

THE WORK OF NATURE

How the Diversity of Life Sustains Us

YVONNE BASKIN

A Project of SCOPE:
The Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment

ISLAND PRESS
Washington, D.C. ● Covelo, California

Contents



Foreword by Paul R. Ehrlich

ix

Preface by Harold A. Mooney and Jane Lubchenco

xiii

Acknowledgments

xvii

CHAPTER ONE

This Web of Life

1

CHAPTER TWO

The Keystone Club: Who's Important

15

CHAPTER THREE

Community Ties

39

CHAPTER FOUR

Water: The Essence of Life

71

CHAPTER FIVE

The Vitality of the Soil

103

CHAPTER SIX

Of Plants and Productivity

131

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Power to Shape the Land

151

CHAPTER EIGHT

Climate and Atmosphere

179

CHAPTER NINE

Do We Still Need Nature?

205

Notes

225

Index

251