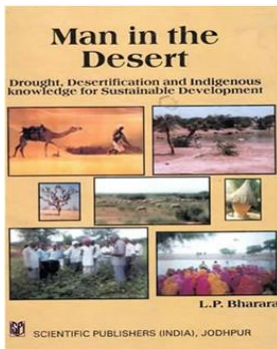


Man in the Desert



L.P. Bharara

ISBN	: 9788172331931	Book Format	: Book
Language	: English	Binding	: Hard Bound
Imprint	: Scientific Publishers	Edition	: 1
Pages	: 394	© Year	: 1999
Weight	: 534 Gms	Trim Size	: 5.75 X 8.75

Print Book : ₹2,650.00

Blurb

The Book Social aspects of drought and desertification in the desert eco-system have recently received international recognition. Though the desert environment is harsh and rainfall is very unreliable, the rural people based on traditional knowledge, have been living in balance with the natural environment since ages. The people have evolved traditional knowledge, skill and practices for dryland agriculture; soil water and vegetation conservation; livestock rearing and management. Techniques of natural resources conservation, role of physio-cultural institutions and bio-technological capacities to sustain a variety of life forms, form the basis of their sustenance living. But enormous increase in human and animals has disturbed the fragile eco-system. Overgrazed lands, shrinking forests and eroded agricultural fields due to over cultivation, deforestation and cutting of vegetation have lead to degradatation of vegetation and diminution of crop potential decreasing productivity per unit area. This poses a potential threat to the resources and ultimately the lives and livelihood of the inhabitants. Thus, to protect these resources from conversion into desert like situation to desertification, there is a need to study indigenou technical knowledge for sustained production and conservation of resources. Appropriate mix of new technologies and traditional wisdom is extremely important. The book addresses these problems and their solutions. The book based on empirical field investigations, pertains to the study of man in relation to desert environment. It is devoted to the saga of drought stricken land and people of the Thar desert of India. The book synthesises the problems of drought and desertification from socio-cultural and human-ecological angle and encompasses Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) for sustained production and survival. It focuses on the three different ecological regions like pastoral, rainfed and irrigation-cum-rainfed, to the whole of arid zone of Rajasthan and India. In addition to update our rich cultural heritage of ITK, and review of voluminous researches on the problem, it is enriched with case studies, illustrated with photographs, charts and tables. The book has been organised into three parts to make chapters and topics to be arranged in an almost systematic order. The book will be of immense value to the technocrates, planners, policy makers, scientists, researchers and NGO s dealing with the problem of drought, desertification and ITK.

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