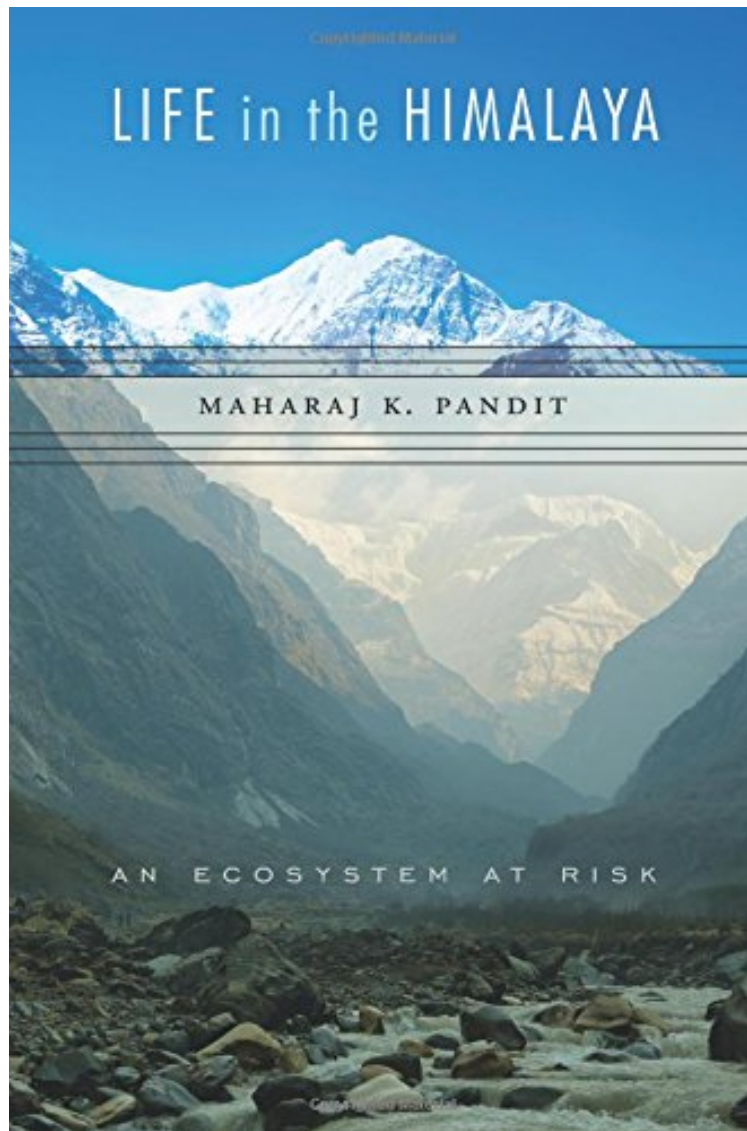


[Ebook free] Life in the Himalaya: An Ecosystem at Risk

Life in the Himalaya: An Ecosystem at Risk

Maharaj K. Pandit

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Maharaj K. Pandit : Life in the Himalaya: An Ecosystem at Risk before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Life in the Himalaya: An Ecosystem at Risk:

The collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates around fifty million years ago profoundly altered earth's geography and regional climates. The rise of the Himalaya led to intensification of the monsoon, the birth of massive glaciers and turbulent rivers, and an efflorescence of ecosystems along the most extreme elevational gradient on Earth. When the

Ice Age ended, humans became part of this mix, and today nearly one quarter of the world's population inhabits its river basins, from Afghanistan to Myanmar. *Life in the Himalaya* examines the region's geophysical and biological systems and explores the past and future of human sustainability in the mountains' shadow. Maharaj Pandit divides the Himalayas' history into four phases. During the first, the mountain and its ecosystems formed. In the second, humans altered the landscape, beginning with nomadic pastoralism, continuing to commercial deforestation, and culminating in pockets of resistance to forest exploitation. The third phase saw a human population explosion, accompanied by road and dam building and other large-scale infrastructure that degraded ecosystems and caused species extinctions. Pandit outlines a future networking phase which holds the promise of sustainable living within the mountains' carrying capacity. Today, the Himalaya is threatened by recurrent natural disasters and is at risk of catastrophic loss of life. If humans are to have a sustainable future there, Pandit argues, they will need to better understand the region's geological vulnerability, ecological fragility, and sociocultural sensitivity. *Life in the Himalaya* outlines the mountains' past in order to map a way forward.

In this book, Maharaj K. Pandit, who grew up in the west Himalayas and conducted his Ph.D. research in the east Himalayas, brings an informed perspective on Himalayan history. Emphasizing people's relationships with the mountains, Pandit discusses past phases of development and suggests a future of sustainable living. This book is a valuable contribution to our understanding of this threatened region. (Trevor Price, University of Chicago) In an engrossing narrative, Maharaj K. Pandit integrates biology and Earth sciences to explain how the unique Himalayan flora came to be and what we must do to conserve this biological treasure for future generations. (Andrew Knoll, Harvard University) About the Author Maharaj K. Pandit is Dean of the Faculty of Science and Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Delhi, and a Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard University. Peter H. Raven is George Engelmann Professor Emeritus of Botany, Washington University in St. Louis, and President Emeritus of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Kamal Bawa is Distinguished Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Boston.