

Bio Cultural Significance And Conservation Of Plant Diversity Of Sacred Groves In Sunder Nagar Distt Mandi(H.P)

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Abstract

Human faith, beliefs and traditions have played a significant role in biodiversity conservation in India for Centuries.

Common beliefs and superstitions regarding the trees, herbs, flowers, fruits and vegetable are prevalent among the people of both rural and urban in India. And the bio-cultural approach is related to the anthropological value of holism is an integration of both biological science and anthropology.

This way of the understanding takes local, cultural views and understanding of illness and disease.

Keywords:- Tradition, Faith, culture, Biodiversity, Bio-cultural approach, ecosystem

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I. Introduction

India is known for its diversity like religion, customs, myths, languages, culture etc. It has been also observed that large number of plants are being used for the worship of gods and goddesses by the different indigenous communities, which serve as the useful tool for Conservation of plants.

On the basis of ancient scriptures a wide variety of plants like *Ficus religiosa*, *Ocimum*, *Sanctum*, *Azadirachta indica* etc. have religious activities, marriages and other ceremonies(Robinson and Cush 1997).

India has deep rotated traditional worshipping of the plants, which provide base for gran root conservation Practice(Gadgil 1987, 2002, Gadgil and Rao 1998).

The existance of Sacred groves in India dates to ancient times and their presence has been documented since the early 1800s Believing trees to be abode of gods and ancestral spirits, many communities set aside area of forest and established rules and customs.

Sacred groves are the forest patches conserved by local people through socio-cultural and religious practices.

Sacred groves in Himachal Pradesh are called(dev-van) or (Devta ka Jungle) are dedicated to a particular diety.

Sacred Groves in India

Ramkrishnan(1998) reported the existence of Sacred groves in different parts of India and they are known by different names in different area(Bhakat 1990).

Sacred groves of Himachal are studied by H.P state Bio-diversity board.

II. Research Problem

My research area is Sunder Nagar(Suket) located in Mandi Distt, here are many sacred groves such as Mahamaya forest Murari Devi, SheetlaMata, Kamrunag, Droradhar.

The environment as natural resources such as forests fossil fuels or other materials and physical gifts of nature are easily exploited by us to meet our basic needs.

The issue before me is how can we strengthen ethical culture and behaviours in order to strengthen our environment?

How do we balance the earth's genuine, needs and greeds of a few?

One of the key question in my mind while selecting the problem area was 'how one could possibly approach, analyze and bridge the persisting gap between earth climate science and cultural understanding of climate change as informed and shaped by religion?



III. Review of Literature

Sacred groves comprise of patches of forests or natural vegetation from a few trees to forests of several acres that are usually dedicated to local folk deities or tree spirits. Sacred groves are protected in the belief to keep them in a relatively undisturbed state since they express an important relationship of Human beings with nature (Hughes and Chandran, 1998).

Buchanan (1870) reported the links of forests with the deities of their respected villages of the Western Ghats of Karnataka.

Brandis (1897) the first inspector General of forests carried out the earliest documentations work on sacred groves in India.

Roy Burman (1996) reported that many sacred groves in western Maharashtra were maintained by the state Revenue department.

Gadgil and Vartak (1973) traced the historical link of sacred groves to the preagricultural, hunting and gathering societies. Deshmukh et al., (1998) discussed the issues related to conservation and development of primary information on each of sacred Malhotra (1998) provided an overview of the various anthropological dimensions of Sacred groves in India.

Bhasin (1999) dealt with the religious and cultural aspects of a SG in Sitabari in Rajasthan

IV. Purpose And Objective of Study

1. To undertake a quantitative ethnobotanical study of traditional knowledge and plant use among local people living in the study area.
2. To explore the relationship between plant diversity and use
3. To determine the conservation and eco tourism implications of the study on future of local community as a conservation and ecotourism site.
4. To enhance the understanding of bio-cultural importance on or contribute to biodiversity
5. To promote the development of policies that include and support the role of culture in biodiversity conservation.
6. To communicate lessons learned from the case studies and to promote the carrying out and sharing of case studies and lessons learned.
7. To find out the status of sacred groves in Himachal Pradesh
8. To document the sacred and protected groves and their bio-diversity

V. Research Methods



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