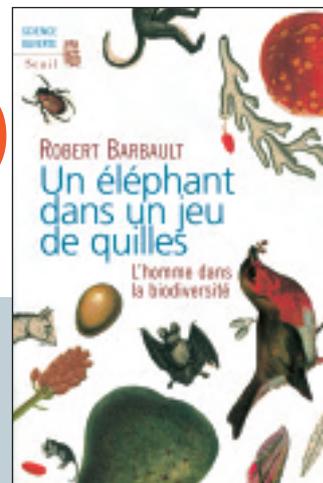


The Prize for Life

BOOKS



An Elephant Can Forget

For three billion years, the association between the species on our earth has been the secret of the creation of life and diversity. In short, life itself. But over the past few short centuries, especially the last two, there has been a wrench in the system, skewing the machinery, and creating increasing havoc every day: human activity is upsetting ecological balances, killing off species, and threatening biodiversity. Like an elephant in a game of skittles, by seriously forgetting its place. Robert Barbault's clear explanations leave no room for doubt. He reveals the mechanisms of the extermination of life. His book is a wake-up call for us to change our behavior, to work together more and more and, above all, not to lose faith in human beings, who were and are still the great artisans of this world.

In giving its first “Environment Award” to the book by ecologist Robert Barbault, the Veolia Foundation has broken new ground.

Honoring Sustainable Development Week in its own way, the Veolia Environment Foundation awarded its first “Environment Book Prize” on June 6. The award, presented in Paris (France) in the majestic Grand Gallery of the National Museum of Natural History, was given to Robert Barbault for his book “Un Éléphant dans un jeu de quilles” [An Elephant in a Game of Skittles], which looks at man’s place in biodiversity.

Changing our Behavior

A two-in-one event. By taking this initiative, the Veolia Environment Foundation filled an unexpected gap: there was no other prize in France intended for an author whose work is committed

to our environment and argues in favor of defending it. Another innovation of the Foundation was the bridge it forged between the corporate, research and publishing worlds in order to disseminate as widely as possible knowledge of the challenges of sustainable development, which are the pillars of Veolia’s ethical choices.

“In France, there is a serious lack of awareness of these issues,” notes Robert Barbault, the winner, “I am delighted that a major corporation has created such an award, which supports, above all, the endeavors of scientists like me. I am also delighted to see corporations take initiatives to reach out to wider audiences and create awareness among our citizens. Too often, we have a tendency to blame com-

panies and decision-makers. But each one of us has to change our behavior as well.” The panel, chaired by writer Claude Michelet, found it difficult to choose between the five works short-listed from all those that had been sent to him. Thanks to this award, “Un Éléphant dans un jeu de quilles” is

now distributed across France in all learning centers and local libraries. The book’s promotion by the media is aided by the 50,000 euros provided by the Foundation. Its author, Robert Barbault, was awarded the amount of 5,000 euros.

THE FIVE BOOKS SHORT-LISTED

- Ecological Architecture: A Critical History, JAMES STEELE
pub. **Thames & Hudson**
- Le développement durable [Sustainable Development], JEAN-PIERRE PAULET
pub. **Ellipses**
- Les pollutions invisibles [Invisible Pollutions], FRÉDÉRIC DENHEZ
pub. **Delachaux & Niestlé**
- Risques écologiques [Ecological Risks] LOÏC CHAUVEAU
pub. **Larousse**
- Un éléphant dans un jeu de quilles [An Elephant in a Game of Skittles] ROBERT BARBAULT
Pub. **Le Seuil**