

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
AND THE NATURAL WORLD



Edited by Vinita Damodaran
Anna Winterbottom and Alan Lester

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Vinita Damodaran is Director of the Centre for World Environmental History and Senior lecturer in the department of History at the University of Sussex, UK. Her expertise is on the indigenous communities and the environmental history of Eastern India. She has published numerous books and articles including co-editing *Nature and the Orient; the Environmental history of South and South East Asia* (1998) and *The British Empire and the Natural World, Environmental encounters in South Asia* (2011)

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About the book

The East India Company and the Natural World is the first work to explore the deep and lasting impacts of the largest colonial trading company, the British East India Company, on the natural environment. The EIC both contributed to and recorded environmental change during the first era of globalization. From the small island of St Helena in the South Atlantic, the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, and as far off as New Zealand, the Company presence profoundly altered the environment by introducing plants and animals, felling forests, and redirecting rivers. The threats of famine and disease encouraged experiments with agriculture and the recording of the virtues of medicinal plants. The EIC records of the weather, the soils, and the flora provide modern climate scientists with invaluable data. The contributors – drawn from a wide range of academic disciplines - use the lens of the Company to illuminate the relationship between colonial capital and the changing environment between 1600 and 1857.

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