Miller, G.T.: **Living in the Environment. Principles, Connections, and Solutions.**- Thomson Learning, Belmont 2002. GBP 26.99. ISBN 0-534-37697-5.

A true evergreen among the plethora of books on environmental problems is just appearing in the twelfth significantly revised edition. Since its first edition in 1975 this book has led the way in using an interdisciplinary approach, combining information from natural and social sciences, to present a general idea of how nature works and how things so important for our living are interconnected. To the main themes discussed belong basic principles of ecosystem functioning, natural resources and their changes, environmental quality and pollution, social aspects of environmental science, biodiversity, sustainability, land use and conservation. This is seemingly very similar as in other environmentally oriented books, but the way how the themes are discusses is different.

Each chapter begins with a short story setting the stage for the materials that follows. In addition to many carefully selected colour photographs, several hundreds of full-colour diagrams are included. There are many special boxes within the text, presenting an individual researcher's point of view ("guest essays") or listing arguments from both sites of controversial environmental issues ("con/pro boxes"). Some other boxes give insights into key environmental problems and many possible solutions are proposed. To encourage critical and integration-oriented thinking, all boxes end with "critical thinking" questions. Balanced and unbiased view of two sides of all controversial issues and stimulation of critical thinking of a reader to evaluate opposing ideas is probably the most characteristic feature of the reviewed book.

The book is designed primarily as a textbook for introductory courses on environmental science, and one must say that it is a really nice textbook. The organization of individual chapters is not only logical and clear, but also written in very attractive, interest capturing style. All new terms are well defined when introduced, and once more explained in a glossary at the end of the book. Questions are used as titles for all subsections, and they may serve simultaneously as a set of learning objectives. Each chapter ends with an extensive list of review questions followed by another set of questions to encourage students to critical thinking about the pertinent environmental problems. Several interesting themes for individual projects are added to each chapter, as well as a detail list of supplementary material, including internet databases. Very useful is a special interactive website for this book (http://www.brookscole.com/product/0534376975s) containing not only lists of important publications, organizations and international agencies, but it also allows students to test their mastery of each chapter in form of "flesh cards" or "tutorial quizzes". Readers who become especially interested in a particular topic can use an online database of articles from more than 700 periodicals accessible on another website (http://www.infotrac-college.com).

As a teacher I may fully recommend the book to students and to anybody else who is interested in basic, objective information on environmental problems. The book presents not only huge amount of facts, principles and concepts, but it also learns how to sharpen our critical thinking skills. As the author says, "we need to be *wisdom seekers*, not information vessels".

J. GLOSER (*Brno*)