
2014 Sustainability Science Award

Sacred Ecology,

Written by Fikret Berkes

Published by Routledge



The Sustainability Science Award is given to the authors of a single scholarly work published in the last five years that makes the greatest contribution to the emerging science of ecosystem and regional sustainability through the integration of ecological and social sciences. Nominees need not be ESA members and can be of any age, nationality, or place of residence.

Sacred Ecology by Fikret Berkes tackles the question: what can the study of traditional knowledge contribute to contemporary environmental issues? By melding socio-ecological, historical, and philosophical approaches to indigenous knowledge, Berkes describes in a nuanced way how traditional knowledge intersects with scientific knowledge. He tackles a range of epistemological issues underlying how we conceptually and practically broaden our understanding of indigenous knowledge as a field of knowledge in its own right.

Building on his own extensive field work among native peoples from subarctic Canada to tropical Caribbean islands, he addresses many issues of sustainability, including fishing management, climate change adaptation, hunting and livestock keeping, and other areas. He envisions, in some depth, a new way to do ecology (and other sciences) so that it can better integrate with indigenous science, and ways of driving science from community needs. In the 2012 (3rd) edition of *Sacred Ecology*, Berkes has substantially updated and bolstered the evidence in making his case for how indigenous and other forms of scientific knowledge can be used in decision making and improving our understanding of linked natural and social systems. The book is designed to be useful to individual scholars as well as for classroom teaching.