



Reseña de libro

Book review: Jody Butterfield, Sam Bingham, Allan Savory. *Holistic Management Handbook: Regenerating your land and growing your profits*, 3rd ed. 2019, Island Press, 2000 M Street, NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20036. 250 p. Hardcover and Ebook.

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In “*Holistic Management Handbook*”, Jody Butterfield, Sam Bingham and Allan Savory offer a fascinating step-by-step method for running a farm using a holistic management approach with tangible results. In this third edition, the authors bring their vision to the responsibility to restore our environment, and describe how to do it. This vision has clear instructions that focus on: *plan-monitor-control-replan*. The handbook has been thoroughly revised and explains the planning procedures described in the book “*Holistic Management: a Commonsense Revolution to Restore Our Environment*” (Savory and Butterfield, 2016). The major revisions enlarged are the holistic perspective to manage natural systems, natural processes and cycles (water, mineral, community dynamics, and energy), and nature’s function in relationship with people, animals, and land (time management, stock density, cropping, burning). Both books are complementary in theory and practice, as together they explain how land is restored by livestock and the gains made from the land through holistic management. The chapters 2 and 3 conclude with examples of worksheets for grazing plans, monitoring procedures, and chapter 4 offers Appendices about ecological monitoring forms. The handbook includes a comprehensive glossary of terms.

The first part describes holistic financial planning. The tagline of financial planning is: “Money is the ruler” because it is essential to plan profit first, rather than expenses. This is the single most important activity for ensuring that all the money earned and spent is in line with the holistic context proposed. The gross profit analysis can identify, for example, the best time to buy land or hay, to embark on new investments, or sell the farm.

Part two describes holistically planned grazing and the term “Grazing unit”, which is described as any piece of land with moving livestock across the landscape. The divisions can be demarcated by fences, natural barriers or natural features. Holistic management attempts to restore balance by moving livestock in a manner that

simulates the pack density and mobility of the wild grazers. This helps eliminate the deleterious effects of conventional livestock management.

The holistic ecological monitoring process and the collection of previous history details of the land are the keys to creating the future landscape (Part 3). Once the first monitoring is done, it is necessary to describe the four ecosystem processes: community dynamics, water cycle, mineral cycle, and energy flow. These four ecosystem processes are land health indicators and can be used to evaluate soil health status, as affected by management and climate change.

The fourth and last part of this book describes holistic land planning for a grazing operation and the role of time in grazing and trampling. Considerations that need to be taken with the movement of a large herd of animals require attention to fencing, water points, roads and handling corridors, owners of the land and water rights.

This handbook is an essential companion for those seeking to manage land holistically. The book will be very helpful to agronomists, researchers, practitioners, farmers, and students working in agricultural and environmental resource resilience. The book has few negatives, none of which detract from the achievement. Chapter summaries are useful but inconsistent in purpose to give a brief statement of the main points. Some black and white photographs were low quality. The book has a strong land regenerating focus set within solid scientific evidence where any sceptical reader can apply and test the methods described on the guidelines. Every instruction reflects the authors’ efforts dedicated to producing this outstanding work.

REFERENCES

Savory, A., Butterfield, J., 2016. *Holistic management: a common sense revolution to restore our environment*. Washington DC: Island Press.

