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"Exploring the Diversity of Conceptualizations of Nature in East and South-East Asia"

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This article sheds light on the diversity of meanings and connotations that tend to be lost or hidden in translations between different conceptualizations of nature in East and South-East Asia. It reviews the idea of "nature" in Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Tagalog, Cebuano, Lumad, Indonesian, Burmese, Nepali, Khmer, and Mongolian. It shows that the conceptual subtleties in the conceptualization of nature often hide wider and deeper cosmological mismatches. It concludes by suggesting that these diverse voices need to be represented in global reports on sustainability, which can be fostered by the direct involvement of experts from diverse traditions of thought who have access and interpretative knowledge of sources in languages other than English. To take into consideration the diversity of conceptualizations of nature can lead to better decisions about sustainability and improve the acceptability and efficiency of environmental policies in each local context, as well as internationally. Solutions and policies on the ground must be designed based on the local conceptual and cultural frames. (Abstract)

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