

The eminent Harvard biology Professor Edward O. Wilson once said about ants, “We need them to survive, but they don’t need us at all.” The same, in fact, could be said about countless other insects, bacteria, fungi, plankton, plants, and other organisms. This fundamental truth, however, is largely lost to many of us. Rather, we humans often act as if we are totally independent of nature, as if our driving thousands of other species to extinction and disrupting the life-giving services they provide will have no effect on us whatsoever.

This summary, using concrete examples from our award-winning Oxford University Press book, *Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity*, co-sponsored by the U.N. (CBD Secretariat, UNEP, and UNDP) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), has been prepared to demonstrate that human beings are an integral, inseparable part of the natural world, and that our health depends ultimately on the health of its species and on the natural functioning of its ecosystems.

We have written this summary because human health is generally not part of discussions about biodiversity loss, by policy-makers or by the general public, and because most people, as a result, do not understand the full magnitude of the biodiversity crisis and do not develop a sense of urgency about addressing it. We believe that once people really grasp what is at stake for their health and their lives, and for the health and lives of their children, they will do everything in their power to protect the living world. (...)

The article:

<http://chge.med.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/resources/182945%20HMS%20Biodiversity%20booklet.pdf>

The book:

http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general/subject/LifeSciences/Ecology/?view=usa&ci=9780195175097&utm_source=AdaptiveMailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Science%20Matters&org=408&lvl=100&ite=1175&lea=155318&ctr=0&par=1