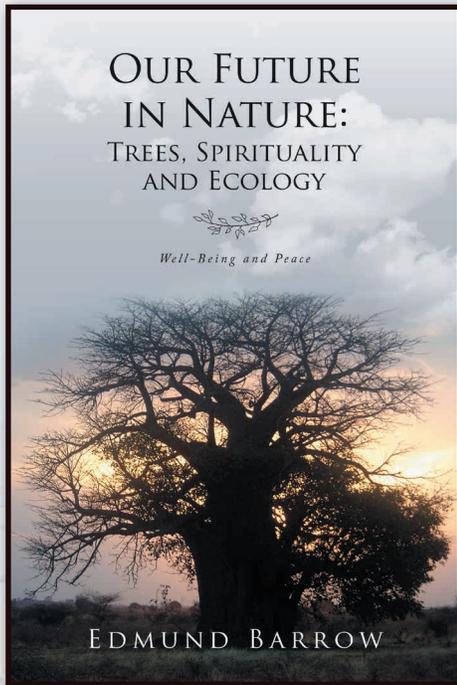


OUR FUTURE IN NATURE: TREES, SPIRITUALITY AND ECOLOGY

EDMUND BARROW



This book is a passionate plea for a more spiritual way of understanding nature, and is a wide-ranging exploration of the spiritual, historical and scientific literature on trees and sacred landscapes, showing how deeply trees impact human life. Edmund is inspired by and recognizes the spiritual strengths and traditions of numerous cultures and major religions. Religions should promote a spirituality that respects nature, and which sees humans as part of nature. The book closes with ideas about how spiritual views of nature can enrich human lives (Robert Fisher, University of Sydney, Australia).

This book will help rebuild humanity's damaged relationship with nature. Though bringing back the sacredness of trees and groves is not the only course correction we need. Saving ourselves and the earth from mass extinction needs a fundamental reshaping of our relationships. Indigenous and local communities showed us how to live lightly and respect nature. What Edmund says is one core component of what we need to do. I hope his message is read widely and incorporated into action and policy. We owe this much to the earth that has given birth to us, and to the other species we coinhabit it with (Ashish Kothari, Kalpavriksh, India).

Edmund has a wonderful narrator's voice. The text is sincere, friendly and engaging. One wants to keep reading. This book speaks to different audiences including leaders and people from different religious and spiritual traditions who want to understand more about ecology. There are strong messages for conservationists to engage more actively in the spirituality of nature. Edmund poses the book as a means to heal and engage. He invites the reader to rediscover his or her own heritage, the lost language of trees, to plant, to be mindful, to pray, and be present with trees (Nigel Crawhall, Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO, Paris, France).

Edmund grew up on an organic farm in Ireland, and went to Trinity College Dublin where he studied natural sciences. He has a Masters degree in development. Edmund has worked for over 40 years, mainly in Africa (but also in Asia, and the Americas), in 20+ countries focusing on how communities conserve and benefit from nature. He emphasizes local learning in terms of governance, empowerment, benefit sharing, natural resource management, and the more spiritual aspects of nature. This includes the importance of local and indigenous knowledge. He has extensive experience with participatory approaches to environmental management, village-level land use planning at landscape levels and forest landscape restoration. Edmund has published widely emphasising practical lessons to enable people benefit from conservation. He lives in Nairobi, Kenya with his wife and two sons.

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