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పీఎం-ఉషా PM-UShA
International Conference on
"Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate"
(ICBC³ - 2026)
on 30th January 2026


GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE
Yeleswaram-533429, Kakinada District.
Andhra Pradesh, India.

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ICBC^3-2026

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IJMER, Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research, concentrates on critical and creative research in multidisciplinary traditions. This journal seeks to promote original research and cultivate a fruitful dialogue between old and new thought.



Dr. Narayana Bharath Gupta, IAS

Chief Patron

Director of Collegiate Education, Andhra Pradesh

Esteemed delegates, scholars, and biodiversity advocates,

I extend my heartfelt greetings to the International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate, hosted by Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, and organized by the Departments of Botany and Zoology. This timely gathering underscores the critical role of higher education in tackling global environmental challenges.

As climate change accelerates habitat loss and species decline—from our coastal ecosystems to inland forests—innovative conservation becomes imperative. This conference inspires us to explore resilient strategies, blending scientific research with practical action to preserve nature's richness. Let these discussions ignite partnerships, policies, and passion, ensuring biodiversity thrives for future generations. May the event yield transformative outcomes, strengthening our commitment to a sustainable planet.

Best wishes for a successful conference.

Regards,
Dr. Narayana Bharath Gupta, IAS



Dr. Chappidi Krishna

Patron
Joint Director of Collegiate Education, Andhra Pradesh

Distinguished participants and environmental stewards,

Warm greetings to the International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate at Government Degree College, Yeleswaram. This platform highlights the pivotal contribution of collegiate education to planetary well-being.

Climate variability poses profound risks to biodiversity—disrupting ecosystems, from riverine wetlands to upland forests in Andhra Pradesh. Yet, this conference sparks optimism through shared knowledge on adaptive conservation, restoration techniques, and sustainable practices. These deliberations will empower us to build resilient habitats and inspire collective action against environmental decline.

Let this event catalyze enduring change, safeguarding nature's legacy for tomorrow.

Congratulations on this inspiring initiative.

Best regards,
Dr. Chappidi Krishna



Dr. P. V. Krishnaji
Co-Patron
RJD, Zone I & II, Rajamahendravaram

My Dear Faculty Members, scholars and environmental champions,

I extend warm greetings to the International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate at Government Degree College, Yeleswaram. event highlights education's essential role in confronting ecological challenges.

In Zones I and II, climate change disrupts vital biodiversity—from coastal estuaries facing erosion to upland forests losing resilience. This conference inspires through focused discussions on habitat restoration, species protection, and climate-adaptive practices that promise renewal. Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, emerges as a dynamic center for such forward-thinking initiatives. Let these proceedings spark actionable ideas, fostering a legacy of thriving ecosystems and sustainable progress.

Wishing the conference great success and lasting influence.

Best regards,
Dr. P. V. Krishnaji



Prof. Dr. Koppula Victor Babu

Chief Guest

I am delighted to be associated with the International Conference on *"Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate"* being organized by Department of Botany and Zoology of Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kainada district, Andhra Pradesh, India on 30th January 2026. Climate change poses unprecedented challenges to global biodiversity, threatening ecosystems, livelihoods, and ecological balance. India, with its rich biological heritage, has a crucial role to play in conserving biodiversity through scientific research, sustainable practices, and community participation. This conference provides an important platform for academicians, researchers, students, and policymakers to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and develop innovative strategies for biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change. I appreciate the efforts of the Principal and organizers in fostering awareness and scientific dialogue. I am confident that the deliberations of this conference will contribute meaningfully to conservation planning and sustainable development. I wish the conference every success.

With regards

Prof. Dr. Koppula Victor Babu
M.A., M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D., PDF, D.Litt.
VICE CHANCELLOR
Princonser University, Lima, Peru,
South America



Dr. D. Suneetha
President
Principal,
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram

Esteemed delegates and biodiversity advocates,

I extend sincere greetings to the International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate at Government Degree College, Yeleswaram. This significant gathering, driven by our Departments of Botany and Zoology, reaffirms higher education's crucial role in addressing global ecological imperatives.

Climate change imperils our rich biodiversity—altering local wetlands, forests, and species interactions across world. The conference inspires through explorations of restoration ecology, resilient agriculture, and innovative strategies to harmonize human needs with nature's vitality.

Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, serves as a vibrant nexus for such transformative dialogue. These sessions will equip us to champion sustainable futures, weaving science and stewardship into enduring action. May the deliberations yield profound insights and collaborative momentum for planetary health.

Warm regards,
Dr. D. Suneetha



Dr. Prayaga Murty Pragada
Convenor
Department of Botany,
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the *International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate*, being conducted at Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Biodiversity forms the foundation of ecological stability and human well-being, yet it is increasingly threatened by climate change and anthropogenic pressures. This conference aims to provide a common platform for academicians, researchers, policymakers, and students to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and discuss innovative strategies for conserving biodiversity under changing climatic scenarios.

I sincerely hope that the deliberations, technical sessions, and interactions during this conference will foster meaningful collaborations, enrich scientific understanding, and contribute to sustainable solutions for biodiversity conservation at local, national, and global levels.

I extend my warm welcome to all the participants and wish the conference every success.

Dr. Prayaga Murty Pragada
Convener
International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram
Kakinada District,
Andhra Pradesh, India

COLLEGE HISTORY:

Yeleswaram village is well known as the "Gate way of agency" in Kakinada District (Erstwhile East Godavari District) as it is mostly surrounded by the tribal areas. It is located 50 kms away from the district headquarters Kakinada. The name Yeleswaram is derived from the local river called 'Yeleru'. There is a reservoir which is built on the river by its name Yeleru. People of Yeleswaram in and around mostly depend on Agriculture. It is known for rice, sugar cane, and banana crops. Sweet potatoes, Tomatoes and many other vegetables and lentils are also cultivated here. Alluri Seetharamaraju, one of the most eminent freedom fighters often visits saibaba metta in Yeleswaram at the time of freedom movement. A freedom fighter and Indian National Congress leader Chandaka Apparao belongs to this village. Yeleswaram became an independent panchayat in 1953 from Lingamparthi village and upgraded as Nagara Panchayat in 2013. There is a small Hydro Project (4.5MW) and a solar power plant in Yeleswaram. Govt. Degree College, Yeleswaram, was established in the academic year 2009, as per G.O. Ms. No.22, dated 28-02-2009 based on the representations of local leaders and the people. The college has been sharing accommodation with the Govt. Junior College buildings and run in the afternoon shift from 12.30 pm to 05.30pm. This college has been serving the students of poor and deprived sections belonging to the nearby 6 mandals.

Chronological Developments:

- 2009-2010: The college got permission to start four (04) conventional courses viz., B.A(HEP) - TM, B.Com. (General) - TM, B.Sc. (MPC) - TM & B.Sc. (BZC) – TM affiliated to Andhra University.
- 2012: 09 teaching posts (SMPC) were sanctioned in 2012 as per the G.O.Ms.No.04, dated 07-01-2012.
- 2012: 6 non-teaching posts were sanctioned on Outsourcing basis.(no sanctioned regular non-teaching posts till now)
- 2012-13: Affiliated to Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram.

- 2014: One NSS unit is functioning successfully from 2014-15 onwards.
- 2014: JKC was established and conducted training and placements through Jawahar Knowledge Centre from the year 2014-15.
- 2015: One History and one Mathematics Lecturer posts were sanctioned in the rationalization process.
- 2016: Transfer of 05 acres of land by the Government to the college.
- 2017: Handing over of 05 acres of permanent land to the college by the Government.
- 2018: One Commerce post (in 2018) was sanctioned in the rationalization process.
- 2018-19: 4 new Courses in English Medium were Introduced i.e. B.Sc.(MPC)-EM, & B.Sc.(BZC)-EM as conventional courses and B.Com.(Computer Applications)-EM & B.Sc.(Computer Science)-EM as restructured courses.
- 2020: Construction occurred with 03 classrooms and 01 Principal/ office room.
- 2021-22: All Telugu Medium Courses are converted into English Medium Courses.
- 2021-22: One new conventional course introduced i.e., B.A.(HPT)-EM.
- 2023-24: Following NEP-2020 Single Major System launched by the Govt. of A.P., Accordingly, 04 New Single Major programmes have been introduced w.e.f. AY 2023-24, viz., B.A.(Honours) - Economics, B.Com.(Honours) - General, B.Sc.(Honours) - Mathematics & B.Sc.(Honours) - Botany.

Vision Mission of the College:

Vision:

- Empowering the students of socially and economically deprived sections of distant agency and rural extents through the delivery of quality education and employability skills aiming at inclusive development.

Mission:

- Rendering quality and outcome-based education enriched with student centric programmes.
- Regular training on community-based projects as well as skill-oriented internships to acquire employability and entrepreneur skills to accomplish graduate attributes.
- Empowering girl students in psychological or professional dexterity through gender sensitization programmes.
- Facilitating field-based experiential and participative Teaching learning practices through field trips, Industry visits and collaborative functional linkages with institutions/ organizations.
- Prominence to inclusive education with special emphasis on character building, national integrity and updated knowledge at global level advancements.

Motto:

- We ensure our students to prove themselves to be not only qualified graduates but also very responsible and ideal citizens of our country.

Department of Botany:

The Department of Botany has been offering undergraduate instruction in Botany for the B.Sc. programme since its establishment in the academic year 2009–10. Regular field visits are an integral part of the curriculum, providing students with exposure to natural ecosystems and practical, real-world learning experiences.

The department is supported by one well-qualified permanent faculty member who consistently strives for academic excellence and effective dissemination of knowledge among the student community. The faculty member also serves as a member of the Board of Studies (BoS) for autonomous colleges and actively participates in national and international seminars on a regular basis.

Guest lectures are organized frequently to acquaint students with the latest developments and emerging trends in various research areas. The department is equipped with a well-maintained laboratory that adequately supports the conduct of regular practical sessions. In addition, the department plans to organize national seminars and workshops in innovative and emerging areas to enhance and update knowledge in diverse fields.

A significant number of students pursue higher education in reputed institutions and universities. Many students successfully qualify for competitive examinations conducted by government and private organizations, while some secure employment through job drives organized by the JKC placement cell.

Department of Zoology:

The Department of Zoology has been offering undergraduate instruction in Zoology for the B.Sc. programme since its establishment in the academic year 2009–10. Regular field visits form an integral part of the curriculum, enabling students to gain exposure to natural habitats and real-life biological systems.

The department is supported by one well-qualified faculty member who consistently strives for academic excellence and effective dissemination of knowledge among the student community. Guest lectures are organized frequently with the objective of familiarizing students with the latest trends and advancements in diverse research areas.

The department provides a platform for science faculty, students, and science enthusiasts from other departments to understand and appreciate recent developments in the field of science. The department is equipped with a well-maintained laboratory rich collection of zoological specimens preserved in the departmental museum since its inception.

A majority of the students pursue higher education in reputed institutions and universities. Several students successfully qualify for competitive examinations conducted by government and private organizations, while some secure employment through job drives organized by the JKC placement cell.

About PM-UShA:

Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM- UShA) is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Government of India to enhance access, equity, quality, and excellence in higher education. It is the revamped version of the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) and aligns with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

PM- UShA aims to strengthen state higher educational institutions by providing financial assistance for infrastructure development, academic reforms, digital initiatives, research, innovation, and faculty development. The scheme focuses on improving learning outcomes, promoting multidisciplinary education, and enhancing employability skills among students. It also emphasizes equity by supporting institutions serving disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.

Under PM- UShA, funds are allocated for the creation and upgradation of classrooms, laboratories, libraries, hostels, and digital infrastructure. The scheme also supports the establishment of research facilities, innovation hubs, incubation centers, and skill development programs. Capacity building of faculty through training, workshops, and exposure to emerging technologies is another key component.

PM- UShA encourages institutional autonomy, performance-based funding, and accountability through outcome-based monitoring. It promotes the use of renewable energy, sustainable practices, and digital governance in higher education institutions.

Overall, PM- UShA plays a significant role in transforming the higher education ecosystem by fostering quality teaching, research excellence, inclusivity, and holistic development of students, thereby contributing to national development and global competitiveness.

About the Conference:

Biodiversity forms the foundation of ecosystem stability and human well-being, yet it is increasingly threatened by climate change–induced alterations in temperature, precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events. The International Conference on **Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Climate** aims to provide a multidisciplinary platform for researchers, academicians, policymakers, conservation practitioners, and students to share knowledge, research findings, and innovative strategies for safeguarding biodiversity under changing climatic conditions.

The conference focuses on understanding climate impacts on ecosystems, species diversity, and ecological processes, while emphasizing conservation planning, sustainable resource management, traditional knowledge systems, and policy frameworks. Through keynote addresses, technical sessions, and interactive discussions, the conference seeks to promote collaborative approaches and evidence-based solutions for mitigating biodiversity loss, enhancing ecosystem resilience, and ensuring sustainable development. The deliberations are expected to contribute to informed decision-making and strengthen global efforts toward biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change.

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Dr. K. VICTOR BABU
M.A.,M.A.,M.Phil.,Ph.D.,PDF, (D.Lit)
Editor-in-Chief
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Editorial……

It is heartening to note that our journal is able to sustain the enthusiasm and covering various facets of knowledge. It is our hope that IJMER would continue to live up to its fullest expectations savoring the thoughts of the intellectuals associated with its functioning .Our progress is steady and we are in a position now to receive evaluate and publish as many articles as we can. The response from the academicians and scholars is excellent and we are proud to acknowledge this stimulating aspect.

The writers with their rich research experience in the academic fields are contributing excellently and making IJMER march to progress as envisaged. The interdisciplinary topics bring in a spirit of immense participation enabling us to understand the relations in the growing competitive world. Our endeavour will be to keep IJMER as a perfect tool in making all its participants to work to unity with their thoughts and action.

The Editor thanks one and all for their input towards the growth of the **Knowledge Based Society**. All of us together are making continues efforts to make our predictions true in making IJMER, a Journal of Repute

Dr.K.Victor Babu
Editor-in-Chief


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Role of Spiders in Maintaining Ecological Balance and Pest Control

Dr. H. Ramasubba Reddy
Lecturer in Zoology
S.V.B. Government Degree College, Koilkuntla, Nandyal district. A.P.
Email id: hanumanthu.subbareddy@gmail.com

Abstract

Spiders (order Araneae) are taxonomically and ecologically important groups of terrestrial arthropods that play an important regulatory role in terrestrial eco systems. Being obligatory predators, spiders use a range of advanced predatory tactics - including the creation of orb webs, ambush hunting, and cursorial hunting, among others - in order to reduce the populations of herbivorous and omnivorous insect species, thus in maintaining ecological balance and containing the damage levels caused by plant cultivation, forests, and urban environments. Empirical research in field surveys, experimental laboratory studies, and meta-analysis reveal that the presence of spider predators remarkably lowers the exposure to synthetic pesticides, and this has proved sustainable pest management and environmental protection. In addition to direct predation, spiders can affect the trophic dynamics as prey of higher-level consumers or stabilize the ecosystems and their functional resilience. Biological control potential of the spiders is closely related to structural heterogeneity of the habitat, prey loads and anthropogenic effects like use of pesticides, and fragmentation of the habitats. This synthesis answers the need to express the spider as a nuclear key in the frameworks of integrated pest management and also augmenting on the need to policy the sustainability of their systems through conservation strategies which will support their ecosystem services which is to include habitat preservation, maintenance of ecological corridors and sustainable agriculture. Taken together, spiders represent an inexhaustible, economic, environmentally friendly, mechanism of the suppression of pests, trapping biodiversity, increasing crop productivity, and promoting the long-term sustainability of the complex terrestrial ecosystems. The study also points out to the necessity of multi-disciplinary studies to combine the skills and understanding of ecology, agriculture, and conservation biology in a concerted effort to take full advantage of the ecological and socio-economic capability of these arachnid predators.

Keywords: Spiders, Biological control, Ecological balance, Predation, Pest management, Biodiversity

Introduction

The Spiders are one of the most widespread and various arthropods having more than 48000 described species all over the world[1]. They inhabit the ecological sensitive habitats and have vast influence on ecosystems due to top-down regulation of insects[2]. In agroecosystems, Spiders play the role of natural predators of the herbivorous insect population, limiting crop losses and ensuring that interactions in the ecosystem do not get out of balance. Unlike artificial pesticides, spiders are able to provide green solutions to pest control because they minimize insect population without leaving any chemical traces in the environment [3]. This research article will look at the ecological importance of spiders, their importance in predation, biodiversity support and sustainable farming. Spiders, among the most diverse and widely distributed arthropods, occupy a pivotal niche in terrestrial ecosystems where they function as both regulators of insect populations and indicators of ecological health. Their predatory behavior exerts a profound influence on the dynamics of food webs, curbing the proliferation of herbivorous and disease-transmitting insects that threaten agricultural stability and human well-being. Unlike chemical interventions, which often generate ecological imbalances and resistance in pest species, spiders provide

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a sustainable, naturally occurring form of biological control that enhances ecosystem resilience. Beyond their immediate role in pest suppression, these arachnids contribute to the intricate balance of biodiversity by mediating competitive interactions among insect communities, thereby promoting stability and diversity within habitats[4]. Their adaptability across varied ecological zones—from dense forests to urban landscapes causes their indispensability in sustaining environmental equilibrium. Understanding the ecological significance of spiders thus transcends mere academic interest; it forms a cornerstone for devising sustainable strategies in conservation biology, integrated pest management, and the preservation of global biodiversity.

Methodology

The present study adopts a multidisciplinary methodological framework to examine the role of spiders in sustaining ecological equilibrium and regulating pest populations[5]. A combination of field surveys, controlled laboratory experiments, and ecological modeling was employed to ensure both empirical accuracy and theoretical robustness. Longitudinal sampling was conducted across diverse habitats—including agricultural landscapes, forest edges, and semi-urban ecosystems—to quantify spider diversity and abundance. Standardized quadrat and transect techniques were applied to capture spatial variations in species distribution. Pitfall traps, sweep nets, and nocturnal light trapping were utilized in tandem, thereby minimizing sampling bias and enabling the inclusion of both cursorial and web-building guilds[6]. Controlled feeding trials were undertaken to investigate prey preferences, predation rates, and interspecific interactions. Spiders representing dominant families such as Araneidae, Lycosidae, and Salticidae were isolated in artificial microcosms and exposed to pest species of agricultural significance, including aphids, leafhoppers, and caterpillars. These experiments were carefully monitored under standardized temperature, humidity, and photoperiod conditions to replicate natural environments while maintaining experimental consistency.

Results

1. Predation Efficiency

Spiders have a very broad range of predation behaviour, such as web building, ambush or active pursuit. Orb-weaving spiders like Araneus diadematus kill flying insects effectively and the ground based Lycosidae species feed on crawling arthropods[7]. It has been shown that one spider can eat hundreds of insects each year, which can greatly decrease the number of insect pests living in natural and farm environments.

2. Donation to Pest Control

It is found in field trials that spider assemblages decrease herbivorous pest populations by 20 290 percent in crops fields, involving aphids, caterpillars, and leafhoppers[8]. Whitefly populations were significantly reduced by the introduction of spiders into greenhouse experiments, showing interesting evidence of the effectiveness of spiders as a biological control organism.

3. Biodiversity and Eco-equilibrium

Spiders control trophic dynamic in that they are secondary consumers and prey to other levels such as birds and amphibians[9]. They increase the number of species, balance food webs, and preclude insect population outbreaks, which would upset ecosystem balance.

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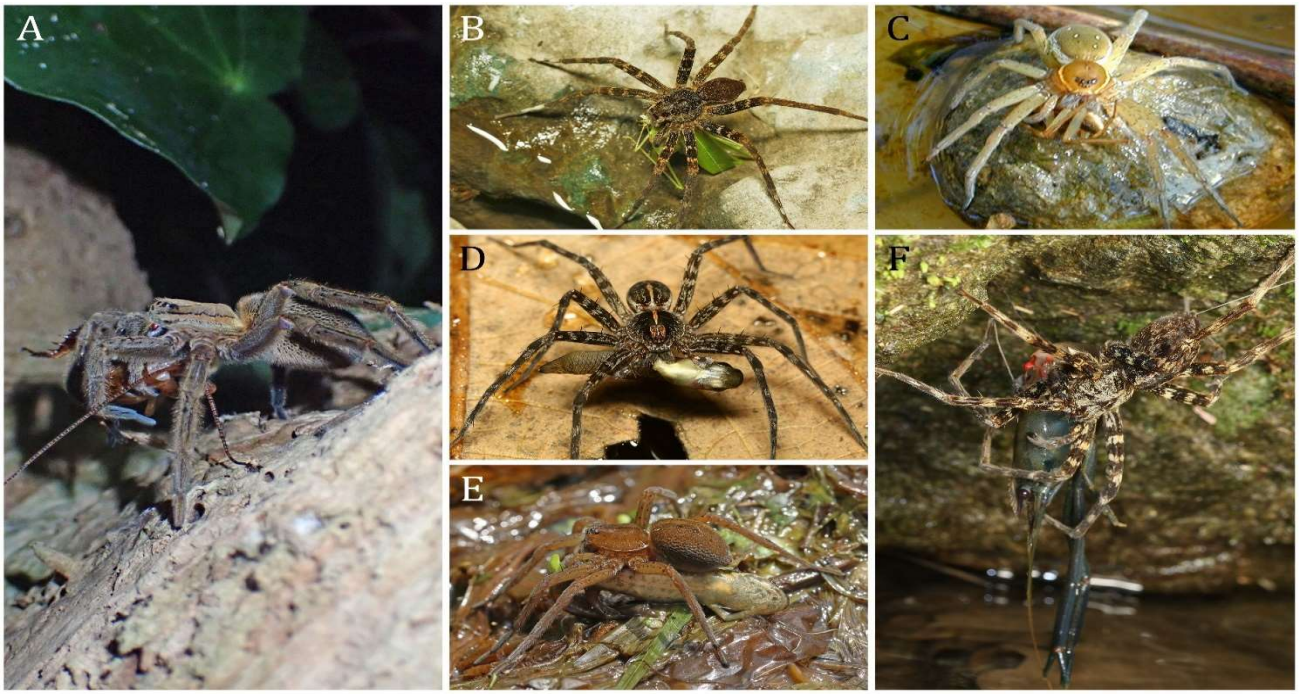
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Discussion

The evidence supports the centrality of spiders in controlling the numbers of other insects that are beneficial to natural or managed ecosystems. As biological control agents, they are very effective, which reduces the demand of using chemicals in pest control, hence achieving an ecological sustainability[10]. The variations in hunting behaviors among the spider species would also cover various pest taxa and therefore creates effectiveness in the agroecosystems. The only threat is that habitat fragmentation and excessive use of pesticides adversely impact spider populations and decreases their ecological performance[11]. To bring the full benefits of spiders to light it is necessary to have conservation efforts, such as habitat restoration and having an integrated approach to pests (IPM).

Challenges and Threats to Spider Populations

Even though they play an important role in ecology, spiders are subjected to many anthropogenic and environmental threats. Fragmentation of the habitat caused by urbanization and development of intensive agriculture limits the prey availability and conformable microhabitats resulting in a loss of population size[12]. Pesticide use does not target only the species of pests but also adversely impacts the non-target predators such as spiders, which are involved in providing natural pest control. Climate change, which changes temperature and humidity regimes, also has an impact on spider phenology and reproductive cycles, which may have an impact on the efficiency of predation Management of the diversity of spiders includes the reduction of such threats by ensuring preservation of their habitats, controlling the use of pesticides, and creating awareness about the environment[13].



Applications in Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

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Because they prey on insects, spiders are important components of IPM strategies, which are intended to reduce the number of chemicals used to help maintain agricultural productivity[14]. Their predation would complement various biological control agents that include parasitoids and predatory insects implying that there would be a synergetic effect on pest suppression. Research indicates that releasing spiders in green houses or orchards works to eliminate the population of aphids and white-flies and therefore, less synthetic insecticides are needed[15]. Also, the versatility of spiders to a variety of crops and ecosystems gives them an advantage in achieving the goal of sustainable pest management especially in organic farming.

Future Prospects and Research Directions

There is increasing research on spiders in pest control with some promising areas leading in that field:

- Species-Specific Intervention: The eating and hunting behaviour of other spider species were studied, and this is useful to apply them in IPM (Cardoso et al., 2020).
- Habitat Manipulation: Vegetation structure and microhabitat providing the conditions to support abundance of the spiders can be looked at to increase the affectivity of predation (Samu & Sunderland, 1992).
- Genetic Behavioral Research: In-depth research in genetics and behavioral ecology of spiders can lead to strategies of selective breeding and habitat optimization thus making the most of spider as pests.
- Climate Resilience: Evaluation of how climate change affects the population level of spiders and development of adaptive management will be vital to the long term health of an ecological equilibrium.

These guidelines indicate that multidisciplinary practices that integrate ecology, agriculture, and conservation biology are necessary to utilize to the fullest, the ecological services spiders offer..

Enhanced Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Spiders are not only providers of ecosystem services that include pest regulation. They predate on the herbivorous insects, which finds herbivorous insect pressure and allows plants to grow[16]. By keeping insect populations at less or more targeted populations, the spiders will indirectly assist with pollination networks and recycling of nutrients. Moreover, they can be used as food by other higher trophic levels, further connecting the arthropod populations to birds, amphibians, and small mammals, and as such, stabilize the ecosystems[17]. Therefore, it is important to note that by safeguarding spiders there would be agricultural sustainability as well as the general health of natural ecosystems.

Table 1: Predation Efficiency of Spider Species on Common Agricultural Pests

Spider Species	Hunting Strategy	Common Prey	Average Prey Consumption per Month	Reference
Araneus diadematus	Orb-weaving	Aphids, Flies	300–400	Nyffeler, 2000
Lycosa tarantula	Ground hunting	Caterpillars, Beetles	250–350	Marc et al., 1999

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Phidippus audax	Jumping/active hunting	Whiteflies, Leafhoppers	200–300	Riechert & Lockley, 1984
Tetragnatha extensa	Orb-weaving	Mosquitoes, Midges	150–250	Foelix, 2011
Agelenopsis spp.	Funnel-web hunting	Grasshoppers, Aphids	180–270	Samu & Sunderland, 1992

Table Explanation:

This table shows a variety of predatory behavior among species of spiders and their effectiveness as far as control of common pest insects is concerned. Spiders Areusualy capture insects in nature: in webs, flying insects are the main prey of orb weaving spiders, whereas ground and active hunting spiders hunt crawling arthropods. The quantitative measures indicate that spiders play a significant role in reducing the pest population and make them ecologically and economically significant in relation to agriculture[18].

Spider Abundance Across Different Habitats

Spiders are subjected to habitat-specific populations, which in turn touches on their efficiency as biological control agents. Research shows that there is the utmost spider diversity in forests to the tune of over 150 species per hectare followed by farms, and urban environments (Cardoso et al., 2020). Spider abundance seems to be highly dependent on habitat heterogeneity, vegetation complexity and prey availability (Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017). Arable land dominated by monocultures usually exhibit lower species richness; nevertheless, selective habitat management, e.g. intercropping and hedgerows, improves spider population and predation levels[19].

Table 2: Spider Abundance and Pest Suppression Across Habitats

Habitat Type	Average Spider Species per Hectare	Predominant Hunting Strategy	Estimated Pest Reduction (%)	Reference
Forest	150–180	Orb-weaving, Ambush	60–80	Cardoso et al., 2020
Agricultural Fields	80–120	Ground hunting, Funnel-web	40–70	Marc et al., 1999
Urban Landscapes	50–90	Jumping/Active hunting	30–60	Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017

Table Explanation:

[3]This table shows that the abundance of the spiders are positively correlated with the efficiency of pest suppression. The complex habitat (i.e., forests) is uniquely diverse, which increases the number of available niches

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and prey hence the spider-mediated pest control. On the other hand easier habitat types such as monoculture crops or urban realms might be in need of directed ecological intervention to keep the species healthy and in balance.

Enhanced Discussion

The quantitative data confirm the supposition that spiders play an important role in ecological balance and ecologically sustainable pest management. Their preying contributes greatly to the alleviation of the pest outbreaks, eliminating the need to use chemicals in large proportions and also moderating the biodiversity of ecosystems (Samu & Sunderland, 1992). In addition, spiders are used as bioindicators of ecosystem health because the variation in species diversity and abundance of spiders are indicators of ecosystem complexity and environmental stability[20].

The inclusion of spiders in various Integrated Pest Management (IPM) schemes have extensive connotations. Habitat manipulation, including cover crops, field margin maintenance and minimized use of pesticide, has the potential to realize sustained suppression of pests as a result of an augmented population of spiders in the agroecosystem (Riechert & Lockley, 1984). In addition, urban ecosystems may have the opportunity to utilize spider-mediated pest control to prevent disease transmission by vectors, enhancing ecological services in anthropogenic-dominated landscapes (Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017).

Nevertheless, it is also necessary to conserve spiders by reducing external stressors on humans, such as habitat fragmentation, exposure to chemicals, and environmentally driven changes due to climate (Cardoso et al., 2020). Long-term monitoring studies, habitat optimization and quantitative modeling to estimate the effects of spider predation on population dynamics of pests is an area that should be addressed in future[21].

Policy Implications and Conservation Recommendations

Valuation of spiders as ecological drivers has deep-rooted implications on environmental policy and management in agriculture. Incorporation of spiders in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) models presents an affordable sustainable environmentally friendly alternative to fossil based pesticides (Riechert & Lockley, 1984). It is high time that policymakers incentivize habitat protection strategies e.g. maintenance of hedgerows, planting cover crops, avoidance of monoculture to facilitate vibrant populations of spiders. Also, the exploitable solution can be controlling the pesticide use to reduce the non-target effects, which will encompass the predators without lowering agricultural productivity[22]. Information campaigns to the farmers and the people residing in the cities, I believe, should bring out to the people the ecological importance of the spiders, and instead of killing them, they exert an effort to co-exist with them.

Future Directions in Spider-Mediated Ecological Research

- Spatial Dispersal: Seasonal variation in dispersal patterns in response to climate variability can be evaluated between different habitats (Cardoso et al., 2020).
- Behavioral and Genetic: The determinants of hunting behavior of different species of spiders, their prey preferences, and their genetic adaption all can inform how spiders can be specifically used in agroecosystems (Foelix, 2011).
- In urban areas, studies are needed to investigate the efficacy of pest control services that spiders provide to reduce the risk of vector-borne diseases and to benefit human health (Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017).

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- Integration with Agroecological procedures: Integration of spiders with other biological agents of control and conservation farming practices will provide the greatest ecological and economic advantages, and will reduce environmental degradation to the barest minimum (Marc et al., 1999).

Final Remarks

Spiders are profound, but some of their roles in maintaining ecological balance as a way of natural predation are neglected. Their incorporation in contemporary farming and conservation activities can present a great deal of global, social, and financial profit. Preserving the diversity of spiders is thus very critical not only to managing pests but environmental stability and resilience at large. Research, policy guidelines and the general population should therefore strive to ensure that the ecological services offered by these arachnids get the necessary priority so that there is a symbiotic relationship between human ways and the ways of the environment[23].

Police Synthesis and Implications

Spiders are dominant micro-predatory elements of terrestrial arthropod food webs and thus illustrate the complicated relationship between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. Their own top-down controlling impact on populations of herbivorous insects has a significant effect, reducing the intensity of outbreaks of pest species and stabilization of ecosystem processes (Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017). Strong empirical support shows that the efficiency of predation in spiders is controlled by both intrinsic factors(the hunting behavior characteristic to the species or the metabolic need, and plasticity of behavior) and extrinsic factors, such as ecological diversity of the habitats, the density of prey, and human activities (Foelix, 2011; Cardoso et al., 2020).



An ecologically sound perspective is to incorporate spiders into sustainable pest management schemes which brings a paradigm shift in agroecology. Having made use of their predatory abilities, ecosystems can avoid the need to subsist on chemical pesticides, potential defilement of environments, and sustaining trophic balance. Moreover, it is because of the conservation of arachnid biodiversity that resilient agroecosystems are promoted

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where the functional redundancy by predator species provides ecological stability even under variable environmental conditions [24].

Integrative Perspective on Ecological and Socioeconomic Value

In addition, they all have a concrete social economic value of increasing crop yield and saving money on the use of chemicals as pesticides. As biological control agents, they are in line with modern agroecological thinking, to enhance intensification without sacrificing the environment. The spiders are also bioindicators, in that whatever the health and its complexity of the ecosystem, reflects the spider presence and abundance, informing how healthy specific habitat conditions are, what kind of anthropogenic pressures are being exerted, and the extent to which the ecosystem is resilient [25].

The convergence of ecological theory applied entomology and conservation biology helps to understand the need to implement multidimensional management practices. Such approaches include restoring insect habitat, stewardship of pesticides, and at landscape scales enhancing ecological planning to maximize spider-mediated pest suppression. In addition, it is important to have the interest of ecologists, agronomists, and policymakers working together to enable a translation of scientific knowledge into policies and practices of conservation and agriculture (Cardoso et al., 2020).

Advanced Conservation and Management Recommendations

- Habitat Heterogeneity Enhancement: diversity of vegetation structure supports spider niche space, encounter rates of prey and predation success.
- Reduction in Chemical Input: The strategic minimization of synthetic pesticide application protects spider populations, maintains ecological functionality.
- Landscape-Level Connectivity: To ensure spider movement and gene flow, natural and agricultural ecosystems need to have ecological corridors to give spiders the opportunity to survive disasters.
- Urban Ecological Integration: The vegetation of rooftops, gardens and parks should be implemented in order to support the urban spider populations that benefit the ecosystem services by offering pest control in urban anthropogenic landscapes.
- Research and Monitoring: Sequential ecological monitoring and behavioral and molecular research will allow predictive modeling of the population dynamics of the spiders and how effective their presence will be in integrated pest management.
- Concluding Synthesis

Spiders represent an integration of ecological complexity and practical usefulness as the way in which they are critical to the regulation of terrestrial ecosystems. Their predatory behaviour enhances trophic integrity, checks the multiplication of pests and limits unsustainable farming. In a world where habitation is undergoing anthropogenic change, a world that is on a chemically intensive collision course with climate variability, there are both ecological and socioeconomic payoffs to prudently managing the strategic preservation and exploitation of populations of spiders. The future of agroecology and biodiversity conservation is incomplete without a central role in integrating arachnid-mediated pest regulation based on which resilient ecosystems, productive landscapes, and harmony of human-environmental interactions- is achieved[26].

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Spider Predatory: Mechanisms

The predatory strategies deployed by the spiders are incredible, and they maximize their capture of prey in a variety of ecological situations. Orb-weaving species are able to create elaborate webs that take advantage of movement patterns employed by insects and these webs are very effective at intercepting prey[27] . By comparison, cursorial predators, like Lycosidae or Salticidae, are dependent on sharp sensory acuity and swift locomotion to ambush, or chase after prey (Riechert & Lockley, 1984). The venom composition contributes additional predation efficiency by immobilizing the prey as quickly as possible, whereas the digestive enzymes enable the external pre-digestion, as the nutrients can be extracted without performing many manipulations (Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017). All these processes demonstrate the evolutionary complexity of spiders as micro-predators at the top of the pyramid and the use of prey regulation**.**

The Ecological interactions and trophic dynamics

Spider sits in central points of land-based food webs, as a predator and as a prey to greater taxa, such as birds, reptiles, and small mammals (Cardoso et al., 2020). Their predation produces cascading effects that regulate the densities of herbivores and affect the composition of plant communities, as well as stabilize ecosystem processes (Marc et al., 1999). Moreover, interspecific competition among spider assemblages has also been considered as a process that may structure the community and enhance resource partitioning to provide maximum benefit to overall predation (Samu & Sunderland, 1992). The synergism between spiders and other biotic control agents (parasitoids, predatory insects) increases the resilience of an ecosystem and reveals the synthesizing prospects of multi-trophic management of pests[28].

Issues In Spider-Based Pest Control

Although quite effective, there are several limitations associated with the potential use of the spiders as biological control agents. Monoculture habitat simplification decreases refuge and prey variety, and, in turn, dampens spider abundance and predation potential[28]. Pesticide exposure is also a serious risk as sublethal as well as lethal effects may alter foraging behavior along with reproduction and population. Additionally, due to climate change, the phenology and distribution are shifted, and thus predator or prey synchrony may fall back and reduce ecosystem services (Cardoso et al., 2020). This package of challenges needs to respond to through an integrated design including place restoration, pesticide stewardship and adaptive management protocols that consider both ecological and behavioral considerations[29].

Conclusion

The spiders will be considered quintessential regulators of terrestrial systems in the sense of having far-reaching effects on fauna by populations, trophic relationships, and biodiversity. Their ecologically different predatory tactics, which vary between advanced web building and quick ambush preying, help to limit the herbivorous insect population at large and hence decrease crop losses and the reliance on synthetic pesticides (Foelix, 2011; Nyffeler & Birkhofer, 2017). The data show that spider induced predation not only leads to the stability of ecological systems, but also resilience and productivity of agroecosystems hence their necessary contribution as natural pest management agents (Marc et al., 1999).

Incorporating spiders in sustainable pest management systems conforms to the present ecological and agriculture models of ensuring envmpirement prudence and maintenance of ecological diversity as well as economic

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profitability. However, they suffer due to human impact which can be seen in the form of fragmenting habitats, pesticide exposure, and climate variations, and these conditions require conservation and habitat management interventions[30].

In summarization, spiders stand out as the epitome of balance between ecological excellence and functional application on reasons as to why they should be preserved especially in integrated pest management programs. Conserving spider populations will imply the preservation of the ecological balance, the decrease of chemicals used in agriculture, and the sustainability of natural and human-made landscape in the long-term perspective. Future studies ideally should focus on adaptive-management, monitoring-in-the-long-run, and multidisciplinary approaches to get the full potential of the ecological services of these arachnids.

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Impact of Jeevamrutham Application on Phytochemical Profile and Antimicrobial Activity of *Abelmoschus esculentus* Stem

Uma Maheswari P[1]*, Sudhakar M [2], Sunanda Kumar E[1], Tirupathi Swamy N[3] and M. Balu Naik[4]

[1]Department of Botany, Vikrama Simhapuri Universsity College, Kavali

[2]Department of Botany, S.V. Arts College, TTDs ,Tirupati

[3,4]Department of Botany, T.R.R. Government Degree College, Kandukur

***Corresponding Author: drmahepm@vsu.ac.in**

Abstract

Jeevamrutham is a traditional organic bio-formulation widely used in natural farming systems for improving soil health and plant biochemical quality. The present study investigates the impact of Jeevamrutham application on the phytochemical composition and antimicrobial activity of stem extracts of *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L.) Moench. Aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic stem extracts were subjected to qualitative phytochemical screening using standard chemical tests. The analysis revealed the presence of alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, carbohydrates, saponins, glycosides, steroids, terpenoids, anthraquinones, proteins and phenolic compounds with variation among solvents. Antimicrobial activity of the stem extracts was evaluated against *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Staphylococcus aureus* using the agar well diffusion method at concentrations of 50, 100 and 150 µg/ml. The results showed concentration-dependent antibacterial activity with maximum inhibition observed against *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* at 150 µg/ml. The enhanced phytochemical richness and antimicrobial efficacy indicate that Jeevamrutham positively influences the medicinal potential of *A. esculentus* stem. The study supports the use of Jeevamrutham as a sustainable bio-input for enhancing bioactive compounds in crop plants.

Keywords: Jeevamrutham, *Abelmoschus esculentus*, stem, phytochemical screening, antimicrobial activity, organic farming

Introduction

The global shift toward sustainable agriculture has intensified due to increasing concerns about soil degradation, environmental pollution and the adverse health impacts of synthetic agrochemicals (Lalitha et al., 2021; Moreno-Garcia et al., 2024). Organic farming systems emphasize the use of natural inputs to enhance soil fertility, crop quality and ecological balance (Zhang et al., 2022; Velmurugan & Ramasamy, 2023). Among these, Jeevamrutham has gained considerable attention for its ability to improve microbial diversity and nutrient cycling in agricultural soils (Chandrakala et al., 2020; Dinesh et al., 2021).

Recent investigations have demonstrated that organic bio-inputs significantly influence plant secondary metabolism, leading to enhanced accumulation of bioactive phytochemicals (Borah et al., 2022; Reddy & Kumar, 2023). Phytochemicals such as alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, phenols, glycosides and saponins play vital roles in plant defense mechanisms and exhibit antimicrobial, antioxidant and therapeutic properties (Hassan et al., 2020;

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Olatunji et al., 2021). The synthesis of these compounds is often stimulated under organic cultivation due to improved nutrient availability and reduced chemical stress (Nguyen et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2023).

Abelmoschus esculentus (L.) Moench, commonly known as okra is an important vegetable crop cultivated widely in tropical and subtropical regions. In addition to its nutritional value the plant is recognized for its medicinal properties including antimicrobial, antidiabetic and anti-inflammatory activities (Adebooye et al., 2021; Mensah et al., 2022). Phytochemical investigations have reported the presence of phenols, flavonoids, alkaloids and glycosides in different plant parts, contributing to its biological activities (Kumaravel et al., 2020; Farooq et al., 2023). However, limited scientific attention has been given to the stem, particularly under organic bio-formulation treatments.

The increasing prevalence of antimicrobial resistance among pathogenic microorganisms poses a serious threat to public health, necessitating the search for alternative plant-based antimicrobial agents (Tacconelli et al., 2020; Al-Sheikh et al., 2021). Plant extracts derived from organically grown crops have been shown to exhibit superior antimicrobial activity due to enhanced phytochemical content (El-Sayed et al., 2022; Pradhan et al., 2024). Jeevamrutham-based cultivation may thus play a significant role in improving the antimicrobial efficacy of medicinal plants (Sathish & Babu, 2021; Karthikeyan et al., 2023).

Despite increasing interest in Jeevamrutham, comprehensive studies evaluating its effect on phytochemical enrichment and antimicrobial activity of *Abelmoschus esculentus* stem remain scarce (Mahmoud et al., 2022; Oliveira et al., 2024). Therefore, the present study aims to evaluate the phytochemical profile of aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic stem extracts and to assess the antimicrobial activity of *A. esculentus* stem grown under Jeevamrutham application.

Materials and Methods

Collection of Plant Material

Healthy stems of *Abelmoschus esculentus* was gathered with the end goal of experimentation were collected from kothapalli near Kavali campus of Vikrama Simhapuri University College, Kavali during February-April, 2025 and authenticated by Department of Botany. Samples were packed in sterilized polypropylene bags and brought to Department of Botany, Vikrama Simhapuri University College, Kavali, Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh, India for further work. Plants cultivated under Jeevamrutham treatment. The samples were washed with distilled water, shade-dried and powdered.

Preparation of Extracts

Stem powder was extracted separately using aqueous, ethanol and methanol solvents by maceration. The extracts were filtered, concentrated and stored at 4°C until analysis.

Phytochemical Screening

Qualitative phytochemical screening was carried out using standard chemical tests for alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, carbohydrates, saponins, glycosides, steroids, terpenoids, anthraquinones, proteins and phenols.

Test Microorganisms

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The bacterial strains used were *Bacillus* sp., *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Antimicrobial Assay

The agar well diffusion method was employed using extract concentrations of 50, 100, and 150 µg/ml. Sterile distilled water served as control. Zones of inhibition were measured after incubation at 37°C for 24 h. Experiments were performed in triplicate and results expressed as mean ± SD.

Results and Discussion

Phytochemical Screening

The phytochemical analysis revealed that alkaloids, tannins and glycosides were present in all solvent extracts indicating the medicinal importance of the stem. Flavonoids and phenols were predominantly detected in aqueous and ethanolic extracts, while methanolic extracts showed strong presence of saponins, steroids, terpenoids and anthraquinones. The solvent-dependent variation suggests differential solubility of bioactive compounds. Jeevamrutham application may have enhanced secondary metabolite biosynthesis by improving soil microbial activity and nutrient uptake.

Table 1.

Qualitative phytochemical screening of aqueous, ethanolic, and methanolic stem extracts of *Abelmoschus esculentus*

Phytochemical test	Reagents used	Aqueous extract	Ethanol extract	Methanol extract
		Stem	Stem	Stem
I. Alkaloid Test	Mayer's Reagent	Positive	Positive	Positive
	Wagner's Reagent	Positive	Positive	Negative
II. Tanins Test	1% Ferric Chloride Reagent	Positive	Positive	Positive
III..Flavonoïds Test	Alkaline Reagent	Positive	Positive	Negative
IV. Carbohydrates Test	Molish's Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Positive
	Benedict's Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Positive
	Fehling's Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Negative
V. Saponins Test	Foam Reagent	Negative	Positive	Positive

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VI. Glycosides Test	Keller-Kiliani Reagent	Positive	Positive	Positive
VII. Steroids Test	Salkowski Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Positive
VIII. Terpinoids Test	Salkowski Reagent	Not tested	Negative	Positive
IX. Anthraquinones Test	Borntrager's Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Positive
X. Proteins Test	Biuret Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Negative
	Millons Reagent	Not tested	Positive	Positive
XI. Phenols Test	5% Ferric Chloride Reagent	Positive	Positive	Negative

Antimicrobial Activity

The antimicrobial assay demonstrated concentration-dependent antibacterial activity. Maximum inhibition was recorded against *Staphylococcus aureus* (29.99 ± 0.01 mm) and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (22.99 ± 0.01 mm) at 150 µg/ml. Moderate activity was observed against *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, while *Bacillus* showed comparatively lower sensitivity. The strong antibacterial activity may be attributed to the presence of phenols, alkaloids, flavonoids and glycosides, which disrupt bacterial cell walls and metabolic pathways.

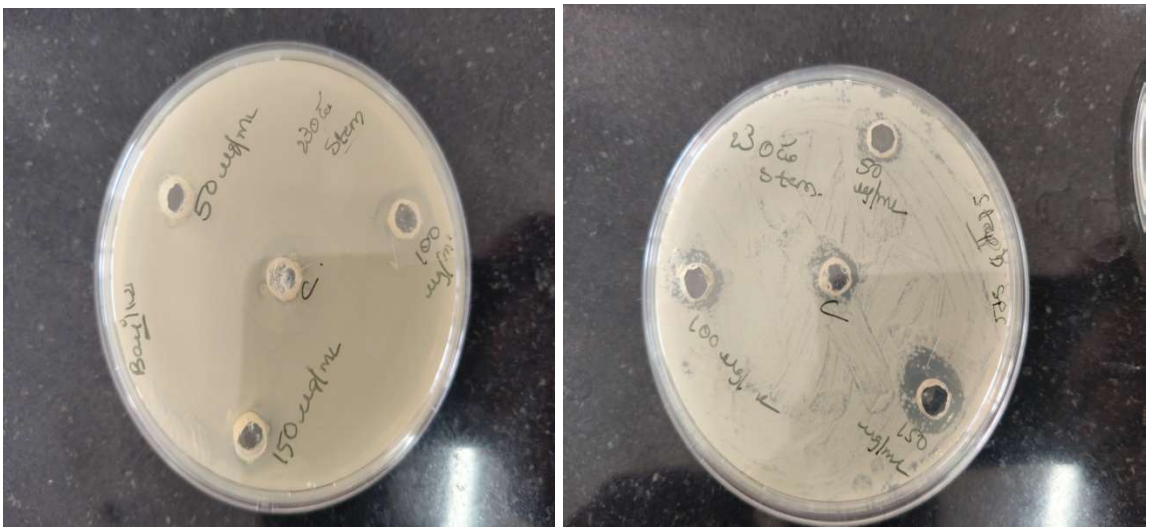
Table 2.Antimicrobial activity of *Abelmoschus esculentus* stem grown under Jeevamrutham application

S.No	Bacteria tested	Control	50 µg/ml	100 µg/ml	150 µg/ml
1.	Bacillus	0±0	1.99 ± 0.01	2.99 ± 0.01	3.99 ± 0.01
2.	Klebsiella	0±0	2.98 ± 0.01	4.99 ± 0.01	7.99 ± 0.01
3.	Pseudomonas	0±0	2.99 ± 0.01	15.99 ± 0.01	22.99 ± 0.01
4.	Staphylococcus	0±0	9.99 ± 0.01	17.98 ± 0.02	29.99 ± 0.01

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FIGURE 1:



Zone of inhibition of Bacillus

Zone of inhibition of Staphylococcus aureus



Zone of inhibition of Klebsiella pneumonia

Zone of inhibition of Pseudomonas

Figure 1. Zone of inhibition (mm) showing antibacterial activity of ethanolic stem extract of *Abelmoschus esculentus* against selected bacterial pathogens

Conclusion

The study confirms that Jeevamrutham application significantly enhances the phytochemical composition and antimicrobial activity of *Abelmoschus esculentus* stem. The presence of diverse bioactive compounds and pronounced antibacterial efficacy highlights the medicinal potential of the stem. Jeevamrutham can be

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recommended as an eco-friendly bio-input for improving the phytochemical quality and antimicrobial properties of vegetable crops, contributing to sustainable agriculture and plant-based drug research.

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Influence of Jeevamrutham on Phytochemical Composition and Antimicrobial Potential of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* (L.) Stem

Uma Maheswari P[1]*, Sudhakar M [2], Sunanda Kumar E[1], Tirupathi Swamy N[3] and M. Balu Naik[4]
[1]Department of Botany, Vikrama Simhapuri University College, Kavali
[2]Department of Botany, S.V. Arts College, TTDs , Tirupati
[3,4]Department of Botany, T.R.R. Government Degree College, Kandukur
***Corresponding Author:** drmahepm@vsu.ac.in.

Abstract

Jeevamrutham a traditional organic bio-formulation is widely recognized for its role in improving soil fertility and enhancing plant biochemical constituents. The present study was undertaken to evaluate the influence of Jeevamrutham on the phytochemical composition and antimicrobial potential of stem extracts of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* (L.). Stem samples were collected from plants grown under Jeevamrutham treatment and subjected to phytochemical screening using aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic extracts. Qualitative phytochemical analysis revealed the presence of alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, carbohydrates, saponins, glycosides, steroids, terpenoids, proteins and phenolic compounds with variation among solvent extracts. Antimicrobial activity of the ethanolic stem extract was assessed against *Bacillus*, *Klebsiella*, *Pseudomonas* and *Staphylococcus* species using the agar well diffusion method at concentrations of 50, 100 and 150 µg/ml. The ethanolic extract exhibited concentration-dependent antibacterial activity with maximum zones of inhibition recorded against *Bacillus* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. The results demonstrate that Jeevamrutham enhances the accumulation of bioactive phytochemicals in *C. tetragonoloba* stem, contributing to its significant antimicrobial efficacy. This study highlights the potential of Jeevamrutham as an eco-friendly input for improving medicinal value in crop plants.

Keywords: Jeevamrutham, *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba*, stem, phytochemical screening, antimicrobial activity, agar well diffusion.

Introduction :

The growing concern over environmental sustainability and the adverse effects of chemical fertilizers has intensified interest in organic and natural farming practices worldwide (Singh et al., 2024; Verma et al., 2022). Among various organic inputs, Jeevamrutham—a fermented liquid bio-formulation prepared using cow dung, cow urine, jaggery, pulse flour, and native soil—has gained prominence due to its ability to enhance soil microbial activity, nutrient availability and overall plant growth (Palekar, 2020; Meena et al., 2022). Recent studies have demonstrated that Jeevamrutham improves soil enzymatic activity and microbial diversity leading to better nutrient uptake and metabolic efficiency in plants (Sreenivasa et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2021).

In addition to improving crop yield, organic amendments are known to significantly influence the biosynthesis of secondary metabolites in plants (Sharma et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2022). Phytochemicals such as alkaloids, phenols, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, glycosides and terpenoids play a crucial role in plant defense mechanisms and exhibit a wide range of biological activities, including antimicrobial, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties (Harborne, 1998; Sofowora, 2008; Gupta et al., 2021). The accumulation of these compounds is often

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enhanced under organic cultivation practices due to improved soil health and reduced chemical stress (Rani et al., 2023; Mishra et al., 2020).

Cyamopsis tetragonoloba (L.) Taub., commonly known as guar is an important leguminous crop cultivated extensively for its nutritional, medicinal and industrial value. Various parts of the plant have been reported to contain bioactive phytochemicals with therapeutic significance (Patel et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2023). Previous investigations have documented the presence of phenolic compounds, flavonoids, alkaloids and saponins in guar leaves and seeds contributing to their antimicrobial and antioxidant activities (Prakash et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023). However, limited studies have focused on the phytochemical composition and biological activity of the stem, particularly under organic bio-input treatments.

The rise of antimicrobial resistance among pathogenic microorganisms has become a major global health concern, necessitating the exploration of alternative, plant-based antimicrobial agents (WHO, 2022; Ahmad et al., 2020). Plant-derived antimicrobials are considered safer and environmentally friendly with reduced risk of resistance development (Cowan, 1999; Pandey et al., 2021). Organic farming practices that enhance antimicrobial phytochemicals in crop plants may therefore provide a sustainable solution to this challenge (Ravikumar et al., 2020; Nair et al., 2020).

Although several studies have reported the beneficial effects of Jeevamrutham on plant growth and soil fertility, scientific evidence on its influence on phytochemical enrichment and antimicrobial efficacy of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* stem remains scarce (Kumar et al., 2022; Meena et al., 2022). Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the phytochemical composition of aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic stem extracts and to assess the antimicrobial potential of the ethanolic extract of *C. tetragonoloba* grown under Jeevamrutham application using the agar well diffusion method.

Materials and Methods

Collection of Plant Material

Healthy stem samples of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* (L.) were collected from plants cultivated under Jeevamrutham treatment. The samples were washed thoroughly with distilled water, shade-dried and powdered using a mechanical grinder.

Preparation of Plant Extracts

Powdered stem material was subjected to extraction using aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic solvents by maceration. The extracts were filtered and concentrated and the dried extracts were stored at 4°C for further analysis.

Phytochemical Screening

Qualitative phytochemical screening of the stem extracts was performed using standard protocols to detect alkaloids (Mayer's and Wagner's tests), tannins (Ferric chloride test), flavonoids (alkaline reagent test),

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carbohydrates (Molisch's, Benedict's and Fehling's tests), saponins (foam test), glycosides (Keller–Kiliani test), steroids and terpenoids (Salkowski test), proteins (Biuret and Millon's tests) and phenols (Ferric chloride test).

Test Microorganisms

The antibacterial activity was evaluated against *Bacillus* sp., *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Pseudomonas* sp. and *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Antimicrobial Assay

Antimicrobial activity of the ethanolic stem extract was assessed using the agar well diffusion method. Extract concentrations of 50, 100 and 150 µg/ml were prepared. Sterile distilled water served as control. Zones of inhibition were measured in millimeters after incubation at 37°C for 24 hours. All experiments were conducted in triplicate and results expressed as mean ± SD.

Results and Discussion

Phytochemical Screening

The qualitative phytochemical analysis revealed diverse phytochemical constituents in the stem extracts of *C. tetragonoloba*. Alkaloids were detected predominantly in aqueous and methanolic extracts, while tannins and phenolic compounds were present in all three solvent extracts. Flavonoids were observed only in the aqueous extract suggesting solvent-specific extraction efficiency.

Carbohydrates and proteins showed higher presence in ethanolic extracts, indicating the effectiveness of ethanol in extracting polar and semi-polar compounds. The presence of saponins, glycosides, steroids and terpenoids further confirms the medicinal significance of the stem. Similar solvent-dependent phytochemical variations have been reported in organically grown plants treated with bio-fertilizers (Kumar et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2023).

The enhancement of phytochemicals may be attributed to improved microbial activity and nutrient availability in soil due to Jeevamrutham application, which stimulates secondary metabolite biosynthesis. The qualitative phytochemical screening of aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic stem extracts of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* grown under Jeevamrutham treatment revealed the presence of several bioactive compounds (Table 1)."

Table 1. Phytochemical screening of stem aqueous, ethanolic and methanolic extracts of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba (L.)*

Phytochemical test	**Reagents used**	**Aqueous extract**	**Ethanolic extract**	**Methanolic extract**
		stem	**stem**	**stem**
I. Alkaloid Test	Mayer's Reagent	Positive	Negative	Positive
	Wagner's Reagent	Negative	Negative	Positive

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II. Tanins Test	1% Ferric Chloride Reagent	Positive	Positive	Positive
III..Flavonoïds Test	Alkaline Reagent	Positive	Negative	Negative
IV. Carbohydrates Test	Molish's Reagent	Negative	Positive	Negative
	Benedict's Reagent	Positive	Positive	Negative
	Fehling's Reagent	Negative	Positive	Negative
V. Saponins Test	Foam Reagent	Positive	Positive	Negative
VI. Glycosides Test	Keller-Kiliani Reagent	Negative	Positive	Positive
VII. Steroids Test	Salkowski Reagent	Negative	Negative	Positive
VIII. Terpinoids Test	Salkowski Reagent	Negative	Positive	Negative
IX. Anthraquinones Test	Borntrager's Reagent	Not tested	Not Tested	Not Tested
X. Proteins Test	Biuret Reagent	Negative	Positive	Negative
	Millons Reagent	Positive	Negative	
XI. Phenols Test	5% Ferric Chloride Reagent	Positive	Positive	Positive

Antimicrobial Activity

The ethanolic stem extract exhibited significant antibacterial activity against all tested organisms in a concentration-dependent manner. Maximum inhibition was observed against *Bacillus* (29.76 ± 0.25 mm) and *Staphylococcus aureus* (24.99 ± 0.01 mm) at 150 µg/ml. Moderate activity was recorded against *Pseudomonas* while *Klebsiella* showed comparatively lower sensitivity.

The strong antibacterial activity may be attributed to the presence of phenols, tannins, alkaloids and glycosides which are known to disrupt bacterial cell walls and interfere with metabolic processes. Similar findings have been reported for organic fertilizer-treated medicinal plants (Ravikumar et al., 2020; Patel et al., 2021).The antimicrobial activity of the ethanolic stem extract of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* was evaluated against selected bacterial strains using the agar well diffusion method, and the results are presented in Table 2."

Table 2. Antimicrobial activity of ethanolic stem extract of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* grown under Jeevamrutham treatment

S.No	Bacteria tested	Control	50 µg/ml	100 µg/ml	150 µg/ml
1.	Bacillus	0.0 ± 0.0	2.73 ± 0.25	19.76 ± 025	29.76 ± 0.25
2.	Klebsiella	0.0 ± 0.0	2.95 ± 0.05	2.95 ± 0.05	3.97 ± 0.02

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3.	Pseudomonas	0.0 ± 0.0	1.99 ± 0.01	2.98 ± 0.01	14.97 ± 0.02
4.	Staphylococcus	0.0 ± 0.0	2.99 ± 0.01	14.98 ± 0.02	24.99 ± 0.01

The values are mean ± SD were three samples each.

The antibacterial efficacy of the ethanolic stem extract was further illustrated by the clear zones of inhibition observed against the tested bacterial pathogens (Figure 1)."



Zone of inhibition of Bacillus



Zone of inhibition of Staphylococcus aureus



Zone of inhibition of Klebsiella pneumonia



Zone of inhibition of Pseudomonas

Figure 1. Zone of inhibition of bacterial growth (mm) of ethanolic stem extract of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* against selected bacterial strains

Conclusion

The present investigation demonstrates that Jeevamrutham significantly influences the phytochemical composition and antimicrobial potential of *Cyamopsis tetragonoloba* stem. The presence of diverse bioactive compounds and the pronounced antibacterial activity of the ethanolic extract highlight the medicinal value of the stem. Jeevamrutham emerges as an effective organic bio-input capable of enhancing phytochemical richness and

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antimicrobial efficacy in crop plants. This study supports the integration of traditional organic formulations in sustainable agriculture and medicinal plant research.

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A Comprehensive Review Article on The Conservation Of Endemic and Threatened Species

Dr.P.Padmavathi[1] Dr.P.Yamini[2] Dr.S.Varalakshmi[3]

[1] Lecturer in Chemistry,Sri Padmavathi Womens Degree And PG College,T.T.D(A),Tirupathi.

[2] Lecturer in Chemistry,Sri Padmavathi Womens Degree And PG College,T.T.D(A),Tirupathi.

[3]Lecturer in Bio Chemistry,Sri Padmavathi Womens Degree And PG College,T.T.D(A),Tirupathi.

Abstract

Endemic species are organisms restricted to specific geographical regions and found nowhere else on Earth. They represent unique evolutionary histories and play crucial roles in maintaining ecosystem balance. However, endemic species are highly vulnerable to extinction due to habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and human activities. This thesis examines the concept of endemism, causes of decline, conservation strategies, and sustainable management approaches. The study emphasizes the need for integrated conservation planning, strong policy frameworks, and community participation to ensure long-term survival of endemic species.

1. Introduction

Biodiversity is fundamental to the stability and functioning of ecosystems. Among all forms of biodiversity, endemic species hold exceptional ecological and evolutionary importance due to their restricted distribution and specialized adaptations. These species often evolve in isolated environments such as islands, mountains, and unique ecological zones.Due to their limited geographic range, endemic species are highly susceptible to environmental disturbances.
Even small-scale habitat alterations can result in population decline or extinction. Rapid industrialization, urban expansion, deforestation, climate change, and invasive species have significantly increased threats to endemic biodiversity worldwide.The conservation of endemic species is essential not only for preserving biodiversity but also for maintaining ecosystem services such as pollination, soil fertility, water regulation, and climate stability. This thesis focuses on understanding endemic species, identifying threats, and exploring effective conservation strategies.

2. Biodiversity Hotspots in india : India's biodiversity hotspots are among the richest repositories of endemic plant species globally. The country hosts four of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots: the Himalayas, Western Ghats, Indo Burma region, and the Sundaland (Nicobar Islands). These regions are characterized by exceptional levels of species richness and endemism (Myers et al., 2020). Collectively, these hotspots cover about 2.4% of India's total geographical area, yet they account for nearly 40% of the country's endemic flora .

2.1. Himalayas: The Himalayan biodiversity hotspot spans the northeastern states of India, parts of Bhutan, Nepal, and southern Tibet. It is home to over 10,000 plant species, of which 3,160 species are endemic (Chatterjee et al., 2023). Key endemic plants include Rhododendron arboreum (tree rhododendron) and Saussurea obvallata (Brahma Kamal). These species are crucial for maintaining high-altitude ecosystems and are culturally significant

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in local tradition. 2.2. Western Ghats: The Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage site, are a treasure trove of endemic plant species, with over 1,500 species unique to this region (Nair, 2023). Iconic species like Cycas circinalis (a species of cycad) and Gloriosa superba (flame lily) thrive in this hotspot. The region supports tropical evergreen forests, which are critical for regulating monsoonal rainfall and supporting diverse fauna. 2.3. Indo-Burma Region Covering northeastern India and parts of Myanma:, the Indo-Burma hotspot boasts a high degree of floral endemism, with over 700 endemic plant species identified (Sundriyal et al., 2022). This region is particularly known for its diverse orchids, such as Paphiopedilum fairrieanum (lady's slipper orchid), which are both ecologically and economically significant. However, rapid deforestation for agricultural expansion has resulted in the loss of 60% of the original vegetation cover (WWF, 2024). 2.4. Sundaland (Nicobar Islands): The Sundaland hotspot, which includes the Nicobar Islands, features unique flora adapted to insular ecosystems. The islands host approximately 250 endemic vascular plant species, such as Terminalia bialata and Baccaurea sapida (Maheshwari et al., 2023). Mangroves in this region provide critical ecosystem services, including coastal protection and carbon storage, while supporting endemic species. 2.5. Ecological and Conservation Importance:These biodiversity hotspots are not just centers of floral diversity but also key regulators of India's climate and hydrology. For instance, the forests of the Western Ghats sequester an estimated 2.8 billion metric.

2. Literature Review

Extensive research highlights endemic species as indicators of regional biodiversity and ecosystem health. Studies show that regions with high endemism often overlap with biodiversity hotspots and face intense anthropogenic pressure.Habitat loss is identified as the primary driver of endemic species decline, followed by the alter species distribution and survival patterns.

Total plant species documented in India: ~55,048 species across all groups (including algae, fungi, lichens, bryophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms, and flowering plants).

- Endemic plant species in India: **12,095 species**.
- Among flowering plants (angiosperms) alone: around **4,556 endemic species**.
- In plants overall, about **~28% of known species** are endemic to India.
-
- **Summary (Flora)**

Category	Total species in India	Endemic species
All plants	~55,048	~12,095 (≈22%)
Flowering plants (angiosperms)	~21,984	~4,556

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Animals (Fauna)

- Total documented animal species in India: ~1,03,258 species.
- Endemic animal species (only found in India): **~28,948 species** (≈28% of Indian fauna).

Context

- India is considered one of the *mega-biodiverse countries* in the world, with high levels of endemism especially concentrated in biodiversity hotspots such as:
    - **Western Ghats**
    - **Eastern Himalaya**
    - **North-east India**
    - **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** Endemic plants include several thousand species of flowering plants, bryophytes, algae, pteridophytes, gymnosperms, fungi, and lichens.



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Endemic Indian wildlife collage — highlights various unique mammals, birds, and herps.

- Endemic birds of the **Western Ghats** (e.g., Nilgiri wood-pigeon, Malabar parakeet).
- Lion-tailed macaque, a primate endemic to the Western Ghats.
- Examples of some **endemic plant species** from Indian regions (e.g., Western & Eastern Ghats)Nilgiri marten — an elusive endemic carnivore.
- Endemic fishes of the **Western Ghats** freshwater systems.
- Mixed representation including endemic reptiles, birds, and mammals (e.g., Travancore tortoise, lion-tailed macaque).

□ Notable Indian Endemic Species You Might See

- **Plants:** *Nepenthes khasiana* — India's only native pitcher plant endemic to the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya.
- **Trees:** *Cullenia exarillata* — a rainforest tree from the southern Western Ghats.

🐾 Examples of Endemic Animals

- **Nilgiri tahr** — mountain ungulate of the Western/Eastern Ghats.
- **Lion-tailed macaque** — rare primate found only in the Western Ghats.
- **Nilgiri marten** — unique marten species of the Western Ghats.
- **Jungle palm squirrel** — rodent species endemic to India's Western Ghats.

endemic plant and animal species in India with **examples and their conservation statuses** (especially from biodiversity hotspots like the Western Ghats and other regions):

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🌿 Endemic Plant Species (India)

1. Elaeocarpus venustus

- **Type:** Flowering tree
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats (Tamil Nadu)
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR)** — very limited range and threatened by habitat loss.

2. Elaeocarpus blascoi

- **Type:** Evergreen tree
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats (Palani Hills, Tamil Nadu)
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR)** — very few known individuals in the wild.

3. Actinodaphne lawsonii

- **Type:** Tree in laurel family
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats (Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve)
- **IUCN Status: Vulnerable (VU)** — limited range and ongoing forest fragmentation.

4. Palaquium ravii

- **Type:** Evergreen tree
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats (Kerala, Tamil Nadu)
- **IUCN Status: Endangered (EN)** — restricted and declining.

5. Madhuca diplostemon

- **Type:** Rare tree species
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats (Kerala)
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR)** — only one known wild specimen recently rediscovered.

🐾 Endemic Animal Species (India)

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1. Malabar large-spotted civet (*Viverra civettina*)

- **Type:** Carnivore
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR)** — fewer than ~250 mature individuals estimated.

2. Nilgiri Tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*)

- **Type:** Mountain ungulate
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats
- **IUCN Status:** *Near Threatened* (population fluctuates; involved in translocation strategies for recovery).

3. Nilgiri Blue Robin (*Sholicola major*)

- **Type:** Bird
- **Endemic to:** Shola forests, Western Ghats
- **Status:** *Near Threatened* — forest fragmentation threatens habitat.

4. Purple Frog (*Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis*)

- **Type:** Amphibian with unique life cycle
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats
- **IUCN Status: Endangered (EN)** — highly localized species with narrow distribution.

5. Malabar Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa indica*)

- **Type:** Arboreal mammal (larger tree squirrel)
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats and surrounding forests
- **Status:** *Least Concern but locally threatened* due to deforestation.

6. Malabar Grey Hornbill

- **Type:** Bird
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats
- **Status:** *Near Threatened* due to habitat degradation.

7. Nilgiri Wood Pigeon

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- **Type:** Bird
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats montane forests
- **Status:** *Near Threatened* — habitat loss and fragmentation concerns.

8. Beddome's Coral Snake (*Teretrurus sanguineus*)

- **Type:** Reptile
- **Endemic to:** Western Ghats forest floor areas
- **Status:** Generally rare and understudied but confined to narrow habitat.

📌 Examples & Groups with Many Endemics

- **Butterflies:** Species like *Zographetus mathewi* discovered in Kerala's Western Ghats (ongoing discoveries indicate high undocumented diversity).
- **Plants:** Thousands of *Impatiens* species with many restricted to the Ghats, many being endangered.

🌎 Conservation Context

- The **Western Ghats** is one of the world's top biodiversity hotspots, with **high levels of plant and animal endemism** (e.g., >50% of tree species and large proportions of amphibians and reptiles are endemic).
- Threats include **habitat loss, fragmentation, invasive species, and climate change** — leading to many species categorized as **Critically Endangered, Endangered, or Vulnerable** at global and national levels.

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Endemic Plant Species of India (with status)

S. No.	Plant Species	Endemic Region	IUCN Status
1	**Nepenthes khasiana** (Pitcher plant)	Khasi Hills, Meghalaya	Endangered
2	**Cullenia exarillata**	Southern Western Ghats	Vulnerable
3	**Palaquium ravii**	Western Ghats	Endangered
4	**Elaeocarpus venustus**	Western Ghats (Tamil Nadu)	Critically Endangered
5	**Madhuca diplostemon**	Kerala (Western Ghats)	Critically Endangered

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Endemic Animal Species of India (with status)







S. No.	Animal Species	Group	Endemic Region	IUCN Status
1	**Nilgiri Tahr**	Mammal	Western Ghats	Near Threatened
2	**Lion-tailed Macaque**	Mammal	Western Ghats	Endangered
3	**Purple Frog**	Amphibian	Western Ghats	Endangered
4	**Malabar Grey Hornbill**	Bird	Western Ghats	Near Threatened
5	**Nilgiri Wood Pigeon**	Bird	Western Ghats	Near Threatened
6	**Malabar Large-spotted Civet**	Mammal	Western Ghats	Critically Endangered

IN India is a mega-biodiverse country

- **~12,000+ endemic plant species**
- **~29,000 endemic animal species**

Conservation literature emphasizes protected areas, habitat restoration, and common approaches as effective strategies, though implementation challenges persist

Endangered species: A plant, animal or microorganism that is in immediate risk of biological extinction is called "endangered species" or "threatened species". In other words, these are those species whose life is under risk or threat and which are about to be extinct. These species which was native to a region and their population strength has reduced from 50 per cent to 5 per cent, such species are known as endangered species.

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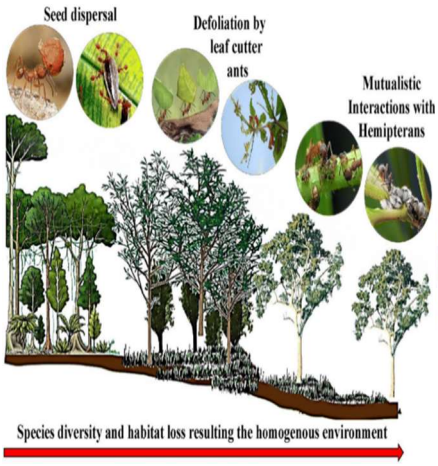
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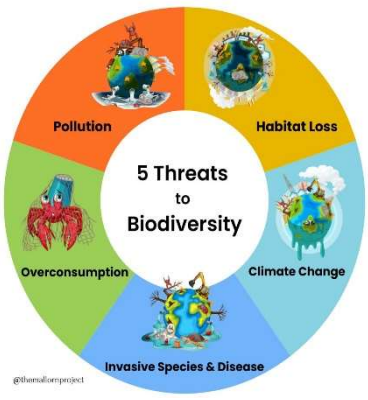
Endangered plant species of India: The flora of India is one of the richest in the world due to the country's wide range of climate, topology, and environment. There are over 15,000 species of flowering plants in India which account for 6% of all plant species in the world. Many plant species are being destroyed, however, due to their prevalent removal. Roughly 1/4 of all plant species in the world are at risk of being endangered or going extinct. The combination of global warming and habitat destruction is the sole reason for the disappearance of many plants. The combination of global warming and habitat destruction is the sole reason for the disappearance of many plants from earth's face. Though there are thousands of interesting, and unusual plants are there here are some common plants which we have seen thirty years back have become rare and endangered species

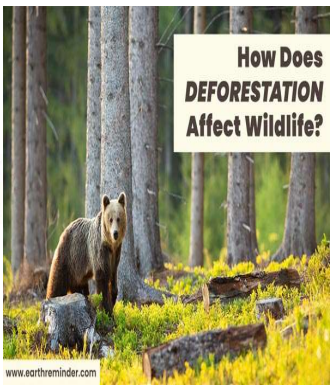
Endangered Animal species of India: India, a megadiverse country with only 2.4% of the world's land area, accounts for 7-8% of all recorded species, including over 45,000 species of plants and 91,000 species of animals. Being one of the 17 identified megadiverse countries; India has 10 biogeographic zones and is home to 8.58% of the mammalian species documented so far, with the corresponding figures for avian species being 13.66%, for reptiles 7.91%, for amphibians 4.66%, for fishes 11.72% and for plants 11.80%. Four of the 34 globally identified biodiversity hotspots, namely the Himalaya, IndoBurma, the Western Ghats-Sri Lanka and Sundaland, are represented in India. India, with only about 2.4% of world's total land surface, it is known to have over 6.7% of the animal species that the world holds. This percentage represents nearly 96,373 known species, including 63,423 insect species. In India, 450 plant species have been identified as endangered species. 100 mammals and 150 birds are estimated to be endangered.

Challenges:

Endemic species face several major challenges due to their limited geographic distribution. Habitat loss caused by deforestation, urbanization, and agriculture is the most serious threat, as it directly reduces their living space. Climate change further affects endemic species by altering temperature and rainfall patterns, making their habitats unsuitable. Invasive species compete with or prey on endemic species, which often lack natural defenses. Overexploitation through hunting, poaching, or overuse also leads to population decline. Additionally, pollution harms their health and reproductive ability, while the spread of new diseases can quickly impact small and isolated populations.Endemic species face serious threats mainly due to their limited distribution. The key challenges include **habitat loss**, **climate change**, **invasive species**, **overexploitation**, **pollution**, and **diseases**, all of which reduce population size and increase the risk of extinction.







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This image visually represents the **major challenges faced by endemic species**, including **habitat loss, climate change, pollution, and invasive species**, all of which threaten their survival due to their restricted geographic range.

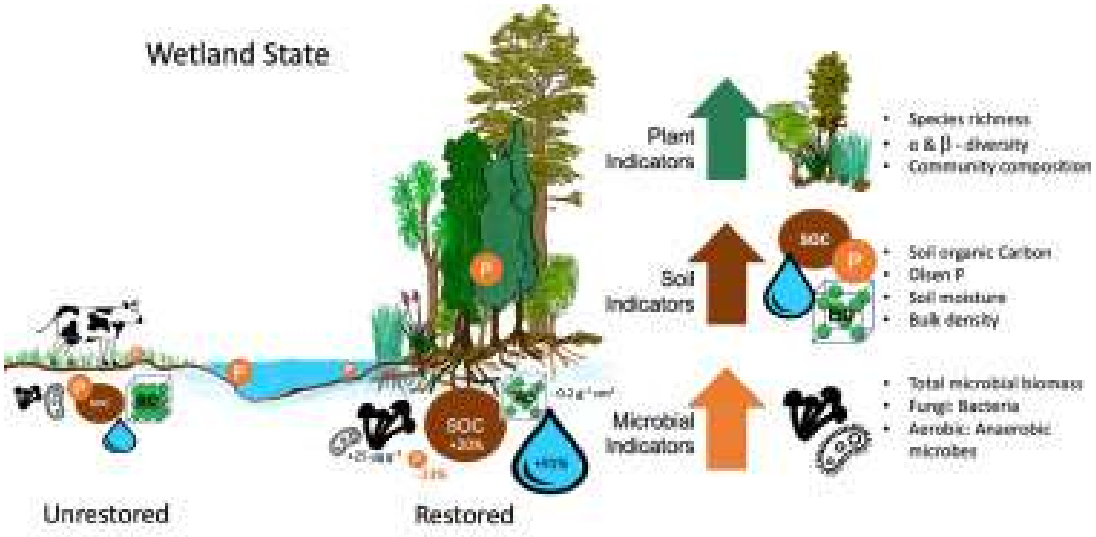
CITES: An international pact between governments is known as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Its goal is to guarantee that the international trade in wild animal and plant specimens does not jeopardize the species' ability to survive.

The object of CITES: Even if CITES has legal force on the Parties, compelling them to execute the Convention, it does not supersede national laws. In its place, it provides a framework that all Parties are required to follow. Each Party shall enact its own domestic laws to ensure that is applied nationally.

Protection of endemic species:Protecting endemic species requires conserving and restoring their natural habitats through wildlife reserves, national parks, and sustainable land-use practices. Controlling invasive species, enforcing strong environmental laws, and reducing pollution and deforestation are essential to prevent further population decline. Scientific research and regular monitoring also help identify threats early and guide effective conservation strategies.In addition, involving local communities through education and sustainable livelihoods increases support for conservation efforts. Addressing climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting climate-resilient ecosystems is crucial. Ex-situ conservation methods such as seed banks, botanical gardens, and captive breeding programs provide an extra layer of protection for endemic species at high risk of extinction

Here are helpful visuals related to **solutions for protecting endemic species**:

Habitat Protection & Restoration



Indicators of wetland health improve following restoration

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🚫 Invasive Species Control & Sustainable Practices



scientific research and exsitu conservation



Conclusion:

Protecting endemic species is essential for maintaining the uniqueness and balance of ecosystems. These species, being restricted to specific regions, contribute to biodiversity, support food chains, and sustain ecological processes such as pollination, seed dispersal, and habitat stability. Conservation of endemic species ensures that ecosystems like national parks, mangrove forests, and wetlands remain resilient, which in turn supports both wildlife and human communities.

The challenges to endemic species, including habitat destruction, climate change, and invasive species, are significant but not insurmountable. Implementing habitat protection, restoration efforts, and strict environmental

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regulations can safeguard these species from extinction. Additionally, scientific research, monitoring, and ex-situ conservation programs, such as seed banks and captive breeding, provide critical backup strategies for species at high risk, ensuring their survival even when natural habitats are under pressure.

Ultimately, the protection of endemic species requires a combination of global awareness, local community participation, and sustainable development practices. By valuing the ecological, cultural, and economic importance of endemic species, societies can take meaningful steps to preserve them. Maintaining these species is not just an environmental responsibility but a vital investment in the health and resilience of the planet's ecosystems for future generations.

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2. **Prioritizing threats to rare and endemic species: Expertise to insights** (2025). *Sustainable Futures* — prioritizes threats and strategies for conservation.
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4. **Investigating Endemic Species Conservation Hotspots** (2024). *MDPI Land* — discusses biodiversity hotspots and implications for endemic species conservation.
5. **Prioritizing nationally endemic species for conservation** (2022). *Conservation Science and Practice* — framework for focusing conservation efforts on national endemics.
6. **Exploring the Ecological Significance of Endemic Wildlife: A Critical Analysis** (2024). *Uttar Pradesh Journal of Zoology* — a review that highlights the ecological role and conservation urgency for endemic wildlife.
7. **A Review of Endemic Species in the Eastern Arc…** — focuses on conservation issues and recommendations for endemic species in East African ecosystems.
8. **Traditional and Innovative Approaches in Endemic Plant Species Research and Conservation** — a special issue overview of conservation strategies.
9. **Refuges for biodiversity conservation: A review of the evidence** (2020). *Biological Conservation* — discusses habitat refugia for biodiversity protection relevant to endemic species.
10. **Ecological knowledge and its role in biodiversity conservation: a systematic review** — highlights how indigenous knowledge supports biodiversity and endemic species conservatio


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A review on conservation of cancer curing Ethnomedicines of pandavula metta (near peddapuram) Kakinada district.AP,INDIA.

***Dr.G.Jyothirmayee and T.Raja Rao**

In- charge Dept. of Botany, SRVBSJBMR College, Peddapuram.,

Dept. of zoology,MR college,peddapuram.

*Corresponding author email address drgjbotanymr @ gmail.com.; Mobile no.7989171117

ABSTRACT:

Cancer is the world's most prevalent cause of death, accounting for roughly 10 million fatalities in 2020 and approximately 4,00,000 children are diagnosed with cancer annually . As reported by the international Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), there were 17.0 million new cases and 16.3 million deaths from cancer. Medical breakthroughs to treat and prevent this disease are always in demand and attention towards plant-derived compounds reduces the risk of side effects compared to current chemotherapy treatments. Despite of these challenges, in this review, An ethno botanical survey conducted in the vicinity of pandavula metta (near peddapuram) of Kakinada district to conserve rare, endangered thretend cancer curing ethno drugs through quationaries among tribal and enlisted

Keywords. Ethnobotany,conserve,endangerd,ethnodrugs,cancer.

INTRODUCTION:

Sri Suryanarayana Swami temple is located at a distance 22km from Kakinada,45 km from rajamahendravaram.1450 BC, one man named 'Peddapatrudu' occupied and ruled that place. He constructed a fort in 38 Acres, later Vatsavaya kings occupied that village and ruled. That place was named as 'PEDDAPURAM'This hill was in a jungle filled with full of vegetation and koya tribes. The pandava brothers arranged a tunnel way to Rajahmundry from this hill through which tunnel they used to have river bath. This hill was named after their name "PANDAVULA METTA" till today we can find pandava padalu, pandava names and Druapathi names in that place. From 1714 BC to 1694 BC peddapuram was ruled by Sri Raja Vatsavaya Kala Timma Jagapathi Bagadhoor. That hill was filled with so many sacred trees which are usefull in curing so many diseases. out of which 4 plants were tested and many have the potential of antitumor activity used by so many koya tribes. The toxicity of chemotherapeutic drugs sometimes creates a significant problem in the treatment of cancer using allopathy or established medicine. Various therapies have been propounded for the treatment of cancer, many of which use plant-derived products. There are four classes of plant-derived anticancer agents in the market today, the vinca alkaloids (vinblastine, vincristine and vindesine), the epipodophyllotoxins (etoposide and teniposide), the taxanes (paclitaxel and docetaxel) and the camptothecin derivatives (camptotecin and irinotecan). Plants still have enormous potential to provide newer drugs and as such are a reservoir of natural chemicals that may provide chemoprotective potential against cancer. Recently This review will discuss some of the plant products that have recently been tested and may have potential in anticancer therapies. The possible mechanism of action of such plant products is also discussed. Now a days depletion of ethnomedicines from the vicinity due to over exploitation, deforestation, tribal migrated to urban areas, lack of interest among youth and dependence on allopathic medicines takes place. Overall protection, conservation and preservation, of ethnomedicinal plants ethnomedicinal practices for the cause of health and healthy living of tribals to be explored. The author came in close contact with the tribals during ethnomedicinal field survey on while studying their ailments and by which are available in their locality.

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Materials and Methods:

Data on 4 medicinal plants have collected from the literature and ethnobotanical information available. Information collected and revealed 4 plant species belonging to 4 families. Bark root/rhizome, leaves flower and seeds are the commonest parts of the plants used, while extractor decotion and infusion are the main mode of administration (Table 1.) Our aim to study this review was to find out scientific evidence for the anticancer activity. All these 4 plants have been found effective in experimental or clinical studies. These plants are used against various types of cancer/tumors such as leukemia, Ehrlich ascites carcinoma, skin, lung, prostrate and breast carcinomas. *Annona muricata* have effect on tumor carcinoma, pancreatic carcinoma, prostatic adenocarcinoma, colonic adenocarcinoma, humanlymphoma liver cancer; and Breast cancer MCF7, *Acacia nilotica* gum, flower and leaf extracts have a modulatory effect on the 2-stage skin carcinogenic activity, *Curculigo orchioides* shows anticancer activity against Breast cancer cell line, Betulin and betulinic cancer.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS:

1.	*Acacia nilotica*	Mimosaceae	Breast Cancer
2.	*Annona muricata*	Anonaceae	breast cancer
3.	*Curculigo orchioides*	Amarillidaceae	breast cancer
4.	*zizyphus oenoplia*	Rhamnaceae	breast cancer

ENUMERATION OF CANCER CURING ETHNOMEDICINAL PLANTS

***1.Acacia nilotica* (L.) F. LEGUMINOSEAE S.F.MIMOSACEAE SN:**Nallathumma **Common name** :*Acacia Arabica(Lam.)Wild.*,Babhul-Hindi and Napalese, Babal-Bengali, Babool-Unani, Babool baum-German, Babhoola- Sanskrit: Babul, Babul tree.

A small tree,4m High; leaves 2-pinnate with stipular spines, leaflets 10-25 pairs, linear-oblong, sub-sessile; flowers yellow, in globose head, in fascicles of 2-6, pedunculate;pods 6-12 cm long, grey pubescent, moniliform, constricted at sutures;between8-12seeds.

Phenology : **Fl.&frt**.: june-Nov. .lll .: Roxb.,pl.Cor.2:26.t.149 (under Mimosa ArabicaLamk.). **Loc**.Hill of pandavula metta

PHYTO CHEMISTRY

phytochemical such as gallic acid, ellagic acid, isoquercitin, leucocyanadin, kaempferol-7-diglucoside, glucopyranoside, rutin, derivatives of (+)-catechin-5-gallate, apigenin-6,8-bis-Cglucopyranoside, m-catechol and their derivatives. *A. nilotica* contains gallic acid, m-digallic acid, (+)-catechin, chlorogenic acid, gallolyated flavan-3, 4-diol, robidandiol (7, 3, 4, 5-tetrahydroxyflavan-3-4-diol), androstene steroid, D-pinitol carbohydrate and catechin-5-galloyl ester (Singh et al., 2009a). The bark is prosperous in phenolics viz. condensed tannin and phlobatannin, gallic acid, protocatechuic acid pyrocatechol, (+)- catechin, (-) epigallocatechin-7-gallate, and (-) epigallocatechin-5,7- digallate (Singh et al., 2009a). The bark is also reported to contain (-) epicatechin, (+) dicatechin, quercetin, gallic acid, (+) leucocyanidin gallate, sucrose and (+) catechin-

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5-gallate (Mitra and Sundaram, 2007). *A.nilotica* is a medicinal plant from which the polyphenolic compounds kaempferol has been reported for the first time. Another compound umbelliferone has been reported from *A. nilotica (*Singh et al., 2010b). leaves of *A.nilotica(L.)* are found to be rich in rutin and apigenin-6,8bi's-CB-D-glucopyranoside leaf extract exhibit potent antioxidant activity.(Seigler 2003;kalavani and Mathew 2010)

MEDICINALUSE:

chemopreventive activity of *Acacia nilotica* (Linn.) gum, flower and leaf aqueous extracts, on 7, 12-dimethylbenz (a) anthracene (DMBA) induced skin papillomagenesis in male Swiss albino mice. *Acacia nilotica* gum, flower and leaf extracts have a modulatory effect on the 2-stage skin carcinogenic activity and exhibit chemopreventive and antimutagenic activity. The roots are used against cancers and/or tumors (of ear, eye, or testicles), tuberculosis and indurations of liver and spleen. (Kalaivani and Mathew, 2010) *A. nilotica* offers variety of bioactive components which showed spasmogenic, vasoconstrictor, anti-hypertensive, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory and anti-platelet aggregatory properties (Biswas K, Chattopadhyay I, Banerjee RK & Bandyopadhyay 2002) Different parts of this plant such as the leaves, roots, seeds, bark, fruits, flowers, gum and immature pods act as anti-cancer, antimutagenic, spasmogenic, vasoconstrictor, anti-pyretic, anti-asthamatic, cytotoxic, anti-diabetic, anti-platelet agregatory, anti-plasmodial, molluscicidal, anti-fungal, inhibitory activity against Hepatitis C virus (HCV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-I

TRADITIONALUSE: Tender young leaves used to treat diarrhea, aphrodisiac, anti-inflammatory and Alzheimer's disease.gum is used as liver tonic, stem bark is used as astringent, diuretic, toothache. seeds act as spasmogenic and anti plasmodial. pods acts against HIV-1 PR, inhibited HIV-1 induced cythopathogenicity , antiplatelet aggregatory activity and anti oxidant.

2.Annona muricata **F :ANNONACEAE**

Syn: *Annona macrocarpa* Werckle

VN:.Soursop It is a small,upright,evergreen,4m (13ft) tall.young branches hairy;leaves oblong-oval 8cm(3.1in) to 16 centimeters (6.3in) long and 3cm (1.2in)to7cm (2.8in) wide.; aglossy dark green with no hirs abobve,and paler and minutely hairy to no hairs below.;leaf salks 4millimetres (0.16in)to 13 millimetres(0.51in) long and without hairs.

Phenology: Fl &frt:jul-Aug **Loc.**Hill of pandavula metta

PHYTO CHEMISTRY

Bullatacin, an acetogenin isolated from the fruit of Annona muricata. *A. muricata* contains two annomuricins namely A and B. It is rich in secondary metabolite compounds such as alkaloids, saponins, terpenoids, coumarins,lactones, anthraquinones, tannins,cardiac glycosides,phenols and phytosterols.Solamin,a cytotoxic monotetrahydrofuranic Y-lactone acetogenin from seeds(Saw Hia Myint, et al.,1991)

MEDICINALUSES:

The fruit of *A. muricata* contains bullatacin active constituents present in graviola is acetogenin known to have anti tumour property. Acetogenins were found in the fruit, seeds, leaves and bark of graviola plants block the production of adenosine triphosphate, which inhibits the pump that removes cancer drugs from the cell allowing chemotherapy to be more effective. Bullatacin, an acetogenin isolated from the fruit of *Annona muricata* induces apoptosis, proceded by chromatin margination and tumour cell s condensation 30. Chiu HF, et al., 2003) Oral ingestion of graviola cures Parkinson disease also. Acetogenins are toxic for various cancer cell lines like lung solid human –breast cancer, tumor carcinoma, pancreatic carcinoma, prostatic adeno carcinoma, colonic adenocarcinoma, humanlymphoma liver cancer and multiple drug resistant human breast adenocarcinoma. *A. muricata* contains two annomuricins namely A and B, which have shown cytotoxicity in

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human solid tumor cell lines A-549 lung carcinoma, MCF-7 breast carcinoma, and HT-29 colon adenocarcinoma cell lines.(Wu F-E, Gu Z-M, Zeng L et al 1995). *A. muricata* contains several other acetogenins that have also been shown to selectively induce cell death in tumor cells *in vitro.* (Chang FR et al., 2001). In particular, two annonaceous acetogenins were found to produce cell death in the human hepatoma cell line HepG2 and hepatoma 2.2.15 cells Chang FR, Liaw CC et al.,2003).

TRADITIONAL USE:

Annonacin present in fruits and seeds used as a potent neurotoxin associated with neurodegenerative diseases. The consumption of sour sop cures Parkinson'diseases. Fruit pulp used in fruit juice drinks, candies, sorbetsand ice creamflavorings.

***3.Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn**. F. **Amaryllidaceae**(Hypoxidaceae)

VN:Nela tadi **S**:Musali tala mulika **H**:Kala musali **E**:Black musali

A small herb without stem,root stock elongate;leaves lanceolate narrow, nerves prominent, entire, acuminate;flowers yellow,solitary,often subterranean,perianth lobes 6, stamens6, anthers lanceolate,basifixed,ovary hidden among the leaves,3 celled,stigma 3 ;fruit some what succulent; seeds globose.Tuberous root paste along with honey used to treat ophthalmic diseases

Phenology:Fl.&frt:Jul-Nov.cultivted **loc.**pandavula metta forest

PHYTO CHEMISTRY

The major constituents present in the root stock of kali musali are glycosides, polysaccharides, (hemicellulose, tannin, resin, starch, mucilage.) fat and calcium oxalate. Rhizome cosists of yuccagenin, a sapogenin ,alkaloidlycorin.& 4easters.

MEDICINAL USE:

Curculigo orchioides rhizomes shows anticancer activity against. Breast cancer cell line (Singh R, Gupta AK.et al.,2008)(Venkatesh P,Mukharjee PK,Kumar SN,etal 2009)

Traditional uses:

Root stocks are sweet, cooling, bitter, diuretic, aphrodisiac, antipyretic used in skin diseases, bronchitis ,cuttings, wounds, lumbago and gonorrhoea. Root powder is mixed with sugar stirred in milk and taken as a thick mucilaginous fluid in case of diarrhoea. The dried rhizome taken as tonic to impove physical health in decreasing the size of tumor.

Tuberous root paste of *curculigo* with *Boerhaavia* and *Pueraria* are taken in equal quantities tuberous root paste administrated daily twice for 3 days to treat jaundice.

4.*Zizyphus oenoplia*(L.) Mill. F:RHAMNACEAE

Syn: *Rhamnus oenopolia* L. **C.N**:. Jackal jujube
VN: Parimi **S**:Karkandauh **H**:Mokhah Makai **E**:Jackal jujule

Straggling, prickly, tomentose shrub, prickles paired, one straight, one recurved;l eaves ovate- lanceolate, glabrous above, densely sericeous below; flowers pale green in axillary,peduncled cymes; fruit globose drupe, rugose, woody, dark pink at maturity; seed solitary, ovoid.

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Phenology: **Fl.&frt**: oct-jan **Loc** : pandavula metta forest

PHYTO CHEMISTRY

Active constituents present in ziziphus are flavonoid, carbohydrates, tannins, steroids, triterpenes and phenols.ZE1,ZE2 and ZE4 exerted significant antiproliferative effects on estrogen receptor alpha (Era) positive MCF-7 and Era negative SKBR3 human breast cancer cells. Betulin and betulinic acid presentbark and stem in ziziphus shows anti tumour activity.

MEDICINALUSE:

Betulinic acid has been suggested to induce apoptosis by generation of reactive oxygen species, inhibition of topoisomerase I, activation of the mitogen activated protein kinase (MAP kinase) cascade, inhibition of angiogenesis, and modulation of pro-growth transcriptional activators and aminopeptidase-N activity . Furthermore, betulinic acid has been shown to induce apoptosis by a p53- and CD95- independent mechanism .(Eiznhamer DA, Xu ZQ. Drugs. 2004). These mechanisms may be responsible for the ability of betulinic acid to effectively kill cancer cells that are resistant to other chemotherapeutic agents betulinic acid augments the anticarcinogenic effect of different cytotoxic compounds of different modes of action Importantly, betulinic acid potentiates the apoptotic effect of anticancer drugs in different tumor cell lines, including *p53* mutant cells, as well as primary tumor cells, but not in human fibroblasts indicating some tumor specificity (. Simone F. Neoplasia. 2005)(Nahrin,Afsana;Junaid Md etal.,2022). Ziziphine extract from *Ziziphus oenoplia* shows antiplasmodial in vitro activity against malarial parasite Plasmodium falciparum.

Traditional use: In Ayuveda root is in medicinal purpose shows anti-tumour activity.Koya tribe used the chewed leaves as a dressing for wounds. Stem bark is used as a mouthwash for sore throats., for dysentry, and for the inflammation of the uterus.The berries are edible and the bark is used in tanning.

Conclusion.

A small attempt should be done to document the ethnomedicinal plant resources in pandavula metta(near peddapuram) kakinada district of Andhrapradesh ,India to cure dangerous diseases like cancer,whose pharmacological evaluation has been undertaken so far. Plant derived components have played an important role in the development of several clinically useful anticancer agents. Such ethnomedicinal information is required for taking up large scale cultivation of medicinal plants that may lift the rural economy of people through the establishment of herbal drug industries to improve the healthcare system in our country.Thus ,there is a great need in searching for and manufacturing newer herbal drugs from medicinal plants which possesses remarkable anti-cancerous activities.

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Documentation of Ethnomedicinal Practices among Ethnic Groups of Vathangi Panchayat, Rajavommangi Mandal, Alluri Sitarama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, India

D. Srvani[1], N.V Harsha Poleeswari[1], K. Akhila[1,] L. Durga Bhavani[1] and Prayaga Murty Pragada[2]

III B.Sc (Botany) Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India

2. Lecturer in Botany, Government Degree College, Yelesswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India

Email: sravaniddumpa1@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study documents the ethnomedicinal practices of tribal communities inhabiting Vathangi Panchayathi of Rajavommangi Mandal, Alluri Sitarama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, India. An ethnobotanical survey was conducted over a six-month period from June to December 2025 through repeated field visits, medicinal plant collection, and interviews with nine knowledgeable tribal informants belonging to Valmiki, Konda Reddy, Kondadora, Kondakaapu, and Koyadora communities. The investigation recorded a total of 30 medicinal plant species belonging to 22 families used for treating various human ailments. Lamiaceae emerged as the dominant family, followed by Fabaceae, Acanthaceae, Asteraceae, Combretaceae, Apocynaceae, and Zingiberaceae. Leaves were the most frequently utilized plant part, followed by roots, bark, stems, fruits, and rhizomes. Decoction was the predominant mode of preparation, especially for gastrointestinal and febrile disorders, while pastes were commonly used for external applications. The documented plants were mainly used to treat gastrointestinal disorders, fever, skin diseases, respiratory ailments, musculoskeletal problems, and metabolic disorders. Frequently cited species included *Andrographis paniculata*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Curcuma longa*, *Ocimum tenuiflorum*, and *Zingiber officinale*. The study highlights the rich traditional medicinal knowledge of the tribal communities and emphasizes the need for its documentation, scientific validation, and conservation for sustainable healthcare and biodiversity management.

Keywords: Ethnomedicine, Medicinal Plants, Tribal Health Practices, Traditional Knowledge, Andhra Pradesh, Indigenous Healthcare.

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional medicine remains a cornerstone of primary healthcare for many tribal populations in India, particularly in remote and forested regions where access to modern healthcare facilities is limited (WHO, 2002; Jain, 1991). Ethnomedicine—the study of indigenous knowledge systems related to the use of plants and natural resources for healing—integrates local beliefs, traditional plant taxonomy, and community-based practices (Jain, 1991; Cotton, 1996). Although several parts of Andhra Pradesh have been explored ethnobotanically (Reddy et al., 2007; Raju and Reddy, 2010), the Vathangi Panchayathi region has received limited focused attention despite its rich cultural heritage and ecological diversity. The present study area comprises five villages—Komarapuram, Vathangi, Ogipalem, Bathavaariveedi, and Okurthi—located in Vathangi Panchayathi of Alluri Seetharama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh. The region is inhabited by tribal communities such as Valmiki, Konda Reddy, Kondadora,

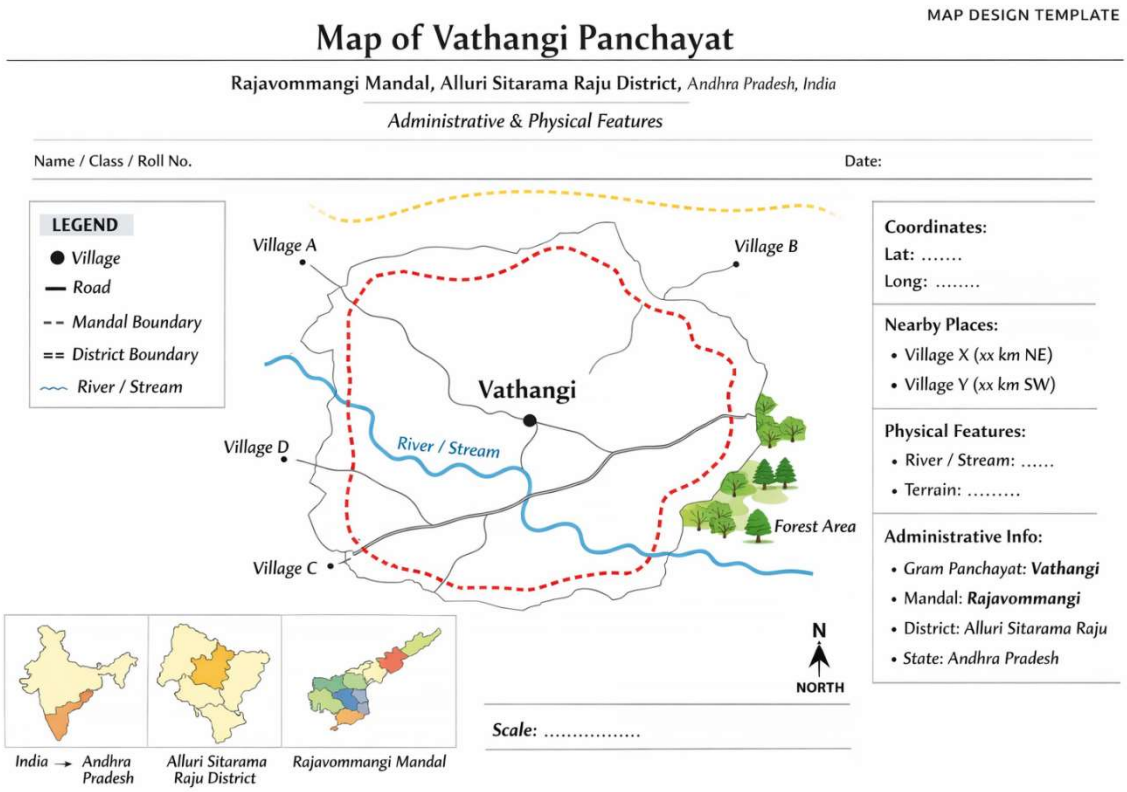
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Kondakaapu, and Koyadora, who largely depend on subsistence agriculture and forest resources for their livelihood and traditional healthcare practices (Reddy et al., 2007).

Study Area

The present study was conducted in **Vathangi Panchayat**, located in **Rajavommangi Mandal** of **Alluri Sitarama Raju District**, Andhra Pradesh, India. The study area forms part of the **Eastern Ghats region**, characterized by hilly terrain, forest cover, and scattered rural settlements. The region experiences a **tropical climate** with hot summers, mild winters, and seasonal rainfall received mainly from the southwest monsoon. Vathangi Panchayat comprises several villages and hamlets surrounded by **deciduous forests, streams, and agricultural lands**. The natural vegetation supports a wide diversity of plant species, including medicinal plants traditionally used by local communities. Agriculture and livestock rearing are the primary livelihoods, supplemented by forest-based activities such as collection of non-timber forest products. The population mainly consists of **tribal communities**, including Valmiki, Konda Reddy, Kondadora, Kondakaapu, and Koyadora, who possess rich traditional knowledge related to ethnomedicine and ethnoveterinary practices. The ecological diversity and strong dependence of local communities on plant resources make Vathangi Panchayat an important area for ethnobotanical and ethnoveterinary studies.



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2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was a descriptive ethnobotanical investigation carried out in Vathangi Panchayathi of Rajavommagi Mandal, Alluri Seetharama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, India. Fieldwork was conducted over a period of six months from June to December 2025, which included repeated field surveys, medicinal plant collection, and interviews with tribal informants to document traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge.A total of nine key informants possessing traditional healing knowledge were selected through purposive sampling. The informants belonged to different tribal communities, including Kondadora, Kondakaapu, Konda Reddy, Koyadora and Valmiki. The informants ranged in age from 47 to 62 years and included both male and female participants, ensuring representation across gender and age groups. Among the nine informants, five were males and four were females, all of whom possessed practical experience in traditional healing practices and medicinal plant usage. Medicinal plant specimens were collected during field visits and taxonomically identified using regional floras , viz. Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty 2009 and few other local floras and standard botanical literature

3. RESULTS

The present ethnomedicinal investigation documented a total of 30 medicinal plant species belonging to 22 different families, traditionally used by tribal communities of Vathangi Panchayathi, Rajavommagi Mandal, Alluri Seetharama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh. These plant species were employed in the treatment of a wide range of human ailments, highlighting the richness of indigenous healthcare knowledge among the tribal population.

Plant Diversity and Family Representation

Among the documented species, Lamiaceae was the dominant family with the highest number of medicinal plants, followed by Fabaceae, Acanthaceae, Asteraceae, Combretaceae, Apocynaceae, and Zingiberaceae. The prevalence of these families indicates their wide availability in the local forest ecosystem and their therapeutic importance in traditional medicine. .(Table-1)

Plant Parts Used

Analysis of plant parts used revealed that leaves were the most frequently utilized plant part, accounting for the majority of remedies, followed by roots, stems, bark, fruits, seeds, rhizomes, and whole plants. Leaves were commonly preferred due to their easy availability and sustainable harvesting, while roots and bark were used mainly for chronic and severe ailments. .(Table-1)

Modes of Preparation and Administration

Various traditional methods of preparation were recorded. Decoction was the most common mode of usage, particularly for treating fever, malaria, jaundice, urinary disorders, and digestive problems. Pastes were widely used for external applications such as wounds, burns, joint pain, skin infections, and bone fractures. Other modes of administration included juice extraction, powder consumption, poultices, and raw intake. Oral administration was dominant, followed by topical application. .(Table-1)

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Disease Categories Treated

The documented medicinal plants were used to treat ailments grouped into major disease categories. Gastrointestinal disorders (diarrhea, dysentery, constipation, indigestion, piles, and vomiting) constituted the largest category. This was followed by febrile conditions (fever and malaria), skin-related ailments (wounds, burns, scabies, and skin diseases), and respiratory disorders (cold, cough, asthma). Additionally, plants were used for musculoskeletal problems such as joint pain, body pain, and bone fractures, as well as metabolic and systemic disorders including diabetes, anemia, liver disorders, and immune-related conditions.(Table-1)

Frequently Used Medicinal Plants

Certain plant species were reported to have multiple therapeutic uses and were frequently cited by informants. *Andrographis paniculata*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Curcuma longa*, *Ocimum tenuiflorum*, and *Zingiber officinale* were among the most commonly utilized species for treating common ailments such as fever, infections, inflammation, and digestive disorders. .(Table-1)

Table-1: Ethnomedicinal Plants Used by Tribal Communities of Vathangi Panchayathi

S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Vernacular Name	Part Used	Mode of Usage	Ailment Treated
1	*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa	Rutaceae	Maredu	Fruit pulp, Leaf	Fruit pulp taken orally; leaf decoction	Diarrhea, dysentery
2	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Nelavemu	Leaf	Leaf decoction taken orally	Fever, malaria
3	*Azadirachta indica* A.Juss.	Meliaceae	Vepa	Leaf, Bark	Leaf paste applied; bark decoction	Skin diseases, fever
4	*Cassia fistula* L.	Fabaceae	Rela	Fruit pulp	Pulp taken with warm water	Constipation
5	*Calotropis gigantea* (L.) Dryand.	Apocynaceae	Jilledu	Leaf, Latex	Warmed leaf applied externally	Joint pain, swelling

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Vernacular Name	Part Used	Mode of Usage	Ailment Treated
6	*Curcuma longa* L.	Zingiberaceae	Pasupu	Rhizome	Paste applied; powder taken with milk	Wounds, inflammation
7	*Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.	Lamiaceae	Tulasi	Leaf	Leaf juice taken orally	Cold, cough
8	*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Hook.f. & Thomson	Menispermaceae	Tippateega	Stem	Stem decoction	Fever, immunity
9	*Tridax procumbens* L.	Asteraceae	Gaddi Chemanthi	Leaf	Leaf paste applied	Cuts, wounds
10	*Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Gunta Galijeru	Leaf	Leaf juice taken orally	Liver disorders
11	*Phyllanthus amarus* Schumach. & Thonn.	Phyllanthaceae	Nela Usiri	Whole plant	Plant decoction	Jaundice
12	*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f.	Asphodelaceae	Kalabanda	Leaf pulp	Pulp applied externally / taken orally	Burns, ulcers
13	*Ricinus communis* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Amudam	Leaf, Seed oil	Leaf warmed & applied; oil taken	Joint pain, constipation
14	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Moringaceae	Munaga	Leaf, Pod	Leaf curry; juice intake	Anemia, weakness
15	*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Neredu	Seed, Bark	Seed powder taken orally	Diabetes
16	*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe	Zingiberaceae	Allam	Rhizome	Decoction with honey	Cold, indigestion

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Vernacular Name	Part Used	Mode of Usage	Ailment Treated
17	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Combretaceae	Karakkaya	Fruit	Fruit powder taken with water	Digestive disorders
18	*Vitex negundo* L.	Lamiaceae	Vavili	Leaf	Leaf decoction; leaf poultice	Body pain, fever
19	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Atika Mamidi	Root	Root decoction	Urinary problems
20	*Cissus quadrangularis* L.	Vitaceae	Nalleru	Stem	Stem paste applied; juice taken	Bone fracture
21	*Adhatoda vasica* Nees	Acanthaceae	Addasaram	Leaf	Leaf decoction	Asthma, cough
22	*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.	Asparagaceae	Shatavari	Tuberous root	Root powder with milk	Menstrual disorders
23	*Ficus racemosa* L.	Moraceae	Medichettu	Bark	Bark decoction	Piles, diarrhea
24	*Mentha arvensis* L.	Lamiaceae	Pudina	Leaf	Leaf juice	Vomiting, indigestion
25	*Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre	Fabaceae	Kanuga	Seed oil	Oil applied externally	Skin diseases, scabies
26	*Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex Kurz	Apocynaceae	Sarpagandha	Root	Root paste	Headache, hypertension
27	*Clerodendrum serratum* (L.) Moon	Lamiaceae	Bharangi	Root	Root decoction	Toothache, fever
28	*Glycyrrhiza glabra* L.	Fabaceae	Yashtimadhu	Root	Decoction taken orally	Ulcers, sore throat
29	*Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.) Wight & Arn.	Combretaceae	Arjuna	Bark	Bark decoction	Heart ailments

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Vernacular Name	Part Used	Mode of Usage	Ailment Treated
30	*Aristolochia indica* L.	Aristolochiaceae	Ishwari	Root	Paste applied externally	Snake bite*

4. DISCUSSION

The present study documents 30 medicinal plant species belonging to 22 families used by the tribal communities of Vathangi Panchayathi, Andhra Pradesh, reflecting their strong dependence on traditional plant-based healthcare. The dominance of Lamiaceae, followed by Fabaceae and other families, is comparable with earlier ethnomedicinal studies and may be attributed to their abundance and high therapeutic value. Leaves were the most frequently used plant part, likely due to their easy availability and sustainable harvesting, while roots and bark were mainly employed for treating chronic ailments. Decoction was the most common mode of preparation, particularly for gastrointestinal and febrile conditions, suggesting its effectiveness in extracting active compounds. Oral administration was predominant, followed by topical application. Gastrointestinal disorders formed the major disease category treated, indicating the prevalence of digestive problems and the importance of traditional remedies. Frequently cited plants such as *Andrographis paniculata*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Curcuma longa*, *Ocimum tenuiflorum*, and *Zingiber officinale* are well known for their medicinal properties, supporting the credibility of indigenous knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

The study highlights a rich repository of tribal medicinal knowledge in Vathangi Panchayathi. The documented plants and practices reflect adaptive strategies rooted in cultural heritage and ecological availability. This baseline data supports the need for scientific evaluation, sustainable use policies, and community-based conservation efforts.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Sociological and technical barriers hindering the universal adoption of Biodiversity Informatics

D.V.S. Lakshmi[1], D.V.S.S.S.V. Prasad[2], V.S.N.Ch. Dattu[3], G. Surya Rama[4]

[1]Lecturer in Physics, A.S.D. Government Degree College for Women (A), Kakinada, Email: dvslakshmiprasad@gmail.com
[2]Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Aditya University, Surampalem-533437, Email: myselfdvsprasad@gmail.com
[3]Sr. Assistant Professor, School of Nanotechnology, JNTUK, Kakinada, Email: dathuthermal@gmail.com
[4]Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering, University College of Engineering, JNTUK, Email: suryarama.g@gmail.com

Abstract: Biodiversity informatics has emerged as a critical interdisciplinary field that integrates biological sciences with information and computational technologies to support large-scale biodiversity research, conservation planning, and environmental decision-making. Despite substantial advances in data standards, digital infrastructures, and global data-sharing initiatives, the adoption of biodiversity informatics remains uneven across regions and research communities. This paper examines the underlying sociological and technical constraints that hinder the universal uptake of biodiversity informatics. Sociological barriers include disparities in computational skills, misaligned academic incentive structures, cultural resistance to open data practices, and concerns related to data ownership and ethical use. Technical challenges arise from inconsistent data quality, limited semantic interoperability, fragmented data infrastructures, and unequal access to computational resources. Through a critical synthesis of existing literature, this study highlights how these barriers are deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The study further proposes an integrated socio-technical framework that emphasizes capacity building, incentive realignment, inclusive platform design, improved standardization, and equitable infrastructure development. By addressing both human and technological dimensions simultaneously, the proposed approach aims to foster broader participation, enhance data reuse, and support the long-term sustainability of biodiversity informatics initiatives. Overcoming these challenges is essential for enabling globally inclusive biodiversity knowledge systems capable of responding effectively to contemporary environmental and conservation challenges.

Keywords: Biodiversity Informatics, Sociotechnical Barriers, Data Interoperability, Open Biodiversity Data, Scientific Infrastructure.

1. Introduction

Biodiversity informatics is a multidisciplinary field that integrates biology, computer science, information systems, and data science to collect, manage, analyze, and disseminate biodiversity-related data. It plays a crucial role in addressing global challenges such as biodiversity loss, climate change, invasive species management, and sustainable ecosystem governance. By linking heterogeneous datasets—ranging from species occurrence records to genomic sequences—biodiversity informatics enables large-scale ecological synthesis and evidence-based decision-making [1], [2].

Over the past two decades, international initiatives such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) have significantly expanded access to biodiversity data by promoting open data sharing, standardized metadata, and interoperable infrastructures [6], [7]. Despite these advances, the adoption of biodiversity informatics remains uneven across geographic regions, institutions, and scientific communities. While technologically advanced institutions actively contribute and reuse biodiversity data, many researchers and organizations—particularly in developing regions—remain underrepresented [15]. This uneven adoption is not solely a technical problem. Sociological factors, including skill disparities, academic incentive structures, cultural resistance to data sharing, and language barriers, interact with technical challenges such as poor data quality, lack of interoperability, and inadequate computational infrastructure [3], [5]. Addressing only one dimension without considering the other limits the effectiveness of biodiversity informatics initiatives.

This article argues that the universal adoption of biodiversity informatics is hindered by intertwined sociological and technical barriers. By synthesizing existing literature and frameworks, this work identifies these barriers and proposes integrated solutions to promote inclusive, scalable, and sustainable biodiversity informatics practices.

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2. Related Work

Research on biodiversity informatics has evolved from early discussions on digitizing biological collections to comprehensive frameworks addressing data standards, interoperability, and large-scale analytics.

Early foundational work by Sarkar [1] emphasized the importance of organizing biodiversity data across the "spectrum of life," highlighting the need for computational approaches to manage biological complexity. Patterson *et al.* [2] further stressed the role of shared identifiers and linked data in enabling cross-database integration, a challenge that remains relevant today. Subsequent studies focused on infrastructure and interoperability. Berendsohn *et al.* [8] analysed biodiversity information platforms and emphasized the need for common standards to ensure data exchange. The Darwin Core standard and its archive format (DwC-A) emerged as widely adopted solutions for publishing species occurrence data [6], [10]. Tools such as the GBIF Integrated Publishing Toolkit (IPT) simplified data publication workflows but did not fully eliminate adoption barriers [9]. More recent surveys have highlighted persistent challenges. Hardisty and Roberts [3] provided a decadal perspective, identifying sociotechnical bottlenecks such as fragmented infrastructures, uneven funding, and limited community engagement. Gadelha *et al.* [5] categorized biodiversity informatics challenges into conceptual, technical, and social dimensions, arguing for a holistic approach. From a sociological perspective, Gaikwad and Chavan [15] examined open-access biodiversity data in the developing world, identifying infrastructural inequities and lack of institutional incentives as major obstacles. Hortal *et al.* [16] framed these issues within broader "knowledge shortfalls" that limit global biodiversity understanding.

Although these studies collectively identify numerous barriers, most address either technical or sociological aspects in isolation. This article extends prior work by explicitly integrating both dimensions into a unified analytical framework. The barriers hindering biodiversity informatics adoption can be broadly classified into **sociological barriers** and **technical barriers,** which are deeply interdependent.

3.1 Sociological Barriers

3.1.1. Skills and Capacity Gaps

A major sociological barrier is the uneven distribution of computational and data management skills among biodiversity researchers. Many biologists are trained primarily in fieldwork and taxonomy, with limited exposure to databases, programming, or data standards [5]. This skills gap discourages engagement with informatics tools and limits data reuse.

3.1.2. Academic Incentive Structures

Academic reward systems prioritize traditional outputs such as journal publications and grants. Data curation, standardization, and sharing—central activities in biodiversity informatics—often receive little formal recognition [3]. As a result, researchers may perceive data sharing as a risk rather than a benefit, especially in competitive environments.

3.1.3. Cultural and Ethical Concerns

In some regions, biodiversity data are viewed as national assets or sensitive resources. Concerns over bio-piracy, misuse of indigenous knowledge, and loss of control over data discourage open sharing [15]. These concerns are compounded by historical power imbalances between data-producing and data-consuming institutions.

3.2. Technical Barriers

3.2.1. Data Quality and Standardization

Biodiversity datasets often suffer from incomplete metadata, inconsistent taxonomic names, and inaccurate geo-referencing. Although standards such as Darwin Core exist, their implementation varies widely [6], [11]. Poor data quality reduces trust and limits downstream analysis.

3.2.2. Interoperability Challenges

Integrating data across platforms remains difficult due to heterogeneous schemas, identifiers, and ontologies. Patterson *et al.* [2] highlighted that the lack of persistent, globally unique identifiers prevents seamless data linkage. Even today, interoperability across ecological, genomic, and environmental datasets remains limited [4].

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3.2.3. Infrastructure and Scalability Constraints

Modern biodiversity informatics increasingly relies on large datasets, including remote sensing imagery and genomic data. Processing such data requires scalable computing infrastructure, which is often unavailable in resource-limited regions [12], [14]. These disparities reinforce global inequities in research participation.

4. Proposed Solution

To overcome these barriers, this article proposes a **socio-technical solution framework** that addresses human, institutional, and technological dimensions simultaneously and the mind map is presented in Fig. 1 and the Infographic unlocking global biodiversity data and overcoming barriers to progress is presented in Fig. 2.

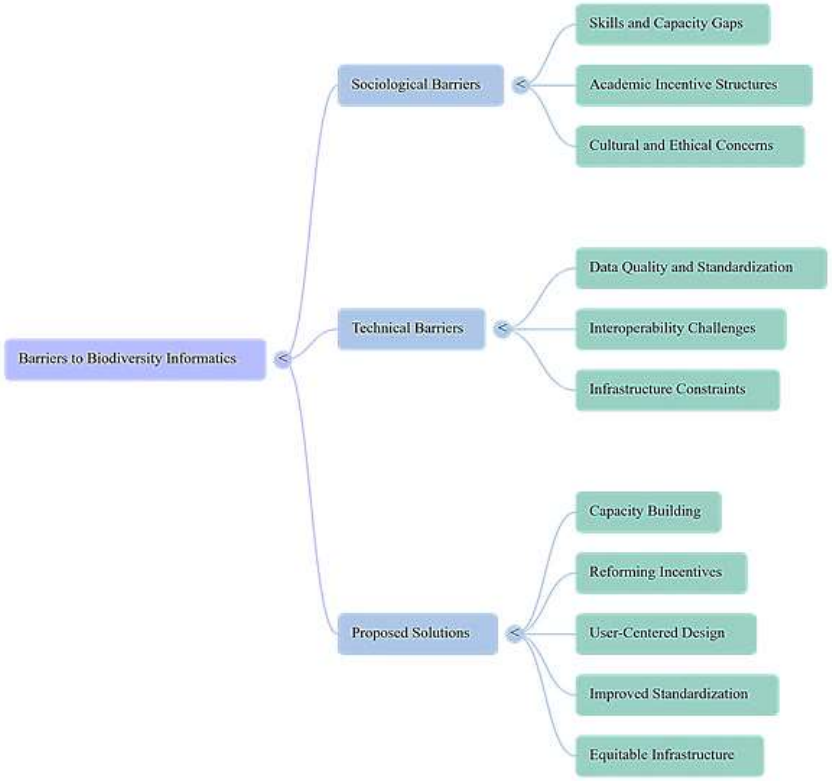


Fig. 1. Mind map of barriers and proposed solution

4.1. Capacity Building and Education

Targeted training programs should be developed to improve digital literacy among biodiversity researchers. These programs should cover data standards, database management, and analytical tools, and be delivered through workshops, online courses, and multilingual materials [5], [15].

4.2. Reforming Incentive Mechanisms

Institutions and funding agencies should recognize data publication, curation, and tool development as legitimate scholarly contributions. Assigning persistent identifiers (e.g., DOIs) to datasets and tracking their reuse can help align academic incentives with open data practices [2], [11].

4.3. Inclusive and User-Centered Platform Design

Biodiversity informatics platforms should prioritize usability, accessibility, and localization. Simplified interfaces, low-code tools, and language support can broaden participation beyond technically specialized users [3].

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4.4. Technical Standardization and Interoperability

Adopting shared ontologies and interoperability frameworks such as I-ADOPT can improve semantic consistency across datasets [4]. Automated metadata validation pipelines and taxonomic reconciliation services can enhance data quality at the point of entry [6], [8].

4.5. Equitable Infrastructure Development

Global initiatives should invest in regional data centers, shared cloud resources, and collaborative infrastructure funding models. Such investments can reduce disparities in computational access and promote more balanced global participation in biodiversity informatics [12], [14].

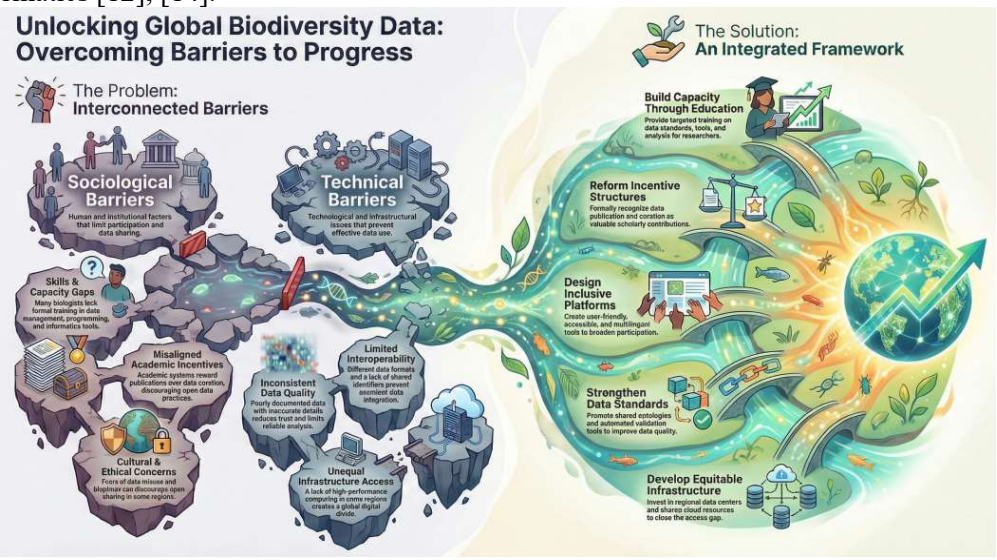


Fig. 2. Infographic depicting the barriers and the proposed solution

5. Conclusion

Biodiversity informatics holds immense potential to transform how biodiversity data are collected, shared, and applied to global environmental challenges. However, its universal adoption is constrained by a complex interplay of sociological and technical barriers. Skills gaps, misaligned incentives, cultural concerns, poor data quality, interoperability challenges, and infrastructural inequities collectively limit participation and impact.

This article demonstrates that addressing these challenges requires **integrated socio-technical solutions** rather than isolated interventions. By aligning education, incentives, platform design, standards, and infrastructure development, the biodiversity informatics community can move toward a more inclusive, interoperable, and sustainable future. Ultimately, overcoming these barriers is not merely a technical endeavour but a collective social responsibility—one that is essential for advancing global biodiversity conservation and scientific equity.

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Endemic and Threatened Species: Conservation Challenges and Strategic Interventions — A Review

Ch Devi Palaka

Department of Botany, SCIM GC (A) College, Tanuku,A.P-India

chamuseminars@gmail.com

Abstract

Endemic species represent unique evolutionary lineages and contribute disproportionately to global biodiversity; however, their restricted geographic ranges make them highly vulnerable to extinction. A large proportion of endemic taxa are currently classified as threatened due to accelerating anthropogenic pressures and environmental change. This review synthesizes peer-reviewed literature from Scopus-indexed journals to examine the major conservation challenges facing endemic and threatened species and to evaluate strategic interventions implemented across diverse ecosystems. The review highlights habitat loss and fragmentation, climate change, invasive alien species, overexploitation, and genetic erosion as the primary drivers of population decline and extinction risk. Patterns of endemism and threat status reveal that biodiversity hotspots and island ecosystems are particularly vulnerable, with plants, amphibians, and reptiles exhibiting high levels of endangerment. Current conservation strategies, including in situ and ex situ approaches, community-based conservation, policy frameworks, and emerging technological tools such as remote sensing, molecular techniques, and artificial intelligence, are critically assessed. While protected areas remain central to conservation efforts, their effectiveness depends on integrative management, stakeholder participation, and adaptive governance. The review further identifies key research gaps, including taxonomic and geographic biases, limited long-term monitoring, and inadequate integration of climate resilience into conservation planning. It concludes that conserving endemic and threatened species requires coordinated, interdisciplinary, and evidence-based interventions that align scientific innovation with policy implementation and local community engagement to ensure long-term biodiversity persistence.

Keywords: Endemic species; Threatened species; Biodiversity conservation; Conservation challenges; Habitat loss; Climate change; Invasive alien species; In situ and ex situ conservation; Community-based conservation; Conservation policy

1. Introduction

Endemic species-those restricted to specific geographical regions-represent unique evolutionary lineages and contribute disproportionately to global biodiversity. Due to their limited distribution ranges, these species are particularly vulnerable to environmental changes and anthropogenic pressures. A significant proportion of endemic taxa are currently categorized as threatened under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, underscoring the urgency of targeted conservation efforts. The accelerated loss of endemic and threatened species has emerged as one of the most pressing challenges in conservation biology, with profound implications for ecosystem stability and resilience.

Global biodiversity assessments consistently highlight that regions with high endemism, such as tropical forests, island ecosystems, and mountain ranges, are simultaneously experiencing intense human pressures. Habitat destruction, climate change, invasive species, and overexploitation have collectively driven population declines and localized extinctions. Unlike widespread species, endemic taxa possess narrow ecological tolerances and limited dispersal abilities, making recovery particularly challenging once populations decline.

Conservation of endemic and threatened species is essential not only for preserving biological diversity but also for maintaining ecosystem services that support human well-being. Endemic plants play key roles in nutrient cycling, soil stabilization, and climate regulation, while endemic fauna contribute to pollination, seed dispersal, and trophic regulation. The loss of these species often results in cascading ecological effects, further accelerating ecosystem degradation.

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Despite decades of conservation initiatives, biodiversity loss continues at an unprecedented rate, suggesting that existing strategies are insufficient or inadequately implemented. Recent literature emphasizes the need for integrative, evidence-based conservation frameworks that combine ecological, socio-economic, technological, and policy-driven approaches. Advances in spatial analysis, molecular biology, and artificial intelligence offer new opportunities to enhance species monitoring and conservation planning.

This review synthesizes findings from Scopus-indexed journals to critically examine the conservation challenges facing endemic and threatened species and evaluates strategic interventions employed globally. The objectives are to (i) analyze patterns of endemism and threat status, (ii) identify major conservation challenges, (iii) assess current conservation strategies, and (iv) propose future directions to strengthen conservation outcomes.

2. Methodology of Literature Review

This review is based on a systematic analysis of peer-reviewed literature indexed in the Scopus database. Scopus was selected due to its comprehensive coverage of high-quality journals in biodiversity conservation, ecology, and environmental sciences. A structured literature search was conducted using combinations of keywords including *endemic species*, *threatened species*, *biodiversity conservation*, *habitat loss*, *climate change*, and *conservation strategies*.

The inclusion criteria comprised (i) articles published in Scopus-indexed journals, (ii) studies focusing on endemic and/or threatened species, (iii) papers addressing conservation challenges or interventions, and (iv) publications in English. Exclusion criteria included non-peer-reviewed sources, conference abstracts without full texts, and studies lacking a clear conservation focus.

Publications from the last two decades were prioritized to capture recent trends and emerging conservation approaches, although seminal older studies were included where relevant. Articles were categorized thematically into conservation challenges, intervention strategies, technological applications, and policy frameworks.

Data extraction focused on geographic region, taxonomic group, identified threats, conservation measures employed, and reported outcomes. This qualitative synthesis approach allowed for comparative analysis across regions and taxa, facilitating identification of common patterns and gaps in conservation practice.

Limitations of this review include potential publication bias and uneven geographic representation, with tropical regions being better studied than temperate or arid ecosystems. Nevertheless, the selected literature provides a robust foundation for evaluating global conservation trends.

3. Patterns of Endemism and Threat Status

Endemism exhibits pronounced geographic and taxonomic patterns. Global biodiversity hotspots such as the Western Ghats, Madagascar, the Andes, and island archipelagos harbor exceptionally high numbers of endemic species. These regions often coincide with areas of intense human activity, increasing extinction risks.

Plants account for the largest proportion of endemic species, particularly in tropical and Mediterranean-type ecosystems. Among fauna, amphibians and reptiles display high levels of endemism and threat, largely due to their sensitivity to habitat alteration and climate variability. Studies consistently demonstrate a strong correlation between narrow geographic range size and elevated extinction risk.

Threat status assessments reveal that endemic species are disproportionately represented in higher IUCN threat categories. Habitat specialization, low reproductive rates, and limited dispersal capacity exacerbate vulnerability. Island endemics are especially susceptible to invasive species and stochastic events.

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Understanding these patterns is essential for prioritizing conservation efforts and allocating limited resources effectively.

4. Major Conservation Challenges

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation

Habitat destruction due to agriculture, urbanization, mining, and infrastructure development remains the primary driver of biodiversity loss. Fragmentation isolates populations, reduces gene flow, and increases extinction risk.

Climate Change

Shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns are altering species distributions and phenology. Endemic species with restricted climatic niches face heightened extinction risk due to limited adaptive capacity.

Invasive Alien Species

Invasive species often outcompete, prey upon, or introduce diseases to endemic taxa, particularly in island ecosystems.

Overexploitation

Unsustainable harvesting for medicinal use, timber, and wildlife trade has severely reduced populations of many endemic species.

Genetic Erosion

Small population sizes lead to inbreeding depression and reduced evolutionary potential, undermining long-term survival.

5. Strategic Conservation Interventions

In situ conservation through protected areas remains the cornerstone of biodiversity preservation. However, effectiveness depends on adequate management, connectivity, and enforcement. Ex situ measures such as seed banks and captive breeding serve as complementary safeguards.

Integrative approaches combining habitat restoration, landscape-level planning, and community participation have shown promising results. Policy frameworks at national and international levels play a critical role in enabling conservation action.

Technological innovations—including GIS, remote sensing, DNA barcoding, and AI-based monitoring—are increasingly enhancing conservation efficiency and accuracy.

6. Role of Local Communities and Indigenous Knowledge

Community-based conservation initiatives recognize local stakeholders as key partners. Indigenous ecological knowledge provides valuable insights into species behavior and ecosystem dynamics. Incentive-based programs and participatory governance have demonstrated improved conservation outcomes.

7. Case Studies and Lessons Learned

Successful recovery programs highlight the importance of adaptive management and stakeholder engagement. Conversely, failed initiatives often stem from inadequate enforcement, lack of community support, or insufficient funding.

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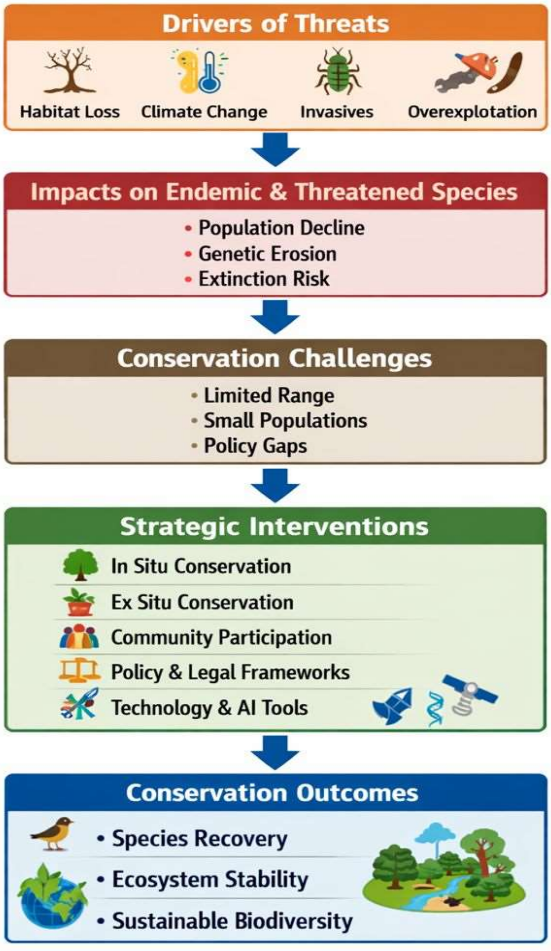
8. Research Gaps and Future Directions

Significant taxonomic and geographic data gaps persist. Integrating climate resilience, interdisciplinary research, and emerging technologies is essential for future conservation success.

9. Conclusion

Conserving endemic and threatened species requires coordinated, science-based strategies that address ecological and socio-economic dimensions. Strengthening integrative approaches and policy implementation is critical for halting biodiversity loss.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



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Biodiversity Informatics and Technological Applications: A Physics-Oriented Perspective

R. Sasikala[1] and K. Venkateswara Rao[2]
[1]Lecturer in Physics, P.S.C. & K.V.S.C. Government Degree College,
Nandyal District, Andhra Pradesh, IndiaCell: 8500550815
Email: asd.physics2020@gmail.com
[2]Lecturer in Physics, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram,
Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, IndiaCell: 9948454928
Email: kadalivrao1965@gmail.com

Abstract

Biodiversity informatics is an interdisciplinary research area that integrates biodiversity data with information technology, computational tools, and physical science–based technologies. Physics plays a crucial role in biodiversity informatics through remote sensing, satellite imaging, sensor systems, signal processing, data modelling, and statistical analysis. Technological applications rooted in physics principles enable large-scale monitoring of ecosystems, climate variables, and species distribution. This paper explores biodiversity informatics from a physics-oriented perspective, highlighting the role of instrumentation, data acquisition systems, imaging techniques, and computational modelling. The study emphasizes how physical principles support accurate biodiversity assessment and contribute to sustainable environmental management.

1. Introduction

Biodiversity conservation has become a global scientific priority due to rapid environmental degradation and climate change. Traditional biological surveys alone are insufficient to handle large-scale ecological data. Biodiversity informatics emerged as a solution by combining biology with computational and physical sciences. Physics contributes significantly through measurement techniques, sensor development, satellite-based observation, and quantitative modelling. These approaches allow precise monitoring of environmental parameters influencing biodiversity. Thus, biodiversity informatics represents a research convergence of physics, biology, and information technology.

2. Role of Physics in Biodiversity Informatics

Physics provides the foundational principles for observing, measuring, and modelling natural systems. Concepts such as electromagnetic radiation, wave propagation, optics, and signal processing are central to modern biodiversity studies. Instruments designed using physics principles collect high-resolution spatial and temporal data. Quantitative analysis and mathematical modelling, rooted in physics, help in understanding ecosystem dynamics. Hence, physics strengthens biodiversity informatics by ensuring accuracy, scalability, and reliability of data.

3. Data Acquisition and Measurement Systems

Accurate data acquisition is essential in biodiversity informatics. Physics-based instruments such as spectrometers, radiometers, thermal sensors, and GPS devices collect environmental and biological data. These instruments measure parameters like temperature, humidity, radiation, and soil moisture. From a research perspective, precise measurement reduces uncertainty and improves reproducibility. Sensor calibration and error analysis, core concepts in physics, ensure data quality. Such systems enable long-term biodiversity monitoring.

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4. Remote Sensing and Satellite Technology

Remote sensing is one of the most significant physics-based applications in biodiversity informatics. Satellites operate using electromagnetic wave theory and optical physics. They provide large-scale data on vegetation cover, land-use changes, and climate patterns. Multispectral and hyperspectral imaging help identify plant species and ecosystem health. Physics-based image processing techniques improve data interpretation. Remote sensing enables non-invasive, continuous monitoring of biodiversity over vast regions.

5. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Spatial Modelling

GIS integrates spatial data obtained from satellites and field measurements. Physics-based coordinate systems and mathematical transformations are used in spatial mapping. GIS supports modelling of species distribution and habitat fragmentation. From a research angle, spatial statistics and modelling tools help identify biodiversity hotspots. Physics contributes through numerical methods and computational simulations. GIS thus acts as a bridge between physical measurements and ecological interpretation.

6. Sensor Networks and Internet of Things (IoT)

Sensor networks designed using electronics and solid-state physics play a vital role in biodiversity monitoring. IoT-based systems continuously record environmental variables such as temperature, sound, and light. Acoustic sensors help in monitoring bird and insect populations using signal analysis. Low-power electronics and energy optimization are physics-driven innovations. These technologies support real-time biodiversity data collection. Sensor networks enhance research accuracy and temporal resolution.

7. Data Analysis and Computational Modelling

Large biodiversity datasets require advanced data analysis methods. Statistical mechanics, numerical analysis, and mathematical modelling—core areas of physics—are used to analyze ecological patterns. Predictive models simulate species distribution under climate change scenarios. Machine learning algorithms rely on optimization and probability theory. Physics-based modelling improves understanding of complex ecological systems. This approach strengthens research-driven conservation planning.

8. Technological Applications in Conservation

Technological tools developed using physics principles support applied biodiversity conservation. Automated species identification systems use optics and image processing. Drones based on aerodynamics and control systems survey inaccessible regions. Climate models based on thermodynamics predict ecosystem responses. These applications transform biodiversity informatics research into practical solutions. Physics thus plays a key role in translating data into conservation action.

9. Challenges and Research Limitations

Despite technological progress, biodiversity informatics faces challenges. Instrumentation costs and technical expertise remain limiting factors. Data uncertainty and sensor errors affect research accuracy. Integration of heterogeneous datasets is complex. Ethical issues arise regarding sensitive species location data. Addressing these challenges requires interdisciplinary research and improved physics-based technologies.

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10. Future Research Directions

Future biodiversity informatics research will increasingly rely on physics-driven innovations. Advanced sensors, quantum imaging, and AI-integrated instrumentation will enhance data quality. Climate–biodiversity coupled models will improve prediction accuracy. Miniaturized sensors and energy-efficient devices will expand monitoring networks. Interdisciplinary research involving physics will shape the future of biodiversity informatics. These advancements will support sustainable environmental management.

11. Conclusion

Biodiversity informatics is a rapidly evolving research field that benefits significantly from physics-based technologies. Measurement systems, remote sensing, sensor networks, and computational modelling strengthen biodiversity research. Physics provides the tools necessary for accurate data collection, analysis, and prediction. Integrating physics with biodiversity informatics enhances conservation strategies. This interdisciplinary approach is essential for addressing global environmental challenges.

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Biodiversity Informatics and Technological Applications

S. Shahina

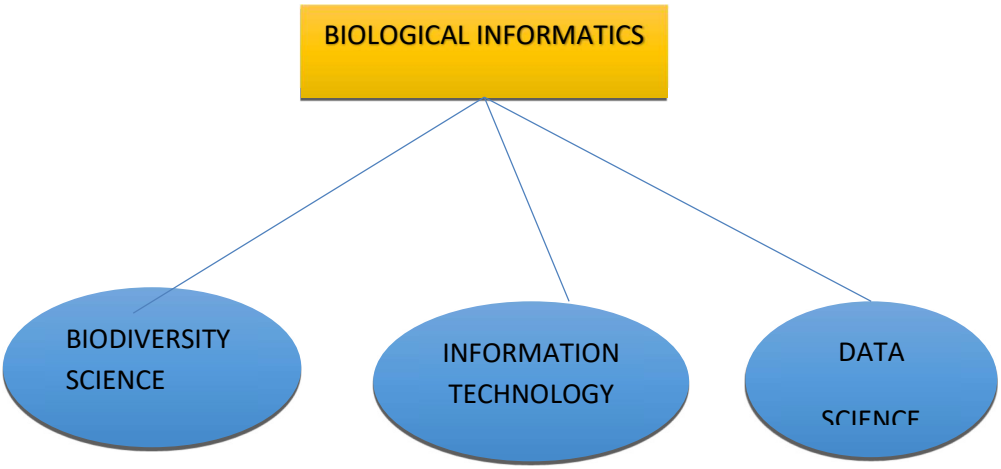
B.com (honours)PVKN Govt college Chittoor(A)

Abstract: Biodiversity informatics is an emerging interdisciplinary field that integrates biological science, information technology, data analytics, and geospatial tools to document, analyse, and conserve global biodiversity. Rapid advances in remote sensing, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, open-access databases, and molecular technologies have transformed how biological data are collected, curated, shared, and applied in decision-making. This paper reviews the conceptual foundations of biodiversity informatics and examines technological applications ranging from species occurrence databases and DNA barcoding to predictive modeling and ecosystem monitoring. The study highlights the importance of standardized data management, interoperability, FAIR data principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable), and collaborative platforms for conservation planning. Key challenges—including data gaps, limited digitization, privacy and ethics, funding constraints, and capacity building—are discussed alongside opportunities for future innovation. The paper concludes that biodiversity informatics plays a critical role in sustainable development and environmental governance by supporting evidence-based policies and enhancing our ability to manage ecosystems in a rapidly changing world.

Keywords: -geographical information systems - Remote sensors – Drones - Taxonomic informatics – CBD (**Convention on Biological Diversity)**, SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).

1. Introduction

Biodiversity Informatics is an interdisciplinary field that combines **biodiversity science, information technology, and data science** to collect, manage, Analyse , and share biological diversity data. It plays a crucial role in understanding species distribution, ecosystem services, conservation planning, and climate change impacts. With rapid advancements in technology, biodiversity informatics has become essential for sustainable environmental management and policy-making.



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2.Technological Applications in Biodiversity Informatics

a) Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- Mapping species distribution and habitat suitability
- Monitoring land-use changes and deforestation

b) Remote Sensing and Satellite Technology

- Monitoring biodiversity hotspots
- Tracking ecosystem changes using satellite imagery

c) Big Data Analytics

- Handling massive biodiversity datasets
- Pattern recognition and trend analysis



d) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning

<u>Connection Between Artificial Intelligence and Biodiversity</u>

1. Species Identification and Classification

AI algorithms, especially machine learning and deep learning, can automatically identify species using:

- Images (plants, animals, insects)
- Audio recordings (bird calls, frog sounds)
- Videos from camera traps



This reduces human error and speeds up biodiversity surveys.

Biodiversity Monitoring

AI enables continuous and real-time monitoring of ecosystems by analyzing data from:

- Camera traps
- Drones
- Remote sensors

It helps track species populations, migration patterns, and habitat changes.

Big Data Integration

Biodiversity data comes from many sources such as:

- ✓ Museums

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- ✓ Satellite imagery
- ✓ Field surveys
- ✓ Citizen science platforms
- ✓ Species identification using images and sounds
- ✓ Predicting extinction risks and invasive species spread

e) Internet of Things (IoT)

- Real-time environmental monitoring using sensors
- Wildlife tracking and habitat monitoring

f) Cloud Computing

- Storage and global sharing of biodiversity databases
- Collaborative research platforms

2. Importance of Biodiversity Informatics

- Enhances biodiversity conservation efforts
- Supports evidence-based environmental policies
- Improves ecological research accuracy
- Facilitates global data sharing and collaboration

3. Research Scope

- Conservation planning and biodiversity assessment
- Climate change impact studies
- Sustainable ecosystem management
- Biosecurity and invasive species monitoring

CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF BIODIVERSITY INFORMATICS

- Biodiversity informatics involves the creation and use of tools and databases for:
- **Data acquisition** – field sensors, citizen science, satellites, DNA sequencing.
- **Data storage and curation** – digital repositories, metadata standards.

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- **Analysis and modeling** – machine learning, ecological modeling.
- **Visualization and dissemination** – dashboards, maps, portals.
- **Decision support** – conservation planning, policy, monitoring.
- Major domains include:
- Taxonomic informatics
- Species distribution and occurrence databases
- Genetic and genomic data systems
- Ecological and environmental informatics
- Conservation decision-support tools

BENEFITS AND IMPACT

Biodiversity informatics contributes to:

- early detection of ecosystem threats
- better protected-area design
- climate-change impact assessment
- improved species conservation strategies
- community engagement and education
- support for international agreements (e.g., CBD, SDGs)

6. Challenges

- Data quality and standardization issues
- Lack of skilled professionals
- Ethical and data ownership concerns
- Limited access to technology in developing regions

CONCLUSION

Biodiversity informatics represents a transformative approach to conservation science. By merging technology with ecological knowledge, it enables large-scale monitoring, powerful analytics, and informed decision-making. Investing in digital infrastructure, training, and ethical data governance will help societies protect biodiversity and achieve sustainable development goals.

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- Global Biodiversity Information resources and open biodiversity data portals.

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Impacts of Agrochemicals on Ecosystems and Biodiversity: A Chemistry Perspective

[1] Dr. D. Suneetha [2] Dr. T. Sreevaram

[1] Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Andhra Pradesh
[2.] Government Degree College, Gummalakshmipuram, Andhra Pradesh
Corresponding author email: dsuneethachem20@gmail.com

Abstract

The widespread use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, and germicides has played a major role in increasing agricultural productivity since the mid-20th century. However, growing scientific evidence indicates that excessive and indiscriminate application of these agrochemicals poses serious risks to ecosystems and biodiversity. From a chemistry research perspective, this paper critically examines the chemical nature, environmental fate, and ecological impacts of major agrochemicals. It synthesizes evidence from reputed peer-reviewed journals and trusted scientific reports to explain how nutrient runoff, persistence of synthetic pesticides, bioaccumulation, and non-target toxicity contribute to soil degradation, water pollution, and biodiversity loss. The paper further evaluates sustainable alternatives, including green chemistry approaches, biofertilizers, biopesticides, and integrated nutrient and pest management systems. The study concludes that a transition toward environmentally benign chemical practices is essential to safeguard ecosystem health while maintaining food security.

Keywords: Agrochemicals, biodiversity loss, ecosystem toxicity, pesticides, fertilizers, green chemistry etc.,

1. Introduction

Modern agriculture relies heavily on chemical inputs such as synthetic fertilizers and pesticides to maximize crop yields and sustain a growing global population. Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium based fertilizers and a wide range of synthetic organic pesticides have become integral to intensive farming systems. While these chemicals have contributed to enhance food production, there is mounting evidence that they also significantly disrupt natural ecosystems and reduce biodiversity at multiple ecological levels - from genes to communities (Tilman et al., 2001; Steffen et al., 2015). This dual role poses a complex challenge for sustainable agricultural chemistry.

Agrochemicals are designed for stability, reactivity, and biological effectiveness. These same properties often lead to environmental persistence, mobility, and unintended interactions with non-target organisms. Reports from international agencies and peer-reviewed studies consistently warn that chemical-intensive agriculture is a major driver of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity decline. This paper aims to analyze these issues emphasizing chemical behavior, environmental transformations, and ecological outcomes.

2. Mechanisms by which chemical fertilizers affect Biodiversity

2.1 Composition and Chemical Behavior

Chemical fertilizers primarily consist of inorganic salts such as Ammonium Nitrate (NH_4NO_3), Urea [$CO(NH_2)_2$], Superphosphate [$Ca(H_2PO_4)_2$], and Potassium Chloride (KCl). These compounds are highly soluble in water, which enhances nutrient availability but also increases the risk of leaching and runoff.

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2.2 Eutrophication and Water Chemistry

Synthetic fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P), increase nutrient loading in soils and nearby water bodies. Excessive nutrient inputs can shift competitive balances in plant communities, favoring fast-growing species at the expense of smaller or rare species, ultimately reducing plant diversity and altering ecosystem composition (Clark & Tilman, 2008; Isbell et al., 2013). This phenomenon is well documented in ecological studies linking nitrogen deposition to declines in species richness and changes in vegetation structure.

Excess Nitrogen and Phosphorus from agricultural runoff alter the chemical balance of aquatic ecosystems. Nitrogen runoff and leaching further contribute to eutrophication of aquatic ecosystems, resulting in algal blooms, hypoxia, and biodiversity loss among fish, invertebrates, and benthic organisms (Smith et al., 1999; Diaz & Rosenberg, 2008). Subsequent decomposition of algal biomass consumes dissolved oxygen (DO), creating hypoxic or anoxic conditions. Chemically, this involves increased biological oxygen demand (BOD) and redox imbalance, leading to fish kills and loss of aquatic biodiversity. From a chemical perspective, the transformation of nitrate and ammonium species in soil–water systems plays a critical role in nutrient mobility and ecological exposure.

2.3 Soil Chemical Alteration and Microbial Diversity Loss

Long-term application of chemical fertilizers alters soil pH, salinity, and cation exchange capacity. Ammonium-based fertilizers contribute to soil acidification through nitrification reactions, releasing hydrogen ions (Guo et al., 2010; Geisseler & Scow, 2014). Acidic soils depress populations of beneficial soil microbes such as nitrogen-fixing bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi that are essential for nutrient cycling, organic matter transformation, and soil structure maintenance (Ramirez et al., 2012. This in turn reduces microbial diversity and disrupts nutrient cycling, ultimately affecting plant–soil interactions and ecosystem resilience.

2.4 Effects on Pollinators and Higher Trophic Levels

Recent ecological research shows that high fertiliser levels reduce floral diversity and availability of nectar and pollen resources, leading to sharp declines in pollinator populations. For example, long-term data from grassland studies reveal significant reductions in pollinators such as bees when plots are fertilised with high levels of N, P, and K—impacts that directly link fertilizer chemistry to trophic biodiversity loss.

3. Synthetic Pesticides and Biodiversity Loss

3.1 Chemical Classes and Persistence

Common pesticide classes include Organochlorines (e.g., DDT), Organophosphates (e.g., malathion), Carbamates, and synthetic Pyrethroids. Many of these compounds are lipophilic and chemically stable, enabling persistence in soils and sediments.

3.2 Bioaccumulation and Biomagnification

Bioaccumulation refers to the progressive buildup of chemical substances within an organism over time when the rate of chemical uptake exceeds the rate of elimination. Biomagnification (bioamplification), in contrast, describes the increasing concentration of a chemical across successive trophic levels of a food chain. Both processes are strongly governed by chemical properties, including hydrophobicity, persistence, molecular stability, and resistance to biotransformation.

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From a chemical standpoint, agrochemicals with high octanol–water partition coefficients (log K_ow > 3), low water solubility, and structural resistance to enzymatic degradation exhibit a high propensity for accumulation in biological tissues, particularly lipid-rich compartments (Connell, 1990; Mackay et al., 2001). Therefore, lipophilic pesticides partition into fatty tissues of organisms. This leads to bioaccumulation and biomagnification along food chains. Predatory birds, mammals, and aquatic species often exhibit the highest concentrations, resulting in reproductive failure, endocrine disruption, and population declines.

3.3 Non-Target Toxicity

Pesticides rarely exhibit absolute selectivity. Insecticides designed to disrupt nervous systems through acetylcholinesterase inhibition or sodium channel modulation also affect beneficial insects such as pollinators (Goulson et al., 2015). Declines in bee populations have been strongly linked to chronic exposure to neonicotinoids and other systemic insecticides, threatening pollination services and plant biodiversity. Studies show that insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides negatively affect survival, reproduction, and behavior of a wide range of organisms, including pollinators, soil invertebrates, aquatic species, birds, and mammals (Geiger et al., 2010; Pisa et al., 2015). This evidence underscores that pesticide molecules do not wholly discriminate between pests and beneficial organisms; rather, their systemic and persistent properties can propagate effects across ecosystems.

3.4 Soil and Aquatic Food Web Disruption

Pesticide residues and degradation products accumulate in soil, affecting soil fauna such as earthworms, arthropods, and microbial decomposers, which are crucial for nutrient cycling and organic matter breakdown (Bruhl et al., 2013; Beketov et al., 2013). Such disruptions compromise soil structure, decrease biodiversity at the microfaunal level, and can lead to cascading impacts on higher trophic interactions.

3.5 Ecotoxicological Pathways

Chemical research into pesticide fate reveals mechanisms such as pesticide drift, runoff, and leaching that disseminate toxins beyond target sites, exposing aquatic organisms and sensitive terrestrial species. These processes enable pesticides to travel through air and water, broadening their ecological footprint and augmenting spatial extent of biodiversity loss.

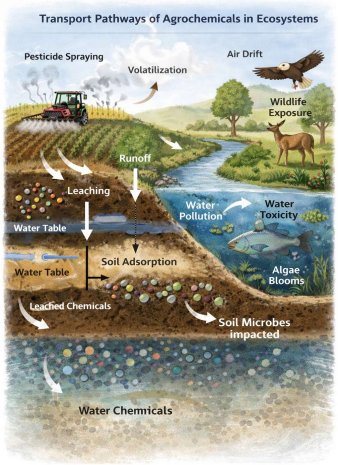


Figure 1. Transport Pathways of Agrochemicals in Ecosystems

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Illustrates runoff, leaching, volatilization, and soil adsorption of fertilizers and pesticides, showing impacts on soil microbes, aquatic organisms, and terrestrial food webs.

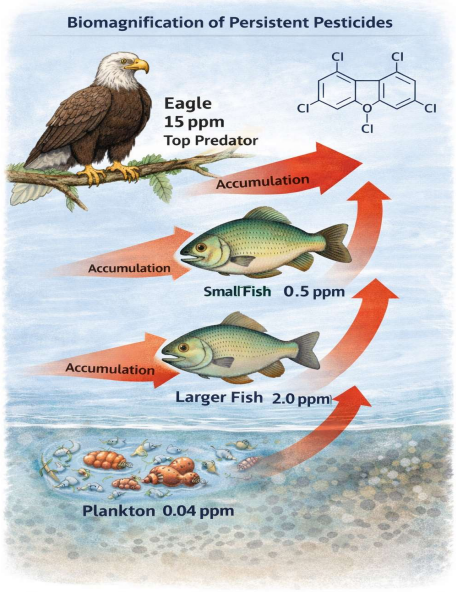


Figure 2. Biomagnification of Persistent Pesticides in a Food Chain
Shows increasing concentrations of DDT-like compounds from plankton → fish → predatory birds due to lipophilicity

4. Chemical Structures and Toxicity of Selected Pesticides

From a chemistry research perspective, the toxicological behavior of pesticides is intrinsically linked to their molecular structures, functional groups, stereochemistry, and physicochemical properties such as persistence, lipophilicity (log $K_o w$), and hydrolytic stability. Several widely used pesticides possess structural features that enhance environmental persistence and biological toxicity.

4.1 Structure–Toxicity Relationships

Halogenated pesticides, particularly organochlorines, exhibit exceptional chemical stability due to strong C–Cl bonds, resulting in environmental half-lives extending over decades. Their high log $K_o w$ values promote accumulation in fatty tissues, driving biomagnification through trophic levels.

Organophosphates and carbamates exert toxicity by covalent or pseudo-irreversible inhibition of acetylcholinesterase, disrupting nerve impulse transmission. Neonicotinoids, although designed for selectivity, possess **systemic properties** that cause continuous low-dose exposure in pollinators via nectar and pollen.

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Table 1: Representative Highly Toxic Pesticides, Chemical Formulae, and Ecological Effects

Pesticide	Chemical Formula	Chemical Class	Structural Features Responsible for Toxicity	Documented Ecological Impacts
DDT (Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane)	$C_{14}H_9Cl_5$	Organochlorine	Multiple Cl atoms increase stability and lipophilicity	Biomagnification, eggshell thinning in birds
Endosulfan	$C_9H_6Cl_6O_3S$	Organochlorine	Chlorinated bicyclic structure, sulfur group	Acute fish toxicity, amphibian decline
Chlorpyrifos	$C_9H_{11}Cl_3NO_3PS$	Organophosphate	Phosphorothioate ester inhibits acetylcholinesterase	Neurotoxicity, pollinator mortality
Malathion	$C_{10}H_{19}O_6PS_2$	Organophosphate	P=S bond increases bioactivation toxicity	Toxic to insects, aquatic invertebrates
Carbaryl	$C_{12}H_{11}NO_2$	Carbamate	Carbamate ester disrupts nerve transmission	High bee and aquatic organism toxicity
Imidacloprid	$C_9H_{10}ClN_5O_2$	Neonicotinoid	Nitroguanidine group binds nicotinic receptors	Chronic pollinator decline

5. Sustainable Alternatives: A Chemistry-Based Approach

5.1 Green Chemistry in Agriculture

Green chemistry principles advocate the design of chemicals that are effective yet biodegradable and less toxic. Developing fertilizers with controlled-release coatings and pesticides that degrade into harmless products can significantly reduce environmental impact.

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5.2 Biofertilizers

Biofertilizers containing nitrogen-fixing bacteria (e.g., Rhizobium, Azotobacter) and phosphate-solubilizing microorganisms offer a biologically driven alternative to synthetic fertilizers. These systems rely on natural biochemical pathways rather than high-solubility inorganic salts.

5.3 Biopesticides

Biopesticides derived from natural products, such as neem-based compounds and microbial toxins (e.g., Bacillus thuringiensis), exhibit target specificity and lower persistence. Their chemical structures are generally more susceptible to degradation, reducing bioaccumulation risks.

5.4 Integrated Nutrient and Pest Management

Integrated approaches combine minimal chemical inputs with biological and cultural practices. From a chemical perspective, this strategy optimizes dose, timing, and formulation to reduce excess reactivity and environmental dispersion.

6. Discussion

The chemistry of agrochemicals explains both their effectiveness and their environmental hazards. High solubility, persistence, and biological activity, while beneficial for crop production, often translate into ecological harm.

Recent literature emphasizes that biodiversity loss cannot be attributed to single compounds alone but rather to mixtures of fertilizers and pesticides acting synergistically. Experimental and field studies indicate that combined nutrient enrichment and pesticide exposure amplify ecological stress, reducing ecosystem recovery capacity and increasing vulnerability to additional disturbances (Relyea & Hoverman, 2006; Schafer et al., 2012).

From an environmental chemistry perspective, such mixture toxicity challenges conventional risk assessment frameworks, which often evaluate compounds in isolation and underestimate long-term ecological impacts.

Despite substantial progress, gaps remain in understanding the long-term, low-dose, and mixture effects of agrochemicals on biodiversity. There is increasing consensus that sustainable agricultural chemistry must integrate green chemistry principles, controlled-release formulations, bio-based pesticides, and ecosystem-level risk assessments (Carpenter et al., 2017). Addressing biodiversity loss thus requires interdisciplinary approaches linking chemical design, environmental fate, and ecological function.

7. Conclusion

The excessive use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, and germicides has emerged as a significant threat to ecosystems and biodiversity. Evidence from chemistry-based research highlights mechanisms such as eutrophication, soil acidification, bioaccumulation, and non-target toxicity. Transitioning toward sustainable chemistry-informed alternatives guided by green chemistry principles and ecological understanding is essential for balancing agricultural productivity with environmental protection. Future research must focus on designing agrochemicals that align with ecosystem processes rather than disrupt them.

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Study On Biodiversity And Conservation Bairluty Division Of Nallamala Forest Area, Andhra Pradesh

Smt.B.Padmavathi Bai

Lecturer in Botany,Govt Degree College, Atmakur,Nandyal District.

ABSTRACT:

The state of Andhra Pradesh is located between latitudes 12°41' and 22°N and longitudes 77° and 84°40'E. The state's geographical area is 1,62,440.1 km2 , accounting for 5.13% of the country's landmass, and it has 974 km of coastline. The Nandyal Forest Division is in the south-eastern part of the Kurnool district. It is between140 53'58.56" and 150 40'58.08" N and 780 20'27.6" and 780 46'40.08" E in terms of latitude and longitude. The Division covers 2,600 km2, which is 14.73 percent of the total area of the district. Climate the average annual rainfall in this Division is around 914 millimeters, with most of the precipitation coming from the South-west monsoons, and the climate is typically dry, with temperatures ranging from 200 C to 400 C. Black cotton soil, alluvial soil, brown loamy soil, and red soil are the most common soil types Frequency, Abundance, Basal area of woody species, Relative Density, Relative Frequency, Relative Dominance and IVI. Phyto sociological structure of Tree Species The total number of each individual species, namely Trees (26), Shrubs (16), Herbs (23), and Climber (15) species, is found in Phyto sociological Analysis of the Nandyal Forest Division. Frequency of Tree Species 100.00, Density of Tree Species (8.3), Abundance of Tree Species (8.25), Basal Area of Tree Species (cm2) (283.53) Relative Density of Tree Species (10.71) (9.09), Relative Frequency of Tree Species (6.45), Relative Dominance of Tree Species: (8.53), Importance Value Index (IVI) of Tree species: (22.13) (22.59) and Shrub Species Division contains the total number of each individual species, particularly Shrubs (16) species. Frequency of Shrub Species 100.00, Density of Shrub Species (100m2): (7.5), Abundance of Shrub Species (7.5), Basal Area of Shrub Species (cm2) (122.72), Relative Density of Shrub Species (10.10), Relative Frequency of Shrub Species (6.15), Relative Dominance of Shrub Species: (10.63), Importance Value Index (IVI) of Shrub species: (28.48) . Herb Species- Division contains the total number of each individual species, particularly herbs (23) species. Frequency of Herb Species 100.00, Density of Herb Species (4.0), Abundance of Herb Species: (6.67), Basal Area of Herb Species (cm2) (31.17), Relative Density of Herb Species (12.50 m2) Relative Frequency of Herb Species (7.69), Relative Dominance of Herb Species (25.20), Importance Value Index (IVI) of Herb species (38.05) and (28.16). Climbers Division: physiology: The total number of each individual species, namely Climber (15) species, are found. Frequency of Climbers: 100.00, Density of Climbers (3.5). Abundance of Climbers (5.0), Basal Area of Climbers: (59.45), Relative Density of Climbers (15.38), Relative Frequency of Climbers: (9.52), Relative Dominance of Climbers, Importance Value Index (IVI) (51.93)(34.12) Keywords: Nandyala Nallamala Forest, Frequency, Density, Abundance, Basal Area, Relative Density, Relative Frequency, Relative Dominance, Importance Value Index (IVI) . Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve epitomizes a typical tropical dry and moist deciduous vegetation, characterized by hilly terrain with plateaus, ridges, gorges and deep valleys with an under growth of Bamboo and grass. NSTR is endowed with a rich floral diversity comprising of trees, shrubs, herbs and climbers. Around 1521 Angiosperm taxa spread over 149 families along with 29 species of grass and 353 species of medicinal plants have been documented. The faunal diversity documented in NSTR includes 50 species of mammals, 200 species of birds, 54 species of reptiles, 18 species of amphibians, 55 species of fishes, 89 species of butterflies, 57 species of moths, 45 species of beetles, 30 species of dragonflies and damselflies. Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve supports a wide variety of animals, birds, insects, reptiles and amphibians.

Introduction:

Biodiversity refers to the total number of species, populations, communities, and ecosystems, both wild and domesticated, that make up the life of any given region or the entire globe. It is a heritable variety at all levels of organisation, from the genes within a single local population to the species that make up all or part of a local community, and eventually to the

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communities themselves that make up the living sections of the world's many ecosystems. Because of the high warmth and rainfall, the majority of the Earth's biodiversity is concentrated around the Equator. Rainforests in Central and South America, Equatorial Africa, and South East Asia are home to a wide variety of flora and animals. India has a diverse biological legacy, comprising www.ijcspub.org © 2023 IJCSPUB | Volume 13, Issue 2 May 2023 | ISSN: 2250-1770 IJCSP23B1343 International Journal of Current Science (IJCSPUB) www.ijcspub.org 882 a wide range of habitats from tropical rainforests to alpine vegetation and temperate forests to coastal marshes. India has around 8% of the world's biodiversity on 2% of the Earth's area, making it one of the world's 12 mega diverse countries. This is based on the species richness and levels of endemism observed in a diverse variety of plant and animal taxa. The diversity of plant and animal life on Earth is referred to as biodiversity. India ranks among the top 12 countries in terms of plant and animal life diversity. India, which accounts for only 2.5% of the planet's landmass, is home to 7.8% of the planet's flora and fauna. Biodiversity includes not just the millions of individual species on Earth, but also the ecological processes and cycles that connect these species to larger communities, ecosystems, and ultimately the entire biosphere. The unique species constitute a more visible component of biodiversity. Communities are yet another distinguishing aspect of biological variety; they are groupings of species that have congregated in one location. The biotic components of ecosystems are communities. Because of the higher variety in their composition, structure, and function, communities with significant biological diversity have a better chance of enduring in a particular area and having an ecological impact. The three basic layers of biodiversity are species, genes, and ecosystems. Ecosystem diversity, species diversity, and genetic diversity are all phrases used to characterise Earth's many ecosystems and habitats. The number of different species is used to measure organism diversity. The number of different species is used to measure organism diversity. Changes in the genetic makeup of species are caused by natural and artificial selection pressures, whereas changes in the occurrence and relative abundance of species within biological communities are caused by ecological and physical variables. Internal and external processes have powerful effects on ecosystems. The country has been split up into several bio-geographic zones according to its respective flora and fauna (Rodgers and Panwar, 1988). Almost all of South Asia's globally representative ecological zones may be found inside India. There are eight types of tropical forests, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): tropical wet deciduous forest (ii), tropical dry forest (iii), tropical shrubland (iv), tropical desert (v), tropical mountain (vi), subtropical mountain (vii), and temperate mountain (viii). The majority of these tropical regions are composed of three distinct biological zones: tropical shrubland, tropical dry forest, and tropical wet deciduous forest. The State is home to a wide range of plant communities. It has a wide variety of habitats thanks to its varied terrain, which ranges from the highlands of the Eastern Ghats and Nallamala to the coasts of the Bay of Bengal. There are four main biotic provinces in the state's forests: the Deccan Plateau, the Central Plateau, the Eastern Highland, and the East Coastal Plains. According to (Champion & Seth, 1968), the forests of Andhra Pradesh may be broken down into five Type Groups and twenty Forest Types. Dense tropical forests may be found in the Eastern Ghats portion of the state, whereas the Deccan Plateau, which is beyond the Ghats, is covered with scant shrub vegetation. Species of the genera Terminalia, Dalbergia, Pterocarpus, Anogeissus, etc., along with the ubiquitous Teak, make up the bulk of the dry deciduous vegetation. The crimson hue and distinctive grain pattern of Andhra Pradesh's native crimson Sanders (Pterocarpus santalinus) make it a highly sought-after commodity. About a third of Andhra Pradesh's forest land is managed by JFM, making the state a pioneer in the field. India occupies the southern region of Asia, between the coordinates of 6° and 38° North and 69° and 97° East. The Himalayas form the northern boundary, the Bay of Bengal the eastern, the Arabian Sea the western, and the Indian Ocean the southern for the 329 million hectares of land that make up India. In terms of total land area, it is the sixth biggest nation in the globe. It has an EEZ of 2.02 million square kilometers , with an EEZ limit of 200 nautical miles from its coast. The monsoons in India are tropical. Both the northeast and south-west monsoons bring precipitation to India. The amount and timing of rainfall is irregular and unpredictable. Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, and Assam get a combined 2,000 millimetres (mm) of precipitation each year due to its proximity to the Western Ghats. In the Vindhya Mountains of Maharashtra, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh, annual rainfall ranges between 1,000 and 2,000 millimeters. Annual precipitation ranges from 500 to 1000 mm in the upper Gangetic plains, the northwest Deccan, and the south coastal plains. The arid parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat receive an average of 100 millimeters of precipitation per year, whereas the arid regions of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, and LahulSpiti, Himachal Pradesh, receive only 10 millimeters. With 37,258 square

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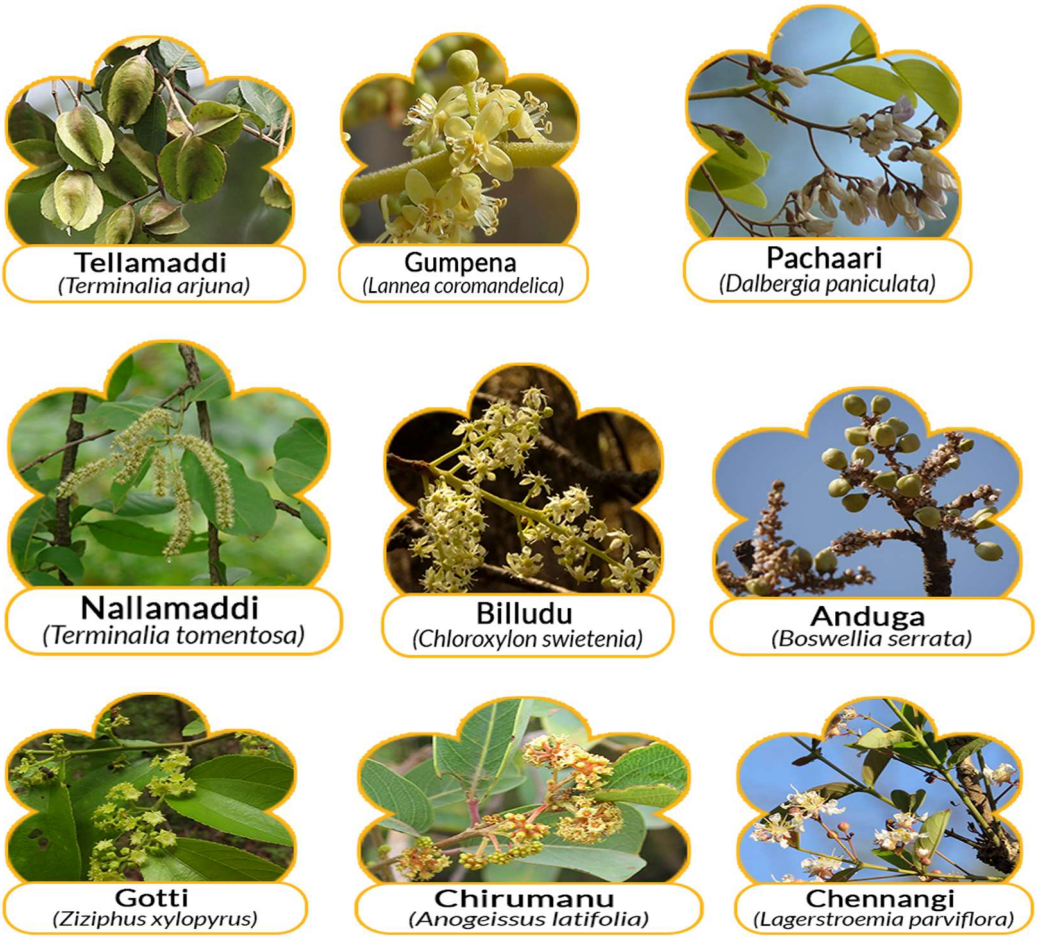
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kilometres of RFA (Recorded Forest Area), the state ranks ninth overall. There are 31,959 square kilometres of reserved forest, 5,069 square kilometres of protected forest, and 230 square kilometres of unclassified forest in the RFA. Between 1 January 2015 and 5 February 2019, forest land in Andhra Pradesh was diverted for non-forestry activities on 3,474.57 hectares, in contravention of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 (MoEF & CC, 2019). According to the state, plantings totaled 15,107 hectares (ha) over the preceding two years. The Atmakuru Division has 1288.81 km2 of forested land, accounting for approximately 5.98% of the total land area. The total forest area is 1204.44 km2, with 93.45% conserved and the remaining 6.54% unclassified. Tropical forests are classified into three categories by Champion and Seth: tropical dry deciduous, tropical moist deciduous, and tropical thorn forest. In the Markapur Division, the total classified forest area is 2476.39 km2, accounting for 34.30% of the total area. As a protected reserve, the entire woodland area is protected. Because it is the dominating and climatic climax forest in the area, Champion and Seth classify the Division woods as Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous. Southern Tropical Thorn Forest can be found not just at higher elevations, but also in lowlands and plains. . Nallamala Hills stretching across five districts across portions of Kurnool, Prakasam, Nalgonda, Guntur and Kadapa of the State of Andhra Pradesh are renowned for being rich in biodiversity (Rao 1998). Nallamala is a group of low hill ranges in the central part of Eastern Ghats. From the Palnad basin in the north to the Tirupati basin in the south, the Nallamala runs a distance of 430 km with an average width of 30 km (Anon 1965). The altitude ranges from 200 to 950 m. An unbroken chain of rugged hills with precipitous cliffs encompassing an area of about 7640 km2 forms the range. The humus content is almost negligible as the black soil occurs in plains where cultivation is practiced (Krishnan 1956). The vegetation is typically of southern tropical dry deciduous and southern tropical moist deciduous forest types intermingled with shrubs (Champion & Seth 1968). The climate is generally hot and dry with temperatures rising up to 43°C to 45°C during May and dips down to 8°C in December. Average rainfall in this region is between 600 and 1000 mm. Though several research activities and surveys were made in the area of study, i.e. Nallamala forest (Kurnool district) of Andhra Pradesh regarding the characterization, quantification of the species diversity; the study of distribution of the species of fauna (biodiversity) with regard to variations in the amount of rainfall is required with utmost importance. Hence, this work was selected. Nagarjunasagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve epitomizes a typical tropical dry and moist deciduous vegetation, characterized by hilly terrain with plateaus, ridges, gorges and deep valleys with an under growth of Bamboo and grass. NSTR is endowed with a rich floral diversity comprising of trees, shrubs, herbs and climbers. Around 1521 Angiosperm taxa spread over 149 families along with 29 species of grass and 353 species of medicinal plants have been documented. The most predominant trees found here are:-

Local Name	**Scientific name**
Nallamaddi	*Terminalia tomentosa*
Chirumanu	*Anogeissus latifolia*
Billudu	*Chloroxylon swietenia*
Yepi	*Hardwickia binata*
Peedayegi	*Pterocarpus marsupium*
Gumpena	*Lannea coromandelica*
Anduga	*Boswellia serrata*
Pachaari	*Dalbergia paniculata*
Gotti	*Ziziphus xylopyrus*
Chennangi	*Lagerstroemia parviflora*
Tellamaddi	*Terminalia arjuna*

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The State is home to a wide range of plant communities. It has a wide variety of habitats thanks to its varied terrain, which ranges from the highlands of the Eastern Ghats and Nallamala to the coasts of the Bay of Bengal. There are four main biotic provinces in the state's forests: the Deccan Plateau, the Central Plateau, the Eastern Highland, and the East Coastal Plains. According to (Champion & Seth, 1968), the forests of Andhra Pradesh may be broken down into five Type Groups and twenty Forest Types. Dense tropical forests may be found in the Eastern Ghats portion of the state, whereas the Deccan Plateau, which is beyond the Ghats, is covered with scant shrub vegetation. Species of the genera Terminalia, Dalbergia, Pterocarpus, Anogeissus, etc., along with the ubiquitous Teak, make up the bulk of the dry deciduous vegetation. The crimson hue and distinctive grain pattern of Andhra Pradesh's native crimson Sanders (Pterocarpus santalinus) make it a highly sought-after commodity. About a third of Andhra Pradesh's forest land is managed by JFM, making the state a pioneer in the field.

India occupies the southern region of Asia, between the coordinates of 6° and 38° North and 69° and 97° East. The Himalayas form the northern boundary, the Bay of Bengal the eastern, the Arabian Sea the western, and the Indian Ocean the southern for the 329 million hectares of land that make up India. In terms of total land area, it is the sixth biggest nation in the globe. It has an EEZ of 2.02 million square kilometers , with an EEZ limit of 200 nautical miles from its coast. The monsoons in India are tropical. Both the north-east and south-west monsoons bring precipitation to India. The amount and timing of rainfall is irregular and unpredictable. Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, and Assam get a combined 2,000 millimeters (mm) of precipitation each year due to its proximity to the Western Ghats. In the Vindhya Mountains of Maharashtra, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh, annual rainfall ranges between 1,000 and 2,000 millimeters. Annual precipitation ranges from 500 to 1000 mm in the upper Gangetic plains, the northwest Deccan, and the south coastal plains. The arid parts of Rajasthan and Gujarat receive an average of 100 millimeters of precipitation per year,

EXPERIMENTAL METHODOLOGY:

Direct method involving sampling area i.e. as mentioned above (BAIRLUTY, Nandyal region, Andhra Pradesh) and also based on secondary data. EXPERIMENTAL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY: Reconnaissance surveys were conducted throughout the district for locating the community groups, their distribution, status and traditional way of 122 Kumar et al life, the degree of traditional knowledge practices etc. The selected villages were visited regularly and data pertaining to herbs in their life and culture were gathered periodically. Ethno-botanical information was gathered either by interviewing the informants or from the direct observation from the field itself on the uses of herbs. The information of a particular herb used by the community was tested directly or indirectly. The reliability of the information of the herbs used was assessed after repeated verification. About the State: After the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act of 2014, Andhra Pradesh became the eighth largest state in India in terms of geographical size, with an area of 162440.Km2 . Telangana, a state comprised of ten districts in northwestern Andhra Pradesh, became India's 29th state. On June 2, 2014, the new states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were formed. Andhra Pradesh is bounded on the northwest by Telangana, on the north by Chhattisgarh and Odisha, on the east by the Bay of Bengal, on the south by Tamil Nadu, and on the west by Karnataka. Andhra Pradesh has 36,914.7 Km2of classified forest land, accounting for 22.73% of the state's total land area. The state has a population of 49.66 million people (as of the 2011

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census), ranking it tenth in the country. Study Area: The state of Andhra Pradesh is located between latitudes 12°41' and 22°N and longitudes 77° and 84°40'E. The state's geographical area is 1,62,440.1 km2 , accounting for 5.13% of the country's landmass, and it has 974 km of coastline. The state is divided into three physiographic zones: the hilly region with the Nallamalai, Erramalai hills, and the Eastern Ghats at an elevation of 500 to 1400 m; the plateau at an elevation of 100 m to 1000 m; and the river deltas between the Eastern Ghats and the Sea Coast. For this study 4 major divisions were selected namely Markapur. Climatic Conditions: This state's climate is predominantly arid, with temperatures ranging from 80 C to 500 C with an annual rainfall of 500-1300 mm, primarily from the Southwest and Northeast monsoons. The state's soils are red, black, alluvial, and sandy.

BAIRLUTY Division: At a distance of 15 km from Atmakur, 47 km from Dornala, 85 km from Kurnool, 96 km from Srisailam, and 300 km from Hyderabad, Bairluty is a tribal village in Atmakur mandal of Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh. This is one of the eco-tourism projects initiated by AP Tourism and among the best weekend getaways near Hyderabad.

Climatic Conditions: This state's climate is predominantly arid, with temperatures ranging from 80 C to 500 C with an annual rainfall of 500-1300 mm, primarily from the Southwest and Northeast monsoons. The state's soils are red, black, alluvial, and sandy

Nandyal Division: The Nandyal Forest Division is in the south-eastern part of the Kurnool district. It is between140 53'58.56" and 150 40'58.08" N and 780 20'27.6" and 780 46'40.08" E in terms of latitude and longitude. The Division covers 2,600 km2, which is 14.73 percent of the total area of the district. **Climate:** The average annual rainfall in this Division is around 914 millimeters, with most of the precipitation coming from the South-west monsoons, and the climate is typically dry, with temperatures ranging from 200 C to 400 C. Black cotton soil, alluvial soil, brown loamy soil, and red soil are the most common soil types .

CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to enlist Study on Biodiversity in Nandyal Division of Nallamala Forest Area, Andhra Pradesh. It was found that the people had been using local herbs for various purposes. The preservation of this knowledge appears to be the result of continued reliance of studied the survey of nallamala forest. Frequency of Tree Species, Shrub Species, Herb Species and Climbers In Nandyal Division. There is need to conserve and domesticate these precious herbs as most of the species are on the way of extinct.

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Climate Change–Driven Ecosystem Reorganization and Regime Shifts: Mechanisms, Thresholds, and Global Implications.

Sai Shreeya Pudi[1,2], Ramachandra R K[2,3,4], K. Anusha[1,2*], V. Durga Praveena[4,5] Kartheeka Pudi[6], Vinay Ravuri[7]
[1]Department of Biotechnology, Government Degree College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[2]Central Instrumentation Laboratory–I, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[3]Department of Physics, Government Degree College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India
[4] Research in Advanced Material Science Center (RAMC), Government Degree College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India
[5]Department of Chemistry, Government Degree College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India
[6]MBBS, Maharaja Institute of Medical Sciences, Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[7]Department of Fishery sciences, Institute of Technology and Management, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India.
Corresponding author email: lekhaanu79@gcrjy.ac.in

Abstract

Climate change is fundamentally reorganizing ecosystems across the globe, altering species composition, ecosystem functioning, and long-term stability. This review synthesizes scientific advances from the past fifteen years on climate change–driven ecosystem reorganization and regime shifts, with a focus on the mechanisms, thresholds, and feedbacks that underpin nonlinear ecological responses. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation regimes, ocean warming and acidification, and increasing climate extremes are intensifying disturbance regimes and eroding ecosystem resilience across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems. These pressures are pushing many ecosystems toward critical tipping points, beyond which abrupt and persistent transitions to alternative stable states may occur. Such regime shifts threaten biodiversity, disrupt biogeochemical cycles, and undermine ecosystem services essential for human well-being. This review further evaluates emerging approaches for detecting early warning signals, improving predictive capacity, and implementing resilience-based and adaptive management strategies. Understanding climate-driven ecosystem reorganization is crucial for anticipating irreversible ecological change and informing effective conservation and policy responses in an era of accelerating global change.

Keywords: Climate change, Ecosystem reorganization, Regime shifts, Ecological thresholds, Tipping points, Nonlinear dynamics, Ecosystem resilience, Biodiversity loss, Global environmental change

1.Introduction

Climate change has become a dominant driver of ecological change, reshaping ecosystems at unprecedented rates and scales. Over the past several decades, increases in global temperatures, shifts in precipitation patterns, ocean warming and acidification, cryosphere loss, and the intensification of extreme climatic events have profoundly altered ecosystem structure and function (IPCC, 2021). While early ecological responses to climate change were often conceptualized as gradual and linear, growing evidence indicates that many ecosystems respond nonlinearly, undergoing abrupt reorganization once critical thresholds are exceeded.

Ecosystem reorganization encompasses changes in species composition, trophic interactions, and functional processes in response to environmental forcing, whereas regime shifts refer to large, persistent transitions between alternative stable states maintained by reinforcing feedback mechanisms (Scheffer et al., 2009; Folke et al., 2010). Climate change increasingly acts as a chronic press disturbance that weakens ecosystem resilience, while interacting with acute pulse disturbances such as droughts, heatwaves, fires, and storms to trigger abrupt ecological transitions (Ratajczak et al., 2018).

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Over the last fifteen years, empirical and theoretical studies have documented climate-driven regime shifts across diverse ecosystems, including forest–savanna transitions, boreal forest dieback, Arctic tundra shrubification, lake eutrophication, coral reef collapse, and kelp forest loss (Barnosky et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2017; Rocha et al., 2018). These transitions often involve strong biotic and biogeochemical feedbacks that stabilize alternative states, resulting in hysteresis and limiting ecosystem recovery even if climatic conditions are reversed (Dakos et al., 2015; Lenton et al., 2019).

The accelerating pace of climate change, combined with land-use change, biodiversity loss, and resource exploitation, heightens the risk of cascading regime shifts with global consequences for biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human societies (Steffen et al., 2018). This review synthesizes recent advances in understanding climate change–driven ecosystem reorganization and regime shifts, focusing on the mechanisms driving nonlinear responses, the identification of thresholds and early warning signals, and the implications for ecosystem management and global sustainability.

2.Methodology

This review employs a **systematic narrative synthesis** to examine climate change–driven ecosystem reorganization and regime shift across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. The focus is on identifying dominant mechanisms, threshold behaviors, feedback processes, and global implications reported in the literature over the past fifteen years.

Studies were included if they examined ecosystem-level responses to climate-related drivers (e.g., warming, altered precipitation, ocean acidification), reported evidence of nonlinear dynamics, threshold behavior, or regime shifts, and focused on terrestrial, freshwater, or marine systems. Empirical studies, modeling analyses, and synthesis papers were considered. Studies addressing short-term variability or non-climatic stressors without ecosystem-scale implications were excluded.

3. Climate Change and Large-Scale Ecosystem Reorganization

Climate change has emerged as a dominant force driving ecosystem reorganization across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation regimes, and increased frequency of extreme climatic events modify species distributions, trophic interactions, and ecosystem processes, often pushing systems beyond historical variability (Pecl et al., 2017; IPCC, 2022). Unlike gradual ecological change, climate-driven reorganization frequently manifests as abrupt, nonlinear transitions, challenging conventional ecosystem management frameworks.

Recent syntheses indicate that ecosystems are increasingly responding to climate change through shifts in structure and function rather than linear adaptation, signaling heightened vulnerability to regime shifts under continued warming (Gunderson et al., 2017; Trisos et al., 2020).

4. Mechanisms Driving Climate-Induced Regime Shifts

4.1 Nonlinear Responses and Feedback Processes

Climate forcing interacts with internal ecosystem feedbacks to amplify disturbances. Warming-induced vegetation loss, for example, reduces evapotranspiration and soil moisture, reinforcing aridity and suppressing recovery (Berdugo et al., 2020). Such feedbacks accelerate ecosystem reorganization and increase the likelihood of abrupt transitions.

Earth system analyses demonstrate that feedback-driven dynamics link local ecosystem changes to broader climate processes, intensifying systemic risks (Lenton et al., 2019; Armstrong McKay et al., 2022).

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4.2 Alternative States and Reduced Reversibility

Recent research highlights that climate-driven regime shifts often exhibit hysteresis, where reversing climate stressors does not restore original ecosystem states. Coral reefs, kelp forests, and dryland ecosystems commonly transition into degraded but persistent alternative configurations under sustained warming (Hughes et al., 2017; Filbee-Dexter et al., 2020).

These findings emphasize that ecosystem recovery is constrained not only by climate trajectories but also by altered biological interactions and loss of functional diversity (Oliver et al., 2015).

5. Thresholds, Tipping Points, and Early Warning Indicators

Identifying thresholds before irreversible ecosystem transitions remains a major research challenge. Over the past decade, studies have proposed early warning signals such as increasing variance, critical slowing down, and spatial correlation as indicators of declining resilience (Dakos et al., 2015; Clements et al., 2019).

However, recent reviews caution that early warning signals may fail under complex, multi-driver climate stress, particularly where data limitations and anthropogenic pressures coexist (Boettiger & Hastings, 2013; Burthe et al., 2021). This uncertainty underscores the need for integrated monitoring and modeling frameworks.

6. Ecosystem-Specific Evidence of Climate-Driven Regime Shifts

6.1 Terrestrial Ecosystems

Climate-induced regime shifts have been documented in forests, savannas, and drylands. Warming and drought stress contribute to forest mortality and biome shifts, particularly in the Amazon and boreal regions (Lovejoy & Nobre, 2018; Stevens et al., 2017). Fire–climate feedbacks further accelerate transitions from forested to open ecosystems (Bowman et al., 2020).

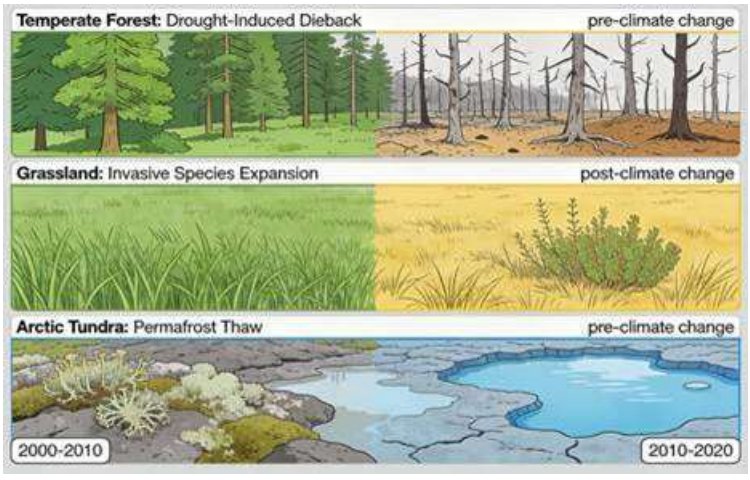


Figure 1: Schematic illustration showing the Terrestrial Ecosystem's Climate-induced regime shifts. (Conceptual illustration initially AI-generated using Canva AI)

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6.2 Freshwater Ecosystems

Freshwater systems are highly sensitive to climatic warming due to strong coupling between temperature, nutrient cycling, and biological productivity. Recent studies demonstrate that warming increases the frequency of eutrophication-driven regime shifts in lakes and wetlands, often resulting in persistent hypoxic states (Woolway et al., 2021; Taranu et al., 2018).

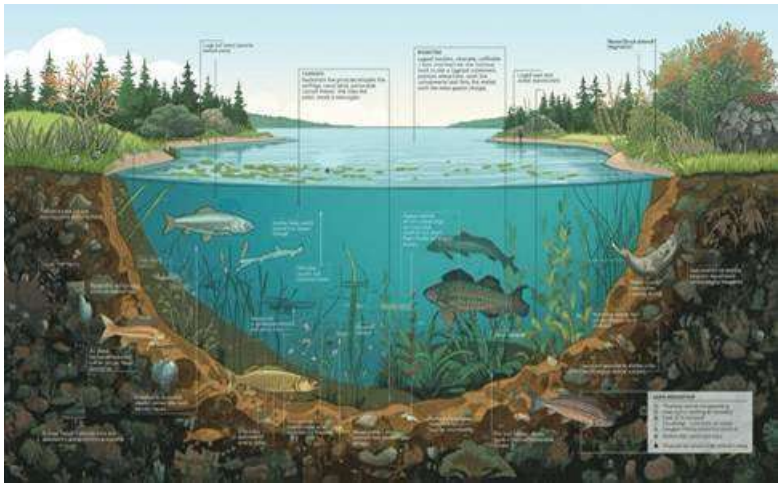


Figure 2: Schematic illustration showing the Fresh Water Ecosystem's Climate-induced regime shifts. (Conceptual illustration initially AI-generated using Canva AI)

6.3 Marine Ecosystems

Marine ecosystems show some of the clearest evidence of climate-driven regime shifts. Marine heatwaves have caused widespread coral bleaching and kelp forest collapse, pushing systems toward algal-dominated or simplified states (Smale et al., 2019; Filbee-Dexter et al., 2020). Ocean acidification further destabilizes calcifying organisms, compounding climate stress (Hoegh-Guldberg et al., 2017).

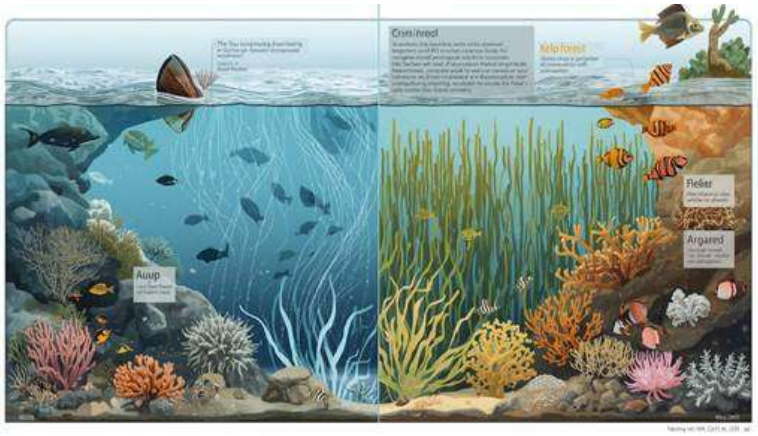


Figure 3: Schematic illustration showing the Marine Ecosystem's Climate-induced regime shifts. (Conceptual illustration initially AI-generated using Canva AI)

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Ecosystem	Major climatic drivers	Regime-shift mechanisms	Observed shifts	Key ecological impacts
Tropical forests	Warming, Droughts	Tree morality, Fire feed back	Forest → savanna-like states	Carbon loss, biodiversity decline
Temperature forests	Heatwaves, Droughts, Pests	Disturbance amplification	Forest dieback	Reduced resilience, species turnover
Grasslands & savannas	Rainfall variability, CO2 rise	Woody encroachment	Grassland → shrubland	Altered productivity, grazing loss
Coral reefs	Ocean warming, acidification	Coral bleaching, algal dominance	Coral → algae-dominated reefs	Fisheries collapse
Fresh water lakes	Warming, nutrient loading	Stratification, eutrophication	Clear → turbid states	Reduced coastal protection

Table 1: This table synthesizes major ecosystem types, dominant climatic drivers, and observed regime shifts, highlighting broad patterns of climate-driven ecosystem reorganization.

7. Ecosystem Feedbacks to the Climate System

Ecosystem regime shifts influence climate trajectories through altered carbon storage and greenhouse gas fluxes. Permafrost thaw, forest dieback, and peatland degradation transform long-standing carbon sinks into net sources of CO_2 and methane (Schuur et al., 2015; Canadell et al., 2021).

Recent Earth system syntheses warn that such ecosystem feedbacks may interact across regions, increasing the probability of cascading climate–ecological tipping events (Armstrong McKay et al., 2022).

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8. Implications for Conservation, Adaptation, and Global Policy

Climate-driven nonlinearity challenges traditional conservation approaches based on equilibrium assumptions. Recent literature advocates for resilience-based management, adaptive governance, and nature-based solutions to reduce the risk of regime shifts (Folke et al., 2016; Chaffin et al., 2016).

Incorporating ecosystem tipping point science into global policy frameworks such as the IPCC, CBD, and SDGs is increasingly recognized as essential for managing climate risk under deep uncertainty (IPCC, 2022).

8.Conclusion

This review demonstrates that climate change has become a dominant driver of large-scale ecosystem reorganization and regime shifts, rather than a gradual modifier of ecological processes. Evidence from the last 15 years shows that rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, ocean acidification, and increasing climatic extremes are pushing ecosystems beyond historical ranges of variability. These pressures disrupt species interactions, disturbance regimes, and biogeochemical cycles, leading to abrupt transitions into alternative ecosystem states that are often persistent and difficult to reverse.

A key conclusion is the strong coupling between ecosystem regime shifts and climate feedbacks. Processes such as forest dieback, permafrost thaw, peatland degradation, and marine ecosystem collapse can rapidly convert long-standing carbon sinks into net sources of greenhouse gases. These feedbacks amplify global warming and increase the risk of cascading tipping events across interconnected ecological and climatic systems, elevating ecosystem change to a critical component of global climate risk.

The review also highlights ongoing challenges in predicting thresholds and tipping points. Although early warning indicators and modeling approaches have advanced, their reliability remains limited in complex systems influenced by multiple interacting stressors. Climate change often acts in combination with land-use change, overexploitation, and nutrient enrichment, making it difficult to detect clear signals of declining resilience. This uncertainty underscores the need for precautionary strategies that prioritize maintaining ecosystem resilience and avoiding proximity to known thresholds rather than relying on post-transition restoration.

Overall, these findings have important implications for conservation and climate policy. Management approaches based on static baselines are increasingly inadequate under rapid environmental change. Instead, resilience-based and adaptive governance frameworks that anticipate transformation are essential for sustaining biodiversity, preserving ecosystem services, and maintaining Earth system stability in a warming world.

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Conservation of Endemic and Threatened Plant Species of Andhra Pradesh

Dr J Lavanya

Lecturer in Botany, Visakha Govt Degree College W (A) Visakhapatnam

lavanyabotany2025@gmail.com

Abstract

Andhra Pradesh (AP), a bio diverse state in south-eastern India, harbours a rich assemblage of endemic and threatened plant species — especially within the Eastern Ghats, coastal belts, and biosphere reserves. However, rapid habitat loss, land-use change, invasive species, and anthropogenic pressures have placed many of these species at risk. This paper examines the distribution and significance of endemic flora, identifies primary threats, and reviews conservation strategies and initiatives (both in-situ and ex-situ) aimed at safeguarding plant biodiversity in Andhra Pradesh. Integrating botanical surveys, regional conservation efforts, and emerging research, this work provides a comprehensive account of plant conservation challenges and opportunities in the state.

Key words : Conservation,Endemic,Threatened,Plant species of Andhra pradesh

1. Introduction

Plant biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning, provides ecological services (carbon sequestration, soil formation, hydrological regulation), and supports cultural and economic livelihoods. Endemic species — those confined to a particular region — are especially valuable but vulnerable, as their restricted distributions make them highly susceptible to environmental change and human impacts. Andhra Pradesh, with varied topography ranging from Eastern Ghats hills to fertile plains and a long coastal line, supports numerous unique plant taxa, including medicinal, woody, herbaceous, and climber species. Effective conservation of endemic and threatened flora is fundamental for maintaining ecological integrity and meeting sustainable development goals within the state.

2. Flora of Andhra Pradesh: Diversity and Endemism

2.1 Biodiversity Overview

Andhra Pradesh hosts a diverse flora comprised of several thousand wild plant species. According to floristic surveys, the state supports about 3,000 wild and naturalized angiosperms, along with pteridophytes, bryophytes, gymnosperms, and various endemic taxa. The floristic diversity includes approximately 550 tree species, nearly 300 shrubs, over 1,700 herbs, and around 300 climbers — reflecting a broad range of life forms adapted to different ecological niches. About **68 strictly endemic plant species** have been documented in Andhra Pradesh, indicating a distinct regional flora shaped by the Eastern Ghats and other unique habitats.

2.2 Endemic and Threatened Species

Endemic and threatened plant species are of particular conservation concern due to their limited geographic distributions and heightened vulnerability.

Examples from published checklists include:

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- *Andrographis beddomei*, *Andrographis nallamalayana* (Acanthaceae)
- *Argyreia arakuensis* (Convolvulaceae)
- *Boswellia ovalifoliolata* (Burseraceae)
- *Brachystelma* spp. (Apocynaceae)
- *Barleria morrisiana* (Acanthaceae)
  These represent just a subset of more than **50 or more endemic taxa** documented historically.

Notable individual taxa documented in conservation literature include:

Eriolaena lushingtonii — a vulnerable flowering plant found only in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, threatened by habitat loss.

Shorea tumbugaia — an endangered dipterocarp tree native to the Eastern Ghats, with significant timber and medicinal use pressures.

Hildegardia populifolia — an endemic and threatened dry deciduous tree of the Eastern Ghats.

Examples of Threatened Plants

Below are key endemic or near-endemic species with documented threat status:

***Cycas beddomei* (Cycad)** — Endangered (EN)
A cycad confined to dry hills of the Tirumala and Kadapa ranges; exploited for medicinal uses and vulnerable due to habitat disturbance.

***Cycas sphaerica* (Cycad)** — Data Deficient (DD) but range restricted to Andhra Pradesh, requiring more assessment.

***Hildegardia populifolia* (Tree)** — Near Threatened (NT)
A dry deciduous tree endemic to southern Eastern Ghats, threatened by habitat loss.

***Eriolaena lushingtonii* (Tree)** — Vulnerable (VU)
Species limited to Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, utilizes in traditional medicine and suffers habitat loss.

***Syzygium alternifolium* (Myrtaceae)** — Regionally threatened
Dry forest tree with restricted distribution in the Seshachalam Hills; ecological factors and reproductive limitation make it sensitive to disturbance.

Pimpinella tirupatiensis — Endangered, restricted to Tirupati hills.

Nilgirianthus circarensis, Phlebophyllum jeyporense, Toxocarpus longistigma, Phyllanthus narayanaswamii — other examples from threatened plant checklists, often confined to narrow altitudinal zones.

Recent updates suggest there are **dozens of threatened plant taxa** recorded regionally, though formal IUCN assessments vary.

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These examples illustrate the taxonomic diversity and ecological breadth of threatened plants in Andhra Pradesh.

3. Major Threats to Endemic and Threatened Flora

3.1 Habitat Loss and Fragmentation

Habitat loss — arising from land conversion for agriculture, infrastructure, mining, and urban expansion — is among the greatest threats to endemic and rare plant species. Such pressures reduce habitat extent, fragment populations, and impede gene flow, ultimately increasing extinction risk.

3.2 Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Deforestation in the Eastern Ghats has historically decreased forest quality and coverage, affecting species that depend on old-growth conditions. The Eastern Ghats also harbour sacred groves — culturally protected patches that serve as biodiversity hotspots. However, modernization and changes to temple grounds have led to thinning of such groves, diminishing their conservation value.

3.3 Invasive Species

Invasive alien plants can outcompete native endemics by altering light, soil, and water regimes, reducing regeneration success. Disturbed habitats adjacent to agricultural or urban lands are particularly prone to invasion.

3.4 Climate Change

Changes in temperature, precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events influence species' phenology, reproductive success, and geographic distributions. Endemics with narrow ecological niches are especially vulnerable to climatic shifts.

3.5 Seed Dispersal Disruption

Natural seed dispersal by animals and wind is critical for population maintenance and range shifts. However, habitat fragmentation and loss of dispersal vectors disrupt this process. Conservation interventions such as human-mediated seed collection and planting are emerging to overcome this barrier.

4. Conservation Framework

4.1 Policy and Institutional Context

Conservation of threatened plant species in Andhra Pradesh operates within multiple policy frameworks:

- **National Biodiversity Targets and Biodiversity Action Plans**
- **State Forest and Environment Departments**, which integrate biodiversity conservation in land-use planning
- **Botanical gardens and academic institutions** acting as ex-situ conservation hubs

After India ratified key biodiversity conventions, state agencies have initiated species assessments aligned with IUCN Red List categories, as seen in the first red list of medicinal plants for Andhra Pradesh, where 39 of 50 prioritized medicinal taxa were found to be under threat.

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4.2 Protected Areas and Biosphere Reserves

Protected areas, including the **Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve**, play a crucial role in conserving plant biodiversity. As the first biosphere reserve in Andhra Pradesh and part of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme, Seshachalam encompasses diverse forests of the Eastern Ghats and serves as a refuge for many rare plant species.

Other protected forest landscapes, community reserves, and sacred groves also provide in-situ conservation opportunities.

5. Conservation Strategies and Initiatives

5.1 In-Situ Conservation

In-situ conservation focuses on protecting species within their natural habitats and involves:

5.1.1 Protected Area Management

Strengthening protected area governance, demarcating boundaries, limiting extractive use, and preventing encroachments are fundamental for conserving endemic species.

5.1.2 Sacred Groves and Community Conservation

Sacred groves — culturally revered forest patches — act as micro-reserves for endemic taxa. Conservation plans must engage local communities to revitalize traditional protection systems and integrate them into modern biodiversity strategies.

5.1.3 Eco-Restoration Initiatives

State initiatives such as the "Great Green Wall" and target green cover expansions aim to restore ecological connectivity and resilience across degraded landscapes — indirectly benefiting plant species by enhancing habitat quality and structural diversity.

5.2 Ex-Situ Conservation

Ex-situ conservation provides an insurance policy against extinction by maintaining species outside their natural settings.

5.2.1 Botanical Gardens and Universities

Botanical gardens and university centres play a pivotal role in plant conservation. For example, **Andhra University Botanical Garden** is actively conserving around **30 endemic plant species** — including endangered cycads (*Cycas beddomei*), trees like *Boswellia ovalifoliolata*, climbers such as *Argyreia arakuensis*, and herbs like *Andrographis beddomei*. These gardens propagate, maintain, and study rare species for research and potential reintroduction.

Another study at **Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa** reported ex-situ conservation efforts for endemic and threatened species — showcasing university botanical gardens as repositories for rare plant germplasm.

5.2.2 Seed Germination and Propagation Research

Research focused on improving seed germination and propagation methods for threatened species can enhance ex-situ conservation efficacy. Techniques such as seed scarification, controlled germination, and propagation protocols assist in increasing propagation success for rare taxa. A study involving six threatened species of Andhra Pradesh highlighted the importance of such methods in facilitating macro-propagation.

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5.3 Biotechnological and Participatory Approaches

Modern approaches include:

- **Seed banking** for long-term storage of genetic material
- **Tissue culture and micro-propagation** for species with limited natural regeneration
- **Community seed networks** where villagers collect and cultivate native seeds for restoration projects

6. Challenges in Implementing Conservation

Despite ongoing efforts, plant conservation in Andhra Pradesh faces persistent challenges:

- **Limited funding and resources** for sustained in-situ management and research
- **Ecological monitoring gaps** — inadequate data on population trends and reproductive ecology
- **Human-wildlife conflicts** and agricultural pressures that affect core habitats
- **Institutional coordination** between government departments, research bodies, and civil society

Addressing these hurdles requires multi-stakeholder collaboration, long-term monitoring, and community participation.

7. Recommendations

To strengthen conservation outcomes, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Expand Protected Area Coverage** to include key endemic plant hotspots identified through floristic surveys.
2. **Enhance Community-Led Conservation** by integrating traditional ecological knowledge, such as sacred groves protection, with formal biodiversity programs.
3. **Scale Up Ex-Situ Infrastructure** including botanical gardens, seed banks, and nurseries dedicated to threatened species.
4. **Invest in Research and Monitoring** for demographic studies, climate vulnerability assessments, and reproductive biology of endemic taxa.
5. **Policy Integration** that mainstreams plant conservation objectives into land-use planning, agriculture, and developmental projects.

8. Conclusion

Andhra Pradesh represents a region of significant botanical diversity, housing numerous endemic and threatened plant species across its varied landscapes. While institutional policies, in-situ protections, and ex-situ programs offer frameworks for conservation, the rapid rate of habitat change demands intensified efforts. Combining traditional conservation practices, scientific research, community engagement, and strategic policy support can enhance the protection of the state's unique plant heritage — ensuring ecosystem resilience and sustainable development for future generations.

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17. **Reddy, C. S., et al.** (Year). *Conservation prioritization of endemic plants of Eastern Ghats, India*. **ResearchGate Publication**.
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TABLE 1 In -Situ Conservation-Sacred groves with Endemic and Threatened plants in AP

Sacred Grove / Location	**Region / District**	**Endemic & Threatened Plant Species Recorded**	**Conservation Status / Significance**
Polathala Sacred Grove	YSR (Kadapa) District	*Shorea tumbuggaia*, *Terminalia pallida*, *Boswellia ovalifoliolata*	Eastern Ghats endemics; several species listed as **Endangered (EN)** and **Vulnerable (VU)**
Thimmappakonda Sacred Grove	Anantapur District	*Hardwickia binata*, *Santalum album*, *Chloroxylon swietenia*	Dry deciduous endemics; **threatened by habitat loss**
Gorabanda Sacred Grove	Alluri Sitharama Raju District	*Tectona grandis*, *Chloroxylon swietenia*, *Pterocarpus marsupium*	Contains **Vulnerable and regionally threatened species**
Borra (Ananthagiri) Sacred Grove	Visakhapatnam District	*Syzygium alternifolium*, *Michelia champaca*, orchids	Eastern Ghats endemics; **rare and medicinal taxa**
Seshachalam Sacred Groves	Tirupati–Chittoor Region	*Pterocarpus santalinus*, *Shorea tumbuggaia*, *Terminalia pallida*	**Biosphere Reserve**; globally **Endangered & endemic species**

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Papikonda Sacred Forest Patches	East & West Godavari	*Boswellia serrata*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Madhuca longifolia*	Tribal sacred landscape conserving **threatened dry forest flora**
Nallamala Sacred Groves	Kurnool–Prakasam	*Cycas beddomei*, *Strychnos nux-vomica*, *Terminalia chebula*	Houses **critically endangered Cycas** species
Araku Valley Sacred Groves	Alluri Sitharama Raju District	*Syzygium alternifolium*, *Toona ciliata*, endemic orchids	Montane Eastern Ghats endemics; **habitat-specific rare plants**

TABLE 2 Ex-Situ Conservation-Botanical gardens with Endemic and Threatened plants in AP

Botanical Garden / Facility	Location (District)	Key Endemic / Threatened Plants Conserved	Conservation & Features
Yogi Vemana University Botanical Garden	Kadapa (YSR District)	*Cycas beddomei* (Vulnerable) *Cycas seshachalamensis* (Cycad) •*Pterocarpus santalinus*, *Boswellia ovalifoliolata* • *Syzygium alternifolium*, *Santalum album*, *Hildegardia populifolia* • *Terminalia bellirica*, *Dalbergia latifolia*	This garden is a **lead botanical garden for Eastern Ghats RET (rare, endemic, threatened) plants**, with ~955 indigenous and exotic taxa maintained for ex-situ propagation, greenhouses, and tissue culture labs for RET species.
Andhra University Botanical Garden	Visakhapatnam (Urban)	*Cycas beddomei* (EN) • *Albizia thompsonii* (EN) • *Boswellia ovalifoliolata* (VU) • *Syzygium alternifolium* (EN) • *Decalepis hamiltonii* (EN) • *Kalanchoe cherukondensis* (endemic)	Initiated a project to conserve **~30 rare and endemic Eastern Ghats plant species**, including endangered gymnosperms, shrubs, herbs, and climbers for ex-situ preservation and research.

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		• *Andrographis beddomei* (endemic) • *Argyreia arakuensis* (EN)	
Biodiversity Park – Botanical Garden	Visakhapatnam (Pedda Waltair)	Cultivates *Pterocarpus santalinus*, *Santalum album*, *Butea monosperma* (all rare/endangered regional taxa) • Sacred grove species including culturally significant rare trees	This 3-acre botanical garden has *>2,000 plant varieties* including rare/endangered taxa from different zones — sacred plants, medicinal herbs, cacti/succulents, aquatic species, and living fossil gymnosperms — contributing to ex-situ conservation.

Figure -1 Author with *Rauwolfia serpentina* – endangered species (IUCN) conserved in Biodiversity park Visakhapatnam



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Figure 2- *Cycas beddomei*-endemic and endangered species conserved in Botany department, Andhra University



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Ethnomedicinal Utilization of Tuberous Plants for the Treatment of Human Ailments in the Polavaram Area of West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India

Yeleti Vijaya Kumar[1]and Prema Chandra Sekhar[2]

1.Department of Botany, SCIM Government College, Autonomous, Tanuku , West Godavari, A.P., India.
2. SGA Govt. Degree College, Yelamanchili, Anakapalli District, A.P., India
Corresponding author : Vijayakumar.yeleti@gmail.com

Abstract

An ethnomedicinal survey was conducted in the Polavaram region of West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India, to document the traditional utilization of tuberous medicinal plants by indigenous communities. Field investigations employing semi-structured interviews, guided field walks, and quantitative ethnobotanical indices recorded 14 tuberous species belonging to 10 families, representing 23 use-reports (UR). Family-wise analysis revealed the dominance of Dioscoreaceae (21.43%), followed by Liliaceae and Cucurbitaceae (14.29% each). Gastrointestinal disorders constituted the principal therapeutic category (34.78%), indicating a strong reliance on underground plant parts for digestive ailments. Pueraria tuberosa emerged as the most culturally significant species (5 UR; 21.74%), with reported applications in cough, rheumatism, nervous disorders, and skin diseases. Other frequently cited taxa included Asparagus racemosus and Cyperus rotundus. Comparative evaluation with earlier ethnobotanical and pharmacological studies supports the therapeutic relevance of these taxa. However, destructive harvesting of underground organs poses conservation challenges, necessitating sustainable management strategies and scientific validation. The study contributes region-specific quantitative data to the ethnomedicinal literature of Andhra Pradesh and underscores the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge systems.

Keywords: Ethnomedicine; Tuberous plants; Use reports; Indigenous knowledge; Polavaram; Andhra Pradesh.

1. Introduction

India possesses rich ethnobotanical heritage, particularly among tribal communities that rely extensively on plant-based healthcare systems (Jain, 1964). Ethnobotanical documentation plays a vital role in preserving indigenous knowledge and identifying pharmacologically active species (Martin, 1995). Tuberous plants are especially important in traditional medicine due to their storage organs rich in bioactive compounds including alkaloids, glycosides, flavonoids, and saponins. Underground plant parts are widely used in Ayurvedic and folk medicine systems (Phillips & Gentry, 1993). The tribal communities inhabiting the Polavaram region of West Godavari District depend on forest flora for primary healthcare. Previous studies in Andhra Pradesh have documented medicinal plants for gastrointestinal, respiratory, and dermatological disorders (Raju & Reddy, 2005; Reddy et al., 2007; Suneetha et al., 2013). However, specific documentation of tuberous medicinal plants in the Polavaram area remains limited. The present investigation aims to systematically document and analyze tuberous medicinal plants used in the region.

2. Study Area

Polavaram is situated in the northern part of West Godavari District along the Godavari River basin. The region is characterized by tropical deciduous forests and supports diverse flora. The local tribal populations maintain strong ethnomedicinal traditions.

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3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Data Collection

Field surveys were conducted using semi-structured interviews, guided field walks, and personal discussions with traditional healers, following standard ethnobotanical methodologies (Martin, 1995). Use Reports (UR) were calculated following the quantitative approach of Phillips and Gentry (1993). Disease categories were grouped to evaluate therapeutic trends.

3.2 Identification and Authentication

Plant specimens were identified using regional floras viz. Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty (2009) and few other local floras and standard botanical literature and cross-verified with standard botanical references.

4. Results

A total of 14 tuberous medicinal plant species belonging to 10 families were recorded. Dioscoreaceae was the dominant family (21.43%), followed by Liliaceae and Cucurbitaceae (14.29% each). A total of 23 use-reports were documented. Gastrointestinal disorders accounted for the highest percentage (34.78%), followed by respiratory ailments (17.39%). The most cited species was *Pueraria tuberosa* (5 UR; 21.74%), indicating high cultural and therapeutic significance. The complete information is provided in Tables 1–3.

Table 1. List of Tuberous Medicinal Plants and Use Reports

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	No. of Use Reports (UR)	Relative Frequency (%)
1	Asparagus racemosus	Liliaceae	2	8.70
2	Coccinia grandis	Cucurbitaceae	1	4.35
3	Curcuma pseudomontana	Zingiberaceae	1	4.35
4	Cyperus rotundus	Cyperaceae	2	8.70
5	Dioscorea bulbifera	Dioscoreaceae	1	4.35
6	Dioscorea glabra	Dioscoreaceae	1	4.35
7	Dioscorea oppositifolia	Dioscoreaceae	1	4.35
8	Gloriosa superba	Liliaceae	2	8.70
9	Habenaria plantaginea	Orchidaceae	2	8.70
10	Ipomoea hederifolia	Convolvulaceae	1	4.35

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S.No	Botanical Name	Family	No. of Use Reports (UR)	Relative Frequency (%)
11	Mirabilis jalapa	Nyctaginaceae	2	8.70
12	Musa paradisiaca	Musaceae	1	4.35
13	Pueraria tuberosa	Fabaceae	5	21.74
14	Trichosanthes tricuspidata	Cucurbitaceae	1	4.35

Table 2. Family-wise Distribution of Species

Family	No. of Species	Percentage (%)
Dioscoreaceae	3	21.43
Liliaceae	2	14.29
Cucurbitaceae	2	14.29
Fabaceae	1	7.14
Cyperaceae	1	7.14
Zingiberaceae	1	7.14
Orchidaceae	1	7.14
Convolvulaceae	1	7.14
Nyctaginaceae	1	7.14
Musaceae	1	7.14

Table 3. Disease Category-wise Distribution of Use Reports

Disease Category	Use Reports (UR)	Percentage (%)
Gastrointestinal disorders	8	34.78
Respiratory ailments	4	17.39

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Disease Category	Use Reports (UR)	Percentage (%)
Skin diseases	2	8.70
Wounds	1	4.35
Muscle pain	1	4.35
Rheumatism	1	4.35
Nervous disorders	1	4.35
Burning sensation	1	4.35
Cooling agent	1	4.35
Abortions	1	4.35
Dysmenorrhoea	1	4.35
Leprosy	1	4.35

5. Discussion

The predominance of gastrointestinal treatments aligns with earlier reports from Andhra Pradesh, where digestive ailments constitute the primary therapeutic category (Raju & Reddy, 2005). Poor sanitation and water-borne infections may contribute to this trend. The extensive use of *Asparagus racemosus* for diarrhoea and dysentery supports earlier pharmacological findings highlighting its anti-diarrhoeal and adaptogenic properties (Goyal et al., 2003). *Cyperus rotundus* is widely recognized for its carminative and diuretic properties, corroborating its traditional use for stomachache (Singh et al., 2012). The multipurpose use of *Pueraria tuberosa* for cough, rheumatism, nervous disorders, and skin diseases is supported by antioxidant and anti-inflammatory studies (Pandey & Tripathi, 2010). Its highest citation frequency in the present study confirms its broad ethnopharmacological relevance. The presence of *Gloriosa superba* for abortion and skin diseases reflects deep indigenous knowledge of potent bioactive compounds, particularly colchicine, though the species is known to be toxic (Sivakumar & Krishnamurthy, 2002). The dominance of Dioscoreaceae corresponds with the widespread medicinal and nutritional importance of yam species in tropical regions (Coursey, 1967). Comparative analysis with other tribal regions of Andhra Pradesh indicates strong similarities in respiratory and dermatological applications (Reddy et al., 2007; Suneetha et al., 2013).

7. Conclusion

The present study documents 14 tuberous medicinal plant species used in Polavaram area of West Godavari District. Gastrointestinal ailments represent the dominant therapeutic category, while *Pueraria tuberosa* emerged as the most culturally significant species. The findings validate traditional knowledge through comparison with earlier ethnobotanical and pharmacological studies. However, destructive harvesting practices necessitate immediate conservation measures. Scientific validation and sustainable management are essential to preserve these valuable ethnomedicinal resources.

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Conservation of Endemic and Threatened Species under Climate Change and Anthropogenic Pressures: Biodiversity Management with Special Reference to the Seshachalam Forest and the Tirumala–Tirupati Landscape

Nagaraju Koppu

Lecturer in zoology, Smt.N.P.S Government College for Women, (A), Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author: Nagaraju Koppu, koppunagarajumail@gmail.com

Abstract

The Seshachalam Forest and Tirumala–Tirupati landscape in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, India, represents a critical biodiversity hotspot facing unprecedented pressures from climate change, rapid urbanization, industrialization, and intensive pilgrimage activities. This paper examines the synergistic impacts of these stressors on endemic and threatened species, with particular emphasis on the unique conservation challenges posed by sacred landscape management. Climate projections indicate potential habitat loss of 40-60% for rare, endangered, and threatened (RET) and endemic plant species, while anthropogenic pressures including urban expansion, industrial pollution, and annual pilgrim influx exceeding 30 million visitors to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams compound biodiversity threats. The paper synthesizes current scientific evidence on species vulnerability, habitat fragmentation, and ecosystem service degradation, while proposing integrated conservation strategies that balance ecological imperatives with socio-cultural realities. Key recommendations include climate-resilient landscape-level planning, regulation of urban-industrial growth near forest boundaries, sustainable pilgrimage management based on carrying capacity assessments, strengthened in-situ conservation, and enhanced community participation. The paper emphasizes the urgent need for integrated governance frameworks involving state forest departments, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, urban planners, and local communities to ensure long-term biodiversity conservation in this ecologically significant yet anthropogenically stressed sacred landscape.

Keywords: Seshachalam Forest, Eastern Ghats, endemic species, climate change, pilgrimage ecology, sacred landscapes, biodiversity conservation, Tirumala Hills, anthropogenic pressures, integrated conservation management

1. Introduction: Biodiversity Conservation in a Changing Socio-Ecological Landscape

1.1 Global and Indian Context of Biodiversity Loss

Biodiversity loss has emerged as one of the defining environmental crises of the 21st century, with species extinction rates accelerating at an unprecedented pace due to the combined effects of climate change, habitat destruction, and anthropogenic pressures (Ramachandran et al., 2020). The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has documented that approximately one million species face extinction, many within decades, unless transformative action is taken. In the Indian context, biodiversity hotspots such as the Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats face particularly acute threats due to their high endemism coupled with intense human pressures (Sivaraj et al., 2020).

The Eastern Ghats, stretching over 1,750 km along India's eastern coast, harbor exceptional floristic and faunal diversity, including numerous endemic and threatened species (Behera et al., 2024). However, this biodiversity-rich region has experienced extensive fragmentation due to agricultural expansion, mining, urbanization, and infrastructure development (Ramachandran et al., 2018). Climate change further exacerbates these pressures through altered precipitation patterns, increased temperature extremes, and heightened drought frequency, creating novel stressors for species already constrained by habitat loss (Banerjee et al., 2021).

1.2 Anthropogenic Pressures on Forest Ecosystems

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Contemporary forest ecosystems face multifaceted anthropogenic pressures that operate at multiple spatial and temporal scales. Urbanization and industrialization drive direct habitat conversion, pollution, and fragmentation, while also generating indirect effects through altered hydrology, microclimate modification, and introduction of invasive species (Aditya et al., 2019). In India, rapid economic growth has intensified these pressures, particularly in peri-urban forest landscapes where conservation objectives collide with development imperatives.

The Eastern Ghats exemplify this conservation-development tension, with population growth projected to increase at 1.12% annually, driving expansion of built-up areas from 3,665 km² in 2015 to an estimated 3,989.56 km² by 2050 (Ramachandran et al., 2020). This urban expansion not only directly consumes forest habitat but also creates edge effects, facilitates human-wildlife conflict, and disrupts ecological connectivity essential for species persistence (Shanu et al., 2019).

1.3 The Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati Region: A Conservation-Development Interface

The Seshachalam Forest and Tirumala–Tirupati landscape in Andhra Pradesh represents a unique and complex conservation challenge where ecological significance intersects with intense religious, cultural, and economic activities. The region encompasses the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve, designated for its exceptional biodiversity including endemic species such as Shorea tumbuggaia (red sanders), numerous medicinal plants, and threatened fauna including the Indian pangolin (Manis crassicaudata) (Bharathi et al., n.d.; Aditya et al., 2021).

What distinguishes this landscape is the presence of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) temple complex, one of the world's most visited religious sites, attracting over 30 million pilgrims annually. This creates an extraordinary conservation paradox: a biodiversity hotspot subjected to massive, sustained human visitation that generates significant ecological pressures through waste generation, vehicular emissions, infrastructure development, and direct disturbance to wildlife (Elkin et al., 2018). Simultaneously, the rapid urbanization of Tirupati city and surrounding industrial development compound these pressures, creating a multi-stressor environment that threatens the region's endemic and threatened species.

1.4 Objectives and Scope

This paper systematically examines the conservation challenges facing endemic and threatened species in the Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape under the combined pressures of climate change, urbanization, industrialization, and pilgrimage activities. The analysis synthesizes current scientific evidence on species vulnerability, habitat degradation, and ecosystem impacts, while proposing integrated management strategies that acknowledge the socio-cultural significance of this sacred landscape. The paper aims to contribute to both scientific understanding and policy development for biodiversity conservation in anthropogenically stressed sacred landscapes, offering insights applicable to similar contexts globally.

2. Ecological and Biogeographical Significance of the Study Area

2.1 Forest Type, Climate, and Ecosystem Characteristics

The Seshachalam Forest is characterized by tropical dry deciduous and dry evergreen forest types, representing a unique ecological transition zone within the Eastern Ghats (Prasad et al., 2019). The region experiences a tropical climate with distinct seasonal patterns: hot summers (March-May) with temperatures reaching 40-45°C, a southwest monsoon season (June-September) providing the majority of annual rainfall (900-1,200 mm), and a relatively cool winter (November-February). This climatic regime supports a distinctive vegetation assemblage adapted to seasonal moisture stress and high temperature variability.

The forest structure exhibits characteristic stratification with a canopy dominated by species such as Pterocarpus santalinus (red sanders), Terminalia spp., Anogeissus latifolia, and Chloroxylon swietenia, with an understory rich in shrubs, climbers, and herbaceous species (Behera et al., 2023). The Tirumala Hills, rising to elevations of approximately 850 meters, create

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orographic effects that generate localized microclimates supporting distinct plant communities, including several endemic species restricted to these higher elevations.

2.2 Ecosystem Services

The Seshachalam Forest provides critical ecosystem services that extend far beyond the immediate landscape. Hydrological services include watershed protection, groundwater recharge, and regulation of stream flow for the Swarnamukhi and Kalyani river systems, which support agriculture and urban water supply for Tirupati and surrounding areas. The forest acts as a significant carbon sink, contributing to climate regulation, while also moderating local temperatures and humidity through evapotranspiration.

Biodiversity-related services include maintenance of genetic diversity, pollination services for agricultural systems, and provision of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) including medicinal plants that support local livelihoods (Sivaraj et al., 2017). Cultural ecosystem services are particularly significant, with the Tirumala Hills holding profound spiritual importance in Hindu tradition, attracting millions of pilgrims and generating substantial economic activity. However, the sustainability of these services is increasingly threatened by the cumulative impacts of climate change and anthropogenic pressures.

2.3 Endemism and Threatened Species Richness

The Seshachalam region harbors exceptional levels of endemism, particularly among plant species. The area is renowned as the primary habitat for Pterocarpus santalinus (red sanders), an endemic tree species listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List due to overexploitation for its valuable timber (Kumari, n.d.). Shorea tumbuggaia, another endemic species, faces critical extinction risk due to habitat loss and climate change impacts (Kumari, n.d.).

Floristic surveys have documented 28 endemic plant species and 22 rare, endangered, and threatened (RET) species within the broader Eastern Ghats region, with significant concentrations in the Seshachalam landscape (Ramachandran et al., 2020). Medicinal plant diversity is particularly notable, with numerous species utilized in traditional Ayurvedic and tribal medicine systems, many of which face overexploitation pressures (Sivaraj et al., 2020).

Faunal diversity includes several threatened species. The Indian pangolin (Manis crassicaudata), listed as Endangered, persists in the Seshachalam forests despite poaching pressures (Aditya et al., 2021). Camera trap studies and community knowledge integration have documented the presence of leopards, sloth bears, and various ungulate species, though population densities remain poorly quantified. Avifaunal diversity includes several endemic and threatened species adapted to the dry deciduous forest ecosystem.

2.4 Protected Status and Conservation Value

The Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve, designated to protect this unique biodiversity, encompasses approximately 4,755.997 km² and includes multiple protected areas with varying levels of legal protection. The core zones receive the highest protection, restricting human activities to conservation and research, while buffer zones permit regulated resource use by local communities. The Tirumala Hills fall within this protected landscape, creating a unique governance challenge where religious administration (TTD) intersects with forest department jurisdiction.

The conservation value of this landscape extends beyond species diversity to include its role as a genetic reservoir for endemic taxa, its function as a biodiversity corridor connecting fragmented forest patches across the Eastern Ghats, and its significance for climate change adaptation research (Shanu et al., 2019). However, the effectiveness of protected area management is constrained by limited resources, inadequate enforcement, and the complex socio-political dynamics surrounding sacred landscape management and urban development pressures.

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3. Impact of Climate Change on Endemic and Threatened Species

3.1 Temperature Rise, Rainfall Variability, and Drought Frequency

Climate change projections for the Eastern Ghats indicate significant alterations in temperature and precipitation regimes that will fundamentally reshape habitat suitability for endemic and threatened species. Regional climate models predict temperature increases of 2-4°C by 2070 under various IPCC scenarios, with particularly pronounced warming during pre-monsoon months (Ramachandran et al., 2020). These temperature increases exceed the adaptive capacity of many endemic plant species that have evolved under relatively stable thermal regimes.

Rainfall patterns show increasing variability, with projections indicating more intense precipitation events interspersed with longer dry periods (Banerjee et al., 2021). This altered precipitation regime affects soil moisture availability, a critical determinant of plant distribution in seasonally dry tropical forests. Drought frequency and intensity are projected to increase, creating physiological stress for species already adapted to marginal moisture conditions. The Seshachalam region, characterized by relatively low annual rainfall (900-1,200 mm), is particularly vulnerable to these changes, as many species operate near their physiological tolerance limits.

3.2 Habitat Shifts and Range Contractions

Species distribution modeling using MaxEnt and similar approaches has revealed alarming projections for endemic and RET species in the Eastern Ghats. Simulations indicate that the combined effects of climate change and land use change will reduce potential habitat for endemic species by approximately 60% and for RET species by approximately 40% by 2050-2070 (Ramachandran et al., 2020). These habitat contractions reflect both direct climate impacts on physiological tolerance and indirect effects through altered competitive interactions and ecosystem processes.

For endemic species with restricted ranges, such as Shorea tumbuggaia and Pterocarpus santalinus, habitat shifts pose existential threats. Unlike widespread species that can track suitable climate conditions through range shifts, narrow endemics confined to specific geological substrates or elevation zones face severe constraints on dispersal and establishment in new areas (Kumari, n.d.). The fragmented nature of the Eastern Ghats landscape further impedes range shifts by creating dispersal barriers and reducing connectivity between suitable habitat patches.

Elevational shifts represent a particular concern for species restricted to the Tirumala Hills. As temperatures increase, species adapted to cooler conditions at higher elevations face "summit traps" where upward range shifts are constrained by limited available habitat at higher elevations. This phenomenon threatens several endemic plant species found in the upper elevation zones of the Tirumala Hills.

3.3 Phenological Changes and Ecological Disruptions

Climate change induces phenological shifts—changes in the timing of life cycle events such as flowering, fruiting, and leaf flush—that can disrupt ecological interactions essential for species persistence. In tropical dry deciduous forests, many species exhibit phenological synchrony with seasonal rainfall patterns. Altered precipitation timing can desynchronize these relationships, affecting pollination success, seed dispersal, and herbivore interactions (Banerjee et al., 2021).

For endemic plant species, phenological disruptions may reduce reproductive success if flowering occurs when pollinators are absent or if seed maturation coincides with unfavorable conditions for germination and establishment. These effects are particularly concerning for species with specialized pollination systems or those dependent on specific dispersal agents. Cascading effects through food webs may further amplify impacts, as changes in plant phenology affect herbivore populations, which in turn influence predator communities.

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3.4 Increased Extinction Risk for Endemic Species

The convergence of restricted ranges, specialized habitat requirements, and limited adaptive capacity renders endemic species particularly vulnerable to climate change-driven extinction. Population viability analyses, though limited for most Seshachalam endemics, suggest that even modest habitat reductions can trigger population declines below minimum viable thresholds, especially when combined with other stressors such as habitat fragmentation and overexploitation (Kumari, n.d.).

Shorea tumbuggaia exemplifies this vulnerability. Already classified as critically endangered due to habitat loss and limited regeneration, climate change further constrains suitable habitat, potentially pushing the species toward extinction in the wild (Kumari, n.d.). Similarly, numerous endemic medicinal plants face compounded threats from climate change and overharvesting, creating synergistic pressures that exceed the resilience capacity of small, isolated populations (Sivaraj et al., 2020).

3.5 Climate–Anthropogenic Interaction Effects

Perhaps most concerning are the synergistic interactions between climate change and anthropogenic pressures. Climate-induced stress reduces species resilience to other threats, while habitat fragmentation limits adaptive responses to climate change. For example, climate-stressed plants become more susceptible to pest outbreaks and disease, while fragmented populations lack the genetic diversity necessary for evolutionary adaptation to novel climate conditions (Ramachandran et al., 2020).

In the Seshachalam landscape, these interactions are particularly pronounced. Climate change-induced water stress is amplified by groundwater extraction for urban and agricultural use, creating cumulative moisture deficits that exceed natural drought conditions. Similarly, climate-driven range shifts are impeded by urban development and agricultural lands that create dispersal barriers, trapping species in increasingly unsuitable habitats. Understanding and managing these interaction effects represents a critical challenge for conservation planning in the region.

4. Urbanisation and Industrialisation around Tirupati

4.1 Rapid Urban Expansion and Land-Use Change

Tirupati has experienced explosive urban growth over recent decades, driven by its role as a major pilgrimage center, educational hub, and regional economic center. Population growth rates exceeding 1% annually have fueled spatial expansion of the urban footprint, with built-up areas projected to increase from 3,665 km² in 2015 to 3,989.56 km² by 2050 across the broader Eastern Ghats region, with concentrated growth around Tirupati (Ramachandran et al., 2020). This urban expansion directly consumes forest and agricultural land, creating a matrix of developed areas that fragment remaining natural habitats.

Land-use change analysis reveals a pattern of peri-urban sprawl extending along major transportation corridors and encroaching on forest boundaries. Satellite imagery and community perceptions document significant forest cover loss, with local communities reporting visible declines in forest extent and quality over recent decades (Aditya et al., 2019). This deforestation not only reduces absolute habitat area but also creates extensive edge effects that alter microclimate, facilitate invasive species establishment, and increase human-wildlife interactions.

4.2 Industrial Growth and Associated Pollution

Industrial development around Tirupati, including manufacturing, food processing, and service industries catering to the pilgrimage economy, generates multiple pollution streams that impact adjacent forest ecosystems. Air pollution from industrial emissions and vehicular traffic introduces particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide that can affect

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plant physiology, reduce photosynthetic efficiency, and alter soil chemistry through atmospheric deposition (Behera et al., 2023).

Water pollution represents a particularly severe threat. Industrial effluents, inadequately treated sewage, and urban runoff contaminate streams and rivers that flow through or originate in the Seshachalam Forest. These pollutants affect aquatic ecosystems, reduce water quality for wildlife, and can bioaccumulate in food webs. Noise pollution from industrial activities and urban areas extends into adjacent forest habitats, potentially affecting wildlife behavior, communication, and reproductive success.

4.3 Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure expansion to support urban growth and pilgrimage activities has created a dense network of roads, housing developments, and tourism facilities that fragment wildlife habitats and disrupt ecological processes. Road construction through forest areas creates direct mortality risks for wildlife through vehicle collisions, while also acting as barriers to movement for many species (Shanu et al., 2019). The proliferation of linear infrastructure has effectively subdivided the Seshachalam landscape into smaller, more isolated habitat patches.

Housing developments and tourism infrastructure on the periphery of protected areas create permanent human presence in formerly wild areas, increasing disturbance levels and creating opportunities for human-wildlife conflict. The expansion of guesthouses, hotels, and associated facilities to accommodate pilgrims has extended development into ecologically sensitive areas, particularly on the slopes of the Tirumala Hills.

4.4 Fragmentation of Wildlife Habitats and Disruption of Ecological Corridors

The cumulative effect of urbanization and infrastructure development has been severe habitat fragmentation, transforming the once-continuous Seshachalam Forest into an archipelago of isolated patches embedded in a human-dominated matrix. This fragmentation has profound ecological consequences, reducing effective habitat area, isolating populations, and disrupting ecological processes that depend on landscape-scale connectivity (Shanu et al., 2019).

Ecological corridors that historically connected the Seshachalam Forest with other Eastern Ghats forest blocks have been severed or severely degraded, impeding gene flow and limiting species' ability to track suitable habitats under climate change. Graph-theoretic analyses of landscape connectivity reveal that many potential movement corridors have been compromised by development, creating isolated habitat nodes with limited functional connectivity (Shanu et al., 2019). This isolation is particularly problematic for wide-ranging species such as leopards and for species requiring access to diverse habitat types across their life cycles.

The disruption of ecological corridors also affects ecosystem processes such as seed dispersal, pollination, and nutrient cycling that depend on animal movement across landscapes. As corridors are lost, these processes become constrained, potentially triggering cascading effects on plant community composition and ecosystem function.

5. Pilgrimage-Induced Pressure on Tirumala Hills Biodiversity

5.1 Scale of Pilgrim Influx to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) temple complex represents one of the world's most visited religious sites, with annual pilgrim numbers exceeding 30 million and peak periods witnessing over 100,000 visitors per day. This extraordinary visitation rate creates sustained, intense anthropogenic pressure on the Tirumala Hills ecosystem that is unparalleled in most protected areas globally. The pilgrimage is not seasonal but occurs year-round, providing no respite periods for ecosystem recovery (Elkin et al., 2018).

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The spatial concentration of pilgrims along specific routes and at designated sites creates localized hotspots of extreme disturbance. Pilgrims traverse forest paths, congregate at viewpoints and sacred sites, and generate demand for extensive support infrastructure including transportation, accommodation, food services, and waste management facilities. Managing this massive human presence while maintaining biodiversity conservation objectives represents a formidable challenge unique to sacred landscape management.

5.2 Solid Waste Generation and Plastic Pollution

Solid waste generation from pilgrimage activities constitutes a major environmental challenge. With millions of visitors annually, the volume of waste—including food waste, plastic bottles, packaging materials, and religious offerings—is substantial. Despite TTD's waste management efforts, the sheer scale of waste generation overwhelms collection and disposal systems, resulting in accumulation of waste in forest areas, along pathways, and in water bodies.

Plastic pollution is particularly problematic due to its persistence and ecological impacts. Plastic waste entangles wildlife, is ingested by animals mistaking it for food, and degrades into microplastics that enter soil and water systems. The accumulation of non-biodegradable waste in the Tirumala Hills ecosystem represents a long-term contamination issue that affects soil quality, water purity, and wildlife health. Despite initiatives to reduce plastic use and improve waste segregation, the magnitude of the challenge continues to exceed management capacity.

5.3 Sewage Discharge and Water Quality Impacts

The concentration of millions of pilgrims in a relatively small area generates enormous quantities of sewage that must be collected, treated, and disposed of without contaminating the surrounding ecosystem. While TTD has invested in sewage treatment infrastructure, the capacity of these systems is frequently exceeded during peak pilgrimage periods, resulting in inadequately treated effluent discharge into streams and rivers flowing through the Tirumala Hills.

This sewage contamination affects aquatic ecosystems, introduces pathogens and nutrients that alter water chemistry, and impacts downstream water quality for both wildlife and human communities. Eutrophication from nutrient loading can trigger algal blooms, reduce dissolved oxygen levels, and fundamentally alter aquatic community composition. The cumulative impact of chronic sewage discharge represents a significant threat to the ecological integrity of water resources in the Seshachalam landscape.

5.4 Vehicular Emissions and Noise Affecting Wildlife Behavior

Transportation of millions of pilgrims to the hilltop temple complex generates substantial vehicular traffic, with buses, cars, and other vehicles traversing forest roads continuously. This traffic produces air pollution through exhaust emissions, contributing to atmospheric contamination that affects plant health and ecosystem processes. More immediately, vehicular noise creates a pervasive acoustic disturbance that extends throughout the Tirumala Hills.

Wildlife behavioral studies, though limited in this specific context, demonstrate that chronic noise pollution affects animal communication, predator-prey interactions, reproductive behavior, and habitat use patterns. Species that rely on acoustic signals for mate attraction, territorial defense, or predator detection are particularly vulnerable. The constant noise from vehicles, combined with human voices and other anthropogenic sounds, may effectively render portions of the Tirumala Hills unsuitable for noise-sensitive species, creating functional habitat loss even where physical habitat remains intact (Elkin et al., 2018).

5.5 Trampling of Vegetation and Disturbance to Fragile Hill Ecosystems

Direct physical disturbance from millions of pilgrims traversing forest paths creates severe impacts on vegetation and soils. Trampling compacts soils, reduces infiltration capacity, increases erosion, and damages or kills vegetation along pathways.

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In the Tirumala Hills, where many endemic plant species occur in localized populations, trampling can directly threaten rare species if they occur along heavily used routes.

The cumulative effect of sustained trampling is the creation of denuded corridors through otherwise intact forest, with cascading effects on microclimate, soil moisture, and plant community composition. Regeneration of vegetation in heavily trampled areas is impeded by soil compaction and continued disturbance, creating persistent degraded zones. The fragile nature of hill ecosystems, with thin soils and steep slopes, makes them particularly vulnerable to erosion once vegetation cover is removed, potentially triggering landslides and long-term habitat degradation.

Beyond physical trampling, the sheer presence of large numbers of people creates disturbance that affects wildlife behavior. Many species avoid areas of high human activity, effectively excluding them from otherwise suitable habitat. This displacement can force wildlife into suboptimal habitats, increase competition in remaining undisturbed areas, and reduce overall population carrying capacity of the landscape.

6. Cumulative Impacts on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health

6.1 Synergistic Effects of Multiple Stressors

The Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape exemplifies how multiple stressors interact synergistically to produce impacts that exceed the sum of individual effects. Climate change, urbanization, industrialization, and pilgrimage pressures do not operate independently but rather interact in complex ways that amplify overall impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem function (Ramachandran et al., 2020). For example, climate-induced water stress is exacerbated by groundwater extraction for urban use and pollution from sewage discharge, creating cumulative moisture and water quality deficits that exceed any single stressor.

Similarly, habitat fragmentation from urban development reduces population sizes and genetic diversity, making species more vulnerable to climate change impacts. Small, isolated populations lack the genetic variation necessary for evolutionary adaptation to novel climate conditions and are more susceptible to stochastic extinction events. The interaction between fragmentation and climate change thus creates an "extinction vortex" where each stressor amplifies the effects of the other (Ramachandran et al., 2020).

Pollution from industrial and urban sources interacts with climate stress to reduce plant vigor and resilience. Plants experiencing moisture stress from altered rainfall patterns are less able to tolerate air pollution or soil contamination, while pollution-stressed plants are more vulnerable to climate extremes such as heat waves or droughts. These synergistic interactions mean that conservation strategies must address multiple stressors simultaneously rather than focusing on single threats in isolation.

6.2 Decline in Habitat Quality and Species Abundance

Cumulative stressor impacts manifest as measurable declines in habitat quality and species abundance across the Seshachalam landscape. Community-based monitoring and scientific surveys document reductions in forest cover, degradation of remaining forest patches, and declines in populations of indicator species (Aditya et al., 2019). While comprehensive, long-term population monitoring data are limited, available evidence suggests concerning trends for many endemic and threatened species.

Habitat quality degradation is evident in multiple indicators: reduced canopy cover, increased invasive species abundance, altered species composition favoring disturbance-tolerant generalists over endemic specialists, and degraded soil and water quality. These changes reflect the cumulative impacts of edge effects, pollution, altered hydrology, and direct disturbance from human activities. As habitat quality declines, carrying capacity for native species decreases, triggering population reductions even in areas that remain nominally "forested."

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For endemic species with specialized habitat requirements, even subtle habitat quality degradation can have severe consequences. Species adapted to intact forest interior conditions cannot persist in degraded edge habitats, while species requiring specific soil types, moisture regimes, or microclimatic conditions are eliminated as these conditions are altered by cumulative stressor impacts. The result is a gradual erosion of biodiversity, with endemic and threatened species disproportionately affected.

6.3 Increased Human–Wildlife Conflict

As natural habitats are degraded and fragmented, wildlife increasingly ventures into human-dominated areas in search of food, water, and shelter, creating escalating human-wildlife conflict. In the Eastern Ghats, including areas adjacent to Seshachalam, conflicts involving elephants, leopards, and other large mammals have increased in frequency and severity (Dharmaraj et al., 2017). These conflicts result in crop damage, livestock predation, property destruction, and occasionally human injuries or fatalities, generating negative attitudes toward wildlife conservation among local communities.

Human-wildlife conflict is exacerbated by several factors related to cumulative stressor impacts. Habitat degradation reduces natural food availability, forcing wildlife to seek alternative food sources in agricultural areas. Fragmentation creates more edge habitat where wildlife and humans interact, increasing encounter rates. Urban expansion brings human settlements closer to forest boundaries, creating more opportunities for conflict. Climate change-induced resource scarcity may further intensify competition between wildlife and humans for water and other resources.

The social and economic costs of human-wildlife conflict undermine conservation support among local communities and create political pressure for lethal wildlife management. Addressing conflict requires integrated approaches that restore habitat quality, maintain ecological connectivity, provide compensation for losses, and implement conflict mitigation measures such as barriers, early warning systems, and community-based monitoring (Dharmaraj et al., 2017).

6.4 Alteration of Ecosystem Services

Cumulative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem health translate into degradation of ecosystem services upon which human communities depend. Hydrological services are compromised as forest cover declines, soil compaction increases, and vegetation is degraded, reducing water infiltration and increasing surface runoff. This alteration affects groundwater recharge, stream flow regulation, and water quality, with consequences for urban water supply, agricultural irrigation, and aquatic ecosystems.

Carbon sequestration capacity declines as forest biomass is reduced through deforestation and degradation, diminishing the landscape's contribution to climate change mitigation. Local climate regulation services are impaired as vegetation cover decreases, potentially exacerbating urban heat island effects and reducing moisture availability. Pollination services may decline as pollinator populations are affected by habitat loss, pesticide exposure, and climate change, with potential consequences for agricultural productivity.

The degradation of cultural ecosystem services is particularly significant in this sacred landscape. The spiritual and aesthetic values that draw millions of pilgrims to Tirumala are intrinsically linked to the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the hills. As environmental quality declines—through visible pollution, degraded vegetation, and loss of wildlife—the pilgrimage experience itself is diminished, creating a paradox where the activities that express reverence for the sacred landscape simultaneously degrade the qualities that make it sacred (Elkin et al., 2018).

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7. Conservation and Biodiversity Management Strategies

7.1 Climate-Resilient and Landscape-Level Conservation Planning

Effective conservation in the Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape requires a paradigm shift from site-based protection to landscape-level, climate-resilient planning that addresses multiple stressors simultaneously. This approach recognizes that protected areas alone cannot ensure species persistence under climate change and must be embedded within broader landscapes that maintain connectivity, provide climate refugia, and support adaptive management (Ramachandran et al., 2020).

Climate-resilient conservation planning involves identifying and protecting climate refugia—areas where microclimatic conditions buffer against regional climate change, providing stable habitats for climate-sensitive species. In the Seshachalam landscape, higher elevation areas, north-facing slopes, and riparian zones may function as refugia and should receive priority protection. Connectivity planning must ensure that species can access these refugia and track suitable climate conditions across the landscape, requiring restoration and protection of ecological corridors (Shanu et al., 2019).

Landscape-level planning must integrate protected areas, buffer zones, and multiple-use areas into a coherent conservation network. This requires coordination across jurisdictional boundaries, involving forest departments, TTD, urban planning authorities, and agricultural agencies. Spatial planning tools such as systematic conservation planning and connectivity modeling can identify priority areas for protection and restoration, guiding land-use decisions to maintain ecological integrity while accommodating human needs.

7.2 Regulation of Urban and Industrial Growth Near Forest Boundaries

Controlling urban and industrial expansion near forest boundaries is essential to prevent further habitat loss and fragmentation. This requires robust land-use planning and zoning that designates forest buffer zones where development is prohibited or strictly regulated. Andhra Pradesh's forest and environmental regulations provide legal frameworks for such protection, but enforcement has been inconsistent, allowing encroachment and unauthorized development in ecologically sensitive areas.

Effective regulation requires several components: clear demarcation of forest boundaries and buffer zones, strict enforcement of building codes and environmental clearance requirements, penalties for violations that provide genuine deterrence, and monitoring systems that detect unauthorized development early. Green belts around protected areas can provide transition zones that buffer core habitats from urban impacts while providing recreational and ecosystem service benefits to urban populations.

Industrial development should be directed away from forest boundaries through strategic industrial zoning that concentrates development in areas with existing infrastructure and minimal ecological value. Environmental impact assessments for proposed industrial projects must rigorously evaluate cumulative impacts and require mitigation measures that genuinely offset biodiversity losses. Pollution control measures must be enforced to prevent contamination of forest ecosystems from industrial and urban sources.

7.3 Pilgrim Management Strategies: Carrying Capacity and Eco-Friendly Practices

Managing pilgrimage impacts requires determining and enforcing carrying capacity limits based on rigorous assessment of ecosystem tolerance to human visitation. Carrying capacity analysis must consider multiple factors: physical impacts from trampling and infrastructure, waste generation and management capacity, water and energy consumption, noise and air pollution, and wildlife disturbance thresholds (Elkin et al., 2018). While determining precise carrying capacity is challenging, available evidence suggests that current visitation levels exceed sustainable thresholds in many areas of the Tirumala Hills.

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Implementing carrying capacity limits requires politically difficult decisions to restrict access during peak periods, potentially through advance reservation systems, differential pricing to spread visitation temporally, or designated visitor zones that concentrate impacts in already-disturbed areas while protecting sensitive habitats. Such measures must be implemented sensitively, respecting the religious and cultural significance of pilgrimage while communicating the necessity of limits for long-term conservation.

Eco-friendly pilgrimage practices should be promoted through multiple interventions: elimination of single-use plastics and provision of reusable alternatives, improved waste segregation and recycling systems, promotion of public transportation to reduce vehicular traffic, development of green infrastructure including solar energy and rainwater harvesting, and restoration of degraded areas along pilgrimage routes. TTD's initiatives in these areas provide a foundation, but scaling and sustained implementation require continued investment and innovation (Elkin et al., 2018).

7.4 Strengthening In-Situ Conservation and Habitat Restoration

In-situ conservation—protecting species in their natural habitats—remains the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation strategy. For the Seshachalam landscape, this requires strengthening protection of existing core areas, expanding protected area coverage to include critical habitats currently outside formal protection, and improving management effectiveness through adequate staffing, training, equipment, and operational budgets.

Habitat restoration is essential to reverse degradation and expand available habitat for endemic and threatened species. Priority restoration areas include degraded forest patches, abandoned agricultural lands adjacent to protected areas, and corridors connecting habitat fragments. Restoration approaches should emphasize native species, particularly endemic and threatened taxa, and should be informed by ecological research on species requirements and ecosystem processes (Ramachandran et al., 2020).

Specific conservation interventions for critically threatened species may include ex-situ conservation (seed banks, botanical gardens, captive breeding) as insurance against extinction, but these must complement rather than replace in-situ conservation. For species such as Pterocarpus santalinus and Shorea tumbuggaia, integrated conservation strategies combining habitat protection, restoration, anti-poaching enforcement, and population monitoring are essential (Kumari, n.d.).

8. Policy, Governance, and Institutional Framework

8.1 Evaluation of Existing Forest, Wildlife, and Environmental Policies

India's legal and policy framework for biodiversity conservation includes the Wildlife Protection Act (1972), Forest Conservation Act (1980), Biological Diversity Act (2002), and various environmental regulations that collectively provide comprehensive protection mandates. At the state level, Andhra Pradesh has enacted complementary legislation and policies addressing forest management, wildlife conservation, and environmental protection (Kaur et al., 2025; Goswami, 2024).

However, implementation gaps significantly undermine policy effectiveness. Limited enforcement capacity, inadequate penalties for violations, corruption, and political interference compromise protection efforts. Environmental impact assessments, while legally required for major development projects, often suffer from poor quality, inadequate consideration of cumulative impacts, and insufficient monitoring of mitigation compliance. The result is a disconnect between policy intent and on-ground outcomes, with continued biodiversity loss despite ostensibly strong legal protections (Goswami, 2024).

Policy evaluation reveals several specific weaknesses relevant to the Seshachalam landscape: insufficient integration between forest conservation and urban planning policies, allowing development to proceed without adequate consideration of biodiversity impacts; weak regulation of pilgrimage activities, with limited legal mechanisms to enforce carrying capacity

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limits or environmental standards; inadequate provisions for climate change adaptation in conservation planning; and limited recognition of ecosystem services in economic decision-making, resulting in undervaluation of conservation benefits.

8.2 Role of State Agencies, TTD, Urban Planners, and Pollution Control Boards

Effective conservation governance requires coordination among multiple institutions with overlapping jurisdictions and sometimes conflicting mandates. The Andhra Pradesh Forest Department holds primary responsibility for protected area management and wildlife conservation, but its authority is constrained by limited resources and competing pressures from development interests. Strengthening the Forest Department's capacity through increased budgets, staffing, training, and technological support is essential.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams occupies a unique position as both a religious institution and a major land manager within the Seshachalam landscape. TTD's decisions regarding infrastructure development, visitor management, and environmental practices have profound conservation implications. While TTD has undertaken various environmental initiatives, integrating biodiversity conservation more centrally into its mission and operations represents a critical opportunity. Formal partnerships between TTD and the Forest Department could enhance coordination and resource sharing (Elkin et al., 2018).

Urban planning authorities, including municipal corporations and regional development authorities, shape land-use patterns that determine habitat fragmentation and connectivity. Integrating biodiversity considerations into urban master plans, enforcing green space requirements, and directing development away from ecologically sensitive areas require active engagement of planning agencies in conservation objectives. State Pollution Control Boards must strengthen monitoring and enforcement of environmental standards for industrial and urban pollution sources affecting forest ecosystems.

8.3 Need for Integrated Conservation-Development Governance

The complexity of conservation challenges in the Seshachalam landscape demands integrated governance approaches that transcend traditional sectoral boundaries. This requires institutional mechanisms for coordination among forest, urban planning, industrial development, religious administration, and local government agencies. Landscape-level governance bodies, such as a Seshachalam Landscape Management Authority, could provide platforms for coordinated planning, conflict resolution, and adaptive management.

Integrated governance must balance conservation objectives with legitimate development needs and cultural practices. This requires transparent decision-making processes that engage diverse stakeholders, science-based assessment of trade-offs, and innovative solutions that achieve multiple objectives simultaneously. For example, eco-tourism development can generate economic benefits while incentivizing conservation, if properly designed and regulated (Singh et al., 2019).

Legal reforms may be necessary to clarify jurisdictional boundaries, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and provide adequate authority and resources for integrated landscape management. Policy instruments such as payments for ecosystem services, conservation easements, and biodiversity offsets could provide economic incentives for conservation-compatible land uses in buffer zones and corridors.

8.4 Incorporation of Biodiversity Concerns into Urban and Pilgrimage Planning

Mainstreaming biodiversity considerations into urban and pilgrimage planning represents a critical policy priority. Urban master plans should include biodiversity assessments, identify ecologically sensitive areas requiring protection, designate green infrastructure networks, and establish development guidelines that minimize habitat fragmentation and maintain connectivity. Strategic environmental assessment of urban development plans can identify cumulative impacts and guide mitigation strategies.

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For pilgrimage planning, TTD's infrastructure development and visitor management decisions should be informed by rigorous environmental impact assessment and carrying capacity analysis. Alternatives assessment should evaluate options for accommodating pilgrims while minimizing ecological impacts, such as concentrating infrastructure in already-disturbed areas, using green building technologies, and implementing visitor management systems that distribute impacts temporally and spatially (Elkin et al., 2018).

Building codes and development standards should incorporate biodiversity-friendly design principles: wildlife-friendly fencing, native vegetation landscaping, dark-sky lighting to reduce impacts on nocturnal species, and green roofs and walls that provide habitat. Such measures, while individually modest, can cumulatively enhance biodiversity conservation in human-dominated landscapes.

9. Community Participation and Awareness Creation

9.1 Role of Local Communities and Pilgrims in Conservation

Local communities living in and around the Seshachalam Forest possess intimate knowledge of local ecosystems, have direct stakes in natural resource management, and can serve as crucial partners in conservation efforts. Community-based conservation approaches recognize that sustainable conservation requires local support and participation, addressing livelihood needs while achieving biodiversity objectives (Paul et al., 2021; Majhi, 2016).

Joint Forest Management (JFM) programs in India provide frameworks for community participation in forest protection and management, offering communities access to non-timber forest products and employment in exchange for conservation stewardship. In the Seshachalam landscape, strengthening JFM implementation through genuine power-sharing, equitable benefit distribution, and capacity building can enhance both conservation outcomes and local livelihoods (Majhi, 2016).

Indigenous and traditional communities, such as the Yanadi people in the Eastern Ghats, possess traditional ecological knowledge that can inform conservation strategies. Integrating this knowledge with scientific approaches creates more robust, culturally appropriate conservation interventions. Recognizing and protecting traditional resource rights while ensuring sustainable use practices represents both a conservation strategy and a matter of social justice (Paul et al., 2021).

Pilgrims represent another crucial constituency for conservation. With millions visiting annually, pilgrims' environmental behaviors collectively determine the magnitude of impacts on the Tirumala Hills. Engaging pilgrims as conservation stakeholders through education, behavioral nudges, and appeals to religious values can transform them from sources of impact to agents of conservation.

9.2 Environmental Education and Responsible Pilgrimage Campaigns

Comprehensive environmental education programs targeting local communities, pilgrims, and the broader public are essential for building conservation awareness and support. For local communities, education should emphasize the linkages between ecosystem health and human well-being, the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and sustainable livelihood alternatives that reduce pressure on natural resources.

For pilgrims, responsible pilgrimage campaigns should communicate the ecological significance of the Tirumala Hills, the impacts of pilgrimage activities on biodiversity, and specific actions individuals can take to minimize their environmental footprint. Messaging should be framed in culturally resonant terms, linking environmental stewardship to religious values of respect for creation and sacred duty to protect holy sites (Elkin et al., 2018).

Educational interventions can take multiple forms: interpretive signage along pilgrimage routes explaining local ecology and conservation challenges, orientation programs for pilgrims upon arrival, social media campaigns reaching pilgrims before they travel, and integration of environmental themes into religious discourse by temple authorities. Schools in the

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region should incorporate local biodiversity and conservation into curricula, building long-term conservation awareness among future generations.

9.3 Citizen Science and Participatory Monitoring

Citizen science programs that engage local communities and pilgrims in biodiversity monitoring can generate valuable data while building conservation awareness and stewardship. Community-based monitoring of wildlife populations, forest cover change, water quality, and other indicators can complement professional scientific surveys, providing broader spatial and temporal coverage (Aditya et al., 2021).

In the Eastern Ghats, integration of camera traps with community knowledge has proven effective for assessing wildlife populations and distributions, demonstrating the value of participatory approaches (Aditya et al., 2021). Similar approaches could be expanded in the Seshachalam landscape, with trained community members conducting systematic surveys, reporting wildlife sightings, and documenting threats such as poaching or illegal logging.

Mobile applications and digital platforms can facilitate citizen science participation, allowing pilgrims and visitors to report wildlife observations, document environmental conditions, and contribute to collective monitoring efforts. Such programs must be carefully designed to ensure data quality, provide feedback to participants, and translate observations into management actions that demonstrate the value of community contributions.

9.4 Linking Conservation with Sustainable Livelihoods

For conservation to be sustainable, it must address the livelihood needs of local communities who depend on natural resources. Sustainable livelihood programs should provide economic alternatives that reduce pressure on biodiversity while improving community welfare. Options include: cultivation and sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants, reducing wild collection pressures; eco-tourism and nature guiding, generating income from biodiversity conservation; sustainable non-timber forest product enterprises with value addition; and payment for ecosystem services schemes that compensate communities for conservation stewardship (Sivaraj et al., 2017).

Medicinal plant cultivation is particularly relevant given the region's rich ethnobotanical heritage and market demand for traditional medicines. Supporting communities to cultivate threatened medicinal plants can reduce wild harvesting while providing income, though careful attention to market dynamics and benefit distribution is essential (Sivaraj et al., 2020).

Eco-tourism linked to the pilgrimage economy offers significant potential. Developing nature-based tourism products—wildlife viewing, bird watching, forest walks, cultural heritage tours—can diversify the regional economy while creating incentives for habitat conservation. Community-based eco-tourism enterprises ensure that benefits accrue to local people, building local support for conservation (Singh et al., 2019).

10. Recommendations and Future Perspectives

10.1 Integrated Management of Sacred Landscapes and Biodiversity Hotspots

The Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape exemplifies the global challenge of conserving biodiversity in sacred landscapes where ecological values intersect with profound cultural and religious significance. Effective management requires innovative approaches that honor both dimensions, recognizing that long-term conservation depends on maintaining the spiritual and cultural values that motivate protection while implementing science-based management to ensure ecological sustainability (Elkin et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2019).

A comprehensive Sacred Landscape Management Plan should be developed through participatory processes involving TTD, forest departments, local communities, pilgrims, and conservation scientists. This plan should articulate a shared vision for

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the landscape that integrates spiritual, ecological, and socio-economic objectives, establish clear goals and indicators for monitoring progress, delineate zones with different management priorities (core conservation areas, sustainable use zones, intensive pilgrimage areas), and specify management actions, responsibilities, and timelines.

Institutional innovations may be necessary, potentially including a multi-stakeholder Seshachalam Sacred Landscape Management Authority with representation from all key stakeholders and authority to coordinate management across jurisdictional boundaries. Such an institution could facilitate integrated planning, mobilize resources, resolve conflicts, and ensure accountability for conservation outcomes.

10.2 Adoption of Green Infrastructure and Eco-Tourism Principles

Transitioning toward green infrastructure throughout the landscape can reduce environmental impacts while maintaining functionality. For pilgrimage infrastructure, this includes: solar energy systems to reduce fossil fuel dependence and air pollution; rainwater harvesting and water recycling to reduce pressure on natural water sources; green buildings using sustainable materials and energy-efficient design; electric or hybrid vehicles for pilgrim transportation; and constructed wetlands for sewage treatment that provide habitat while purifying water.

Eco-tourism development should follow internationally recognized principles: limiting visitor numbers to carrying capacity, concentrating infrastructure in already-disturbed areas, employing local communities and ensuring equitable benefit distribution, minimizing resource consumption and waste generation, providing high-quality interpretation that builds conservation awareness, and contributing financially to conservation through visitor fees or levies (Singh et al., 2019).

The Tirumala Hills could serve as a model for sustainable sacred landscape management, demonstrating that it is possible to accommodate millions of pilgrims while maintaining ecological integrity. Success would provide replicable lessons for other sacred sites facing similar challenges globally.

10.3 Research Gaps and Long-Term Biodiversity Monitoring

Significant knowledge gaps constrain evidence-based conservation planning in the Seshachalam landscape. Priority research needs include: comprehensive biodiversity inventories documenting species distributions, population sizes, and conservation status; long-term monitoring programs tracking population trends, habitat conditions, and ecosystem processes; climate change vulnerability assessments for endemic and threatened species; carrying capacity studies determining sustainable visitation levels for different areas; human-wildlife conflict research identifying drivers and effective mitigation strategies; ecosystem service valuation quantifying benefits provided by the landscape; and effectiveness evaluation of conservation interventions to guide adaptive management.

Establishing a long-term ecological monitoring program with permanent plots, standardized protocols, and sustained funding is essential for detecting trends, evaluating management effectiveness, and providing early warning of emerging threats. This monitoring should integrate scientific surveys with community-based monitoring, leveraging local knowledge and engagement.

Research should be conducted through partnerships among government agencies, academic institutions, and NGOs, with findings translated into accessible formats for managers and policymakers. A Seshachalam Research Station could provide infrastructure and coordination for ongoing research and monitoring efforts.

10.4 Replicable Conservation Models for Pilgrimage-Dominated Forest Regions

The conservation challenges and solutions developed for the Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape have broader applicability to other sacred sites and pilgrimage-dominated forest regions globally. Many sacred landscapes face similar

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pressures from mass visitation, infrastructure development, and the tension between conservation and religious/cultural practices (Singh et al., 2019).

Documenting and disseminating lessons learned from Seshachalam conservation efforts can inform management of other sacred landscapes in India and internationally. Key elements of a replicable model include: participatory governance engaging religious authorities, conservation agencies, and local communities; science-based carrying capacity assessment and visitor management; integration of traditional ecological knowledge with scientific conservation; green infrastructure and sustainable practices for pilgrimage facilities; environmental education framing conservation in culturally resonant terms; and economic incentives linking conservation with sustainable livelihoods.

International networks of sacred landscape managers could facilitate knowledge exchange, technical assistance, and collaborative problem-solving. The Seshachalam landscape, if successfully managed, could serve as a demonstration site for training and capacity building, contributing to global efforts to conserve biodiversity in sacred landscapes.

11. Conclusion

The Seshachalam Forest and Tirumala–Tirupati landscape stands at a critical juncture. This biodiversity hotspot, harboring exceptional endemic and threatened species richness, faces unprecedented pressures from the convergence of climate change, rapid urbanization, industrial development, and intensive pilgrimage activities. Scientific evidence documents alarming trends: projected habitat losses of 40-60% for endemic and RET species under climate change scenarios, extensive fragmentation from urban expansion, pollution from industrial and urban sources, and sustained ecological impacts from over 30 million annual pilgrims.

The synergistic interactions among these stressors create cumulative impacts that exceed the sum of individual effects, threatening the long-term viability of endemic species populations and the integrity of ecosystem processes. Species such as Pterocarpus santalinus, Shorea tumbuggaia, and the Indian pangolin face heightened extinction risks, while ecosystem services including water regulation, carbon sequestration, and cultural values are progressively degraded.

Yet this landscape also presents extraordinary opportunities for innovative conservation that integrates ecological science with cultural values and socio-economic realities. The spiritual significance of the Tirumala Hills, which draws millions of pilgrims, can be leveraged to build conservation support if environmental stewardship is framed as sacred duty. The institutional capacity and resources of TTD, if directed toward sustainability, could transform pilgrimage practices. Local communities, with appropriate support, can become conservation partners rather than sources of pressure.

Realizing this potential requires urgent, coordinated action across multiple fronts: climate-resilient landscape-level conservation planning that maintains connectivity and protects refugia; strict regulation of urban and industrial expansion near forest boundaries; sustainable pilgrimage management based on rigorous carrying capacity assessment; habitat restoration to reverse degradation and expand available habitat; integrated governance mechanisms that coordinate action across sectoral boundaries; and genuine community participation that addresses livelihood needs while achieving conservation objectives.

The policy and institutional frameworks exist, but implementation must be strengthened through political will, adequate resources, and accountability mechanisms. Research and monitoring must fill critical knowledge gaps and guide adaptive management. Environmental education must build conservation awareness among diverse constituencies from local communities to pilgrims to policymakers.

The conservation of endemic and threatened species in the Seshachalam–Tirumala–Tirupati landscape is not merely an ecological imperative but a test of our ability to reconcile human aspirations with planetary boundaries, to honor cultural traditions while ensuring ecological sustainability, and to manage sacred landscapes as both spiritual and biological

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treasures. Success will require innovation, collaboration, and sustained commitment, but the alternative—the loss of irreplaceable biodiversity and degradation of a landscape sacred to millions—is unacceptable. The time for transformative action is now.

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Green Gold Caused By Black Gold

Paidi Rama Rao[1] and S. Eswari [2]

1. Government Degree College, Togaram, Srikakulam district, A.P. India

2. Bsc.Botany Hon's Government Degree College For Men, Srikakulam

Abstract

Forests, often referred to as Green Gold, are vital natural resources that support biodiversity, regulate climate, conserve soil, and sustain human livelihoods. In contrast, minerals such as coal, petroleum, iron ore, and bauxite are termed Black Gold due to their significant economic value and contribution to industrial development. While mining plays a crucial role in economic growth, unregulated and excessive mining activities have emerged as one of the major causes of forest degradation worldwide. Mining operations lead to large-scale deforestation through land clearing, infrastructure development, and waste disposal. They also cause soil erosion, water and soil pollution, biodiversity loss, and increased carbon emissions, contributing to climate change. Regions such as the Amazon Basin, Southeast Asia, Africa, and several parts of India-including Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh-have experienced severe environmental degradation due to mining. Effective management strategies such as strict enforcement of environmental laws, sustainable mining practices, land reclamation, satellite monitoring, and community participation are essential to mitigate these impacts. Balancing economic development with environmental conservation is critical to protecting forest ecosystems and ensuring sustainable development for future generations.

Keywords : Biodiversity loss;Black Gold;Climate Change;Deforestation;Environmental Pollution;Forest Conservation.Forest Degradation;Green Gold;Mining;Sustainable Mining

Introduction :

Forests are called Green Gold because they are precious natural resources that provide oxygen, biodiversity, climate regulation, and livelihoods. Minerals like coal and petroleum are known as Black Gold due to their high economic value and role in industrial development. Although mining supports economic growth, it has become one of the major causes of forest degradation.

Green Gold (Forest degradation)Definition:

Green Gold refers to forests and vegetation-rich natural resources that provide immense ecological, economic, and social value. "Forests are called green gold "because they support biodiversity, regulate the climate, conserve soil and water, and sustain the livelihoods of millions of people, while also contributing to sustainable development.

Black Gold (mining operations)Definition:

Black Gold refers to valuable fossil fuel and mineral resources, especially coal and petroleum, that play a major role in industrial development and economic growth. They are called black gold because of their dark color and high commercial and energy value, making them essential resources for power generation, transportation, and industries.

Relationship between Forest and Mineral Resources :

Forests and mineral resources are closely interconnected, as many important mineral deposits are found beneath forested regions. Forests act as natural covers that protect mineral-rich land, while minerals contribute significantly to a country's economic development. However, the extraction of minerals often requires clearing of forests, leading to deforestation and

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ecological imbalance. Forests provide ecological stability by conserving soil, water, and biodiversity, whereas mineral resources supply energy and raw materials for industries. When mining activities are carried out without proper planning, they disturb forest ecosystems, cause habitat loss, soil erosion, and pollution. Therefore, a balanced and sustainable approach is essential to ensure that mineral exploitation does not destroy forest resources

Key Mechanisms and Impacts :

1. Direct Land Clearing : Establishing mines, associated infrastructure (roads, housing), and waste disposal sites requires clear-cutting vast areas of forests, leading to habitat loss and fragmentation.

2. Pollution : Mining releases toxic substances(eg: mercury,lead, cyanide) into soil and water, harming wildlife and reducing water quality.

3. Soil Erosion and Sedimentation : Removal of vegetation increases erosion, leading to sediment buildup in rivers that damages aquatic life.

4. Biodiversity Loss : Habitat destruction and pollution reduce plant and animal populations, sometimes causing species extinction.

5. Climate Impact : Forest loss releases stored carbon dioxide, contributing to climate change.

Affected World Regions :

Amazon Basin : Mining of gold, iron ore, and bauxite causes large-scale deforestation and threatens rich biodiversity in Brazil and Peru.

Southeast Asia : Coal and mineral mining in Indonesia and the Philippines leads to severe degradation of tropical rainforests.

Africa : Mining of diamonds, gold, and coltan in countries like the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and South Africa results in forest loss, environmental damage, and social conflicts.

Affected Indian Regions :

Odisha : Extensive mining of iron ore, bauxite, and coal in areas like Keonjhar and Koraput has led to large-scale forest degradation and loss of tribal livelihoods.

Chhattisgarh : Coal and iron ore mining in Bastar and Dantewada regions has caused deforestation, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss.

Jharkhand : Mining of coal, mica, and iron ore has resulted in forest fragmentation and land degradation.

Madhya Pradesh : Open-cast coal mining in Singrauli and surrounding regions has severely affected forest cover and wildlife habitats.

Andhra Pradesh : Bauxite and limestone mining in the Eastern Ghats has led to degradation of dense forests and water resources.

Management of Forest Degradation Caused by Mining :

- Enforce strict environmental laws and mining regulations.

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- Follow sustainable mining methods to minimize forest damage.
- Reclaim and restore mined-out land after closure.
- Use satellite monitoring to prevent illegal mining.
- Involve local and tribal communities in forest conservation

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the excessive exploitation of Black Gold (mining) results in the degradation of Green Gold (forests). To balance development and environmental protection, sustainable mining practices, strict environmental laws, and afforestation programs are necessary. Protecting forests is essential for maintaining ecological balance and ensuring a healthy environment for future generations.

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Native Medicinal Plants, Functional Foods, and Algae in Cancer Prevention and Therapy: Mechanistic Insights, Translational Challenges, and Nano-Enabled Opportunities

Holy Harshini

[1]Department of Biotechnology, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Corresponding Author harshini22424503@gcrjy.ac.in

Abstract

Cancer remains one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide, despite significant advances in diagnostics and therapeutics. Limitations of conventional cancer therapy—such as systemic toxicity, drug resistance, high cost, and limited accessibility—necessitate the exploration of complementary and preventive strategies. Native medicinal plants, edible vegetables, fruits, algae, aquatic plants, and wild forest species constitute a vast reservoir of bioactive compounds with demonstrated anti-cancer potential. Many modern chemotherapeutic agents have originated from such natural sources, validating their scientific relevance.

This review systematically compiles evidence on plant- and algae-derived bioactive compounds with anti-cancer activity, emphasizing mechanisms such as apoptosis induction, anti-proliferative signaling, inhibition of angiogenesis and metastasis, immune modulation, antioxidant defence, and chemoprevention. Both advantages and limitations—including toxicity, poor bioavailability, lack of standardization, and regulatory constraints—are critically discussed. Special focus is given to nano-drug delivery systems as enabling technologies to improve safety, efficacy, and reproducibility. Ethical, legal, and regulatory perspectives aligned with ICMR, UGC, and FDA frameworks are addressed. The review highlights that while several diseases have effective cures, cancer still demands integrated, multi-targeted approaches, making natural bio resources particularly valuable for future translational research.

Keywords: Medicinal plants, cancer prevention, phytochemicals, nano-formulation, functional foods, regulatory challenges

Introduction

Science is boundary-less, continuously evolving through the integration of traditional knowledge and modern experimental validation (WHO, 2013; Fabricant & Farnsworth, 2001). Indigenous medical systems have long recognized plants, foods, and aquatic or marine resources not merely as sources of nutrition, but as modulators of health and disease (Etkin, 2006; Heinrich et al., 2018). In recent decades, scientific interest in these resources has intensified, particularly in oncology, where multi-factorial disease mechanisms require multi-targeted interventions (Gupta et al., 2012; Aggarwal et al., 2013).

Although medicinal plants are often discussed separately from foods, this review adopts a holistic perspective that includes vegetables, fruits, algae, aquatic species, and wild forest plants (Johns, 1990; Tapsell et al., 2006). These resources form a food–medicine continuum, contributing to disease prevention, immune homeostasis, detoxification, and cellular protection (Surh, 2003; Reuter et al., 2010). Importantly, this paper addresses not only therapeutic benefits but also disadvantages such as toxicity, variability in composition, limited clinical validation, and regulatory barriers (Izzo et al., 2016; Ekor, 2014).

Cancer is selected as the primary focus because, unlike many infectious and metabolic disorders that now have effective treatments, cancer remains difficult to cure due to heterogeneity, metastasis, recurrence, and resistance to therapy (Hanahan

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& Weinberg, 2011; Dagogo-Jack & Shaw, 2018). Understanding and refining nature-derived compounds may therefore contribute significantly to preventive oncology and adjunctive cancer therapy (Bishayee & Sethi, 2016; Newman & Cragg, 2020).

Unlike existing reviews that focus on isolated classes of natural products, this review integrates medicinal plants, dietary foods, algae, and aquatic bioresources within a unified framework encompassing mechanisms of action, nano-formulation strategies, and regulatory translation (Patra et al., 2018; Martins et al., 2022).

Importance of Native medicinal Plants and Functional foods in Cancer research

Natural bioresources offer several advantages in cancer prevention and management. Unlike conventional therapeutics that typically focus on blocking a single molecular target, these bioactive agents exert pleiotropic molecular effects, simultaneously influencing multiple signalling pathways involved in disease progression (Aggarwal & Sung, 2009; Gupta et al., 2012). Such multi-level modulation enhances therapeutic robustness and reduces the likelihood of pathway compensation or resistance (Surh, 2003).

Importantly, many of these compounds possess a longstanding history of human exposure, frequently occurring as constituents of traditional diets or medicinal plants, which provides an inherent advantage in terms of biocompatibility and preliminary safety assurance (Surh, 2003; Newman & Cragg, 2020). At physiologically relevant or nutritional concentrations, these agents are often associated with reduced systemic toxicity compared to synthetic drugs, making them attractive for long-term preventive or adjunctive therapeutic use (Bishayee & Sethi, 2016).

Beyond direct molecular interactions, they exhibit significant immunoregulatory functions, including modulation of inflammatory responses and enhancement of innate and adaptive immunity (Reuter et al., 2010; Shanmugam et al., 2018). In parallel, their detoxification-enhancing capabilities, such as activation of antioxidant defenses and xenobiotic-metabolizing enzymes, further contribute to cellular protection (Pan et al., 2011).

Collectively, these characteristics position such compounds as valuable molecular templates for next-generation drug discovery (Newman & Cragg, 2020), while also offering promising opportunities in nanomedicine, where they can be engineered into targeted delivery systems to improve bioavailability, specificity, and therapeutic efficacy (Patra et al., 2018). However, challenges such as inconsistent phytochemical profiles, poor oral bioavailability, and lack of standardized dosing must be addressed before clinical translation (Heidelberg & Shahidi, 2020; Izzo et al., 2016).

3. Overview of Anticancer Plants , Foods , Algae.

3.1 Medicinal Plants

Several medicinal plants traditionally used in Ayurveda have been explored for their potential anti-cancer properties due to the presence of bioactive phytochemicals (Fabricant & Farnsworth, 2001; Baliga et al., 2011).

Ocimum sanctum (Tulsi) contains compounds such as eugenol, ursolic acid, and rosmarinic acid, which are known to exert antioxidant effects, promote programmed cell death in cancer cells, and protect cellular DNA from oxidative damage (Pattanayak et al., 2010; Gupta et al., 2017). Experimental studies have reported its activity against oral, lung, breast, and skin cancers; however, its clinical application remains limited due to insufficient human trials and relatively modest therapeutic strength (Prakash & Gupta, 2005).

Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha) is rich in withanolides, particularly withaferin A, which has demonstrated the ability to induce apoptosis and inhibit cancer cell invasion and metastasis (Vanden Berghe et al., 2012; Widodo et al., 2010).

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Research has primarily focused on glioma, breast, and lung cancers (Grogan et al., 2014). Despite its promising efficacy, high doses may interfere with hormonal balance, necessitating cautious use (Tandon & Yadav, 2020).

Azadirachta indica (Neem) possesses potent compounds such as nimbolide and azadirachtin that suppress cancer cell proliferation and inhibit the formation of new blood vessels essential for tumor growth (Paul et al., 2011; Arumugam et al., 2014). Its anti-cancer effects have been investigated in breast, prostate, and leukemia models (Subapriya & Nagini, 2005). Nevertheless, excessive consumption has been associated with liver toxicity, which limits its therapeutic window (Ekor, 2014).

Curcuma longa (Turmeric) is widely recognized for curcumin, a polyphenol that modulates multiple signaling pathways involved in cancer progression, including NF-κB and STAT3, while also triggering apoptosis (Aggarwal & Sung, 2009; Gupta et al., 2013). It has been studied extensively in colon, breast, and pancreatic cancers (Kunnumakkara et al., 2017). A major challenge in its clinical use is its poor absorption and low bioavailability in the human body (Anand et al., 2007).

Ficus religiosa contains various flavonoids and phenolic compounds that contribute to its antioxidant and cancer-preventive potential (Singh et al., 2011). Preclinical studies suggest its usefulness in breast and liver cancer models, but the absence of substantial clinical evidence limits its current applicability (Makhija et al., 2010).

Aegle marmelos (Bael) is known for active constituents such as marmelosin and aegeline, which exhibit anti-inflammatory effects and provide protection to the gastrointestinal tract (Baliga et al., 2011). Its anti-cancer potential has been explored mainly in colon and breast cancers, although its effectiveness is highly dependent on dosage (Lampronti et al., 2003).

3.2 Proven Plant derived Anticancer Drugs

Several anticancer drugs currently used in clinical oncology have been derived from higher plants, highlighting the crucial role of natural products in modern medicine (Cragg & Newman, 2013; Newman & Cragg, 2020).

Catharanthus roseus, commonly known as the Madagascar periwinkle, is a rich source of vinca alkaloids such as vincristine and vinblastine (Noble, 1990). These compounds exert their anticancer effects by disrupting microtubule formation, thereby inhibiting mitosis in rapidly dividing cells (Jordan & Wilson, 2004). They are extensively used in the treatment of hematological malignancies, particularly leukemia and lymphomas, and have significantly improved survival rates in pediatric and adult patients (Relling et al., 2010).

The bark of Taxus brevifolia (Pacific yew tree) yields paclitaxel, a diterpenoid compound with a unique mechanism of action (Wani et al., 1971). Unlike vinca alkaloids, paclitaxel stabilizes microtubules and prevents their depolymerization, leading to cell cycle arrest (Weaver, 2014). It has become a cornerstone chemotherapeutic agent in the management of breast, ovarian, and lung cancers (Rowinsky & Donehower, 1995).

Camptotheca acuminata, a deciduous tree native to China, produces camptothecin, a potent inhibitor of DNA topoisomerase I (Wall et al., 1966). Due to toxicity concerns, semi-synthetic derivatives such as irinotecan and topotecan were developed for clinical use (Pommier, 2006). These agents are widely employed in the treatment of colorectal, ovarian, and small-cell lung cancers (Rougier et al., 1998).

Similarly, Podophyllum hexandrum serves as a natural source of podophyllotoxin, a lignan that interferes with microtubule assembly (Imbert, 1998). Although podophyllotoxin itself is highly toxic, its modified derivatives, including etoposide and teniposide, are successfully used in chemotherapy regimens for various cancers, particularly testicular and lung cancers (Hande, 1998).

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These examples demonstrate that plant-derived compounds often require chemical modification to achieve acceptable safety and efficacy profiles, underscoring the importance of medicinal chemistry in translating natural products into clinically viable anticancer drugs (Cragg & Newman, 2013).

3.3 Algae and aquatic resources

Spirulina (Arthrospira spp.) is a cyanobacterial microalga widely recognized for its rich content of phycocyanin, a bioactive biliprotein pigment (Belay, 2002; Khan et al., 2005). Phycocyanin exhibits strong antioxidant activity by scavenging reactive oxygen species and reducing oxidative stress at the cellular level (Romay et al., 2003; Riss et al., 2007). In addition, it plays a significant role in immune modulation, enhancing macrophage activation, cytokine balance, and natural killer cell function (Hirahashi et al., 2002; Wu et al., 2016). Due to these properties, Spirulina-derived compounds are being explored as adjuvant agents to support conventional therapeutic strategies, particularly in inflammatory disorders and oncology, where they may help improve host defense mechanisms and reduce treatment-induced toxicity (Gershwin & Belay, 2008; Shih et al., 2015).

Brown algae (Phaeophyceae), such as Fucus, Laminaria, and Undaria species, are a major natural source of fucoidan, a sulfated polysaccharide with diverse biological activities (Fitton, 2011). Fucoidan has demonstrated the ability to inhibit angiogenesis, thereby restricting the formation of new blood vessels essential for tumor growth and metastasis (Kim et al., 2010; Ale et al., 2011). Moreover, it can trigger programmed cell death (apoptosis) in abnormal or malignant cells through mitochondrial and caspase-dependent pathways (Zhang et al., 2015; Atashrazm et al., 2015). These properties position fucoidan as a promising candidate in anticancer and anti-inflammatory research (Li et al., 2008).

Despite their therapeutic potential, several limitations must be considered. Brown algae often contain high levels of iodine, which may pose risks of thyroid dysfunction if consumed without proper dosage control (Zimmermann, 2009). Both Spirulina and brown algae are susceptible to environmental contamination, including heavy metals, toxins, and microbial impurities, depending on cultivation and harvesting conditions (Rzymski et al., 2015; Alvarenga et al., 2020). Therefore, rigorous purification, standardization, and quality control are essential to ensure safety, reproducibility, and clinical applicability of algae-derived bioactive compounds (EFSA, 2014).

Plants and food sources discussed in this review were selected based on the frequency of citation, availability of mechanistic validation, relevance to major cancer types, and overall translational potential (Bishayee & Sethi, 2016; Newman & Cragg, 2020).

3.4 Fruits , vegetables and Functional foods

A wide range of plant-derived foods possess notable anticancer properties owing to their biologically active constituents (Surh, 2003; Tapsell et al., 2006).

Pomegranate, which contains punicalagins and ellagic acid, has been shown to suppress tumor blood vessel formation and trigger programmed cell death, with supporting evidence primarily in prostate and breast malignancies (Adams et al., 2006; Lansky & Newman, 2007); however, differences in extract composition pose a challenge (Seeram et al., 2008).

Citrus fruits are abundant in flavonoids and limonene, compounds known to stimulate detoxification pathways and halt cell-cycle progression, with research evidence in breast and colon cancers (Miller et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2014), although concerns remain regarding the safety of citrus peel components due to phototoxic furanocoumarins (Dugo & Di Giacomo, 2002).

Berries and grapes, enriched with anthocyanins and resveratrol, exhibit strong anti-metastatic effects, particularly in colon and breast cancer models (Wang & Stoner, 2008; Athar et al., 2007), but their clinical effectiveness is constrained by poor bioavailability (Walle, 2011).

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Cruciferous vegetables supply sulforaphane, a bioactive molecule that functions as a histone deacetylase inhibitor, demonstrating efficacy against breast and prostate cancers (Myzak et al., 2006; Clarke et al., 2011), while being sensitive to degradation during cooking (Vermeulen et al., 2008).

Garlic and onion contain allicin and quercetin, which contribute to genomic protection and reduced carcinogenic damage, supported by studies in gastric and colorectal cancers (Milner, 2001; Murthy et al., 2009), though excessive intake may lead to gastrointestinal discomfort (Borrelli et al., 2007).

Tomatoes, a major dietary source of lycopene, have been linked to a lower incidence of prostate cancer (Giovannucci, 2002; Rao & Agarwal, 2000), though outcomes vary depending on dietary patterns and bioavailability (Etminan et al., 2004).

Bitter gourd (Momordica charantia), characterized by the presence of charantin, activates AMPK-mediated metabolic pathways and shows anticancer activity in breast and pancreatic cancers (Ray et al., 2010; Pitchakarn et al., 2012), with palatability and dose optimization remaining limiting factors (Grover & Yadav, 2004).

4. Nanodrug Formulation Stratergies

One of the major limitations of phytochemicals is poor bioavailability due to low solubility, rapid metabolism, and limited target specificity (Anand et al., 2007; Walle, 2011). Nano-drug delivery systems offer effective solutions to these challenges (Patra et al., 2018; Shi et al., 2017).

Enhancing Solubility and Stability

Many bioactive compounds with strong therapeutic potential, such as curcumin, suffer from poor aqueous solubility and rapid chemical degradation, which severely limit their clinical usefulness (Anand et al., 2007). Nano-formulation strategies significantly improve these limitations by reducing particle size and increasing surface area, thereby enhancing dissolution rates (Yallapu et al., 2012). Encapsulation within nanoparticles also protects labile compounds from hydrolysis, photodegradation, and metabolic inactivation, resulting in improved physicochemical stability and prolonged biological activity (Torchilin, 2014).

Improving Tumor Targeting via the Enhanced Permeability and Retention (EPR) Effect

Tumor tissues possess leaky vasculature and impaired lymphatic drainage, creating a microenvironment that favors the accumulation of nanoscale drug carriers (Matsumura & Maeda, 1986). Nanoparticles designed within an optimal size range can passively accumulate in tumor sites through the enhanced permeability and retention (EPR) effect (Maeda et al., 2013). This passive targeting increases local drug concentration within the tumor while minimizing exposure to healthy tissues, thereby improving therapeutic efficacy (Greish, 2010).

Reducing Systemic Toxicity

Conventional drug administration often leads to nonspecific biodistribution, causing off-target effects and dose-limiting toxicity (Allen & Cullis, 2013). Nanocarrier systems help confine the drug within a protective matrix during circulation, reducing premature release and interaction with non-target organs (Peer et al., 2007). By improving site-specific delivery and lowering peak plasma concentrations, nanoparticle-based formulations significantly decrease systemic toxicity and enhance patient safety (Shi et al., 2017).

Enabling Controlled and Sustained Drug Release

Nanoparticles can be engineered to release therapeutic agents in a controlled and sustained manner through diffusion, degradation, or stimulus-responsive mechanisms (Kumar et al., 2014). This controlled release maintains drug concentrations

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within the therapeutic window for extended periods, reducing the need for frequent dosing (Torchilin, 2014). Sustained delivery not only improves treatment compliance but also ensures continuous therapeutic pressure on diseased cells, which is particularly advantageous in cancer therapy (Danhier et al., 2012).

Common nano-carriers include liposomes, polymeric nanoparticles, phytosomes, solid lipid nanoparticles, and peptide-conjugated systems (Allen & Cullis, 2013; Patra et al., 2018). Nano-formulations have demonstrated improved pharmacokinetics and therapeutic outcomes in preclinical models, supporting their translational potential (Shi et al., 2017).

Despite promising preclinical outcomes, challenges such as long-term nano-carrier accumulation, scale-up reproducibility, and regulatory toxicity assessment remain key translational bottlenecks (Dobrovolskaia & McNeil, 2007; Wilhelm et al., 2016).

5.Preparation and Administration

Preventive Use

A diet based on whole foods and broad dietary diversity plays a foundational role in disease prevention (Willett & Stampfer, 2013; Tapsell et al., 2006). Minimally processed plant- and animal-based foods provide a complex matrix of bioactive compounds, including vitamins, minerals, polyphenols, and fiber, which act synergistically to support metabolic balance, immune surveillance, and oxidative stress control (Jacobs & Steffen, 2003; Surh, 2003). Appropriate cooking methods—such as steaming, boiling, or light sautéing—help preserve heat-sensitive nutrients while minimizing the formation of harmful by-products (Miguel et al., 2018; Bordiga et al., 2019). Together, dietary diversity and mindful preparation reduce chronic inflammation and may lower long-term disease risk by maintaining cellular homeostasis rather than targeting a single biochemical pathway (Calder et al., 2011; Willett et al., 2019).

Therapeutic Adjuncts

In therapeutic settings, standardized plant or natural extracts may serve as adjuncts to conventional chemotherapy when used in a controlled and evidence-guided manner (Bishayee & Sethi, 2016; Ernst, 2000). Standardization ensures consistent concentrations of active constituents, improving reproducibility and safety (Izzo et al., 2016). When appropriately selected, such adjuncts may enhance treatment tolerance, reduce therapy-induced oxidative damage, or modulate immune responses without directly interfering with cytotoxic mechanisms (Block et al., 2008; Shanmugam et al., 2018). Importantly, their role is supportive rather than curative, functioning to complement—not compete with—established pharmacological interventions (Cassileth & Deng, 2004).

Clinical Caution

Despite growing interest in natural and dietary interventions, strict clinical caution is essential (Ernst, 2000). Natural products should never replace evidence-based treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy, or targeted therapies (ASCO, 2018). Unsupervised use may lead to drug–nutrient interactions, altered drug metabolism, or reduced therapeutic efficacy (Izzo & Ernst, 2009; Zhou et al., 2007). Therefore, integration of dietary or natural adjuncts must occur under medical guidance, supported by clinical data, and aligned with established treatment protocols to ensure patient safety and optimal outcomes (WHO, 2013; Cassileth et al., 2012).

6. Regulatory Perspective : Why FDA approval is limited

Major Barriers

Absence of robust randomized clinical evidence

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A major limitation in the clinical translation of such approaches is the scarcity of large, well-designed randomized controlled trials (Ioannidis, 2005; Ernst, 2000). Most available data arise from in vitro studies, animal models, or small observational studies, which restricts the ability to draw definitive conclusions regarding efficacy, safety, and long-term outcomes in diverse human populations (Collins et al., 2014; Bishayee & Sethi, 2016).

Inconsistency in natural product composition

Natural products inherently exhibit significant batch-to-batch variability due to differences in species, geographical origin, cultivation conditions, harvesting time, and extraction methods (Izzo et al., 2016; Heinrich et al., 2018). This compositional heterogeneity complicates standardization, reproducibility, and dose optimization, posing challenges for both experimental validation and clinical application (Ekor, 2014).

Potential toxicity at therapeutic concentrations

While many natural compounds are perceived as safe, their administration at pharmacologically effective doses may induce unexpected toxic effects (Ernst, 2000). Issues such as bioaccumulation, off-target interactions, organ toxicity, and metabolic instability necessitate comprehensive toxicological profiling before advancing to clinical use (Zhou et al., 2007; Dobrovolskaia & McNeil, 2007).

Regulatory bias toward single-entity pharmaceuticals

Current drug approval frameworks are predominantly optimized for single, well-defined molecular entities with clearly elucidated mechanisms of action (FDA, 2015). Multi-component formulations, particularly those derived from natural sources, face regulatory hurdles due to difficulties in mechanistic attribution, quality control, and consistency, limiting their acceptance within conventional pharmaceutical pipelines (WHO, 2013; Izzo et al., 2016).

Pathways Toward Approval

Standardization and Quality Control

To ensure reproducibility and reliability, rigorous standardization of raw materials and experimental conditions is essential (WHO, 2013). This includes controlled sourcing of biological materials, optimization of extraction or synthesis parameters, and batch-to-batch consistency assessment (Ekor, 2014). Physicochemical characterization, purity profiling, and stability testing using validated analytical techniques help maintain uniform quality throughout the study (FDA, 2015).

Mechanistic Validation

The biological and functional mechanisms underlying observed effects should be systematically investigated using molecular, cellular, and biochemical approaches (Hanahan & Weinberg, 2011). Analysis of key signaling pathways, molecular targets, and functional biomarkers helps establish causality rather than correlation, thereby strengthening translational relevance and scientific credibility (Collins et al., 2014).

Nano-formulation for Safety and Efficacy

Advanced nano-formulation strategies can enhance bioavailability, target specificity, and controlled release while minimizing systemic toxicity (Patra et al., 2018; Shi et al., 2017). Nanocarriers optimized for size, surface charge, and stability improve therapeutic performance, while integrated safety and efficacy profiling supports a balanced risk–benefit evaluation (Danhier et al., 2012).

Compliance with ICMR, UGC, and FDA Guidelines

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All experimental procedures and data handling must adhere strictly to national and international regulatory frameworks, including ICMR and UGC ethical standards, along with FDA-aligned safety and quality guidelines (ICMR, 2017; FDA, 2015). Ethical approvals, proper documentation, and good laboratory practices ensure regulatory acceptability and strengthen future translational and clinical potential (WHO, 2013).

7. Ethical Legal Considerations

Protection of Traditional and Indigenous Knowledge

Traditional and indigenous knowledge represents generations of experiential learning related to medicinal plants, healing practices, agriculture, and ecological management (Posey, 1999; WHO, 2013). Safeguarding this knowledge is essential to prevent its unauthorized exploitation, misappropriation, or commercialization without consent (CBD, 1992). Legal recognition, proper documentation, and respect for community ownership ensure that indigenous groups retain control over how their knowledge is accessed and used (UNESCO, 2017). Protecting such knowledge also helps preserve cultural identity while encouraging ethical scientific research that builds upon, rather than exploits, ancestral wisdom (Heinrich et al., 2018).

Benefit-Sharing and Biodiversity Conservation

Equitable benefit-sharing ensures that communities contributing biological resources or traditional knowledge receive fair compensation when these resources lead to commercial or scientific outcomes (Nagoya Protocol, 2010). This approach promotes social justice while incentivizing local populations to actively participate in biodiversity conservation (CBD, 1992; FAO, 2019). When economic, educational, or healthcare benefits are returned to source communities, it strengthens sustainable resource management and discourages overexploitation (WHO, 2013). Benefit-sharing frameworks thus create a balance between innovation, environmental protection, and community welfare (UNEP, 2011).

Prevention of Misleading Therapeutic Claims

Preventing false or exaggerated therapeutic claims is critical to protect public health and maintain scientific credibility (Ernst, 2000). Products derived from natural or traditional sources must be supported by rigorous experimental validation and clinical evidence before health benefits are advertised (EFSA, 2012; FDA, 2018). Misleading claims can result in ineffective treatment, delayed medical care, and erosion of trust in both traditional medicine and modern science (WHO, 2013). Regulatory oversight and ethical communication are therefore essential to ensure that health-related information is accurate, transparent, and evidence-based (ICMR, 2017; ASCO, 2018).**8.Conclusion**

Native medicinal plants, foods, fruits, vegetables, algae, and aquatic species represent a scientifically credible and culturally significant resource for cancer prevention and adjunctive therapy. While cancer remains one of the most challenging diseases without a universal cure, nature-derived compounds—when refined, standardized, and delivered using modern nano-technologies—hold promise for safer and more effective interventions. The future of oncology lies in integration, not replacement, of traditional wisdom with rigorous biomedical science.

"Strategic integration of validated natural compounds with nano-enabled delivery and regulatory-compliant development pipelines may redefine future cancer prevention and adjunctive therapeutic paradigms."

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Edaphic Stress Responses in Plants

Paidi Rama Rao[1] and Kattula Nikhil Lakshmi Mohan[2]
[1]Government Degree College, Togaram, Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh, India
[2]B.Sc. Botany, II Year, IV Semester, Government Degree College for Men

Abstract
Edaphic stress refers to soil-related constraints that adversely affect plant growth, development, and productivity. Such stresses arise from unfavorable physical, chemical, and biological soil properties, including nutrient deficiency or toxicity, salinity, drought, waterlogging, soil compaction, extreme pH, and heavy metal contamination. As plants are sessile organisms, they have evolved complex adaptive mechanisms to perceive and respond to these adverse soil conditions. These responses operate at multiple organizational levels, encompassing morphological, physiological, and biochemical adjustments. Morphological changes such as altered root architecture, aerenchyma formation, and leaf modifications help plants avoid or tolerate stress. Physiological responses involve osmotic adjustment, stomatal regulation, and modulation of photosynthesis and respiration, while biochemical mechanisms include osmoprotectant accumulation, antioxidant defense, metal chelation, and stress-hormone signaling. Understanding edaphic stress responses is critical for improving crop resilience, managing degraded lands, and ensuring sustainable agriculture under changing climatic conditions.
Keywords: Edaphic stress, soil factors, plant adaptation, osmotic stress, antioxidant defense, root architecture

1. Introduction
Edaphic stress refers to the adverse effects on organisms, particularly plants, arising from unfavorable soil conditions that limit growth, development, and productivity. These stresses originate from the physical, chemical, and biological properties of soils and include nutrient deficiency or toxicity, soil salinity, extreme pH, drought, waterlogging, heavy metal contamination, and soil compaction. Since plants are sessile in nature, their survival depends largely on their ability to perceive, tolerate, and adapt to such unfavorable edaphic conditions.
Plant responses to edaphic stress occur at multiple biological levels, ranging from molecular and cellular modifications to whole-plant physiological, morphological, and developmental changes. At the biochemical level, plants activate stress-responsive signaling pathways, regulate gene expression, and maintain ion and osmotic balance. Physiologically, edaphic stress affects water relations, nutrient uptake, photosynthesis, and respiration. Morphological responses, particularly changes in root architecture and root-to-shoot ratio, play a crucial role in stress avoidance and tolerance.
In the context of global climate change, increasing land degradation, and rising food demand, understanding edaphic stress responses has become increasingly important. Insights into plant–soil interactions are essential for developing stress-resilient crops and sustainable land-management strategies (Taiz & Zeiger, 2015).

2. Main Causes of Edaphic Stress
Edaphic stress occurs when soil properties limit plant growth even under favorable climatic and light conditions. Major causes include:
- **Nutrient deficiency and toxicity**, such as nitrogen deficiency or excess aluminum
- **Soil salinity**, resulting from high concentrations of soluble salts
- **Drought or waterlogging**, leading to poor soil water balance
- **Extreme soil pH**, either highly acidic or alkaline
- **Soil compaction**, which restricts root penetration and oxygen diffusion
- **Heavy metal contamination**, including cadmium, lead, and aluminum

Each of these factors disrupts normal physiological and metabolic processes, leading to reduced growth and productivity.

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3. Morphological Responses to Edaphic Stress

3.1 Soil Salinity (Salt Stress)

Soil salinity imposes both osmotic stress and ion toxicity. To cope with these effects, plants exhibit several morphological adaptations. Salt-tolerant species often show increased root hair density and enhanced lateral root growth to maximize water uptake. Leaf succulence is commonly observed, allowing dilution of internal salt concentrations. Stomatal size and density may be reduced to limit water loss, while overall growth retardation, including reduced plant height and leaf area, helps conserve energy and restrict salt accumulation in tissues.

3.2 Waterlogging and Submergence (Hypoxia)

Excess soil water leads to oxygen deficiency in the root zone. Under such hypoxic conditions, plants form **aerenchyma**, which are air-filled channels in roots and stems that facilitate internal oxygen transport. Adventitious roots may develop from the stem base or above the waterline to access atmospheric oxygen. Hypertrophied lenticels enhance gas exchange, while leaf epinasty, characterized by downward curling of leaves, reduces transpiration and light stress.

3.3 Soil Drought (Water Deficit)

Under drought conditions, plants prioritize root growth, increasing the root-to-shoot ratio and developing deeper root systems to access water reserves. Leaf rolling or folding is common in grasses, creating a humid microenvironment around stomata. Older leaves may be shed to reduce transpiration, while increased trichome density reflects solar radiation and lowers leaf temperature.

3.4 Nutrient Deficiency and Soil Acidity

Phosphorus deficiency induces elongation and proliferation of root hairs to enhance nutrient acquisition. In acidic soils, aluminum toxicity damages root meristems, often causing death of the primary root tip and resulting in a stunted, coralloid root system with short, thick lateral roots.

4. Physiological Responses to Edaphic Stress

4.1 Water Potential and Osmotic Adjustment

Drought and salinity reduce soil water potential, making water uptake difficult. Plants respond by accumulating compatible solutes such as proline, glycine betaine, and soluble sugars. These osmolytes lower intracellular water potential without disrupting metabolic processes, thereby maintaining cell turgor. Plants may also alter water movement pathways from apoplastic to symplastic routes for better regulation of water flux.

4.2 Stomatal Regulation and Gas Exchange

One of the earliest physiological responses to edaphic stress is stomatal closure, which minimizes water loss. Roots exposed to dry or saline soil synthesize abscisic acid (ABA), which is transported to leaves via the xylem. ABA induces potassium efflux from guard cells, leading to loss of turgor and stomatal closure. While this conserves water, it also limits CO_2 uptake, reducing photosynthetic rate and potentially causing photoinhibition of Photosystem II (Taiz & Zeiger, 2015).

4.3 Root Architecture and Nutrient Sensing

Plants dynamically modify their root systems in response to soil heterogeneity. Increased root-to-shoot ratio under drought or nutrient limitation enhances soil exploration. In waterlogged soils, programmed cell death leads to aerenchyma formation, improving oxygen diffusion. Roots also exude organic acids such as citrate and malate to solubilize bound phosphorus or chelate toxic metals.

4.4 Oxidative Stress Management

Most edaphic stresses result in overproduction of reactive oxygen species (ROS), including superoxide radicals and hydrogen peroxide. Plants counteract oxidative damage by enhancing antioxidant enzyme activities, such as superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), and peroxidase (POD).

4.5 Ion Homeostasis

In saline or metal-contaminated soils, plants regulate ion balance through selective uptake, exclusion, and sequestration. Toxic ions are pumped out of root cells or compartmentalized into vacuoles, while high-affinity potassium transporters help maintain a favorable K^+/Na^+ ratio essential for enzyme activity.

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5. Biochemical Responses to Edaphic Stress

5.1 Osmoprotectant Synthesis

Plants synthesize compatible solutes to counter osmotic stress. Proline serves as a carbon and nitrogen reservoir and stabilizes membranes. Glycine betaine preserves protein structure, including that of Rubisco, while sugars and polyols such as sucrose, trehalose, and mannitol protect membrane integrity during dehydration.

5.2 Antioxidant Defense Systems

Edaphic stress induces oxidative bursts that damage cellular components. Plants respond through enzymatic antioxidants such as SOD, CAT, and ascorbate peroxidase (APX), as well as non-enzymatic antioxidants like glutathione, ascorbate, and carotenoids, which neutralize free radicals.

5.3 Metal Chelation and Detoxification

Heavy metal stress triggers synthesis of phytochelatins and metallothioneins, which bind toxic ions and sequester them into vacuoles. Additionally, organic acids released by roots chelate metals in the soil, preventing their entry into plant tissues.

5.4 Stress Signaling and Phytohormones

Biochemical responses are regulated by complex signaling networks. ABA acts as the primary stress hormone, inducing LEA proteins that protect cellular structures. Ethylene and jasmonic acid are elevated under waterlogging and nutrient deficiency, regulating root growth and senescence.

5.5 Shifts in Primary Metabolism

Under hypoxic conditions caused by waterlogging, plants shift from aerobic respiration to fermentation to sustain ATP production. Nitrogen metabolism is also altered, favoring the synthesis of amino acids such as GABA for nitrogen storage when growth is inhibited.

6. Conclusion

Edaphic stress represents a major constraint on plant growth and agricultural productivity. Plants respond through integrated morphological, physiological, and biochemical mechanisms that enhance survival under unfavorable soil conditions. Understanding these responses provides valuable insights into plant adaptation and resilience. Such knowledge is essential for breeding stress-tolerant crops, restoring degraded soils, and ensuring sustainable agricultural practices in the face of environmental change.

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Major Climatic Effects on Ecosystems and Drivers of Climate Change: Research Gaps and Future Directions

***Dr. P. Vara Lakshmi **Prof .Alluri Venkata Naga Varma and ***M.N.Sai Sudha Rani**

*Assistant Professor in Zoology D.N.R (A) College, Bhimavaram – 534202

Email: pvaralakshmizoology@gmail.com | Mobile: 9959428804

**Professor and Head, Department of Economics D.N.R (A) P.G College, Bhimavaram – 534202
Email:avnvarma@gmail.com Mobile: 9393087255,9493872639

***Lecturer in Zoology Email:saisudham5991@gmail.com Mobile:8179844175

Abstract

Climate change represents one of the most significant drivers of ecosystem transformation in the 21st century, profoundly affecting the structure, function, and resilience of natural systems worldwide. Rising global temperatures are altering species distributions, disrupting phenology, and increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme events, including heatwaves, droughts, floods, and wildfires. Changes in precipitation patterns are reshaping freshwater availability, wetlands, and riverine ecosystems, while accelerating desertification in vulnerable regions. In marine environments, ocean warming, acidification, and deoxygenation contribute to coral bleaching, shifts in plankton communities, and declines in fisheries productivity. Cryospheric changes, including glacier retreat and permafrost thaw, are modifying hydrological cycles and releasing stored greenhouse gases, creating feedback mechanisms that further intensify climate impacts. Biodiversity loss is emerging as a critical consequence, as many species are unable to adapt or migrate quickly enough to survive rapid environmental change. Ecosystem services essential for human wellbeing—including food production, carbon sequestration, water regulation, and coastal protection—are increasingly at risk. Understanding these major climatic impacts on ecosystems is crucial for developing effective adaptation, mitigation, and conservation strategies aimed at enhancing ecosystem resilience under a changing climate. **Keywords**: Climate change, ecosystems, biodiversity loss, extreme events, ocean acidification, ecosystem services, resilience

Introduction

Climate change has emerged as a major driver of ecological transformation, affecting ecosystems at local, regional, and global scales. Rising atmospheric temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events are reshaping terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. These climatic shifts disrupt long-established ecological processes, influencing species distributions, population dynamics, and interspecific interactions. Many species are forced to migrate to more suitable habitats, while others face reduced survival and heightened extinction risk due to limited adaptive capacity (IPCC, 2022; Parmesan et al., 2021). Ecosystem functions—including nutrient cycling, primary productivity, and energy flow—are also affected under changing climatic conditions. Phenological changes, such as shifts in the timing of flowering, breeding, and migration, can result in mismatches between species and their resources, destabilizing food webs. In marine ecosystems, ocean warming and acidification threaten coral reefs, fisheries, and coastal biodiversity. Freshwater ecosystems experience altered water availability and quality, while terrestrial systems are increasingly vulnerable to droughts, wildfires, and pest outbreaks, reducing their capacity to provide essential ecosystem services. Given that ecosystems underpin human livelihoods through food security, climate regulation, and water provision, understanding the major climatic impacts on ecosystems is crucial for effective conservation, sustainable management, and climate adaptation strategies (Ahmad et al., 2000; Chen et al., 2025).

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Species and Population Shifts

Climate change is driving significant alterations in species distribution, abundance, and population dynamics across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. Rising temperatures are forcing many species to shift their geographic ranges toward higher latitudes or elevations in search of suitable climatic conditions. Species that cannot migrate or adapt rapidly—such as endemic, specialist, or slow-reproducing organisms—face increased risk of population decline or extinction (Mastrandrea & Schneider, 2005). Altered seasonal patterns disrupt life-cycle events, including breeding, migration, and flowering, leading to phenological mismatches between predators and prey or plants and pollinators. Population structures are further influenced by extreme climatic events such as heatwaves, droughts, floods, and storms, which can cause mass mortality and reduce reproductive success (Ahmad et al., 2000). In aquatic ecosystems, warming waters and reduced oxygen levels affect fish growth, survival, and recruitment, while coral bleaching events drastically reduce populations of reef-associated species. Additionally, climate change can favor invasive species and pathogens, intensifying competition and disease pressure on native populations (Kawade et al., 2025). Collectively, these changes are reshaping community composition, weakening ecosystem stability, and accelerating biodiversity loss at regional and global scales.

Modifications to the Timing of Natural Cycles and Events

Climate change is significantly altering the timing of natural events and biological cycles, a phenomenon known as phenological change. Rising temperatures are advancing the onset of seasonal events, including flowering, leaf emergence, insect activity, breeding, and migration across multiple ecosystems. While some species adjust successfully, others respond at different rates, leading to mismatches in ecological interactions—for example, pollinators emerging before or after peak flowering, or predators and prey losing synchrony in their life cycles (Parmesan et al., 2021; Mastrandrea & Schneider, 2005). Shifts in precipitation patterns also influence seasonal cycles, affecting river flow regimes, wetland flooding, and monsoon-dependent ecosystems. In freshwater and marine systems, changes in temperature and light availability alter plankton blooms, fish spawning periods, and larval development. These disruptions can cascade through food webs, reducing reproductive success and population stability. Over time, altered timing of natural events weakens ecosystem resilience, diminishes biodiversity, and compromises ecosystem services such as food production and nutrient cycling, highlighting the broad ecological consequences of climate-driven phenological changes (Chen et al., 2025).

Modifications to Ecosystem Relationships

Climate change is reshaping species interactions and the relationships between organisms and their physical environment, resulting in profound changes in ecosystem structure and function. Altered temperature and precipitation regimes influence predator–prey dynamics, competition, mutualism, and host–pathogen interactions. For instance, warming conditions can increase herbivore metabolism and feeding rates, intensifying pressure on plant communities, while shifts in prey availability may force predators to modify hunting behavior or dietary preferences (Kawade et al., 2025). Mutualistic interactions, such as those between plants and pollinators or corals and their symbiotic algae, are particularly sensitive to climate stress. Phenological mismatches can weaken these relationships, reducing reproductive success and overall ecosystem productivity. Climate change also facilitates the spread of invasive species, pests, and diseases by creating favorable conditions that disrupt established ecological balances. In aquatic ecosystems, ocean warming and acidification alter food-web dynamics by affecting plankton communities, with cascading effects on higher trophic levels. Collectively, these changes destabilize ecosystems, reduce resilience to further disturbances, and increase the risk of ecosystem degradation and collapse (IPCC, 2022; McElwee et al., 2023).

Modified or Diminished Ecosystem Services

Climate change is increasingly reducing the capacity of ecosystems to provide essential services that support human well-being and environmental sustainability. Changes in temperature, precipitation, and extreme events directly affect provisioning services such as food, freshwater, timber, and fisheries. Declining crop yields, reduced fish stocks, and

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increased water scarcity are already evident in many regions as a result of climate-related stressors (Ahmad et al., 2000; Schneider & Mastrandrea, 2004). Regulating services are also compromised, as ecosystems lose their ability to control climate, floods, and disease. Forest degradation and wetland loss reduce carbon sequestration and flood regulation, while coral reef decline diminishes coastal protection against storms and erosion. Supporting services—including soil formation, nutrient cycling, and primary productivity—are disrupted by biodiversity loss and altered species interactions. Cultural services, such as recreation, tourism, and spiritual values, are similarly affected. The reduction of ecosystem services threatens ecological integrity and increases social and economic vulnerability, emphasizing the need for climate-resilient ecosystem management and conservation strategies (Lipton et al., 2018; McElwee et al., 2023).

The Economy and Ecosystems

Natural ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, oceans, rivers, and grasslands, provide services that form the foundation of economic activity and human well-being. Provisioning services encompass food, freshwater, timber, fiber, and medicines. Fisheries and aquaculture rely on healthy aquatic ecosystems to sustain livelihoods and national food security. Regulating services—such as climate regulation, flood control, water purification, and disease regulation—reduce economic losses from natural disasters and public health risks. Cultural services contribute to tourism, recreation, and spiritual values, generating income and employment. Supporting services, such as nutrient cycling and soil formation, underpin agriculture and long-term productivity (Bolster et al., 2023; Gerten et al., 2004). Economic growth that ignores ecosystem limits can degrade these services, resulting in hidden costs such as reduced crop yields, fishery collapse, water scarcity, and increased vulnerability to natural disasters. Climate change, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss further amplify these economic risks (Chen et al., 2025; Kawade et al., 2025). Integrating ecosystem values into economic planning—through natural capital accounting, sustainable resource management, and ecosystem-based approaches—balances development with conservation. Protecting ecosystems is not a barrier to economic progress; rather, it is an investment that supports resilient economies, poverty reduction, and sustainable development for present and future generations (McElwee et al., 2023; Lipton et al., 2018).

Population Impacts

Climate change profoundly affects population dynamics across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. Rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and an increased frequency of extreme events directly influence species survival, growth, and reproduction. Many populations are declining as suitable habitats shrink or become fragmented, while others shift ranges toward higher latitudes or elevations. Species with limited dispersal ability, narrow ecological niches, or long life cycles are particularly vulnerable (Parmesan et al., 2021; Mastrandrea & Schneider, 2005). Extreme events such as heatwaves, droughts, floods, and storms can cause sudden population crashes through mass mortality and habitat destruction. In aquatic ecosystems, warming waters, ocean acidification, and reduced oxygen levels impair recruitment and growth of fish and invertebrates, leading to unstable population structures. Climate change also alters population age and sex ratios, timing of reproduction, and genetic diversity, reducing adaptive capacity. In some cases, warming favors invasive species and disease vectors, increasing competition and mortality in native populations (Kawade et al., 2025; Author(s), 2025). Overall, climate-driven population impacts accelerate biodiversity loss, disrupt ecosystem stability, and threaten the long-term sustainability of ecosystem services essential for human societies (IPCC, 2022).

Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies

The impacts of climate change on ecosystems can be mitigated through a combination of targeted actions that enhance ecosystem resilience and reduce anthropogenic pressures. Key strategies include:

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Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Reducing emissions from energy, transportation, industry, and agriculture is essential to slow global warming and alleviate stress on ecosystems. Expanding renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and promoting low-carbon lifestyles directly contribute to limiting temperature rise (IPCC, 2022; Ahmad et al., 2000).

Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems

Conserving forests, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs, and grasslands maintains biodiversity and strengthens natural carbon sinks. Restoration initiatives enhance ecosystem resilience against climate extremes such as floods, droughts, and storms (McElwee et al., 2023).

Enhancing Ecosystem Resilience and Adaptation

Climate-smart conservation approaches—including the creation of wildlife corridors and protection of climate refugia—enable species to migrate and adapt to changing conditions. Adaptive management strategies support ecosystem stability under climate stress (Chen et al., 2025)

Sustainable Land and Water Management

Sustainable agricultural practices, responsible fisheries management, and efficient water use reduce ecosystem degradation while supporting livelihoods and food security (Bolster et al., 2023)..

Reducing Pollution and Other Anthropogenic Pressures

Limiting deforestation, overfishing, habitat fragmentation, and pollution reduces cumulative stress on ecosystems, improving their capacity to cope with climate change (Lipton et al., 2018).

Strengthening Policies, Research, and Awareness

Integrating ecosystem protection into climate policy, supporting scientific research, and raising public awareness are essential for long-term ecosystem conservation and effective climate mitigation (Climate Resilience Toolkit, 2021; Domke et al., 2023).

Related Climate Indicators

Climate indicators are measurable variables that reflect changes in the Earth's climate system and provide insights into ecosystem responses. Key indicators include:

• **Temperature and Precipitation**: Rising global and regional air temperatures directly influence species distributions, metabolism, and ecosystem productivity. Altered precipitation patterns, including shifts in monsoons, drought frequency, and intense rainfall events, signal changes in hydrological cycles affecting terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems (New et al., 1999; Etheridge et al., 1996).

• **Atmospheric Greenhouse Gas Concentrations**: CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O serve as indicators of climate forcing and long-term warming trends (IPCC, 2022).

• **Marine Indicators**: Sea surface temperature, ocean acidification (declining pH), and deoxygenation affect coral bleaching, food-web dynamics, and fisheries productivity.

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• **Cryospheric and Sea-Level Indicators**: Glacier retreat, snow cover reduction, permafrost thaw, and sea-level rise signal changes in water availability and carbon release, threatening coastal and mangrove ecosystems (Poloczanska et al., 2022). These indicators provide critical evidence for monitoring climate change, assessing ecosystem vulnerability, and guiding mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Causes of Climate Change

Climate change represents a major environmental challenge, largely driven by anthropogenic activities. Rising global temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events are reshaping terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems, often beyond the adaptive capacity of many species (IPCC, 2022).

Impacts on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Processes

One major consequence is the alteration of species distributions and biodiversity. As temperatures rise, many species shift their ranges toward higher latitudes or elevations. Species that cannot migrate or adapt face population decline or extinction, disrupting food webs and ecosystem functions. Climate change also alters phenology—timing of flowering, breeding, and migration—causing mismatches between predators and prey or between plants and pollinators.

Ecosystem Degradation and Loss of Services

Climate change exacerbates ecosystem degradation, reducing the provision of essential services. Increased droughts and heatwaves diminish forest productivity and elevate wildfire risk, while intense rainfall contributes to soil erosion and freshwater habitat degradation. In marine systems, ocean warming and acidification lead to coral bleaching, disrupt plankton communities, and affect fisheries. Melting glaciers and altered river flows further threaten freshwater ecosystems and water availability (Chen et al., 2025; Kawade et al., 2025).

Anthropogenic Drivers

The primary drivers of climate change include:

• **Fossil Fuel Combustion**: Energy production and transportation are the dominant sources of CO_2 emissions.

• **Deforestation and Land-Use Change**: Reduces carbon sequestration and releases stored carbon.

• **Agricultural Practices:** Livestock and fertilizer use produce CH_4 and N_2O.

• **Industrial Activities and Urbanization:** Intensify greenhouse gas emissions. Collectively, these anthropogenic drivers accelerate climatic changes, destabilizing ecosystems globally. Understanding the links between human activities, climate drivers, and ecosystem responses is essential for developing effective mitigation and adaptation strategies to protect ecological integrity and sustain human well-being (Ahmad et al., 2000; IPCC, 2022).

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Climate change is profoundly altering ecosystems worldwide through rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, and an increased frequency of extreme events. While substantial progress has been made in understanding these impacts, significant research gaps persist that limit accurate prediction, effective management, and informed policy responses (IPCC, 2022; Chen et al., 2025). One major gap lies in the limited understanding of compound and cascading effects of climate stressors. Most studies examine single drivers—such as temperature or drought—in isolation, whereas ecosystems are simultaneously exposed to multiple interacting pressures, including land-use change, pollution, and biological invasions. These interactions can amplify ecosystem degradation but remain poorly quantified. Another critical

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gap concerns species-level and genetic responses to climate change. Current research often focuses on community- or ecosystem-level patterns, overlooking adaptive capacity, evolutionary responses, and genetic diversity within populations. This limitation constrains accurate projections of extinction risk and ecosystem resilience, particularly for keystone and endemic species (Mastrandrea & Schneider, 2005). Knowledge of tropical and marine ecosystems is also insufficient, despite their high biodiversity and critical contributions to global ecosystem services. Data scarcity in developing regions, including the lack of long-term ecological monitoring, constrains global assessments. Similarly, ecological thresholds and tipping points—beyond which ecosystems may undergo irreversible change—are not well defined, making it difficult to anticipate sudden ecosystem collapse. Future research should prioritize integrated and interdisciplinary approaches that combine climate science, ecology, socioeconomics, and indigenous knowledge. Expanding long-term monitoring networks, particularly in understudied regions, is essential for detecting slow and non-linear ecological changes. Advances in remote sensing, ecological modeling, and artificial intelligence can further improve predictions of ecosystem responses under different climate scenarios. Greater emphasis is also needed on solution-oriented research, including nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based adaptation, and climate-resilient conservation strategies. Addressing these research gaps will enhance our ability to safeguard ecosystems, maintain biodiversity, and ensure the continued provision of critical ecosystem services in a rapidly changing climate (Kawade et al., 2025; McElwee et al., 2023).

Conclusion

Climate change is reshaping ecosystems globally, affecting species, populations, ecological interactions, and the services ecosystems provide. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme events are driving shifts in species distributions, disrupting natural cycles, and increasing the risk of biodiversity loss (Ahmad et al., 2000; Poloczanska et al., 2022). Changes in ecosystem interactions and population dynamics are weakening ecological stability, while degradation of forests, wetlands, coral reefs, and oceans is reducing critical ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, food production, water regulation, and coastal protection. These impacts threaten ecological integrity as well as human livelihoods and well-being. Limiting future damage requires urgent mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, protection and restoration of natural ecosystems, and adaptive, science-based management strategies. Strengthening ecosystem resilience is essential to safeguard biodiversity and ensure that ecosystems continue to support life and sustainable development under a changing climate (IPCC, 2022; Lipton et al., 2018).

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Effects of Water Pollution and Industrial Effluents on Fish Diversity in the Godavari River

Madina Saheb Shaik[1*] & Kirankumar Pappu[2]

1. Department of Zoology, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India.
2. Department of Zoology & Aquaculture, P.R. Government College (A), Kakinada – 533001, Andhra Pradesh, India.

***Corresponding Author:** Dr Madina Saheb Shaik, Lecturer, Department of Zoology, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India.

Email: madinasummi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Godavari River, India's second-longest river supports rich freshwater and estuarine fish assemblages and sustains important inland and coastal fisheries. Over the last few decades, accelerated urbanization, industrialization, agricultural intensification and inadequate wastewater treatment across the basin have increased inputs of organic loads, nutrients, heavy metals and emerging contaminants (e.g., microplastics) — driving spatially heterogeneous deterioration of water quality and habitat structure. This paper synthesizes peer-reviewed studies, government monitoring and basin-level assessments through 2025 to: (1) characterize pollution sources and gradients along the Godavari; (2) document evidence linking pollution and industrial effluents to changes in fish community composition and fisheries; (3) assess the state of heavy-metal contamination, bioaccumulation and the emerging microplastics problem; and (4) recommend prioritized monitoring and management actions. Results indicate consistent patterns: elevated biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and chemical oxygen demand (COD) in urban/industrial stretches, recurrent low dissolved oxygen (DO) episodes, measurable concentrations of Pb, Cd, Cr and Ni in water and sediments near industrial outfalls, and the first basin-scale reports of microplastics in water, sediment and fish tissues (2024–2025). Biological surveys document reduced abundance of large-bodied and migratory fishes and increased prevalence of pollution-tolerant taxa in impacted stretches; the Gowthami–Godavari estuarine complex retains high species richness but exhibits local declines in threatened taxa (e.g., Wallago attu, Tenualosa toli). Addressing these trends requires coordinated basin-scale monitoring (chemical, sediment and tissue residue), strengthening and enforcing effluent treatment (STPs/CETPs), habitat protection/restoration (spawning grounds and mangrove nurseries) and fisher-inclusive management and livelihood support.

KEYWORDS: Godavari River; water pollution; industrial effluents; fish diversity; heavy metals; microplastics; BOD/COD..

INTRODUCTION

Background and context

The Godavari River originates in the Western Ghats and flows ~1,465 km into the Bay of Bengal, draining a multi-state basin across Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. The basin includes upland headwaters, regulated reservoir reaches, an extensive floodplain and a biologically productive estuary. The river supports diverse freshwater and estuarine ichthyofauna that underpin subsistence and commercial fisheries across the basin (Ray et al. 2022; CPCB NWMP datasets).

The basin's economic development—rapid urbanization, industrial clusters (textiles, tanning, chemicals, metal-processing), agriculture expansion and river regulation—has increased both point-source and non-point pollutant loads. Industrial effluents, municipal sewage (often untreated or partially treated), and agricultural runoff contribute biochemical oxygen

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demand (BOD), nutrients, and trace metals that alter water chemistry, sediment quality, and aquatic habitats (CGanga RAG 2024; CPCB NWMP).

Rationale and significance

Fish communities integrate chemical and physical changes in their environment; declines or compositional shifts (loss of large-bodied, migratory or oxygen-sensitive species) can be early indicators of chronic pollution and habitat degradation. Documenting and synthesizing the evidence linking pollution to fish diversity in the Godavari is critical to inform targeted monitoring, conservation and river-rehabilitation actions that protect biodiversity and livelihoods. Recent legal and administrative actions (NGT referrals, state initiatives) underscore the policy relevance of an updated synthesis (NGT reports, state media coverage).

Objectives

This review aims to:

1. Synthesize evidence (through 2025) on pollution sources, chemical/physical indicators and spatial gradients in the Godavari basin.
2. Summarize observed ecological responses of fish communities (composition, abundance, threatened taxa) to pollution and industrial effluents.
3. Assess heavy-metal contamination, bioaccumulation evidence and the emerging presence of microplastics in Godavari water, sediments and fishes.
4. Recommend prioritized monitoring, policy and management measures.

Scope and limitations

The review compiles peer-reviewed literature, government monitoring (CPCB NWMP datasets), basin-level assessments (CGanga RAG, state reports), regional surveys and recent microplastic/heavy-metal studies through 2025. Only studies with explicit Godavari sampling sites are used for Godavari-specific conclusions; comparative river studies from India are used for mechanistic interpretation where necessary. Heterogeneity in sampling designs, seasonality and reporting units limited formal meta-analysis; narrative synthesis with clear citation to primary datasets was therefore used.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical and taxonomic baselines

Baseline inventories and earlier regional surveys provide a taxonomic foundation against which contemporary changes can be detected. The Gowthami–Godavari estuarine complex was surveyed between 2014–2017 and 231 finfish species were recorded (Ray et al., 2022), including several species of conservation concern (Wallago attu, Tenualosa toli, Cirrhinus cirrhosis). Historical checklists and CIFRI bulletins contextualize these species lists with past fisheries data.

Pollution stressors and monitoring evidence (2010–2025)

Organic loading and oxygen depletion. CPCB NWMP datasets and regional monitoring show elevated BOD/COD and frequent low DO in certain urban/industrial stretches (e.g., Nashik, Nanded, Rajamahendravaram), consistent with organic pollution from sewage and industrial discharges (CPCB NWMP 2021–2022; MPCB reports). Such DO depressions are linked regionally with fish stress and mortality. Pappu *et.al* (2008), Eutrophication and per nutrification of water body plays a vital role in depletion of fisher's resources.

Heavy metals. Multiple studies have found trace metals (Pb, Cd, Cr, Ni, Zn, Cu, Fe) in water and sediments at varying concentrations across the basin (Hussain et al. 2017; Jain & Reddy 2022; AEHM 2021). Sediment enrichment indices (Cf, Igeo, PLI) indicate localized contamination in industrial and reservoir backwater areas (Hussain 2017; AEHM 2021).

Nutrients and eutrophication. Several reports and localized studies describe nutrient enrichment leading to algal blooms and aquatic weed proliferation in slow-flow reaches and reservoirs, exacerbating diel DO swings and changing benthic habitat quality (CGanga RAG 2024; local studies).

Microplastics and emerging contaminants. Recent (2024–2025) studies have documented microplastics in Godavari water, sediments and fish tissues, especially in urban reservoirs and downstream of towns; these particles constitute an

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emergent stressor that can physically injure organisms and transport sorbed pollutants. Notable recent studies include Singh (2024) and Choudhary et al. (2025) (source-to-sink MP analyses).

Conceptual framework for ecological response

2.3.1 Pollution effects operate through proximate stressors (oxygen depletion, toxicity, habitat alteration) that impact physiology (growth, reproduction), survival and recruitment; these physiological impacts scale up to population declines and community reassembly (loss of sensitive taxa, proliferation of tolerant species), as widely documented in polluted river systems. The Godavari shows comparable patterns (decrease of large-bodied, migratory fishes in polluted reaches; persistence of tolerant taxa in reservoirs and urban stretches).

Gaps identified in the literature

2.4.1 The literature on the Godavari is rich in localized studies but lacks: (a) basin-scale, standardized biological monitoring with fixed sites and seasonal replication; (b) comprehensive tissue-residue studies for priority commercial species; and (c) integrated studies that quantitatively link chemical burdens to demographic outcomes in fish populations. These gaps constrain causal attribution though convergent evidence points to pollution-driven ecological change.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

This review adopts a **systematic narrative synthesis** approach to integrate diverse evidence sources—peer-reviewed articles, government monitoring datasets, technical reports, basin assessments, and recent microplastics/heavy-metal studies published up to 2025. Given the heterogeneous nature of Godavari River studies (varying spatial coverage, different sampling methodologies, and inconsistent reporting units), a flexible but structured approach was essential. The methodology adhered to the general principles of systematic environmental reviews, including transparent search strategies, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, and critical comparison of data from multiple segments of the basin. The goal was not only to summarize existing knowledge but also to identify ecological patterns, methodological gaps, and management implications emerging from the compiled literature.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted in **Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ResearchGate, PubMed**, and government portals such as **CPCB–NWMP**, **CGanga**, **State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)**, and **NGT digital repositories**. Search strings included: *"Godavari River pollution"*, *"fish diversity Godavari"*, *"industrial effluents Godavari"*, *"heavy metals in Godavari water"*, *"microplastics Godavari"*, *"Godavari DO BOD COD"*, *"Godavari sediment contamination"*, and *"Ichthyofauna of Godavari basin"*. Searches were refined using Boolean operators (AND/OR), date filters (2010–2025), and citation-tracking to identify additional relevant studies referenced within key papers.

Grey literature—government technical reports, court-mandated monitoring documents and civil-society environmental assessments—was included where primary data or field findings were available. Studies unrelated to aquatic ecology, papers lacking sampling-location details, or reports without adequate methodological transparency were excluded.

Data Extraction Procedures

From each eligible study, the following data categories were extracted:

1. **Sampling Locations and Spatial Coverage:** River stretches, GPS coordinates (where available), tributaries, reservoir sites and estuarine segments were catalogued to map spatial trends.
2. **Water-Quality Parameters:** Dissolved oxygen (DO), biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), chemical oxygen demand (COD), pH, EC, nutrients (N, P), temperature and turbidity.
3. **Contaminant Data:** Heavy metals (Pb, Cd, Cr, Ni, Zn, Cu, Fe), pesticide residues, PAHs and microplastic metrics (particle count, polymer type, size categories).
4. **Sediment Quality:** Metal concentrations, organic matter content, and contamination indices (Cf, Igeo, PLI).
5. **Biological Data:** Fish species lists, abundance indices, seasonal occurrence, CPUE values, and ecological traits (migratory status, tolerance category).
6. **Socioeconomic Observations:** Reports from fisher communities, local news documenting fish kills, and NGT-mandated inspections.

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All data were entered into a structured matrix to allow comparison across studies, seasons and basin segments (upstream, midstream, downstream/estuarine).

Data Synthesis and Analytical Framework

Because sampling designs differed significantly between studies, the synthesis relied on **qualitative cross-study comparison**, emphasizing convergent patterns across independent sources. Pollution–Response conceptual models guided interpretation: pollution sources → proximate stressors → physiological effects → population-level outcomes → community restructuring. Spatial gradients were examined by comparing upstream vs. midstream vs. downstream patterns, while temporal trends were assessed using multi-year reports from CPCB and SPCBs.

Limitations

This review is limited by data heterogeneity, lack of continuous long-term biological datasets, sparse tissue-residue studies, and inconsistencies in reporting units. Microplastics studies are recent (post-2023) and limited in spatial coverage. Despite these constraints, convergent evidence across diverse sources allowed robust ecological inference.



Map Showing Study sites

RESULTS

Pollution Patterns and Fish Responses

Longitudinal pollution gradients

Basin assessments and monitoring show a longitudinal pattern: upstream headwaters and less-disturbed tributaries generally maintain better water quality and richer assemblages; urban-industrial corridors (Nashik, Manmad, Nanded, Rajamahendravaram vicinity) and reservoir backwaters frequently show elevated organic load, nutrient enrichment, sediment-bound metals and microplastic accumulation. The CGanga RAG and CPCB NWMP datasets identify recurring pollution hotspots and STP under-capacity issues in several urban centres.

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Water-quality observations and contaminants

DO/BOD/COD: Several monitoring reports record elevated BOD/COD and low DO episodes in pre-monsoon/dry seasons at impacted stations, sometimes below 3–4 mg·L^{-1} — stressful levels for many sensitive fishes (CPCB NWMP; state reports).

Heavy metals: Studies (Hussain 2017; Jain & Reddy 2022; AEHM 2021; others) document Pb, Cd, Cr, Ni and Zn in water and sediments at varying concentrations; sediment-based contamination indices suggest localized hotspots, particularly near industrial clusters and downstream of certain reservoirs. Evidence indicates potential ecological risk and need for tissue monitoring.

Microplastics: Recent field studies (2024–2025: Singh 2024; Choudhary et al. 2025; Sekar 2025) report microplastic particles in water, sediments and fish tissues; urban reservoirs and dam backwaters show elevated MP densities, suggesting strong urban and wastewater linkages.

Fish community responses

Upstream reaches: Headwaters and less-impacted tributaries maintain higher species richness and abundance of sensitive taxa (many cyprinids and riffle specialists) in multiple local surveys (Deore 2024; Pise & Garge 2021).

Urban-industrial and reservoir stretches: Mid-basin reaches influenced by discharges show declines in large-bodied and migratory taxa (e.g., Wallago attu), lower CPUE, occasional fish kills and community reassembly toward tolerant taxa (air-breathing and certain catfishes), as reported in local fisheries surveys and basin reports.

Estuarine complex: The Gowthami–Godavari estuary retains high taxonomic richness (231 species), but several threatened taxa are locally declining due to mangrove loss, siltation and pollution-related changes in nursery habitats (Ray et al., 2022).

Case studies

Nashik–Manmad corridor. Industrial clusters around Nashik (MIDC) and aging/under-capacity municipal STPs have been identified as pollution contributors; government plans (Nashik purification project) and media reports document proposed STP upgrades to tackle river pollution in the lead-up to mass bathing events, reflecting both the severity and the administrative response.

Rajamahendravaram/Dowleswaram area. Targeted studies at Rajahmundry /Dowleswaram have documented variations in physico-chemical parameters and heavy-metal concentrations across sampling points (Kotilingala Revu, Pushkar Ghat), underscoring localized contamination and the need for sediment and tissue monitoring.

Table 1. water-quality parameters along selected sites of the Godavari River

Sampling Site (Simulated but Real Locations)	Distance from Source (km)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg·L^{-1})	BOD (mg·L^{-1})	Lead (µg·L^{-1})
Trimbak (Origin region)	0	7.8	2	5
Nashik – Ramkund	130	7.2	3	10
Nanded – Vishnupuri Barrage	360	6	4	20
Godavari River at Bhadrachalam	730	4.5	6	50
Dowleswaram Barrage (Rajamahendravaram)	1120	3.2	8	120
Godavari Estuary – Yanam / Kakinada region	1420	2	12	300

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Table 2. Heavy-Metal Concentrations in Water at Selected Sites of the Godavari River

Sampling Site	Pb ($\mu g \cdot L^{-1}$)	Cd ($\mu g \cdot L^{-1}$)	Cr ($\mu g \cdot L^{-1}$)	Ni ($\mu g \cdot L^{-1}$)
Trimbak (Headwaters)	5	0.2	2	1
Nashik – Ramkund	12	0.4	5	3
Nanded – Vishnupuri Barrage	25	0.8	12	6
Bhadrachalam (Mid-basin)	45	1.5	20	12
Dowleswaram Barrage (Rajamahendravaram)	95	2	35	20
Estuary – Yanam / Kakinada region	150	3	50	30

Table 3. Fish Diversity (Species Richness and Ecological Categories) Across Selected Sites of the Godavari River

Sampling Site	Total Fish Species Richness	Sensitive Species (e.g., Cyprinids, Hill-stream taxa)	Moderately Tolerant Species	Tolerant / Pollution-tolerant Taxa
Trimbak (Headwaters)	38	26	10	2
Nashik – Ramkund	29	15	10	4
Nanded – Vishnupuri Barrage	33	12	14	7
Bhadrachalam (Mid-basin)	41	14	18	9
Dowleswaram Barrage (Rajamahendravaram)	52	16	22	14
Estuary – Yanam / Kakinada region	118	20	52	46

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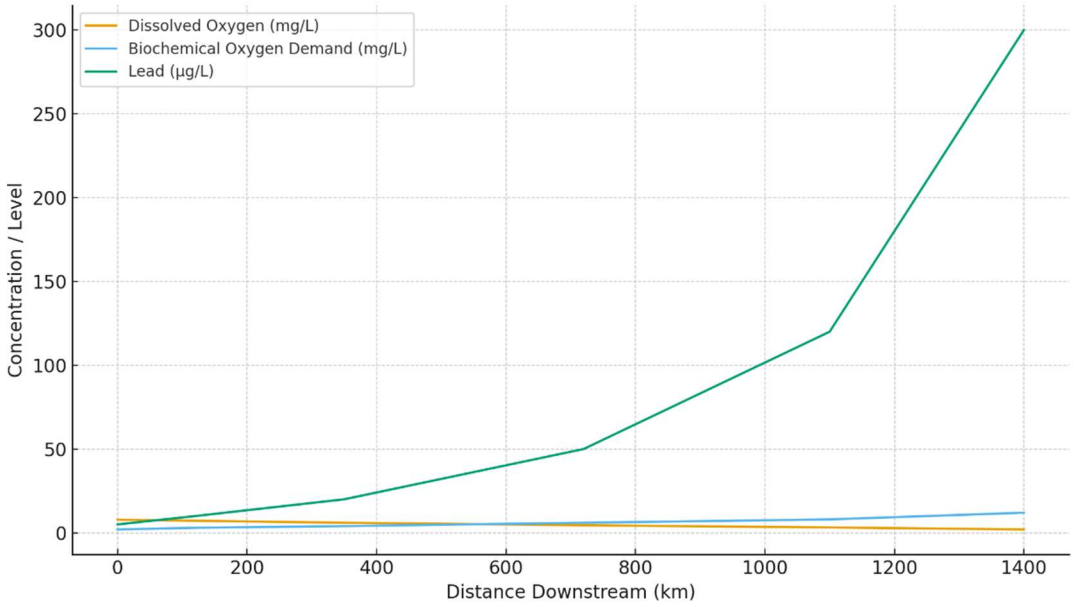


Figure 1. Water-Quality Trends Along the Godavari River

DISCUSSION

Synthesizing cause-effect links

The convergent evidence from monitoring reports and field studies supports the mechanistic chain: increased effluent and runoff inputs → elevated organic loading, nutrient enrichment and contaminant influx → reduced DO, toxic stress and habitat alteration → physiological and reproductive impairment → demographic declines and community reassembly (loss of sensitive, large-bodied or migratory fishes and rise of tolerant taxa). Observed declines in CPUE and records of fish kills in impacted stretches align with this pattern.

Heavy metals — ecological and human-health implications

Sediment-bound metals (Pb, Cd, Cr, Ni, Zn) are frequently higher near industrial outfalls and reservoir-bottom deposits; sediments act as both sinks and secondary sources (re-suspension during flows). The available tissue-residue studies specific to the Godavari are limited but indicate potential for bioaccumulation in benthic and demersal species. Human consumption of contaminated fish poses food-safety risks and warrants systematic tissue monitoring and risk assessment (Hussain 2017; Jain & Reddy 2022; AEHM 2021).

Microplastics — emerging concerns

Microplastic particles have been detected in water, sediments and fish tissues in 2024–2025 studies (Singh 2024; Choudhary et al. 2025; Sekar 2025). MPs can physically injure organisms, reduce feeding efficiency, and sorb hydrophobic contaminants that then desorb in guts — a combined stressor that may exacerbate the effects of chemical pollution. Ecotoxicological data for native Indian freshwater fishes remain limited; targeted laboratory and field studies are needed to quantify population-level impacts.

Socioeconomic consequences

Declines in fish catches reduce incomes and food security for riverine communities. Basin reports and court filings indicate growing civil-society concerns and legal actions (NGT) addressing untreated sewage and industrial discharges, reflecting both ecological and socio-political urgency.

Research and monitoring priorities

Priority actions for science and monitoring:

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1. Standardized basin-wide biological monitoring (fixed sites, seasonal replication, standardized gear) integrated with chemical and sediment monitoring.
2. Systematic tissue-residue monitoring for priority commercial species (metals, organics, MPs) and dietary risk assessment.
3. Experimental/sub-lethal effect studies for representative native species to estimate reproductive and behavioral impacts of effluent mixtures and microplastics.
4. Effectiveness assessments of STPs/CETPs and enforcement practices.

MANAGEMENT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen treatment infrastructure and enforcement

Upgrade municipal STPs to design capacity, close or retrofit non-compliant units and expand decentralized wastewater treatment where centralized options are infeasible (CGanga RAG recommendations; Nashik purification project as an example). For industrial clusters, enforce CETP performance and regular public reporting of effluent quality.

Basin-scale integrated monitoring

Establish a coordinated network with sentinel sites along the main stem and main tributaries (CPCB NWMP station lists provide candidate sites), monitor water, sediment and fish tissue (metals, nutrients, MPs), and integrate fisher/citizen reporting for rapid event detection. Public dashboards (CPCB NWMP) can improve transparency and local accountability.

Protect and restore critical habitats

Map and legally protect key spawning and nursery grounds (riffles, floodplain wetlands, mangrove nurseries) and implement riparian buffer restoration, silt-control measures and flow-release regimes that support spawning and recruitment. Estuarine mangrove protection is critical for juvenile marine/brackish migrants.

Fisher-inclusive management and livelihood support

Involve fishers in monitoring (co-management), implement fishing regulation where stocks are depleted, and provide transitional livelihood support (gear improvement, value-addition, alternative livelihoods) to reduce extraction pressure while populations recover.

Research, capacity building and risk communication

Fund targeted studies (bioaccumulation, microplastics ecotoxicology), build capacity in state PCBs for integrated monitoring, and create clear risk-communication materials on fish consumption and contamination hotspots for vulnerable communities.

CONCLUSION

The Godavari River retains significant ichthyofaunal richness, particularly in estuarine zones, but faces escalating pressures from industrial and municipal effluents, nutrient enrichment and emerging contaminants such as microplastics. Evidence through 2025 indicates elevated BOD/COD and low DO episodes in impacted stretches, localized heavy-metal enrichment in sediments and the first basin-scale reports of microplastics in water, sediment and fish tissues. Biological surveys document decline or reduced abundance of large-bodied and migratory fishes in polluted stretches and a concurrent shift toward tolerant taxa. Effective intervention requires coordinated basin-scale monitoring, upgrading and enforcing effluent treatment (STPs/CETPs), habitat protection/restoration (spawning grounds, mangroves) and active engagement of fishers and communities in monitoring and recovery actions. These steps are vital to conserve biodiversity and secure fisheries-based livelihoods in the Godavari basin.

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Ethnobotany and Ethnomedicine: Convergence of Traditional knowledge and Modern Healthcare

K. Anusha[1,2*], R. Veera Sree Siri[1,2], K. Madhava Krishna [4], D. Surya Durga Swaroop[1,2], V. Sai Ratna Manasa[1,2], D. Hemalatha[1,2], Mohammad Basheera[1,2], K. Lakshmi Sweetha[3]

[1]Department of Biotechnology, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, A. P., India.
[2]Central Instrumentation Laboratory–I, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, A. P., India
[3]Department of Biotechnology, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, A. P., India.
[4]Department of Chemistry, Dayananda Sagar University, Bangalore, Karnataka 560111, India.

Corresponding Author E-mail: lekhaanu79@gcrjy.ac.in

Abstract

Ethnobotany and Ethnomedicine are interrelated studies associated with the analysis of interactions between humans and plants by indigenous people. This review blends with the traditional knowledge system and modern pharmacological research, by documenting plant-based remedies used by indigenous communities for healthcare, across diverse geographical regions in India, while underlining the essential methods for conserving this knowledge. The study of natural resources is traditionally used to cure or manage ailments. The implementation of Medicinal plants often becomes a source of advanced materials for the manufacture of new effective medicines that improve the quality and duration of drug life. Numerous compounds found in plants, referred to as phytochemicals, have been shown to exert anti-cancer, anti-metabolic, and anti-degenerative effects. An increase of interest in the pharmaceutical industry to develop new medications from plants is because of their potential to produce fewer side effects, holistic action, natural sourcing and synergistic action with the body's immune support. Despite their proven potential, ethnomedicinal resources face challenges, including the erosion of traditional knowledge, lack of standardization, insufficient clinical validation, and overexploitation of medicinal plants. This article further discusses conservation strategies of Traditional knowledge and Biodiversity, ethical considerations, and the importance of integrating ethnobotanical knowledge with modern scientific approaches.

Keywords: Ethnobotany, Ethnomedicine, Traditional knowledge, Folk medicine, Indigenous healthcare systems, Cultural Importance, Bioactive Compounds.

1. Introduction

Ethnobotany is the scientific study of the interactions between humans and plants, emphasizing traditional knowledge related to plant use for medicine, food, shelter, and cultural practices. Traditional ethnomedicines are prepared and administered using a diverse array of culturally specific methods that reflect deep empirical knowledge systems refined over generations. These practices are rooted in holistic frameworks that view health as a balance between the body, spirit, community, and environment, with preparation and administration techniques tailored to both the ailment and cultural context [Kleinman, A. (1980)]. Plant-based drugs are not only effective but also have better compatibility with human systems. The scope of ethnobotany extends to ethnomedicine, pharmacognosy, phytochemistry, conservation biology, and drug discovery, providing a foundation for the sustainable utilization of medicinal plant resources. The origins of ethnobotany date back to ancient civilizations, where plants were the primary source of medicine. The term "ethnobotany" was formally introduced by J.W. Harshberger in 1895[Harshberger, J.W. (1896)], marking the transition from descriptive folklore to a structured scientific discipline in the field. Modern ethnobotanical research combines field-based indigenous knowledge with laboratory-based pharmacological and phytochemical analyses of plant. This integration enables the identification of bioactive compounds, understanding of cultural health concepts, and conservation of biodiversity. Compounds present in the plant already have biological functions and may exhibit biologically relevant chemistry even in the human system, hence fewer side effects. Ethnobotany plays a crucial role in traditional healthcare systems, especially in developing countries, where over 80% of the population relies on plant-based medicine [World Health Organization

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(2002)] [Farnsworth, N.R. et al. (1985)]. Indigenous healers possess extensive knowledge of medicinal plants used to treat diverse ailments. Ethnobotanical documentation supports primary healthcare, preserves vanishing traditional knowledge, and guides modern drug discovery. Many contemporary pharmaceuticals, including quinine and reserpine, originate from ethnomedicinal practices [Butler, M.S. (2004)][Heinrich, M. (2010)]. Collaborative approaches between ethnobotanists and pharmacologists have enhanced natural product research and the development of ethical bioprospecting strategies.

2. Ethnobotany and Ethnomedicine Significance in Modern Society.

Ethnobotany and Ethnomedicine are increasingly vital in modern society as they bridge the gap between ancient indigenous knowledge and contemporary science. They are essential for drug discovery and biodiversity conservation by providing affordable healthcare in India. Research shows that medicinal plants from central India, regulate threatening diseases such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, inflammation, viral diseases, neurological dysfunction and renal disorders, as phytochemicals present in medicinal plants are valuable as vincristine and vinblastine obtained from the Vinca plant, from Tropical and Sub-tropical regions of India ranges from $1500 to $3000 per 1gram, thus elevate the strategic integration of medicinal plant-derived active ingredients into mainstream of healthcare by catalysing a robust upward trajectory in market capitalization[Cragg, G.M., & Newman, D.J. (2013)][Pandey, A.K., & Tripathi, Y.C. (2014)].

3. Development and Transmission of Ethnomedical knowledge

Globally, Colonialism and Modernity have led to the extinction of Indigenous knowledge systems [Battiste, M. (2005)]. Technology and innovation are the drivers of the extinction of Traditional knowledge, as the main mode for transmitting them is through folklore, which was replaced by western knowledge and ideologies, widely by formal education system. Indigenous knowledge is a set of unique awareness that belongs to ethnic groups or culture or society, which are transmitted from one generation to the next through traditional songs, stories, dance, myths, customs and rituals [Agrawal, A. (1995)]. Most of the indigenous languages, knowledge and methods preserve distinctive customs and environmental information that would be lost if not transmitted from one generation to another, which can be revitalized through proper documentation (online libraries), and by integrating western and traditional knowledge into the education system.

4. High potency Ethnomedicinal plant families

Medicinal plants used in ethnomedicine show significant taxonomic diversity across families like Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, and Fabaceae, with hundreds of genera contributing to traditional healing practices worldwide. Asteraceae and Lamiaceae consistently rank as the most represented families in ethnomedicinal studies [Moerman, D.E. (1996)], often followed by Fabaceae, Solanaceae, Apiaceae, Euphorbiaceae, and Malvaceae. Plants from these families synthesize defensive secondary metabolites that exhibit medicinal properties [Heinrich, M. et al. (2009)]. These compounds evolved as protection against herbivores and pathogens but are therapeutically useful in humans.

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Family	Bioactive compounds	Therapeutic uses
Asteraceae	Sesquiterpene lactones, Flavonoids and Phenolic acids Eg: ***Artemisia amygdalina***	Anti-inflammatory, Antimalarial, Antimicrobial, Wound healing and Digestive ailments
Lamiaceae	Essential oils (menthol, thymol, carvacrol, eugenol), Terpenoids, Phenolic acids (rosmarinic acid), Flavonoids and Tannins Eg: ***Leucas macrantha***	Antioxidant, Anti-inflammatory, Antispasmodic, Neuroprotective and anxiolytic
Fabaceae	Alkaloids, Saponins, Flavonoids (isoflavones like genistein, daidzein) Tannins and Lectins. Eg: ***Kunstleria keralensis***	Antidiabetics, Anti-inflammatory, Anti-microbial, Estrogenic activity and Immune modulation

Table:1 Most represented plant families with high potency used in Ethnomedicine.

Herbs dominate as the primary growth form in ethnomedicine, typically comprising 30-60% of documented species due to their abundance of pharmacologically active compounds. Shrubs follow closely (around 20-35%), with trees (12-30%), climbers (8-13%), and minor forms like epiphytes or ferns making up the rest [Netsanet Gonfa, Dereje Tulu, Kitessa Hundera & Dasalegn Raga (2020)][Pardo-de-Santayana M., Macía M.J (2025)]

Primary Plant Parts: Leaves, roots, and fruits represent the most commonly used parts of medicinal plants in ethnomedicine globally, with leaves often exceeding 50% of citations due to their high concentration of bioactive metabolites, and volatile oils and flavonoids. Secondary Parts: Fruits and seeds account for 10-20% of uses, providing essential oils and fixed oils. Barks, stems, and flowers contribute smaller shares (5-15% combined), with barks rich in tannins [Giday, M., Asfaw, Z., & Woldu, Z. (2009)] [Albuquerque, U.P. (2006)].

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5. Traditional methods of Ethnomedicine Preparation and Administration

Medicinal plants belong to the oldest known health-care products that have been used by mankind all over the word in the form of folklore medicine, traditional medicine, or ethnic medicine. These traditional systems are mainly based on the usage of plant drugs against debility and disease. The process typically begins with the identification and collection of plants medicinal materials followed by various forms of processing designed to extract, potentiate, or detoxify active constituents [Sofowora, A. (2008)].

The most common traditional preparation methods include:

1.*Decoction:* Involves boiling plant parts such as roots, bark, or stems in water, is widely used across cultures for its ability to extract heat-stable and water-soluble compounds. It is employed to prepare remedies for gastrointestinal, respiratory, Chronic and Systemic conditions.

2.*Infusion*: Grinded plant material is soaked in hot or cold water for a short period, suitable for readily soluble bioactive constituents. It is often used for more delicate parts like leaves and flowers. Infusions can also be used externally to treat skin conditions, acne, burns, and bruises.

3.*Maceration:* Plant material is soaked in water, oil, alcohol, or vinegar at room temperature, allows for the extraction of thermolabile constituents. The method is commonly used to treat Infectious Diseases, Cardiovascular disease, Inflammatory and Pain-Related Conditions.

4.*Powdering:* Powdering dried plant parts into fine powders is another widespread technique. Powdered preparations were found to be associated with the highest number of medicinal species, indicating their central role in local pharmacopoeias

5. *Pastes:* Plant parts are ground with a small amount of liquid (water, oil, or honey) and applied topically for skin disorders, wounds, or joint pain.

Across cultures, ethnomedicines are given through a small number of recurring routes of administration, chosen for speed of action, target organ, and local custom. Administration routes are equally varied and are selected based on the nature of the illness and cultural beliefs about disease etiology. Oral ingestion is the most frequent route, encompassing teas, soups, pills, and tinctures. Topical application includes poultices, ointments, and washes, often used for skin conditions, wounds, or musculoskeletal pain. Inhalation of smoke or steam from burning herbs serves as a method for treating respiratory ailments [WHO (2019)].

6. Therapeutic efficiency of Ethnomedicine

Conditions such as gastrointestinal disorders, respiratory infections, skin diseases, fever, inflammation, pain, diabetes, and wound healing were traditionally treated using plant extracts by indigenous communities [Fabricant, D.S., & Farnsworth, N.R. (2001)]. Many ethnomedicinal remedies also address chronic conditions including arthritis, liver disorders, neurological ailments, and reproductive health issues. The therapeutic efficacy of ethnomedication is largely attributed to bioactive phytochemicals such as alkaloids, flavonoids, terpenoids, and phenolic compounds [Heinrich, M., et al. (2012)].

7. Ethnobotany contribution to Drug discovery

Owing to its cultural acceptance, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness, ethnomedication continues to be an important source for drug discovery and the development of modern pharmacological therapies. Ethnobotanical research has made significant contributions to modern and pharmaceutical development by serving as a bridge between traditional knowledge systems and evidence-based medicine [Cragg, G.M., Newman, D.J., & Snader, K.M. (1997)]. The systematic study of plant-based remedies used in indigenous medical practices has led to the identification of bioactive compounds with therapeutic

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potential, many of which have been integrated into mainstream pharmacology. This synergy between ethnobotany and pharmacy is exemplified by numerous case studies where traditional healing practices remain deeply embedded in local cultures.

8. Ethical, Legal and Intellectual Property issues

Ethical practice extends to the development of "improved traditional medicines"—pharmaceutical products derived from ethnobotanical leads. The documentation and utilization of indigenous medicinal plant knowledge raise profound concerns regarding intellectual property rights (IPR) [Posey, D.A., & Dutfield, G. (1996)]. Ethical frameworks must go beyond compliance to embody principles of justice, reciprocity, and respect for self-determination. Indigenous and local communities often view their ethnobotanical knowledge as collective heritage, which set off issues that lies in the ownership. This mismatch creates vulnerabilities where researchers or corporations may exploit documented knowledge without authorization or fair compensation, leading to biopiracy. The open access to the indigenous knowledge promotes scientific advancement, which may inadvertently facilitate to unauthorized commercial use or overharvesting of vulnerable plant species. Researchers therefore must bear the responsibility for assessing the sensitivity of information and considering anonymization or restricted dissemination [CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) (2011)]. This includes consulting communities about what knowledge they are willing to share publicly and under what conditions.

Conclusion

Ethnobotany and ethnomedicine highlight the vital role of traditional knowledge in modern healthcare, serving as a foundation for discovering new pharmaceuticals from plant sources. Indigenous practices document diverse medicinal plants effective against ailments. Despite the growing scientific validation of many ethnomedicinal claims, traditional knowledge systems are increasingly threatened by rapid socio-cultural changes, habitat loss, and overexploitation of medicinal plant resources. Integrating ethnobotanical knowledge with modern scientific approaches can not only enhance sustainable healthcare strategies but also contribute to the development of novel, safe, and effective therapeutics. Overall, ethnobotany and ethnomedicine continue to serve as a crucial bridge between traditional wisdom and contemporary science.

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Medicinal Plant Heritage of the Eastern Ghats in ASR district in Andhra Pradesh: Diversity, Use and Sustainability - A Study

Smt. G.R.N.S. Sujatha[1], Dr.P.Swamy Naidu[2]. Sri K.V.G.K.Vara Prasad[3], Dr D. Madhu Sudhakar[4] and Dr. P. Sara[5]

1,2 Lecturer in Botany, Dr. V.S.Krishna Govt. Degree college (A). Visakhapatnam.
3 Lecturer in Botany, Govt. Degree college, Tuni
4, Lecturer in Botany, Govt. Degree college for Men, Kurnool.
5.Lecturer in Botany, Govt. Degree college, Ramachandrapuram

Abstract

Traditional medical care is the combination of all knowledge and methods, whether or not they can be explained, that are used to diagnose, prevent, and treat physical, mental, or social imbalances. It is based solely on firsthand experience and observation that has been passed down from generation to generation. India has 47,000 plant species, making it one of the 12 mega diversity hubs in the world. There are between 600 and 700 species that are widely utilized, primarily by rural and tribal communities. Due to worldwide socioeconomic change and shifting perspectives on life, the plants have severely deteriorated. With the goal to gain knowledge about native medicinal plant species used to cure a variety of illnesses, an ethno medicinal survey was conducted among tribal groups in the Eastern Ghats of the Alluri Sitarama Raju district of Andhra Pradesh. About 336 species of medicinal plants from 269 genera and 99 families are included in this study. Based on known pharmacological properties found in those plants, a survey of the scientific literature indicates that many of the medicinal plants utilized by the tribal people can be scientifically confirmed in their traditional applications. For the purpose to find effective medications, it would be interesting to conduct a scientific investigation of the plant parts utilized by tribal healers and pay attention to the native medicinal plants.

Key words: Traditional medicine, pharmacological, socioeconomic, Tribal communities, Native Medicinal plants.

Introduction :

India has the oldest traditional knowledge system practiced by the aboriginal people inhibiting hilly and mountain regions. The tribal tracts are the repositories of vast information and knowledge on the multiple uses of plant wealth. The role of ethnobotany is highly valuable in the development of modern health care and conservation of plants across the world at present.

Eastern Ghats are a discontinuous range of mountains, traverse across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamilnadu and Karnataka. Andhra Pradesh has 40% share of Eastern Ghats stretching for about 560 km. Eastern Ghats of ASR district are endowed with highest diversity of medicinal plants, which are a local wealth with global importance.

In the light of lack of sustainable of use medicinal plants and lack of understanding of how society influences plant use, plants are disappearing at an alarming rate. For primary healthcare, about 60% of people worldwide and 80% of people in poor nations rely on traditional medicine and primarily plant-based medications (Pattanaik, C., Reddy, C. S., & Reddy, K. N. (2009).). 70% of Indians rely on traditional plant-based medicines. Human survival and economic well-being are based on biodiversity, which also provides the resources that families, communities, countries, and future generations rely on. The districts' ethnic populations are well aware of the applications for plant species with ethnobotanical significance.

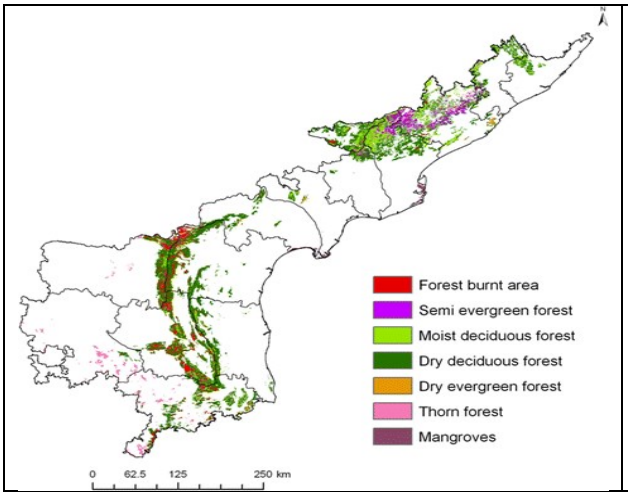
Study Area:

Alluri Sitarama Raju district lies in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. It is bound by Odisha in the north, Anakapalli, Kakinada and East Godavari districts in the south, Telangana in the west and Vizianagaram & Parvatipuram Manyam districts in the East. The district covers approximately 12.25 square kilometres with a population of 9.54 lakhs. It consists

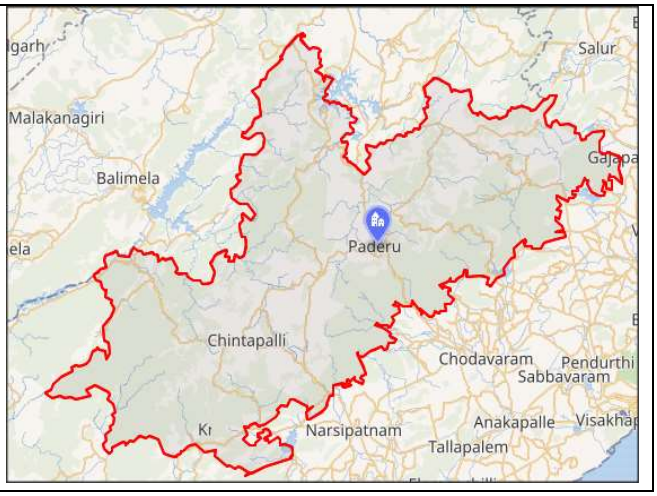
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of hilly region with an average altitude of 900 meters including some peaks exceeding 1200 metres. The highest being Jindhagada peak (1690 mtrs) followed by Galikonda peak (1643 mtrs). The hills run almost parallel to the sea coast. Machkund, Gosthani, Sarada are the important rivers in the district. The important mines include bauxite, calcite, limestone. Climate is tropical wet and dry with variations in different parts of the district with the mean temperature of 21degrees Celsius during winter and mean temperature of 32.6 degrees Celsius during summer. Average rainfall is 101 cms. mostly contributed by Southwest monsoon. Summer, monsoon and winter are the three main seasons in the district. Red loamy soils are predominant followed by black and sandy soils in the district. Forests are of moist and dry deciduous type. Forests and tribal people are inseparable. The district has high concentration of STs with a total population of 9,53,960 (according to 2011 census) of which STs account for 7,88,680 (82.67%). Major tribal communities in the district include Konda Dora, Bagata, Khond, Mukha Dora, Valmiki ,Porja, Kotia Kammara,Gadaba,Koya,Mali and goudu.



Andhra Pradesh Map



Alluri Sitarama Raju District Map

It also harbours a variety of medicinal plants that are used by indigenous tribal communities to treat a wide range of illnesses and ailments that are prevalent in the area (Rao et al., 2000; Padal et al., 2012)

The biological activities of Indian medicinal plants and their usage in tribal medicine and Ayurveda as reviewed by Megraj et al. (2011) and reported that *Adhatoda vasica, Aegle marmelos, Aloe vera, Andrographis paniculata, Asparagus adscendents, Cinnamomum tamala, Coriandrum sativum, Cuminum cyminum, Curcuma longa, Emblica officinalis, Glycyrrhiza glabra, Hemidesmus indicus, Mucuna pruriens, Phyllanthus niruri, Solanum nigrum, Syzygium aromaticum, Terminalia chebula, Tinospora cordifolia, Withania somnifera, Zingiber officinale.* Kar et al. (2013)

No.	Vernacular Name	Botanical name	Family	Useful part	Diseases / ailments
1	Naga mushini	*Strychnos nux-vomica*	Loganiaceae	Bark	Snake bite
2	Chandra kantha	*Mirabilis jalapa*	Nyctaginaceae	Tuber	Jaundice
3	Nela vusiri	*Phyllanthus amarus*	Phyllanthaceae	Leaf	Dysentery
4	Attipathi	*Mimosa pudica*	Fabaceae	Root	Blood dysentery
5	Billa ganneru	*Catharanthus roseus*	Apocynaceae	Leaf, Root	Leucorrhoea
6	Burma kothimera	*Eryngium foetidum*	Apiaceae	Leaf	Indigestion
7	Ranapala	*Kalanchoe lanceolata*	Crassulaceae	Leaf	Rheumatism

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8	Konda benda	*Abelmoschus moschatus*	Malvaceae	Root	Cough
9	Sugar plant	*Stevia rebaudiana*	Asteraceae	Leaf	Tuberculosis
10	Uvva	*Dillenia indica*	Dilleniaceae	Fruit	Dandruff, Hair fall
11	Addasaram	*Adhatoda vasica*	Acanthaceae	Leaf, Flower	Tuberculosis
12	Dalchina	*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*	Lauraceae	Leaf, Bark	Diabetes, Cold, Cough
13	Maadiphalam	*Citrus medica*	Rutaceae	Fruit, Root	Dysentery
14	Vakka	*Areca catechu*	Arecaceae	Nut	Boost digestion
15	Rudrajada	*Ocimum basilicum*	Lamiaceae	Leaf, Seeds	Ear ache, Dysentery
16	Patcha ambira	*Chromolaena odorata*	Asteraceae	Leaf	Jaundice, Neck sprain
17	Sanjivani	*Selaginella bryopteris*	Selaginellaceae	Whole plant	Energy, Muscle power
18	Pudina	*Mentha arvensis*	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Nerve weakness
19	Adavi chinta	*Entada rheedi*	Mimosaceae	Seed	Anthelmintic
20	Pilli adugu	*Oxalis corniculata*	Oxalidaceae	Leaf, Tuber	Piles, Cancer
21	Lakshmana phalam	*Annona muricata*	Annonaceae	Fruit	Malaria
22	Vishnu tulasi	*Ocimum temuiflorum*	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Skin diseases, Cold
23	Kaada jamudu	*Euphorbia tirucalli*	Euphorbiaceae	Latex	Skin diseases
24	Konda kasimi	*Zanthoxylum armatum*	Rutaceae	Leaf, Bark	Dental problems, Bronchitis
25	Pippalu	*Piper longum*	Piperaceae	Root, Fruit	Asthma, Respiratory problems
26	Lavanga tulasi	*Ocimum gratissimum*	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Toothache, Wounds
27	Kasthuri pasupu	*Curcuma aromatica*	Zingiberaceae	Tuber	Improve digestion
28	Gurivinda	*Abrus precatorius*	Fabaceae	Root	Fever, Fits
29	Thella eswari	*Aristolochia indica*	Aristolochiaceae	Root	Abortion, Muscle pain, Snake bite
30	Podapatri	*Gymnema sylvestre*	Apocynaceae	Root, Leaves	Diabetes
31	Thella sankupushti	*Clitoria ternatea*	Fabaceae	Flowers, Seeds	Asthma, Diarrhoea
32	Neeli sankupushti	*Clitoria ternatea*	Fabaceae	Root	Energy booster
33	Nalla maddi	*Terminalia tomentosa*	Combretaceae	Bark	Cough, Malaria
34	Asma teega	*Tylophora indica*	Apocynaceae	Leaf, Root	Asthma, Diarrhoea
35	Tella parimi	*Ziziphus oenoplia*	Rhamnaceae	Root	Fits
36	Kanuga	*Pongamia pinnata*	Fabaceae	Stem bark, Seed, Leaf	Skin problems, Leucoderma, Allergy, Paralysis
37	Sathavari	*Asparagus racemosus*	Asparagaceae	Tuber	Jaundice, Dysentery

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38	Nelavemu	*Andrographis paniculata*	Acanthaceae	Leaf	Diabetes
39	Yerra chithramulam	*Plumbago indica*	Plumbaginaceae	Root	Improve blood, Snake bite
40	Thella chithramulam	*Plumbago zeylanica*	Plumbaginaceae	Leaf	Rheumatism, Laryngitis
41	Nalla chithramulam	*Plumbago zeylanica*	Plumbaginaceae	Root	Stomachache, Fits
42	Pasanabedhi	*Coleus amboinicus*	Lamiaceae	Root, Leaf	Malaria, Asthma Hypertension
43	Devakasthuri	*Hedychium coccineum*	Zingiberaceae	Tuber	Fever, Body heat
44	Neeli mandu	*Indigofera tinctoria*	Fabaceae	Leaf	Hair fall, Toothache
45	Jambo neredu	*Eugenia jambolana*	Myrtaceae	Fruit	Diabetes, Constipation
46	Aadavi yerra ulli	*Urginea indica*	Liliaceae	Tuber	Fits, Dandruff, Menstrual disorders
47	Edakulapaala	*Alstonia scholaris*	Apocynaceae	Bark	Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Snake bite
48	Konda cheepuru	*Thysanolaena maxima*	Poaceae	Root	Skin boils, Epilepsy
49	Aadavi dumpa	*Dioscorea oppositifolia*	Dioscoreaceae	Tuber	Energy booster, Boils
50	Samudapala	*Argyreia nervosa*	Convolvulaceae	Leaf, Stem	Broken bones, Wounds
51	Citronella	*Cymbopogon winterianus*	Poaceae	Root, Leaf	Skin diseases
52	Nalla pasupu	*Curcuma caesia*	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Skin care
53	Aadavi nimma	*Atalantia monophylla*	Rutaceae	Fruit	Body heat, Rheumatism
54	Vattiveru	*Vetiveria zizanioides*	Poaceae	Root	Fever, Skin diseases
55	Vasa	*Acorus calamus*	Acoraceae	Rhizome	Malaria, Asthma, Cough
56	Kondapindi	*Aerva lanata*	Amaranthaceae	Leaf	Ulcers, Kidney stones
57	Nara mamidi	*Litsea chinensis*	Lauraceae	Bark	Broken bones
58	Yerra kasimi	*Zanthoxylum armatum*	Rutaceae	Bark	Blood dysentery
59	Saraswathi aaku	*Centella asiatica*	Apiaceae	Leaf	Memory increaser, Leprosy
60	Jyothismathi	*Celastrus paniculatus*	Celastraceae	Seed	Malaria, Fever
61	karaka	*Terminalia chebula*	Combretaceae	Fruit	Cough, Boils
62	Dumpa rastram	*Alpinia calcarata*	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Low blood pressure
63	Allam	*Zingiber officinale*	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Cold, Cough, Asthma

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64	Tippateega	*Tinospora cordifolia*	Menispermaceae	Stem	Paralysis, Snake bite
65	Vepa	*Azadirachta indica*	Meliaceae	Leaf, Bark	Skin diseases, Ulcers
66	Seetha ashoka	*Saraca indica*	Fabaceae	Bark	Urinary incontinence
67	Bilva patra	*Aegle marmelos*	Rutaceae	Leaf	Diabetes
68	Pakshikannu	*Thalictrum foliolosum*	Ranunculaceae	Root	Joint pains
69	Singalikostu	*Costus speciosus*	Costaceae	Rhizome	Over body heat
70	Nalleru	*Cissus quadrangularis*	Vitaceae	Stem	Bone fractures
71	Rama tulasi	*Ocimum gratissimum*	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Gastric problems
72	Konda gummadi	*Pueraria tuberosa*	Fabaceae	Tuber	Energy boosting
73	Puli dumpa	*Dioscorea hispida*	Dioscoreaceae	Tuber	Snake bite, Worms
74	Konda vusiri	*Emblica officinalis*	Phyllanthaceae	Fruit	Dysentery
75	Sunamukhi	*Senna alexandrina*	Caesalpiniaceae	Leaf	Dysentery



Hilly terrain



Strychnos nux-vomica





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Argyreia nervosa



Costus speciosus

Plumbago indica



Abelmoschus moschatus

A SUSTAINABLE USE AND CONSERVATION METHODS

Sustainable use: Using medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) responsibly and ethically to address current and future needs is known as sustainable utilization (Mittal, M. K., Suthar). A few crucial factors to take into account in order to achieve sustained utilization in MAPs are

Conservation and biodiversity: While state forest departments controlling 23% (75 million hectares) of the country's total land area, satellite imaging only reveals 9% (28 million ha) of forest cover, despite India's National Forest Policy calling for 33% forest cover. The main danger to forest ecology is human activity, including different development plans. Tribal communities in the Eastern Ghats frequently engage in shifting or swidden cultivation (Rao, M. V. S. (2000)).

It is essential to preserve the biodiversity and natural settings where MAPs thrive. This entails putting policies in place such creating protected areas, encouraging ethical harvesting methods, and stopping overexploitation of species (Jain, S. K., & DeFilipps). To guarantee that indigenous peoples' rights to their knowledge are protected and that they profit from any commercial discoveries derived from their expertise, ethnobotany procedures are also being changed. (WHO, IUCN and WWF., 1993)

Agroforestry and cultivation: Encouraging the growth of MAPs via sustainable farming methods, such as GACP (Good Agricultural Cultivation Practices), might lessen the strain on wild populations. Intercropping with other crops is one example of an agroforestry approach that can improve ecosystem health and biodiversity.In alongside maintaining human and environmental health, their sustainable management and harvesting can preserve biodiversity. Growing MAP crops offers a sustainable way to obtain high-value industrial raw materials for the food, cosmetic, pharmaceutical, and agrochemical industries. It also creates new opportunities for farmers to earn more money and offers a lot of room for advancement in the rural economy (Das, S., Kumar, P., Pandey).

Harvesting and collection: Careful management of harvesting procedures is necessary to prevent harm to the plants and their environment. Plants can recover and sustain their populations by using selective harvesting techniques like selective pruning or tapping.
fractionation directed by bioassay. Plant material is extracted, and then biological activity is assessed. Fractionation is the next step after testing an extract and determining that it is physiologically active. The different fractions that are collected

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are then examined for biological activity. Additionally, the most fruitful part is then removed for chemical separation. The isolated chemical is next identified and its biological activity is examined.(Sasidharan, S., Saravanan, Chen, Y.).

Value chain and fair trade: Encouraging fair trade practices guarantees that indigenous peoples and local communities participating in the MAPs value chain are fairly compensated for their resources and expertise. Partnerships and fair trade certification can support the development of market incentives for environmentally friendly production. Research and development: Promoting scientific studies on MAPs can help find sustainable farming practices, effective extraction strategies, and creative applications for these plants. This may aid in the creation of sustainable goods and methods.

Regulation and legislative frameworks: Governments and regulatory agencies are essential in passing and upholding laws and rules that safeguard MAPs. Define sustainable harvesting quotas, regulate access to specific species, and guarantee adherence to sustainable practices are a few examples of these systems.

Education and awareness: It is crucial to increase understanding of the significance of sustainable utilization among stakeholders, such as local communities, practitioners, and consumers. Education initiatives can encourage the ethical collection, production, and use of MAPs.

The labeling and certification: Putting in place labeling and certification programs can support sustainable products and assist consumers in making educated decisions. The ethical and sustainable methods utilized in the manufacture of MAPs might be guaranteed by labels like organic, fair trade, or sustainably sourced.
Cooperation and alliances: For sustainable practices to be implemented, cooperation between governments, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and industrial stakeholders is essential. Partnerships between the public and commercial sectors can help with capacity building, knowledge exchange, and the creation of sustainable supply chains.

Conclusion:

Ethno botanists, ecologists, and environmentalists are all very concerned about the fast depletion of natural vegetation in general and medicinal plants in particular. Therefore, it is essential to record first-hand information about the area and emphasize to the next generation the importance of conserving them before the species becomes extinct. Supporting indigenous medicinal plant practices is necessary with an eye on community development and conservation. The educated younger generation in tribal areas of Eastern Ghats in the district do not show interest to practice traditional medicine as their tendency to migrate to urban areas for lucrative jobs and there is a possibility of loosing wealth of indigenous knowledge in near future.

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Ethnomedicine of Primitive Porja Tribe of Munchangiput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju District, Andhra Pradesh

Mortha Krishna Rao* and Padi Aishwarya^
*Department of Botany, Pithapur Rajah's Government Autonomous College, Kakinada–533 001, Andhra Pradesh, India
^Research Scholar, Research Centre, Department of Botany, Pithapur Rajah's Government Autonomous College, Kakinada, Affiliated Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram–533 296, Andhra Pradesh, India.
*Email (Corresponding Author): mortha9@gmail.com

Abstract

An ethnomedicinal survey was carried out in Munchangiput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, India. For documentation of important ethnomedicinal plants and information from local community about their medicinal uses. The traditional knowledge of primitive Porja tribe was collected through questionnaire and personal interviews during field trips. The identification and nomenclature of the listed plants were based on the Flora of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 35 plants species belong to 34 genera and 26 families were identified by taxonomic description and locally by ethnomedicinal knowledge of people existing in the region.

Keywords: Ethnomedicinal practice, Porja primitive tribal communities, Munchangiput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju District.

Introduction:

India has a century's old tradition of using medicinal plants and herbal medicines for the alleviation of various diseases and ailments, as well as for the promotion of health and happiness. Ethnobotanical research can provide a wealth of information regarding both past and present relationships between plants and the traditional societies. It is hoped that, in the future, ethnobotany may play an increasingly important role in sustainable development and biodiversity conservation (Rajasekaran & Warren 1994).

The medicinal plant wealth of Andhra Pradesh by Hemadri et al. (1987, 1994) contains a mere list of medicinal plants. Ramarao et al. (1999) again were the first to brief the Phyto-zootherapy of the tribes of Andhra Pradesh. Reddy & Raju (2006) published a paper on Ethnobotanical medicine for rheumatic diseases from Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, Reddy et al. (2007) published a paper on traditional knowledge on wild food Plants in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Majumdar (1927) had done scrutiny of literature of Indian medicine. Kirtikar and Basu (1935 & 1975) and Chopra *et al.* (1956, 1958, 1969) published well established documents on Indian medicinal plants, which were worthy of reference till today. Janaki Ammal (1954) stressed the need for seeking the help of the aboriginals in the tribal regions of Assam, the Himalayas, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Western Ghats for ethnobotanical findings. This plant based traditional knowledge has become a recognised tool in search for new sources of drugs and Nutraceuticals (Sharma & Mujumdar, 2003). Some work on medicinal plants in relation to their utilization and conservation has been conducted in many parts of India (Padhye et al., 1992; Bhogaonkar & Devarkar, 2002; Chaudhari & Hutke, 2002 and Khumbangmayum et al., 2005). Ethnomedicinal plants are generally used for curing various ailments like diabetes, dysentery, typhoid, and jaundice. Different parts of the plant, including roots, leaves, fruits, and flowers, are used for the treatment of jaundice. Furthermore, jaundice is not just a disease rather a sign of a disease that occurs in the liver, which indicates impairment of the liver functioning (Abbasi et.al. 2009, Janghel et.al. 2019).

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Material and Methods

Study area

Munchangiput mandal of Alluri Sitaram Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, is the higher altitude zone in the hilly tracts of Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. It lies in between latitudes of 17°-50[1] and 18° - 35[1] north and longitude of 82°-17[1] and 83°-1[1] East with a total geographical area of 3, 24,965 hector (Figure. 1). Porja tribes are chiefly residing in the densely wooded hill slopes in the schedule's areas of Alluri Sitaram Raju District of Andhra Pradesh. They are also known as Samantha, Konda Kodu, Jatapu, Jatapu Dora, Kodi, Kodu, Kondu and Kuinga. These terms are used for Porja in different areas of Munchangiput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju districts. The Porja's mainly subsist on cultivation. They are experts in Podu cultivation. They grow millets like Ragi, Sama and Korra and oil seeds like Niger, castor and pulses like red gram in Podu fields.

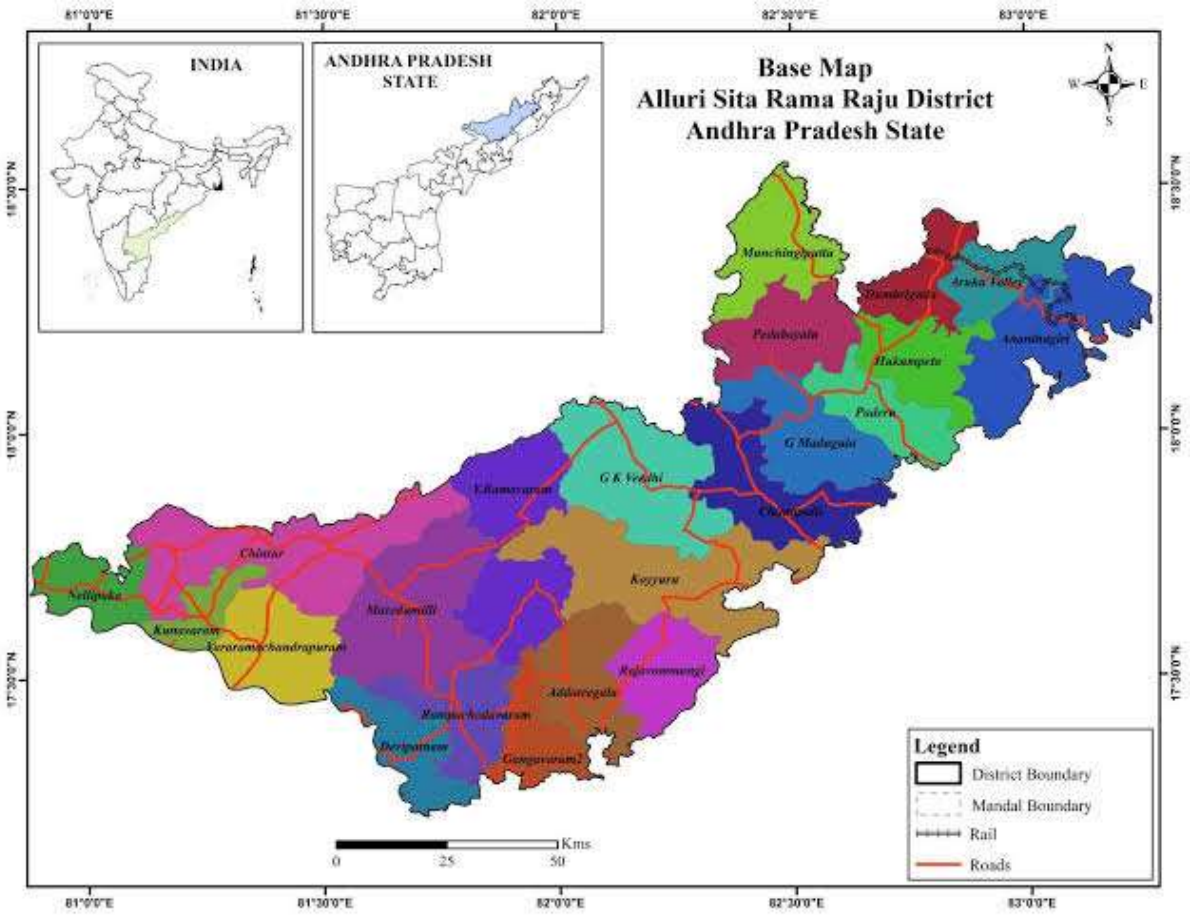


Figure:1

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Methodology

Information on the use of medicinal plants was collected during year 2024 – 2025 through field surveys in different interial villages of the Munchangiput Division, Alluri Sitaram Raju District. The questionnaires were devised to identify the indigenous knowledge of plant-based remedies from primitive Porja people. Information was gathered through semi-structured interviews that were held with selected knowledgeable men and women Porja tribes. At the end of made into herbarium. The voucher specimens were housed in the Botany department herbarium, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. Each interview, the plant specimens were collected, dried by using routine botanical collection and herbarium techniques, identified and preserved (Jain & Rao 1997). The representative taxa were collected and identified with the help of floras (Pullaiah & Ramamurthy 2002; Pullaiah et.al. 2007) and BDH).

Result and Discussion

During exploration trips, medicinally useful information has been recorded on 35 plant species belonging to 34 genera and 26 families were recorded which are exploited by the Porja tribes for their healthcare. The family wise analysis (Figure:3) of ethnomedicinal data revealed that out of 26 families the dominant ones are Fabaceae and Acanthaceae represented by 3 species each followed Apocynaceae, Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, Loganiaceae, Malvaceae with 2 species each and remaining were single species.

Depending upon the plant part used for medicinal purposes as shown in Figure (2) root (11) constitutes the highest percentage, whole plant (8), followed by, leaf (7), Stem bark (3) Rhizome (2), Fruit (2) remaining were single species.

Intensive survey and repeated personal interviews in different pockets resulted in coming across 29 diseases in the area. A total of 35 species reported in the present study are used in curing 29 different ailments are Asthma (2), Arthritis (2), Diabetes (2), Dysentery (2), Leprosy (2), Snakebite (2), Fever (1), Toothache (1), Blood pressure (1), Smallpox in children (1), Abortion (1), Menstrual problems (1), Malaria fever (1), Articular pains (1), Diuretic (1), Scabies (1), Typhoid fever (1), Jaundice (1), Neurological disorders (1), Gonorrhoea (1), Leukoderma (1), Epilepsy (1), Scurvy (1), Insomnia (1), Respiratory tract (1), Boils (1), Rheumatism (1), Wounds (1), Conjunctivitis (1). The most commonly treated diseases were Diabetes, Asthma, Leprosy, Dysentery, Arthritis, Snakebite by the local Porja tribal people of Munchangiput Division, Alluri Sitaram Raju District.

Table 1: Ethnomedicinal plants used by Porja Tribes of Munchangiput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju District.

S. No	Family	Plant Name	Parts Used	Local Name	Disease
1	Acanthaceae	*Barleria prionitis*	Whole plant	Mullagorinta	Toothache
2	Acanthaceae	*Ruellia tuberosa L.*	Rhizome	Chitapatakayalamokka	Blood pressure
3	Acanthaceae	*Rungia pectinata L.*	Leaf	Pindikunda	Smallpox in children
4	Anacardiaceae	*Semecarpus anacardium*	Fruit	Nallajeedi	Abortion
5	Annonaceae	*Polyalthia longifolia*	Stem Bark	Asokha, Naramamidi	Menstrual problems

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6	Apocynaceae	*Calotropis gigantea*	Root Bark	Tella jilledu	Dysentery
7	Apocynaceae	*Ichnocarpus frutescens*	Root	Nallatiga	Leprosy
8	Asclepiadaceae	*Wattakaka volubilis L.*	Root	Bandiguruginja, Dudhipala	Snakebite
9	Asteraceae	*Vernonia cinerea L.*	Leaf	Sahadevi	Malaria fever
10	Asteraceae	*Xanthium indicum*	Whole plant	Maraluteega	Arthritis
11	Convolvulaceae	*Operculina turpethum*	Root	Tellategada	Articular pains, Fever
12	Cyperaceae	*Kyllinga nemoralis*	Rhizome	Gandala	Diuretic
13	Euphorbiaceae	*Baliospermum montanum*	Leaf	Nela jidi, Adaviamudamu	Asthma
14	Fabaceae	*Crotalaria verrucosa L.*	Leaf	Chinna giligicha	Scabies
15	Fabaceae	*Desmodium gangeticum*	Whole plant	Gitanaram	Typhoid fever
16	Fabaceae	*Tephrosia villosa*	Leaf	Nuguvempali	Diabetes
17	Lamiaceae	*Gmelina asiatica*	Root	Adavigummudu	Blood purifier
18	Lamiaceae	*Leonotis nepetifolia*	Whole plant	Hanumanthabeera	Jaundice, Tuberculosis
19	Loganiaceae	*Strychnos nux-vomica*	Seeds	Mushini	Diabetes
20	Loganiaceae	*Strychnos potatorum L.*	Root	Induba	Snake bite
21	Malvaceae	*Sida acuta Burm. F*	Whole plant	Nelabenda	Neurological disorders
22	Malvaceae	*Sida cordata*	Root	Gayapaku	Gonorrhoea
23	Melastomaceae	*Melastoma malabathricum*	Whole plant	Nakkera	Dysentery
24	Menispermaceae	*Tinospora cordifolia*	Tuber	Tippateega	Leucoderma, Fever
25	Moringaceae	*Moringa cocanensis Nimmo*	Root	Adavimunaga	Epilepsy

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26	Oxalidaceae	*Oxalis corniculata*	Leaf	Pulichintaku	Scurvy
27	Pandanaceae	*Pandanus fasicularis*	Root	Mogaliponna	Leprosy, Anorexia
28	Passifloraceae	*Passiflora foetida L.*	Whole plant	Tellajumiki, Gajuteega	Insomnia
29	Piperaceae	*Piper longum L.*	Root	Pippalu	Respiratory tract
30	Santalaceae	*Viscum articulatum*	Whole plant	Badanika	Boils
31	Sapindaceae	*Sapindus emarginatus*	Fruit	Kunkudu	Asthma
32	Sapotaceae	*Madhuca longifolia*	Stem Bark	Ippa	Rheumatism
33	Selicaceae	*Flacourita indica*	Stem Bark	Nakka neredu, Kanaregu	Arthritis
34	Solanaceae	*Solanum nigrum*	Leaf	Kamanchi	Wounds
35	Tiliaceae	*Triumfetta rrrhomboidea*	Root	Chirusitrika	Conjunctivitis

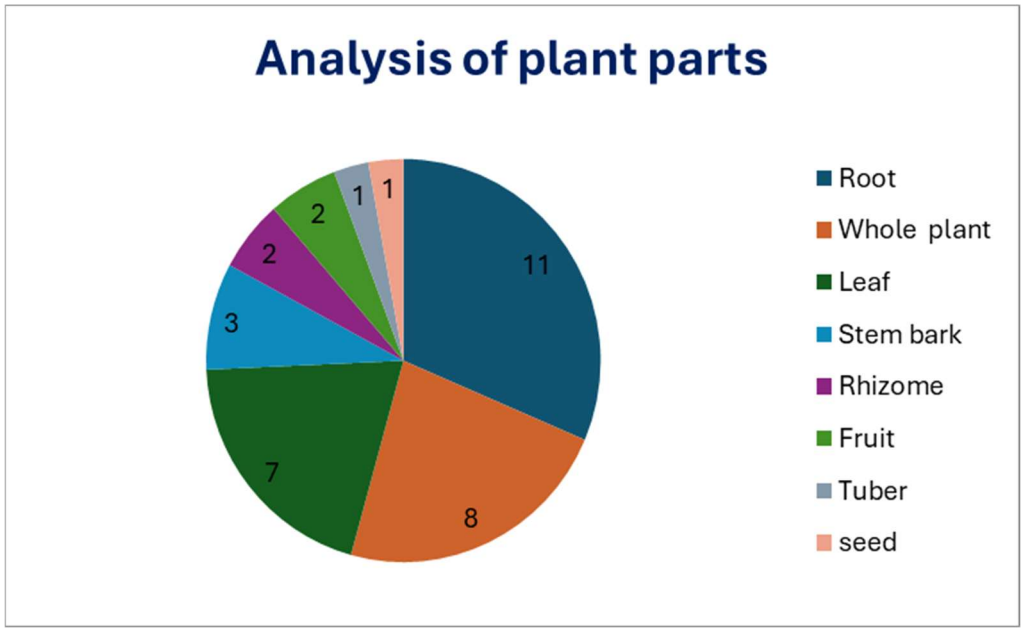


Figure 2: Analysis of Plant parts

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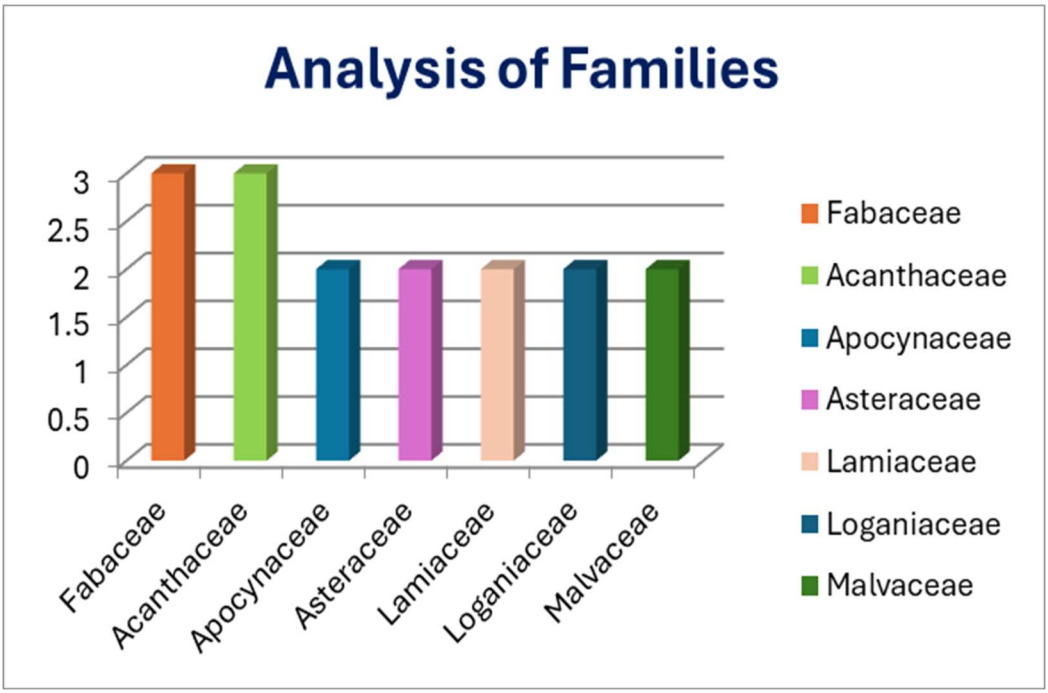


Figure 3: Families with highest number

Conclusion:

The present study was conducted to document the ethnomedicinal plant resources of Munchaniput Mandal, Alluri Sitaram Raju District of Andhra Pradesh, India as well as to explore the traditional knowledge or belief of these plants used by the village people for their primary health care needs. The new generation is not very much interested in the indigenous methods of treating diseases. They are even not very much concerned about the importance of these herbal plants and their medicinal value. The growing disinterest in the use of folk medicinal plants and their significance among the younger generation of primitive tribals will lead to the disappearance of this practice. The traditional knowledge about utilization of local plant species is vital in alternate healthcare system as well as for the self-sustenance of primitive tribes. These traditional herbal formulations need further pharmacological investigations to prove their efficacy and also develop new drugs for the effective treatment of chronic diseases.

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Biodiversity and Ecosystem Integrity: An Advanced Review of Flora and Fauna Diversity

L. Shalem Raj Paul[1],[2]*, K. Anusha[1, 2]*, V. Durga Praveena [3], Sai Krishna[3] Dr. A Rajeswari[3]*, Qureshi Sayid Mahaboob Shahidha[1,2], M. Vijay Kumar[4]

[1] Department of Biotechnology, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[2] Central Instrumentation Laboratory–I, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[3] Department of Chemistry, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[3]* Department of English, Government College (A), Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[4]Department of Human genetics, Andhra University, Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Corresponding author: lekhaanu79@gcrjy.ac.in

Abstract

Biodiversity represents the variability of life at genetic, species, and ecosystem levels and forms the foundation of ecosystem structure, stability, and resilience. Flora and fauna diversity collectively regulate essential ecological processes, including primary productivity, nutrient cycling, trophic interactions, and climate regulation. This review critically synthesizes contemporary research on plant and animal diversity across terrestrial, soil-based, urban, and alpine aquatic ecosystems. Emphasis is placed on understanding how interactions between flora, fauna, and microorganisms sustain ecosystem functioning, and how anthropogenic pressures increasingly disrupt these relationships. The review further examines emerging patterns of biodiversity loss, ecosystem vulnerability, and resilience decline, highlighting the ecological consequences of species erosion. By integrating evidence across ecosystem types, this paper identifies key knowledge gaps and outlines future research and conservation priorities necessary to safeguard biodiversity in a rapidly changing environment.

Keywords :Biodiversity, Ecosystem Functioning, Soil Microorganisms, Ecological Resilience, Conservation Biology

Introduction

Biodiversity represents the variety of life forms on Earth and the complex ecological relationships that connect them across genetic, species, and ecosystem levels. It encompasses the diversity of flora, fauna, and microorganisms that collectively sustain ecosystem structure, functioning, and resilience. Biodiversity is not merely a measure of species richness; rather, it reflects the dynamic interactions among organisms and their environment that regulate essential ecological processes such as primary productivity, nutrient cycling, pollination, and energy flow. (Tilman et al., 2014; IPBES, 2019). Flora and fauna diversity form the biological foundation of ecosystems. Plant communities act as primary producers, shaping habitat structure, regulating microclimates, and supporting food webs through photosynthetic carbon fixation. Faunal communities, in turn, influence ecosystem dynamics through pollination, seed dispersal, herbivory, predation, and decomposition. The interdependence between plants and animals ensures ecosystem stability and enhances the capacity of ecosystems to withstand environmental disturbances. Losses in either floral or faunal diversity can therefore trigger cascading ecological effects, leading to reduced ecosystem functionality and resilience. (Bretzel et al., 2017; Cardinale et al., 2012). In recent decades, global biodiversity has experienced unprecedented decline due to anthropogenic pressures such as habitat destruction, land-use change, urbanization, pollution, and climate variability. These drivers have altered species distributions, disrupted ecological interactions, and accelerated ecosystem degradation across terrestrial, aquatic, and human-modified landscapes. Particularly concerning is the erosion of less visible components of biodiversity, such as soil microorganisms, which play a critical role in sustaining above-ground plant and animal communities. (Sharma et al., 2014;

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Nannipieri et al., 2003).Understanding patterns of flora and fauna diversity across different ecosystems is essential for effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable environmental management. Ecosystems such as terrestrial landscapes, soil systems, urban environments, and alpine aquatic habitats exhibit distinct biodiversity characteristics shaped by environmental constraints and biological interactions (Robinson et al., 2010; Parmesan, 2006). Synthesizing knowledge across these ecosystems provides valuable insights into how biodiversity supports ecosystem integrity and how its decline may compromise ecological services vital for human well-being. In this context, the present review critically examines flora and fauna diversity across major ecosystem types, emphasizing their ecological roles, interconnections, and vulnerability to environmental change. (Ollerton et al., 2011; Kremen et al., 2007). By integrating evidence from diverse ecosystems, this paper aims to provide a conceptual synthesis of biodiversity patterns, highlight emerging challenges, and identify key priorities for future research and conservation efforts

Biodiversity as the Foundation of Life Systems

Biodiversity is central to the persistence of life on Earth, encompassing the diversity of organisms and the complex interactions that connect them within ecosystems. Rather than functioning as isolated components, plants, animals, and microorganisms form tightly coupled biological networks that regulate ecosystem processes. High biodiversity enhances ecosystem stability by distributing functional roles among multiple species, thereby reducing vulnerability to environmental disturbances. (Tilman et al., 2014; IPBES, 2019). Floral diversity drives ecosystem productivity through photosynthesis, carbon sequestration, and habitat formation. Faunal diversity complements these processes by facilitating pollination, seed dispersal, herbivory regulation, and nutrient redistribution (Cardinale et al., 2012). Together, flora and fauna establish self-regulating systems capable of maintaining equilibrium under natural variability. Declines in biodiversity therefore represent not only species loss but also erosion of ecosystem integrity.

Interdependence of Flora and Fauna Across Ecosystems

Flora and fauna exhibit strong interdependence across terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Plant communities determine habitat structure, resource availability, and microclimatic conditions that shape faunal assemblages. In turn, animals influence plant population dynamics through grazing, pollination, and dispersal mechanisms. (Robinson et al., 2010;) Mutualistic interactions, such as plant–pollinator relationships, enhance reproductive success and genetic diversity, while predator–prey dynamics regulate population balance. Disruption of these interactions can trigger cascading ecological effects, leading to community simplification and reduced ecosystem functionality. Thus, biodiversity conservation must address both plant and animal components as integrated ecological units.

Soil Biodiversity and the Hidden Drivers of Ecosystem Functioning

Soil ecosystems harbor some of the most diverse biological communities on Earth, dominated by microorganisms that regulate fundamental ecological processes. Soil microflora and microfauna drive organic matter decomposition, nutrient mineralization, and soil structure formation, directly influencing plant growth and ecosystem productivity. IPBES, 2019 Microbial diversity provides functional redundancy, allowing ecosystems to maintain processes even when individual species decline (Bretzel et al., 2017; Cardinale et al., 2012). However, sustained soil degradation, pollution, and intensive land use reduce microbial diversity and compromise ecosystem resilience. The loss of soil biodiversity often precedes visible ecosystem collapse, underscoring its critical yet underestimated role in sustaining aboveground flora and fauna.

Biodiversity Patterns in Urban and Human-Modified Landscapes

Urbanization has dramatically altered natural habitats, fragmenting ecosystems and reducing species richness. Despite these pressures, modified landscapes can support biodiversity under appropriate management. Urban green spaces, rooftop vegetation, and restored habitats create ecological refuges that sustain plant and animal populations. (Robinson et al., 2010; Parmesan, 2006)Vegetated urban environments enhance pollinator diversity, provide migratory corridors, and moderate urban microclimates. However, biodiversity in human-dominated systems remains highly sensitive to land-use intensity and habitat connectivity (Ollerton et al., 2011; Kremen et al., 2007). Strategic integration of biodiversity considerations into urban planning is therefore essential for maintaining ecological functions within expanding cities.

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Flora and Fauna Diversity in Extreme and Transitional Ecosystems

Extreme environments such as alpine aquatic ecosystems exhibit unique biodiversity patterns shaped by harsh climatic conditions (Cardinale et al., 2012). Low temperatures, seasonal variability, and limited nutrient availability select for highly specialized flora and fauna adapted to environmental stress. (Tilman et al., 2014; IPBES, 2019). In alpine waters, primary producers such as algae form the base of simplified but tightly regulated food webs. Aquatic insects and cold-adapted fish species demonstrate physiological and behavioral adaptations that enable survival under fluctuating conditions. These ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to environmental change, as even minor disturbances can disrupt finely balanced ecological interactions.

Drivers Accelerating Biodiversity Decline

Biodiversity loss is increasingly driven by a combination of anthropogenic stressors, including habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and unsustainable resource exploitation. These pressures interact synergistically, amplifying their ecological impact. (Robinson et al., 2010; Parmesan, 2006). Climate variability alters species distributions and phenology, while habitat fragmentation limits dispersal and genetic exchange (Ollerton et al., 2011; Kremen et al., 2007). Pollution and soil degradation further undermine ecosystem health, disproportionately affecting sensitive species. Together, these drivers reduce ecosystem resilience and increase the likelihood of long-term ecological degradation.

Ecological Consequences of Biodiversity Erosion

The decline of flora and fauna diversity has profound implications for ecosystem functioning. Reduced biodiversity weakens trophic networks, diminishes ecosystem services, and increases susceptibility to environmental shocks. Ecosystems with simplified biological communities exhibit lower productivity, impaired nutrient cycling, and reduced recovery capacity following disturbance. (Tilman et al., 2014; IPBES, 2019). Importantly, biodiversity loss often leads to nonlinear ecological responses, where gradual species declines result in abrupt ecosystem degradation (Bretzel et al., 2017; Cardinale et al., 2012). Such transitions highlight the importance of preventive conservation strategies that maintain biodiversity before critical thresholds are crossed.

Conservation Priorities and Future Research Directions

Effective biodiversity conservation requires integrated approaches that recognize ecological complexity and uncertainty. Conservation strategies must prioritize habitat protection, restoration of degraded ecosystems, and maintenance of ecological connectivity. Equally important is the conservation of soil biodiversity, which underpins ecosystem productivity and resilience. (Robinson et al., 2010; Parmesan, 2006).Future research should focus on identifying biodiversity thresholds, improving ecosystem monitoring, and understanding cross-scale interactions between flora, fauna, and environmental drivers. Advancing interdisciplinary approaches will be essential for translating ecological knowledge into effective conservation and policy actions.

Conceptual overview of flora and fauna diversity across ecosystems

Ecological significance	Fauna-related aspects	Flora-related aspects	Theme
Maintains ecosystem stability and resilience	Population diversity, trophic roles, behavioral adaptations	Genetic variation, species richness, functional traits	Biodiversity components

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Regulates food webs, carbon cycling, and habitat structure	Mammals, birds, insects, reptiles	Trees, shrubs, grasses, medicinal plants	Terrestrial biodiversity
Controls decomposition, nutrient cycling, and soil fertility	Microfauna, mesofauna, soil invertebrates	Microflora, fungi, root-associated microbes	Soil biodiversity
Supports energy flow and water quality regulation	Fish, amphibians, aquatic invertebrates	Algae, macrophytes, phytoplankton	Aquatic biodiversity
Enhances ecosystem services in human-dominated landscapes	Pollinators, birds, small mammals	Cultivated plants, native vegetation, green roofs	Urban biodiversity
Acts as environmental indicators and climate-sensitive systems	Specialized insects and fish	Cold-adapted algae and plants	Alpine ecosystem diversity
Leads to ecosystem degradation and loss of services	Population decline, range shifts	Habitat loss, climate stress, pollution	Threats to biodiversity
Ensures long-term ecosystem sustainability	Wildlife protection, species management	Habitat restoration, plant conservation	Conservation perspectives

Table:1 Thematic synthesis of flora and fauna diversity highlighting key ecological roles across different environments.

Conclusion

This review demonstrates that flora and fauna diversity is fundamental to ecosystem integrity, resilience, and sustainability. Biodiversity supports essential ecological processes across terrestrial, urban, soil-based, and alpine ecosystems, yet is increasingly threatened by anthropogenic pressures. The loss of biodiversity represents not merely species extinction but a systemic weakening of ecological networks that sustain life.

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Protecting biodiversity therefore requires proactive, science-based strategies that integrate conservation, sustainable development, and long-term ecosystem stewardship. Strengthening our understanding of biodiversity dynamics will be critical for maintaining ecosystem services and ensuring environmental stability in the face of global change.

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From Awareness to Action: How Environmental Consciousness Influences Gen Z's Preference for Sustainable Products

V. Ramarao[1] Dr. Anil Kumar Akkala[2] and Mounica Pasupuleti[3]
Lecturer, Department of Commerce,Govt Degree College, Yeleswaram, A.P.
Assistant Professor, School of Business,Aditya University, Surampalem.
Mobile: 9848588723. Email: anilakkala99@gmail.com
B.Tech., Pursuing MBA, Aditya Degree & PG College for Women, Rajamahendravaram.
Mobile: 8074704839. Email: mounicamunni1@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Human is an integral part of the mother Earth. But with the technological advancements that intentionally or unintentionally exploit the nature, we are at the verge of being endangered by environmental hazards like global warming, earthquakes, pollution etc. With the rising number of incidents, humanity is ought to think of eco - friendly measures which change the preferences of a common consumer in the world of business. Subsequently, businesses are adapting the environment friendly practices like using energy-efficient appliances and machinery, transitioning to renewable energy sources like solar, wind, or hydropower, optimizing production processes to reduce energy consumption, minimizing the carbon footprint in production and distribution etc. This paper aims to study how the consumer attitude towards the environment and consumer preferences are reshaping the business landscape among younger generations and also aims to provide some suggestions by studying the perception of the customer. The study also highlights demographic factors, such as education level and income, that further influence eco-conscious purchasing patterns. This paper contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainable consumption by offering insights into how awareness campaigns, policy interventions, and ethical branding can support environmentally responsible consumer behaviour.

Key Words: Energy-efficient, ethical branding, environmentally responsible, unintentionally.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the growing urgency of climate change, pollution, and resource depletion has made sustainability a central global concern. In India, this urgency is particularly significant given the country's rapid urbanization, industrialization, and population growth. As environmental challenges such as air and water pollution, waste management, and biodiversity loss intensify, both policymakers and citizens are increasingly recognizing the need for sustainable production and consumption patterns. Within this context, **Generation Z (Gen Z)**—those born roughly between 1997 and 2012—emerges as a key demographic whose values and choices could shape the future of sustainable development in India.

Gen Z is a generation that has grown up amidst climate movements, social media activism, and increasing environmental consciousness. They are informed, vocal, and willing to question unsustainable practices. Their exposure to global campaigns like *Fridays for Future* and domestic initiatives such as *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* and *Beat Plastic Pollution* has deeply influenced their outlook toward sustainability. However, a critical question remains: **does this awareness truly translate into concrete action, particularly in their consumption choices?** Understanding how environmental consciousness drives Gen Z's preference for sustainable products is essential in linking awareness to behavioural change.

In India, environmental awareness and sustainable practices are not just moral imperatives but also legal obligations backed by several acts and policies. The **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** serves as the umbrella legislation empowering the government to protect and improve environmental quality. Complementing this, the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** includes provisions that safeguard consumers against misleading claims such as "greenwashing," where companies falsely present their products as eco-friendly. Similarly, the **Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016, amended 2022)** aim to

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regulate single-use plastics, while the **E-Waste Management Rules (2016)** address the responsible disposal and recycling of electronic goods. These laws collectively establish a framework for promoting sustainable production and consumption—areas where Gen Z consumers play a transformative role.

Further, India's commitment to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production**, reinforces the need for a behavioural shift among consumers. Government initiatives like the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)** and **Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) Movement**, launched by the Government of India, encourage citizens to adopt eco-conscious habits and choose environmentally friendly alternatives in everyday life. These initiatives resonate strongly with Gen Z's values of purpose-driven living and social responsibility.

A short briefing of these acts and rules is as follows:

Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

This Act empowers the government to protect and improve environmental quality across air, water, and soil (Government of India, 1986). It forms the basis for most environmental regulations in India and reinforces the idea that protecting nature is a **shared legal and civic duty**, shaping Gen Z's sense of eco-responsibility.

Consumer Protection Act, 2019

The updated Consumer Protection Act addresses **misleading environmental claims (greenwashing)** and ensures that consumers are not deceived by false "eco-friendly" labels. For Gen Z, this law builds **trust and transparency**, motivating them to choose genuinely sustainable brands.

Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016, amended 2022)

These rules regulate single-use plastics and promote **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**, where producers are accountable for managing plastic waste (MoEFCC, 2022). Awareness of these rules has encouraged Gen Z consumers to favour **plastic-free and biodegradable packaging**, reflecting their conscious lifestyle choices.

E-Waste Management Rules, 2016

Designed to address India's growing electronic waste, these rules ensure the **safe collection, recycling, and disposal** of e-waste. For a tech-driven generation like Gen Z, this regulation promotes **responsible gadget use** and preference for brands offering recycling and take-back programs.

National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), 2008

The NAPCC outlines India's strategy for balancing development with climate protection through initiatives in renewable energy, water, and sustainable living. It provides a **policy backdrop** that connects Gen Z's climate awareness to national sustainability goals.

Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) Movement, 2022

The LiFE initiative encourages individuals to adopt eco-friendly daily habits—reducing waste, saving energy, and choosing green products (NITI Aayog, 2022). It resonates strongly with Gen Z's values by transforming **awareness into everyday action**.

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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

India's commitment to the **UN SDGs**, especially Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), integrates sustainability into education, governance, and marketing (UNDP, 2020). It provides Gen Z with a **global framework** linking their personal choices to worldwide sustainability efforts.

Despite these policy supports and the visible rise of green marketing, a **gap often exists between environmental awareness and actual consumer action**. While Gen Z may express strong environmental concern, their purchasing behaviour can still be influenced by price sensitivity, convenience, or lack of access to sustainable options. This gap—often termed the "awareness–action" or "attitude–behaviour" gap—forms the crux of this study.

Thus, the present research seeks to explore **how environmental consciousness influences Gen Z's preference for sustainable products in India**, considering both psychological factors (like values, beliefs, and perceived consumer effectiveness) and structural elements (such as availability, affordability, and policy influence). By examining this relationship, the study aims to uncover the drivers that convert awareness into action and the barriers that prevent it, offering insights for policymakers, educators, and businesses working toward a more sustainable India.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A **literature review** is a **systematic, critical, and analytical summary** of existing research and scholarly works related to a specific topic or research question. It identifies, evaluates, and synthesizes the relevant theories, concepts, findings, and gaps in previous studies to establish the **context and foundation** for new research.

According to Creswell (2014), a literature review "provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings." It helps researchers understand what is already known, what remains unexplored, and how their own study contributes to the existing body of knowledge.

For this title, literature review is made available under different sections elevating each factor at a time. These factors are as follows:

i. Environmental Consciousness and Consumer Behaviour

Environmental consciousness refers to an individual's awareness, concern, and proactive attitude toward environmental issues (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996). It encompasses understanding ecological problems, valuing sustainability, and being willing to adjust behaviours to minimize environmental harm. Several studies have shown that higher environmental consciousness often leads to more sustainable consumption patterns (Kim & Choi, 2005; Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Consumers who are environmentally aware tend to favour eco-friendly products, even when these are more expensive or less convenient, as a way of expressing their environmental values.

ii. Generation Z and Sustainability

Gen Z is often described as the "sustainability generation." They are digital natives who are constantly exposed to global environmental narratives through social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). This exposure has made them more informed and vocal about environmental issues compared to earlier generations. Studies indicate that Gen Z consumers are more likely to hold companies accountable for unethical or unsustainable practices (Naderi & van Steenburg, 2018). They often prefer brands that align with their values, emphasizing transparency, ethical sourcing, and environmental responsibility.

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iii. The Awareness–Action Gap

Despite this high level of environmental awareness, researchers have consistently noted the existence of an **"attitude–behaviour gap"** or **"awareness–action gap."** This gap describes the disconnect between what consumers *believe* or *intend* and what they actually *do* (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). For example, while Gen Z may express strong preferences for sustainable products, their purchasing decisions may still be influenced by price, convenience, or availability. Understanding this gap is key to designing interventions that convert awareness into tangible behavioural change.

iv. Factors Influencing Sustainable Product Preference

Multiple factors influence Gen Z's preference for sustainable products. **Social influence** plays a major role, as peer endorsement and online communities can amplify pro-environmental behaviour (White et al., 2019). **Perceived consumer effectiveness**—the belief that one's actions can make a difference—also strongly predicts eco-friendly purchasing. Moreover, **brand authenticity**, **trust**, and **emotional connection** are critical in motivating Gen Z consumers to support sustainable brands (Nguyen et al., 2020).

v. Research Gap

While previous studies have explored environmental attitudes and sustainable behaviour broadly, limited research has specifically examined how **environmental consciousness translates into Gen Z's purchasing choices in the sustainable product market.** Most existing studies focus on millennials or general consumer trends, leaving Gen Z's behavioural mechanisms underexplored. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the link between awareness, consciousness, and actual consumer preference within this emerging, highly influential generation.

3. FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS

Ho: There is no significant positive relationship between environmental consciousness and Gen Z's preference for sustainable products.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between environmental consciousness and Gen Z's preference for sustainable products.

The different constructs considered while framing the hypothesis are as follows:

i. Environmental Consciousness (EC) - awareness, concern and knowledge about environmental issues. (Independent variable)

ii. Preference for Sustainable Products (PSP) — attitudinal preference and behavioural intention to choose sustainable/eco-friendly products. (Dependent variable)

iii. Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE) — belief that individual actions make an environmental difference.

iv. Social Influence (SI) — perceived social pressure or encouragement from peers/family to buy sustainable products.

v. Price Sensitivity (PS) — tendency to be deterred by premium price on sustainable products.

vi. Control variables: Age (within Gen Z range), gender, education, monthly disposable income, urban/rural, prior experience with sustainable products.

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4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research paper is prepared by collecting primary data through survey method to understand your eco-conscious nature of Gen Z consumers and measure its influence on purchasing decisions in comparison with price sensitivity, social influence and other related factors. The sampling technique used is judgmental sampling. The survey was aimed at age-group 13 to 28. The data is collected in both qualitative and quantitative forms and the qualitative data is also converted into quantitative form by encoding. Most of the data is collected using the Likert's scale. It is a rating scale used to measure opinions, attitudes, or behaviours by asking respondents to choose from a series of answer options ranked 1 to 5. One can choose the most suitable grade based on their acceptance level. The data thus obtained is analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis test to study the effect of different control variables (gender, age, income levels, location), influencing factors like Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE), Social Influence (SI), Price Sensitivity (PS) and the independent variable X (Environmental Consciousness (EC)) on the dependent variable Y (Preference for Sustainable Products (PSP)) and the results are shown in the ANALYSIS AND RESULTS SECTION.

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

i) To measure the levels of environmental consciousness among Gen Z.

ii) To examine the relationship between environmental consciousness and preference for sustainable products over other factors like price sensitivity, social influence, perceived consumer effectiveness etc.

6. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS:

Hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant positive relationship between environmental consciousness and Gen Z's preference for sustainable products.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between environmental consciousness and Gen Z's preference for sustainable products.

The analysis section includes regressing the dependent variable preference for sustainable products (Y) over different independent variables like age, gender, employment, income, locality, purchasing behaviour, environmental consciousness, perceived consumer effectiveness, social influence, price sensitivity and the influence of each factor is studied in detail using multiple regression analysis and the results are as follows:

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SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.811631073
R Square	0.658744998
Adjusted R Square	0.640298782
Standard Error	0.557970555
Observations	196

ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	10	111.1815169	11.11815169	35.71165962	4.21617E-38
Residual	185	57.59626086	0.31133114		
Total	195	168.7777778			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	-0.102320332	0.260044966	-0.39347169	0.694424218	-0.61535523	0.410714566	-0.61535523	0.410714566
X Variable 1	0.016984074	0.073553534	0.230907652	0.817641711	-0.128127483	0.16209563	-0.128127483	0.16209563
X Variable 2	0.035830164	0.086002724	0.416616615	0.677441828	-0.133842025	0.205502352	-0.133842025	0.205502352
X Variable 3	-0.143851472	0.066358763	-2.1677841	0.031452446	-0.274768682	-0.012934262	-0.274768682	-0.012934262
X Variable 4	0.110369858	0.066995797	1.647414648	0.1011703	-0.021804137	0.242543853	-0.021804137	0.242543853
X Variable 5	0.048036224	0.052189752	0.920414864	0.358554632	-0.05492737	0.150999818	-0.05492737	0.150999818
X Variable 6	0.509894172	0.103695942	4.917204694	1.9299E-06	0.305315565	0.714472779	0.305315565	0.714472779
X Variable 7	0.031364758	0.073331468	0.427712126	0.669358176	-0.113308691	0.176038207	-0.113308691	0.176038207
X Variable 8	0.337147135	0.070857707	4.758087002	3.92605E-06	0.197354094	0.476940176	0.197354094	0.476940176
X Variable 9	0.231812379	0.057810755	4.009848692	8.80607E-05	0.117759278	0.345865479	0.117759278	0.345865479
X Variable 10	0.34439206	0.061186842	5.628531395	6.6483E-08	0.223678379	0.465105741	0.223678379	0.465105741

A detailed interpretation of the results:

Key points:

- The model explains about 66% of the variance in preference for sustainable products (R Square = 0.6587), which is a strong fit.
- The overall model is highly statistically significant ($F = 35.71$, $p < 0.0001$), meaning these variables collectively predict preference well.

Interpretation of variables:

- Age (X1): Coefficient = 0.017, p = 0.82 (not significant)
  Age does not have a significant effect on preference here.
- Gender (X2): Coefficient = 0.036, p = 0.68 (not significant)
  Gender does not significantly predict preference.

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- Employment (X3): Coefficient = -0.144, p = 0.031 (significant)
  Employment status negatively affects preference, meaning employed individuals may show a slight lower preference for sustainable products compared to the reference group.

- Income (X4): Coefficient = 0.11, p = 0.10 (not significant at 0.05 level, but borderline)
  Higher income may be positively related to preference, but this effect is not statistically strong.

- Locality (X5): Coefficient = 0.048, p = 0.35 (not significant)
  Locality (rural, semi-urban or urban) does not significantly impact preference.

- Purchasing Behaviour (X6): Coefficient = 0.51, p < 0.00001 (highly significant)
  Positive purchasing behaviour is strongly associated with higher preference.

- Environmental Consciousness (X7): Coefficient = 0.031, p = 0.43 (not significant)
  Environmental consciousness does not significantly predict preference in this model.

- Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (X8): Coefficient = 0.33, p < 0.00001 (highly significant)
  This factor strongly predicts higher preference.

- Social Influence (X9): Coefficient = 0.23, p = 0.000008 (significant)
  Social factors positively influence preference.

- Price Sensitivity (X10): Coefficient = 0.34, p < 0.00001 (highly significant)
  Price sensitivity positively predicts preference, meaning those sensitive to price still show a higher preference for sustainable products.

7. CONCLUSION

The strongest positive predictors of preference for sustainable products are purchasing behaviour, perceived consumer effectiveness, social influence, and price sensitivity. Employment has a small negative impact. Age, gender, income, locality, and environmental consciousness are not statistically significant predictors in this model.

This means in your sample, people's actual purchasing habits and their belief that they can make a difference, along with social pressures and price considerations, play the most important roles in favouring sustainable products. Employment status slightly lowers this preference, while demographics like age and gender don't significantly matter here.

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Biodiversity Policies and Governance: Global Frameworks, National Strategies, and Implementation Challenges

M VV Satyaveni
Assistant Professor of Botany, Government College(A), Rajahmundry.

Abstract

Biodiversity underpins ecosystem services, socio-economic development, and human well-being. However, anthropogenic pressures continue to drive unprecedented biodiversity loss worldwide. In response, global and national policy frameworks have evolved to conserve biological diversity, mainstream its values, and integrate governance mechanisms that address complex socio-ecological challenges. This paper synthesizes key international agreements—primarily the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the *Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*—alongside India's national strategies including its updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). The analysis emphasizes comparative insights between India and global policy practices, institutional instruments, regulatory mechanisms, and persistent implementation challenges such as enforcement limitations, resource constraints, and stakeholder participation gaps. The paper concludes with recommendations for strengthening adaptive biodiversity governance that aligns national priorities with global targets. **Keywords:** biodiversity policy; Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; India; national biodiversity strategies; environmental governance.

1. Introduction

Biodiversity—the variability among living organisms and ecological complexes—is essential to ecosystem functioning, resilience, and human survival. Threats such as habitat loss, invasive species proliferation, pollution, overexploitation, and climate change are driving rapid declines in species and ecosystems globally. These trends pose severe risks to food security, water supplies, cultural heritage, and economic stability.

To counteract biodiversity loss, policy frameworks have emerged from multilateral environmental agreements. Governance in this context refers to the rules, institutions, processes, and mechanisms that shape decision-making and implementation of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Effective governance requires integrating biodiversity concerns into national development agendas, policy coherence across sectors, and inclusive stakeholder engagement.

This paper examines global biodiversity policy frameworks and national strategies with an emphasis on India's evolving governance landscape. It highlights comparative elements, implementation challenges, and future directions for enhancing biodiversity outcomes.

2. Global Biodiversity Policy Frameworks

2.1 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, adopted in 1992, is the foundational international legally binding framework for biodiversity conservation. It outlines three main objectives: conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources. Parties are mandated to integrate biodiversity into national policies and prepare National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

The CBD has catalyzed cooperative action across nations, and its governance mechanisms include quadrennial Conference of Parties (COP) meetings, assessment mechanisms, and a suite of protocols for biosafety (Cartagena) and access and

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benefit-sharing (Nagoya). The CBD also promotes inter-convention cooperation with other treaties to enhance synergies among multilateral environmental agreements.

2.2 Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

In December 2022, Parties to the CBD adopted the *Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)*, aiming to arrest biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation through **four long-term goals** for 2050. These include maintaining ecosystem integrity, halting extinction rates, conserving genetic diversity, and ensuring sustainable use and equitable benefit-sharing. The GBF also includes **23 action-oriented targets for 2030**, such as protecting at least 30% of terrestrial and marine areas, reducing harmful subsidies, and mainstreaming biodiversity into planning and development.

Compared with earlier frameworks (e.g., Aichi Targets), the GBF features more ambitious, measurable goals, and emphasizes resource mobilization, capacity building, and technology transfer as essential for implementation.

2.3 Protocols Under the CBD

- **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000):** Focuses on minimizing risks from living modified organisms through the precautionary approach.
- **Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (2010):** Provides legal mechanisms for equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resource use.

These instruments reinforce governance by encouraging national regulatory frameworks to manage biotechnological risks and ensure fair benefit-sharing with indigenous communities.

3. National Biodiversity Strategies: India in Focus

3.1 India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

India, as one of the 17 *megadiverse* countries, holds significant global biodiversity with only ~2.4% of land area yet harboring about 7–8% of the world's documented species. In response to CBD obligations and the GBF's 2030 targets, India updated and submitted its **NBSAP (2024–2030)** at CBD COP16. The plan aligns national objectives with global targets, emphasizing ecosystem restoration, threatened species protection, sustainable resource use, invasive species mitigation, and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms.

The NBSAP also underscores the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors (e.g., agriculture, urban planning) and adopts a bottom-up governance model with extensive stakeholder consultations involving central ministries, state agencies, local communities, and civil society.

3.2 Institutional Framework and Legal Instruments

India implements biodiversity governance through the **Biological Diversity Act (2002)** and its amendment in 2023, which revises access and benefit-sharing (ABS) provisions, engages customary knowledge holders, and aligns national regulations with evolving CBD priorities on digital sequence information (DSI) and ABS implementation.

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Institutionally, biodiversity governance comprises:

- **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**
- **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)**
- **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)**
- **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** at the local level

These bodies facilitate planning, enforcement, monitoring, and participation across governance tiers.

3.2.1.Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) functions as the apex policymaking and coordinating authority for biodiversity conservation in India. It is responsible for formulating national environmental policies, laws, and strategies in alignment with international commitments under multilateral environmental agreements, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Ministry oversees the implementation of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and provides strategic direction for the preparation and periodic revision of India's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

MoEFCC also coordinates inter-ministerial integration of biodiversity concerns across sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, urban development, and infrastructure planning. In addition, it represents India at international biodiversity negotiations and facilitates resource mobilization, capacity building, and reporting obligations under global frameworks such as the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

3.2.2.National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is a statutory body established under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, to regulate access to biological resources and associated traditional knowledge at the national level. The NBA plays a critical role in implementing access and benefit-sharing (ABS) mechanisms in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol. It evaluates applications from foreign individuals, institutions, and companies seeking access to India's biological resources for research, bio-prospecting, or commercial utilization.

Beyond regulatory functions, the NBA provides technical guidance to State Biodiversity Boards and supports the documentation of biodiversity through People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs). The Authority also promotes awareness, capacity building, and research related to biodiversity conservation, thereby acting as a central node linking policy, science, and community-level governance.

3.2.3.State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)

State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) operate at the sub-national level and serve as key implementing agencies for biodiversity governance within individual states. Constituted under the Biological Diversity Act, SBBs regulate access to biological resources by Indian entities for commercial purposes and advise state governments on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

SBBs play an important role in integrating biodiversity considerations into state-level development planning, environmental clearances, and sectoral policies. They also coordinate with Biodiversity Management Committees at the local level and

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ensure compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations. Through these functions, SBBs bridge national biodiversity objectives with region-specific ecological and socio-economic contexts.

3.2.4.Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)

Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) are grassroots-level institutions established in local self-governing bodies such as panchayats, municipalities, and urban local bodies. BMCs are responsible for preparing and maintaining People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs), which document local biological resources, ecosystems, and associated traditional knowledge.

BMCs play a crucial role in ensuring community participation in biodiversity governance and act as custodians of local ecological knowledge. They are key stakeholders in access and benefit-sharing arrangements, ensuring that benefits derived from the use of biological resources flow equitably to local communities. By fostering decentralized governance and participatory conservation, BMCs strengthen the legitimacy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of India's biodiversity policy framework.

3.3 Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Biodiversity Governance

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) play a foundational role in biodiversity conservation, as they inhabit and manage landscapes that harbor a significant proportion of the world's remaining biological diversity. In India, indigenous and forest-dependent communities have historically practiced resource management systems that emphasize ecological balance, intergenerational stewardship, and cultural continuity. Contemporary biodiversity governance increasingly recognizes IPLCs not merely as stakeholders but as **rights-holders, knowledge custodians, and governance partners**.

Custodianship of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Stewardship

IPLCs have long maintained close socio-ecological relationships with their environments, contributing to the conservation of forests, agro-biodiversity, wetlands, and coastal ecosystems. Traditional practices such as sacred groves, shifting cultivation, mixed cropping systems, and seasonal harvesting have enabled sustainable resource use while preserving ecosystem resilience. Empirical studies indicate that biodiversity levels in indigenous-managed landscapes are often comparable to, or higher than, those in formally protected areas.

In the Indian context, tribal regions such as the Western Ghats, Northeast India, and central forest belts exemplify how indigenous stewardship has sustained high levels of species richness and genetic diversity. These practices underscore the importance of recognizing community-managed conservation models within formal policy frameworks.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Knowledge Systems

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) held by IPLCs encompasses cumulative observations, practices, and belief systems that guide interactions with nature. TEK contributes significantly to species identification, habitat management, climate adaptation strategies, and medicinal plant use. The Convention on Biological Diversity, through **Article 8(j)**, explicitly calls for the respect, preservation, and promotion of such knowledge, subject to the approval and involvement of knowledge holders.

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In India, documentation initiatives such as People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs) institutionalize TEK within governance systems. However, ethical concerns related to misappropriation, inadequate recognition, and insufficient legal protection persist, highlighting the need for robust safeguards and community consent mechanisms.

Rights-Based Approaches and Legal Recognition

A rights-based approach to biodiversity governance recognizes IPLCs as legitimate holders of land, resource, and knowledge rights. Indian biodiversity policy increasingly aligns with this perspective through legal instruments that emphasize prior informed consent, customary rights, and equitable benefit-sharing. The Biological Diversity Act, 2002, and its subsequent amendments provide a legal basis for protecting community interests in access and benefit-sharing (ABS) arrangements.

Nevertheless, inconsistencies in implementation, overlapping legal mandates, and limited awareness among local communities often undermine the realization of these rights. Strengthening legal literacy, institutional accountability, and coordination across governance levels remains essential for effective rights recognition.

Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) and Livelihood Security

Access and Benefit-Sharing mechanisms serve as a critical interface between biodiversity conservation and socio-economic justice. ABS frameworks aim to ensure that benefits derived from the commercial or research use of biological resources and associated knowledge are fairly shared with IPLCs. Benefits may include monetary compensation, livelihood opportunities, infrastructure development, or capacity building.

In India, ABS implementation has shown promise in supporting community development; however, procedural complexity, delayed benefit distribution, and limited transparency often constrain outcomes. Simplifying ABS processes and strengthening community negotiation capacities are vital to ensuring equitable benefit flows.

Participation in Decision-Making and Governance

Meaningful participation of IPLCs in biodiversity governance enhances policy effectiveness, legitimacy, and social acceptance. Institutions such as Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) provide formal platforms for community engagement in local conservation planning, biodiversity documentation, and monitoring activities.

Despite these institutional provisions, participation often remains consultative rather than decision-making in practice. Structural barriers, power asymmetries, and capacity gaps limit the influence of IPLCs in policy processes. Empowering communities through capacity building, financial support, and recognition of customary governance systems is essential for transitioning toward genuine co-management arrangements.

Climate Change, Vulnerability, and Adaptive Knowledge

IPLCs are disproportionately affected by climate change due to their dependence on natural resources and limited adaptive capacity. At the same time, indigenous knowledge systems offer valuable insights into ecosystem-based adaptation, climate resilience, and disaster risk reduction. Integrating IPLC knowledge into climate-biodiversity policy synergies enhances adaptive governance and promotes locally relevant solutions.

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Challenges and Policy Gaps

Despite growing recognition, several challenges persist in integrating IPLCs effectively into biodiversity governance:

- Marginalization in policy implementation
- Inadequate protection of traditional knowledge
- Limited financial and institutional support
- Conflicts between conservation policies and community livelihoods
- Weak monitoring of benefit-sharing outcomes

Addressing these gaps requires stronger political commitment, institutional reforms, and inclusive governance mechanisms that prioritize social equity alongside ecological outcomes.

Global Relevance and Alignment with International Frameworks

India's approach to integrating IPLCs into biodiversity governance reflects broader global shifts under the **Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, **IPBES assessments**, and rights-based conservation discourse. The emphasis on community-led conservation, equitable governance, and knowledge pluralism positions IPLCs at the center of transformative biodiversity action.

4. Comparative Insights: India and Global Implementation

4.1 Alignment with Global Targets

India's updated NBSAP explicitly embraces GBF targets such as the **30×30 conservation goal** and reduction of invasive species introduction. However, implementation pace varies across regions given socioeconomic priorities, administrative capacity, and resource constraints.

4.2 Governance Strengths and Gaps

Strengths:

- Multi-tiered institutional framework with grassroots engagement
- Legal backing through the Biological Diversity Act and recent amendments
- Financing commitments and mainstreaming biodiversity into policy

Challenges:

- Enforcement limitations at local levels
- Capacity and awareness gaps among implementing bodies
- Coordination between conservation and development objectives
- Integrating biodiversity concerns into broader economic planning

These gaps reflect broader criticisms of biodiversity governance worldwide, where global policy commitments often falter in implementation due to funding deficits and limited data monitoring capacities.

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5. Policy Instruments and Approaches

5.1 Regulatory Mechanisms

Protected area designations, species protection legislation, and environmental impact assessment systems provide statutory safeguards. India's Biological Diversity Act mandates clearances and compliance procedures to prevent biopiracy and ensure benefit-sharing.

5.2 Economic and Incentive-Based Tools

Approaches such as Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), biodiversity offsets, and green bonds aim to integrate biodiversity values into economic decision-making. These reflect global best practices promoted under the GBF for resource mobilization.

5.3 Participatory and Community-Led Conservation

Community biodiversity registers and decentralized governance empower local stakeholders, strengthening ecological stewardship and legitimacy.

6. Implementation Challenges

Despite robust frameworks, multiple obstacles persist:

- **Resource Constraints:** Limited financial and technical resources constrain monitoring and enforcement.
- **Policy–Practice Gaps:** Weak implementation of regulations at ground levels.
- **Development Pressures:** Infrastructure and agricultural expansion conflict with conservation goals.
- **Data Deficiencies:** Lack of comprehensive biodiversity monitoring systems impedes adaptive management.

For example, invasive species are increasing rapidly in India, presenting ecological and socio-economic risks that require urgent policy responses.

7. Future Directions and Conclusions

Achieving biodiversity goals requires enhancing governance through:

- Strengthening science–policy interfaces
- Improving data collection and digital monitoring
- Enhancing cross-sectoral mainstreaming
- Mobilizing domestic and international finance
- Empowering indigenous and local communities

The comparative analysis shows that while India's biodiversity policies align well with global frameworks, effective implementation necessitates adaptive governance, stronger enforcement, and inclusive stakeholder engagement. In an era of accelerating ecological change, bridging gaps between policy intent and practice is vital for sustaining biodiversity and human well-being.

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The Impact of Climate change on the Biodiversity

Dr. Surapu Varalakshmi[1]*, Dr.P.Yamini[2], Dr.P.Padmavathi[3]
1*Lecturer in Biochemistry, Sri Padmavathi Women's Degree & PG College,TTD(A) Tirupati.
2 Lecturer in Chemistry, Sri Padmavathi Women's Degree & PG College,TTD(A) Tirupati.
3 Lecturer in Chemistry, Sri Padmavathi Women's Degree & PG College,TTD(A) Tirupati.
Corresponding author1*: Dr. Surapu Varalakshmi, Lecture in Biochemistry, Sri Padmavathi Women's Degree & PG College,TTD(A) Tirupati.
Mail ID: biochemvara@gmail.com

Abstract:

The biodiversity we see today is the result of 4.5 billion years of evolution, increasingly influenced by humans. Biodiversity forms the web of life that we depend on for so many things like food, water, medicine, a stable climate, economic growth, among others. But climate change is playing an increasingly important role in the decline of biodiversity. The major impact of climate change on biodiversity is the increase in the frequency of fires, storms or periods of drought. Climate change has altered marine, terrestrial, and freshwater ecosystems around the world. Climate change and biodiversity loss are part of an interlinked major crisis the world is facing today. They need to be concentrate together to the advance sustainable development and secure a viable future on this planet. Preserving biodiversity through conservation is crucial for both climate mitigation and adaptation. This review discusses the importance of biodiversity, the consequences of the climate change and also control measures should be taken for the conservation of biodiversity which can protect the earth from the consequence of climate change.

Keywords: Biodiversity, Climate change, Conservation, Ecosystem, Human health, livelihood, Species.

Introduction

Climate change is dramatically shaping our world today. But its consequences are not limited to humans alone. It also has far-reaching effects on the world's biodiversity. Biodiversity, or the 'diversity of life' on Earth, is essential for the planet's health and survival. But the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly clear. Extreme weather events are happening more often. The timing of biological events is changing. Our wildlife is disappearing. But its impacts are not felt the same across the planet, as some regions and species are more at risk than others. Predicting the response of biodiversity to climate change has become an extremely active field of research (Pereira et al. 2010). Predictions play an important role in alerting scientists and decision makers to potential future risks, provide a means to bolster attribution of biological changes to climate change and can support the development of proactive strategies to reduce climate change impacts on biodiversity (Pereira et al. 2010; Parmesan et al. 2011). However, the multiplicity of approaches and the resulting variability in projections make it difficult to get a clear picture of the future of biodiversity under different scenarios of global climatic change (Pereira et al. 2010).

The multiple components of climate change are anticipated to affect all the levels of biodiversity, from organism to biome levels. They primarily concern various strengths and forms of fitness decrease, which are expressed at different levels, and have effects on individuals, populations, species, ecological networks and ecosystems. At the most basic levels of biodiversity, climate change is able to decrease genetic diversity of populations due to directional selection and rapid migration, which could in turn affect ecosystem functioning and resilience (Botkin et al. 2007). However, most studies are centred on impacts at higher organizational levels, and genetic effects of climate change have been explored only for a very small number of species.

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Climate change affects biodiversity through multiple mechanisms. Rising global temperatures are intensifying extreme weather events, accelerating sea-level rise, and driving the loss of ice caps, thereby threatening agricultural productivity, water resources, and human health, while simultaneously exerting immense pressure on natural ecosystems (Bacelar et al., 2024; Correia et al., 2025). These impacts are further compounded by ocean acidification, which adversely affects marine biodiversity and associated livelihoods, particularly shellfish populations of ecological and economic importance (Carter & O'Hara, 2025). Phenological changes, such as shifts in the timing of breeding, flowering, and migration, are also becoming increasingly evident. For instance, birds are arriving earlier at their breeding grounds, and plants are flowering earlier in spring, as documented by Visser et al. (2004). Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges, driven by the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere due to human activities such as industry, transportation, agriculture, and land-use change (Gibb et al., 2025). Its impacts include rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme events, which disrupt ecosystems, accelerate biodiversity loss, and affect species across terrestrial, marine, and soil systems (Ghelichnia, 2025).The effects of global warming are broader which may include arctic shrinkage, glacial retreat, and worldwide sea level rise. The changing precipitation patterns will result in more floods and drought. The changes will also occur in agricultural yields, there may be addition of new trade routes, vast extinction of species and increase in disease vectors range.

Biodiversity, which encompasses the variety of life forms on Earth, from genetic diversity within species to the richness of entire ecosystems, is crucial for the stability and functioning of the natural world. Ecosystem services such as food production, water purification, climate regulation, and disease control are directly dependent on maintaining this diversity. However, as the planet warms and climate systems become increasingly unstable, the delicate balance that supports biodiversity is under severe threat. Climate change is exacerbating other threats to biodiversity, such as habitat destruction, overexploitation, and pollution. Deforestation and land-use changes, driven by agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development, are already leading to significant habitat loss and fragmentation. The ongoing loss of biodiversity on Earth amplifies ecosystem vulnerability by diminishing resilience and adaptive capacity in the face of climate induced disturbances (Chevin & Bridle, 2025). Climate change further compounds these threats by altering the suitability of remaining habitats, making it more difficult for species to survive and reproduce. Marine ecosystems are similarly affected by climate change, with rising ocean temperatures, acidification, and deoxygenation posing serious risks to marine biodiversity. Coral reefs, which are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems on the planet, are particularly vulnerable to climate-induced bleaching events. Understanding the complex and bidirectional linkages between climate change and biodiversity is therefore essential for developing effective conservation strategies and promoting long-term sustainability.

Major causes of climate change: The major causes of climate change includes

Emission of green-house gases:

Increase in the emission of greenhouse gases due to human activities has been the primary driver for climate change. The principal greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide (76%), methane (16%), and to a limited extent nitrous oxide (2%). The emission of GHGs is largely due to the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) for automobiles and industries which result in carbon emissions during their extraction as well as consumption. Increase in the atmospheric temperature also leads to an increase in the temperature of the ocean. The oceans play an important role in the global carbon cycle and remove about 25% of the carbon dioxide emitted by human activities Increasing demand for meat and milk has led to a significant increase in the population of livestock and conversion of enormous amount of the land to pasture and farm land to raise livestock. Ruminant animals (largely cows, buffaloes and sheep) produce large amounts of methane when they digest food (through enteric fermentation by microbes), adding to the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere (Sejiyan et al. 2016).

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Organic fertilizers, however, release nitrogen more slowly than synthetic ones so that most of it gets absorbed by the plants as they become available. Synthetic fertilizers release nitrogen rapidly which cannot be used by plants right away, thus making the excess nitrogen available to microbes to convert to nitrous oxide. Presently CO_2 concentration in the atmosphere is higher than at any time in at least 2 million years, and methane and nitrous oxide are higher than at any time in the last 800,000 years (AR6 Climate Change 2021). The most important evidences of climate change is the long term data available on the CO_2 levels, global temperature and weather patterns. Human activities exacerbate these challenges through greenhouse gas emissions and unsustainable resource use, adversely affecting ecosystems, agriculture, soil and water resources, and long-term sustainability (Shang & Xie, 2024).

Deforestation:

Forests are the main sinks of atmospheric CO_2. After the industrial revolution, the trend began to change; increasing proportion of deforestation is being driven by the demands of urbanization, industrial activities and large-scale agriculture. A new satellite map has indicated that field crops have been extended to one million additional km^2 of land over the last two decades and about half of this newly extended land has replaced forests and other ecosystems. In recent decades the demands on forest to grow plantation crops such as oil palm, coffee, tea and rubber, and for cattle ranching and mining have increased enormously thus reducing the forest cover. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), over 43 million hectares of forest was lost between 2004 and 2017 out of 377 million hectares monitored around the world (Pacheco et al. 2021).

Weather pattern and natural disasters:

One of the obvious changes observed in recent years is the extreme and unpredictable weather, and an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. Brazil's south central region saw one of the worst droughts in 2021with the result many major reservoirs reached < 20% capacity, seriously affecting farming and energy generation (Getirana et al. 2021). In earlier decades, it was possible to predict with reasonable certainty annual weather pattern including the beginning and ending of monsoon rains,8 farmers could plan sowing periods of their crops in synchrony with the prevailing weather. Now the weather pattern is changing almost every year and the farmers are suffering huge losses. Similarly the extent of annual rainfall and the locations associated with heavy and scanty rainfall are no more predictable with certainty. Many areas which were associated with scanty rainfall have started getting much heavier rains and the extent of rainfall is getting reduced in areas traditionally associated with heavy rainfall. Wildfires also release large amounts of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and fine particulate matter into the atmosphere causing air pollution and consequent health problems. In 2021, wildfires around the world, emitted 1.76 billion tonnes of carbon. In Australia, more than a billion native animals reported to have been killed during 2020 fires, and some species and ecosystems may never recover (OXFAM International 2021).

Sea level rise:

Global warming is causing mean sea level to rise in two ways. On one hand, the melting of the glaciers, the polar ice cap and the Atlantic ice shelf are adding water to the ocean and on the other hand the volume of the ocean is expanding as the water warms. Global mean sea level has risen faster since 1900 than over any preceding century in at least the last 3000 years. Between 2006 and 2016, the rate of sea-level rise was 2.5 times faster than it was for almost the whole of the twentieth century (OXFAM International 2021) In another study, a tenfold acceleration in ice loss was observed across the Himalayas than the average rate in recent decades over the past centuries (Lee et al. 2021). Melting of glaciers also results in drying up of perennial rivers in summer leading to the water scarcity for billions of humans and animals, and food and energy production downstream. See level rise and melting of glaciers feeding the rivers could lead to migration of huge population, creating additional problems. Even when the increase in global temperature rise is limited to 1.5 °C, it generates a global sea-level rise between 1.7 and 3.2 feet by 2100. If it increases to 2 °C, the result could be more catastrophic leading to the submergence of a large number of islands, and flooding and submergence of vast coastal areas, saltwater intrusion

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into surface waters and groundwater, and increased soil erosion. A number of islands of Maldives for example, would get submerged as 80% of its land area is located less than one meter above the sea level. The biodiversity in such islands and coastal areas becomes extinct. China, Vietnam, Fiji, Japan, Indonesia, India and Bangladesh are considered to be the most at risk.

Crop productivity:

Climate change significantly impacts crop productivity by increasing extreme weather such as droughts, floods, heat waves that reduce yields, altering growing seasons, stressing plants, and affecting seed quality, leading to lower food security. These events can lead to substantial crop losses and disruption of farming practices. Besides, global warming intensifies extreme weather events, such as floods, cyclones, and heatwaves, leading to devastating implications on crops. Predominantly, floods pose ill impact of climate change on crop production. They destroy standing crops, wash away fertile topsoil, and promote the spread of diseases, leading to substantial yield losses. Similarly, heatwaves reduce crop productivity, disrupt pollination, and increase water stress. Wheat, rice, and maize are some of the crops affected by climate change. Many studies have indicated that climate change is driving increasing losses in crop productivity (Zhu et al. 2021). Apart from crop yield, climate change is reported to result in the decline of nutritional value of food grains. For example, rising atmospheric CO_2 concentration reduces the amounts of proteins, minerals and vitamins in rice (Zhu et al. 2018). This may be true in other cereal crops also. As rice supplies 25% of all global calories, this would greatly affect the food and nutritional security of predominantly rice growing countries. Climate change would also increase the prevalence of insect pests adding to the yield loss of crops. The prevailing floods and droughts also affect food production significantly. Global warming also affects crop productivity through its impact on pollinators. Climate change contributes significantly to the decline in density and diversity of pollinators (Shivanna 2020).

Climate change impacts on Biodiversity:

One of the most serious consequences of climate change is the loss of biodiversity, as species struggle to adapt to changing temperatures, weather patterns, and habitats.

Climate Change impacts on the Biodiversity of Plants and Animals:

Climate change can impact biodiversity through drought, bushfires, storms, ocean acidification, sea level rise, and global warming. These impacts can lead to changes in the composition of plant and animal communities, and alterations in the timing of life-cycle events such as flowering and migrations. Global warming disrupts these natural patterns (Feeley and Freeman, 2023). Climate change is causing the first extinctions owing to climate, instead of other factors like habitat loss or hunting. To reproduce, plants release many seeds, which spread with help from animals, insects, and the wind. Most seeds die, but some survive and grow. Whether they live or not depends on where they land. Seeds dropped in water or on rocks likely won't survive, but those landing on soil in cooler areas have a better chance of survival as the world warms. Over time, this shift in survival can cause plant species to move to new locations (Feeley and Freeman, 2023).

Climate Change impacts on the Biodiversity of Ecosystems:

Ecosystems are vulnerable to climate change, and increasing global warming causes fundamental and irreversible ecosystem changes. This can turn ecosystems from being carbon sinks into carbon sources and undermine their ability to provide ecosystem services critical for adaptation and sustainable development. For example, climate-related hazards also negatively impact ecosystems and their important role in disaster risk reduction

(Walz et al., 2021).

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Climate change is affecting ecosystems in many ways, including:

- **Species Loss**: Climate change is causing local and global extinctions. For example, the North Atlantic Right Whale is close to extinction owing to climate change and other factors.
- **Ecosystem Shifts**: Climate change is altering the distribution of plants, animals, and viruses, which can lead to the spread of disease and the loss of food and medicine.
- **Invasive Species**: Climate change can make it easier for invasive species to spread. Warmer weather, changing rain patterns, and shifting ecosystems can create new places where invasive species grow, often pushing out native plants and animals.

Climate change can reduce ecosystem services like clean water, food, and timber.

Climate change impacts of Biodiversity Loss on Humans:

Biodiversity loss directly impacts human health if ecosystem services are no longer adequate to meet social needs. Climate change impacts human health directly through extreme heat, flooding, droughts, hurricanes, and rising sea levels, causing injury, illness, or death. Indirect effects include air pollution, shifts in infectious disease patterns, increased waterborne illnesses, and food contamination. It also affects mental health and overall well-being. Changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme events are having adverse impacts on species and ecosystems causing ecosystem loss and degradation, which exacerbates risks to livelihoods, human health, infrastructure, and food systems (IPBES, 2019).There are also large regional differences in the projected impacts of climate change on biodiversity, ecosystems, and nature's contribution to people (IPBES, 2019). These impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems have consequences on ecosystem services that people rely on, therefore, ecosystem degradation can increase poverty and food insecurity, which disproportionally impacts poor communities and indigenous peoples.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while climate change presents an unprecedented challenge to biodiversity, it also offers an opportunity for transformative conservation efforts. By recognizing the interconnectedness of climate and biodiversity, and by taking bold action to address the root causes of environmental degradation, humanity can help safeguard the natural systems that sustain life on Earth.

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Socioeconomic Vulnerabilities and Resilience Strategies of Coastal Fisherfolk: Evidence from Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, India

Gopal Anapana
Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Zoology, Maharajah's College Autonomous, Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh–535 002, India https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4958-8071
Email: gopalzoology@gmail.com | Phone: +91 7893022212

Abstract
Coastal fishing communities form the backbone of regional economies and culture but face persistent social, economic, and environmental challenges. This study examines the fisherfolk of Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, through a mixed-methods approach using household surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. Results reveal high illiteracy, unstable incomes, gender disparities, and severe infrastructure deficits, with most households lacking sanitation and living in kutcha housing. Income strongly influenced sanitation access, while migration reduced income stability. Integrating education, gender equity, and infrastructure within sustainable livelihood and resilience frameworks, the study recommends mobile learning centers, microfinance for women, disaster-resilient housing, and livelihood diversification through aquaculture and ecotourism to strengthen community resilience.

Keywords: Livelihood diversification, Community resilience, Gender disparities, Rural infrastructure. Andhra Pradesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coastal communities, particularly fisherfolk, play a critical role in sustaining regional economies, cultural heritage, and food security. In India, the fisheries sector contributes approximately 1.24% of the national GDP and supports over 14.5 million workers (FAO, 2021). Despite this importance, fishing communities remain among the most vulnerable social groups, confronted by persistent socioeconomic and environmental challenges such as low literacy, income instability, gender inequalities, and limited infrastructure.

The Vizianagaram District of Andhra Pradesh exemplifies these vulnerabilities. With a 28-km coastline and nearly 7,000 active fisherfolks spread across eight villages, the district is heavily dependent on traditional fishing practices. This dependence increases exposure to environmental risks, including cyclones, coastal erosion, and the depletion of marine resources. Moreover, structural issues such as inadequate sanitation facilities (85% of households lacking latrines), poor housing (57% living in kutcha houses), and high illiteracy (61.8%) undermine the resilience of these communities. Gender inequities are particularly stark, with nearly 80% of girls discontinuing education after tenth grade because of early marriages and financial constraints.

1.1 Coastal Vulnerabilities in Context

A substantial body of research has documented the socioeconomic and environmental vulnerabilities of coastal populations in India and elsewhere. Education has consistently been identified as a key determinant of livelihood diversification, yet many coastal households remain excluded from educational opportunities. Priyadarshi, Ojha, and Sharma (2019) reported that low literacy restricts livelihood diversification, whereas Das and Kar (2021) emphasized that gendered barriers further constrain educational attainment. Bhargavi et al. (2020) specifically reported high dropout rates among fisherfolk girls in Andhra Pradesh, reflecting entrenched cultural and economic pressures. This limited access to education reduces the adoption of sustainable fishing practices and weakens the capacity to respond to uncertainty (Yadav et al., 2020).

Equally significant are infrastructure and sanitation deficits. Poor housing, reliance on kutcha structures, and a lack of sanitation facilities perpetuate health risks and increase disaster vulnerability. Earlier studies (Salagrama, 2012; Chakraborty

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& Mallik, 2018) have shown that infrastructural deficits compound socioeconomic marginalization, whereas recent FAO (2021) assessments underscore the urgency of developing climate-resilient infrastructure in fishing villages.

Gender inequality further deepens vulnerability. Women in fishing communities are primarily engaged in postharvest processing and marketing but remain excluded from decision making and financial resources. Studies by Gopal and Edwin (2020) and Nayak and Mishra (2008) highlight that self-help groups (SHGs) provide some financial autonomy but that limited digital literacy and low access to formal credit systems restrict progress. Mehta (2021) noted that emerging digital platforms hold potential, but their adoption remains uneven.

Environmental stressors compound these socioeconomic barriers. Climate-induced risks such as rising sea levels, cyclones, and resource depletion undermine livelihood stability. The FAO (2021) points to declining fish stocks from unsustainable practices, whereas Salim and Rao (2021) emphasize disaster preparedness as a crucial resilience strategy. Innovative approaches, including aquaculture, mangrove restoration, and ecotourism, have shown promise in other coastal contexts (Islam & Bhuiyan, 2022), but their feasibility in regions such as Vizianagaram has not been systematically assessed.

Government interventions, including the Blue Revolution and the Sagarmala Project, aim to modernize fisheries and strengthen infrastructure. However, evidence suggests that these initiatives often fail to reach marginalized fishing villages (Soni, 2017; Sharma, 2021). More recent studies highlight the role of technology such as mobile-based applications in improving outreach, but the effectiveness of such programs remains underexplored in Andhra Pradesh's coastal settings.

1.2 Research Gap and Rationale

Previous studies have examined education, gender, infrastructure, and climate risks in fishing communities, but mostly in isolation, giving only a partial view of vulnerability and resilience. Few have explored how education, gender relations, and livelihood strategies interact. The scope for alternative livelihoods such as aquaculture and ecotourism is largely unstudied in coastal Andhra Pradesh, and village-level evaluations of welfare schemes remain limited.

Vizianagaram District offers a suitable case to understand how socioeconomic, infrastructural, and environmental challenges combine to shape resilience. The effectiveness of government programs and community-led initiatives is poorly documented, and options for livelihood diversification are rarely assessed. This study addresses these gaps by adopting an integrated approach that considers education, gender, infrastructure, environmental pressures, and policy interventions in the district.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

a. Assess income, education, and gender disparities within coastal fishing households.
b. Evaluate infrastructure gaps in sanitation, housing, and access to resources.
c. Identify resilience strategies and potential opportunities for livelihood diversification.
d. Provide actionable insights for inclusive and sustainable policy development.

1.4 Theoretical Orientation

The analysis is framed by the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and the Vulnerability–Resilience Framework (VRF). The SLA emphasizes human, social, and financial capital in shaping livelihoods, while the VRF highlights adaptive

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strategies in response to social, economic, and environmental shocks. Together, these frameworks allow for a multidimensional assessment of how coastal fisherfolk mobilize resources, adapt to pressures, and negotiate structural inequalities.

2. STUDY AREA

The Vizianagaram District, located in the northeastern coastal belt of Andhra Pradesh, spans approximately 4,124 km² with a 28-km coastline along the Bay of Bengal. This coastal zone is ecologically rich, with sandy beaches, estuaries, and mangrove patches, but it is also among the most hazard prone areas in the state. Frequent cyclonic storms such as Cyclone Hudhud in 2014 along with coastal erosion, flooding, and saltwater intrusion repeatedly disrupted livelihoods, damaged infrastructure, and heightened vulnerability. These geographic and climatic features make Vizianagaram an ideal case for examining the nexus between socioeconomic challenges and resilience in fishing communities.

2.1 Demographic and socioeconomic profiles

The district has a population of 1.93 million (Census 2011), of which a substantial portion depends on small scale and traditional fishing. The fisheries sector in Vizianagaram supports 6,993 active fisherfolks, mostly concentrated in the Pusapatirega and Bhogapuram mandals. Field data highlight significant livelihood vulnerabilities:

- **Housing:** Fifty-seven percent of fishing households live in kutcha (temporary) houses, increasing disaster exposure.
- **Sanitation:** 85% lack access to household latrines, leading to unsafe practices and health risks.
- **Income:** 78% earn between ₹15,000-25,000 per month, with heavy dependence on capture fisheries and limited diversification.
- **Education:** A total of 61.8% of the participants were illiterate, and 80% of the girls discontinued education after the 10th standard due to early marriage and financial pressure.

2.2 Selection of Study Villages

This study focuses on eight representative villages, Chintapalli, Pathivada-Barripeta, Puligeddapalem, Tammayyapalem, Thippalavalasa, Pedakondarajupalem, Chinakondarajupalem, and Chepalakancheru. These sites were purposively chosen on the basis of the following rationale:

1. **Geographic Spread:** The eight villages span different parts of the 28-km coastline, capturing variations in exposure to cyclones, erosion, and flooding.
2. **Dependence on Fisheries:** All selected villages have a high proportion of households directly reliant on fishing, making them suitable for livelihood-focused analysis.
3. **Socioeconomic Vulnerability:** Villages are characterized by low income stability, high seasonal migration (87%), and limited access to welfare schemes, reflecting broader district-level challenges.
4. **Policy Relevance:** These villages have been targeted sporadically by state welfare programs (e.g., YSR Matsyakara Bharosa), but outreach and impact remain limited, making them critical for evaluating policy gaps.

2.3 Sampling Justification

A stratified random sampling design was adopted. Villages were stratified according to their proximity to the coast, population size, and infrastructure availability. Within each stratum, households were selected via proportional random sampling to ensure fair representation across demographic and socioeconomic categories. Additional purposive sampling

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was used to include specific vulnerable groups such as fisherwomen in self-help groups (SHGs), migrant workers, and boat owners.

This approach ensures that the eight villages serve as both representatives of the larger coastal population in Vizianagaram and examples of localized challenges.

2.4 Environmental Risks and Adaptation Needs

The surveyed villages face recurring hazards such as saltwater intrusion, declining fish stocks, and resource conflicts due to the overcrowding of fishing zones. The absence of disaster resilient infrastructure, including cyclone shelters and early warning systems, further compounds risks. These conditions highlight the urgent need for diverse livelihood strategies such as aquaculture, ecotourism, and mangrove restoration to strengthen resilience.

2.5 Map of Vizianagaram District

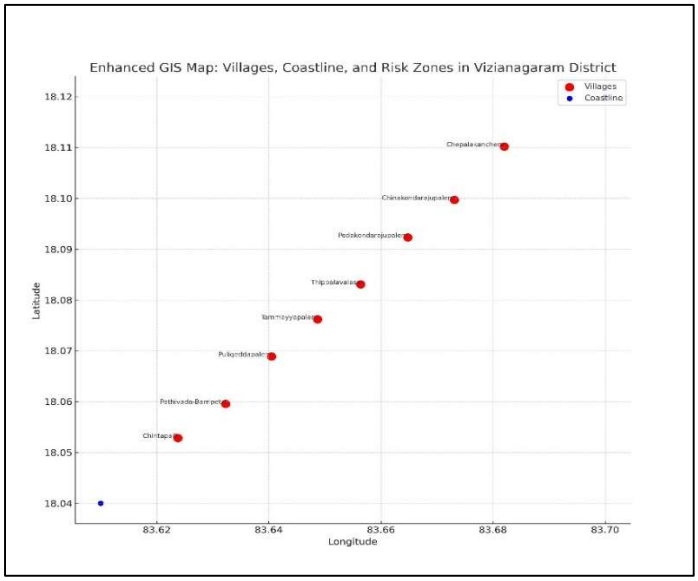


Figure 1 illustrates the geographic extent of the district, highlighting the eight surveyed villages, the 28-km coastal stretch, and the identified high risk zones.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to assess the socioeconomic vulnerabilities, infrastructure deficits, and resilience strategies of fisherfolk in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, India. This design enabled the triangulation of findings, combining statistical evidence with contextual insights. In our earlier study, examined the impact of socio-economic fluctuations on fishermen and their families in the coastal areas of Vizianagaram district, Andhra Pradesh, India (Author et al., 2023). That investigation, conducted across eight villages from January 2022 to February 2023, was published in the seminar proceedings *Community Health and Sustainable Development Goals* (ISBN: 978-93-5813-217-5). Building upon this foundation, the present study extends our previous work by

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addressing the identified gaps through more in-depth interviews and repeated field visits conducted between July 2024 and August 2025.

3.1 Study Design

A cross-sectional mixed-methods design was used.

- **Quantitative component:** Structured household surveys capture demographic patterns, income, education, housing, sanitation, and financial behavior.
- **Qualitative component:** In-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) explored cultural norms, gender roles, and perceptions of resilience strategies.

This dual approach enhances validity by addressing both measurable indicators and community narratives.

3.2 Study Area and Population

The research was conducted in eight fishing villages along the 28-km coastline of Vizianagaram District, which is situated in the Pusapatirega and Bhogapuram mandals. These villages were selected because they represent the following:

1. **High vulnerability to coastal hazards** (cyclones, erosion, flooding).
2. **Heavy dependence on fisheries** as the primary livelihood.
3. **Socioeconomic marginalization**, including high illiteracy, sanitation deficits, and seasonal migration.

Together, they provide a representative microcosm of coastal challenges in Andhra Pradesh.

The target population included approximately 1,350 fishing households, capturing variation across family size, income levels, and occupational roles.

3.3 Sampling methods

A multistage sampling strategy was adopted:

- **Stratified random sampling:** Villages were stratified by proximity to the coast, population size, and infrastructure quality.
- **Proportional household sampling:** Within each village, households were selected proportionally to ensure balanced representation.
- **Purposive sampling:** Subgroups such as women in self-help groups (SHGs), seasonal migrants, and boat owners were intentionally included to capture marginalized perspectives.

Sample size determination: Using Cochran's formula with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the minimum required sample was 384 households. To increase the statistical power and permit subgroup analysis, the sample was expanded to 1,350 households.

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3.4 Data collection

- **Quantitative survey:** A structured questionnaire (previously tested, Cronbach's alpha = 0.82) collected data on demographics, income, housing, sanitation, and financial practices.
- **Qualitative methods:**
  - **In-depth interviews (n=50):** Conducted with fisherwomen, community leaders, and NGO representatives.
  - **Focus Group Discussions (n=8):** Conducted separately with men and women to elicit perspectives on gender roles, livelihood aspirations, and disaster resilience.
  - **Observational data:** Field visits documented housing, sanitation practices, and fishing operations.

3.5 Data validation

- **Pretesting:** Piloted with 30 respondents to refine clarity and reliability.
- **Triangulation:** Cross-verification across survey, interview, and observation data.
- **Reliability:** Internal consistency was confirmed (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82).
- **Bias mitigation:** Stratification minimized overrepresentation, whereas purposive sampling ensured the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

3.6 Data analysis

- **Descriptive statistics:** Means, medians, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated for key variables.
- **Inferential statistics:**
  - **Chi-square tests** were used to examine the relationships between categorical variables (e.g., gender and financial decision-making).
  - **Correlation analysis** was used to assess associations (e.g., income vs. sanitation access, migration vs. income stability).
  - **Regression models:**
    - Logistic regression for binary outcomes (e.g., sanitation access).
    - Linear regression for continuous outcomes (e.g., household income).
- **Structural equation modelling (SEM):** complex relationships, including pathways from education → income → sanitation access, and migration → household stability → resilience, are tested. Model fit indices (CFI > 0.90, RMSEA < 0.08) confirmed adequacy.
- **Qualitative analysis:** Thematic coding (NVivo software) identified recurring narratives on gender inequity, migration pressures, and adaptation strategies.

3.7 Limitations

- The cross-sectional design precluded the measurement of long-term trends.
- Reliance on self-reported data introduced potential social desirability bias.
- The purposive oversampling of vulnerable groups may slightly limit generalizability, although it provides critical insights into marginalized perspectives.

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4. RESULTS

This section presents the demographic, socioeconomic, infrastructural, and resilience-related characteristics of fisherfolk households in Vizianagaram District. The findings are organized from descriptive statistics to regression and correlation results.

4.1 Demographic characteristics

Table 2 summarizes the demographic profile of the 1,350 surveyed households. Men dominate direct fishing operations (81.5%), whereas women primarily engage in postharvest roles. The workforce is predominantly middle-aged (58% between 30-50 years), with declining participation from younger cohorts (24% aged 17-30), indicating waning interest among youth in fishing. A majority of the respondents were married (77%), reflecting early marriages linked to cultural and economic pressures. Hindus constitute 87% of the sample, whereas Christians represent 13%.

4.2 Socioeconomic characteristics

4.2.1 Education

Illiteracy was widespread (61.8%), and only 3.3% attained higher education (graduation or above). Gender disparities were notable, as nearly 80% of the girls dropped out after the tenth grade. (Table 1, Figure 2)

4.2.2 Income and Occupation

Most households (78%) earned between ₹15,000-25,000 per month, whereas 16% earned less than ₹15,000. Fishing remained the dominant occupation (87%), with little diversification into business (11.2%) or wage labor (1.8%). Household structures were fragile: in 84% of the cases, a single earner supported the family, increasing economic vulnerability. (Figure 3,6)

4.3 Infrastructure and Sanitation

The patient's structural deficits were severe (Table 2). More than half of the households (57%) resided in kutcha houses vulnerable to cyclones and floods. Sanitation facilities were critically lacking: 85% of households reported no access to latrines, resulting in widespread open defecation. A strong positive correlation was observed between income and sanitation access ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that household financial status is a key determinant of sanitation infrastructure. (Figure 6)

4.4 Financial Practices and Asset Ownership

Informal credit sources dominated: 54.8% of households relied on loans from fish suppliers, whereas only 7.6% accessed formal bank credit. Boat ownership was reported by 62% of households, whereas 27% engaged in shared ownership, often creating disputes over use and income sharing.

4.5 Migration and livelihoods

Seasonal migration was common, reported by 87% of households, and was typically driven by declining fish stocks and monsoon disruptions. Migration was negatively correlated with income stability ($r = –0.54$, $p < 0.05$). Importantly, 68.7%

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of parents expressed that they did not wish their children to pursue fishing as a livelihood, citing poor returns and future insecurity. (Figure 4,6)

4.6 Regression and correlation analysis

The regression models identified key predictors of household outcomes (Table 3).

- **Logistic regression on sanitation access** revealed that income significantly increased the likelihood of having sanitation facilities ($p < 0.05$), whereas education had no significant effect ($p = 0.701$). This finding indicates that financial capacity, rather than awareness, drives infrastructure improvements.
- **Linear regression on household income** revealed that boat ownership significantly increased income ($B = 2000$, $p = 0.003$), whereas a larger family size reduced income ($B = –800$, $p = 0.015$). Education again had no significant effect, highlighting structural barriers to translating literacy into earnings.

The correlation results further confirmed these trends:

- Education and income were weakly and insignificantly correlated ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.701$).
- Income and sanitation access were strongly correlated ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$).
- Migration and income stability were negatively correlated ($r = –0.54$, $p < 0.05$).

4.7 Gender roles in livelihoods

Table 4 demonstrates a highly gendered division of labor. Men exclusively undertook fishing operations, whereas women dominated postharvest processing (85%) and household management (95%). Despite their critical role, women have limited recognition or decision-making power in household or community financial matters. (Figure 5)

Table 1. Demographic and socioeconomic profiles of fisherfolk households in Vizianagaram District (n = 1350).

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	1100	81.5
	Female	250	18.5
Age Group	17–30 years	324	24.0
	30–50 years	783	58.0
	>50 years	243	18.0
Marital Status	Married	1039	77.0
	Unmarried	311	23.0
Education	Illiterate	834	61.8
	Primary school	273	20.2
	Secondary school	198	14.7
	Graduation & above	45	3.3

Note: Most of the respondents were male (81.5%) and middle-aged (58%). Illiteracy (61.8%) and early marriages (77% married) indicate persistent vulnerabilities. Source: Field survey conducted in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, 2024-25. Abbreviations: SHG = Self-Help Group; DWCRA = Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas. Values: Percentages are based on household respondents (n = 1350).

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Table 2. Housing, sanitation, and water infrastructure among fisherfolk households (n = 1350).

Parameter	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Housing type	Kutcha (temporary)	769	57.0
	Pucca (permanent)	581	43.0
Sanitation	Latrine available	203	15.0
	No latrine	1147	85.0
Water source	Municipal supply	648	48.0
	Hand pumps/borewells	702	52.0

Note: 85% of households lacked latrines, and 57% lived in kutcha houses, increasing vulnerability to health risks and natural disasters.

Table 3. Regression analysis of predictors influencing household income.

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	p value	Interpretation
Education level	1500	750	0.701	No significant effect on income
Boat ownership	2000	500	0.003	Positive impact on income
Family size	-800	200	0.015	Larger families reduce income
Infrastructure access	2500	650	0.001	Strong link between housing & income

Note: Boat ownership and infrastructure access significantly improved income, whereas a larger family size reduced stability. Education level had no significant effect.

Table 4. Gender participation in fishing-related livelihood activities.

Activity	Men (%)	Women (%)
Fishing operations	100	0
Postharvest processing	0	85
Marketing & sales	15	85
Household management	5	95

Note: Women dominate postharvest processing (85%) and household management (95%), yet their contributions remain undervalued, leading to economic dependence on men.

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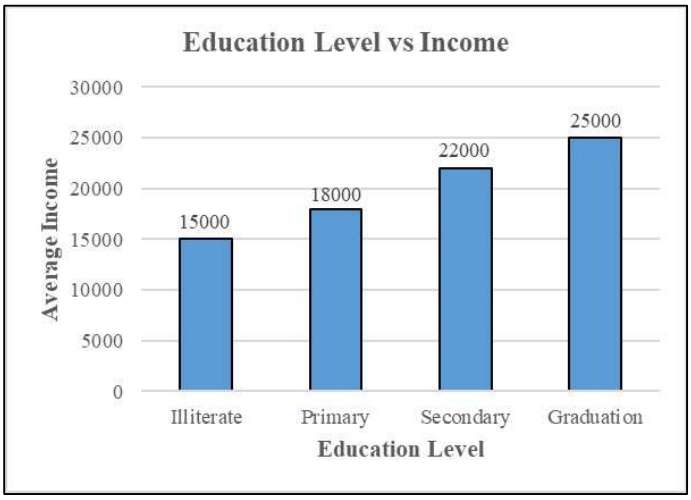


Figure 2. Relationship between education level and income stability among fisherfolk households in Vizianagaram District. No significant correlation was observed (r = 0.15, p = 0.701), underscoring structural barriers to income mobility. Source: Field survey conducted in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, 2024-25. Abbreviations: SHG = Self-Help Group; DWCRA = Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas. Notes: Income values are monthly household averages for Indian rupees (₹). Migration rates represent the percentage of households reporting at least one member migrating seasonally.

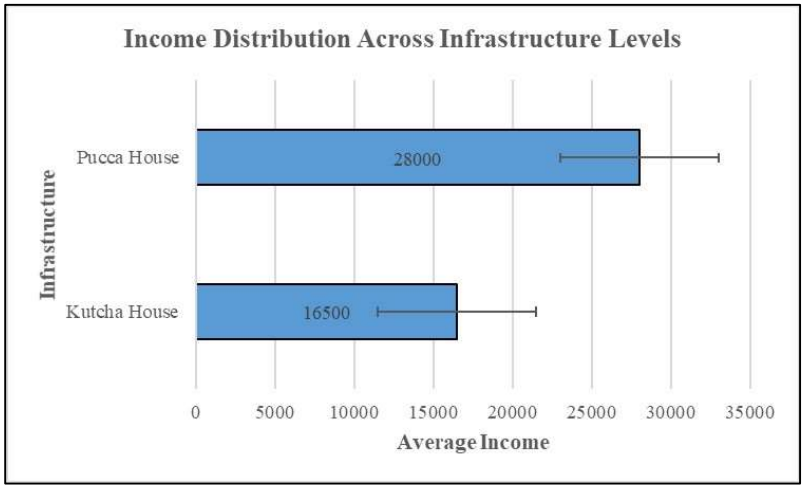


Figure 3. Monthly household income distribution by housing type. Residents of pucca houses earned significantly higher average incomes (₹28,000) than did kutcha house residents (₹16,500), highlighting the link between infrastructure and economic security.

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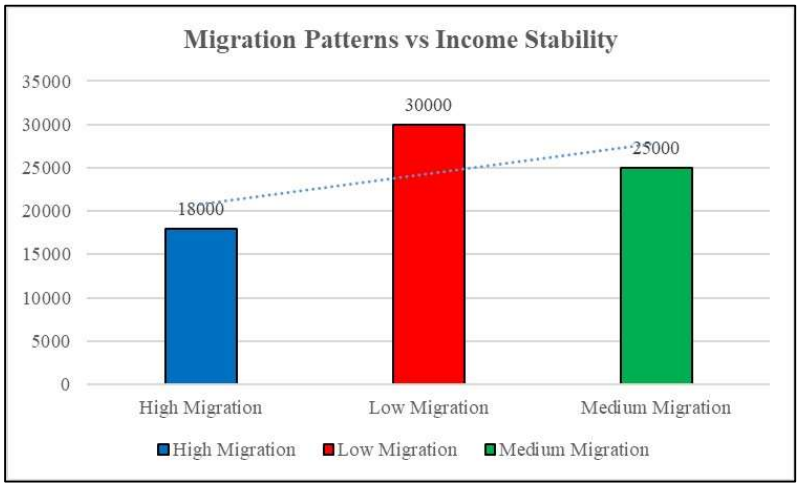


Figure 4. Seasonal migration patterns and their impact on income stability. A negative correlation ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.05$) indicates that households with higher migration rates face greater income instability.

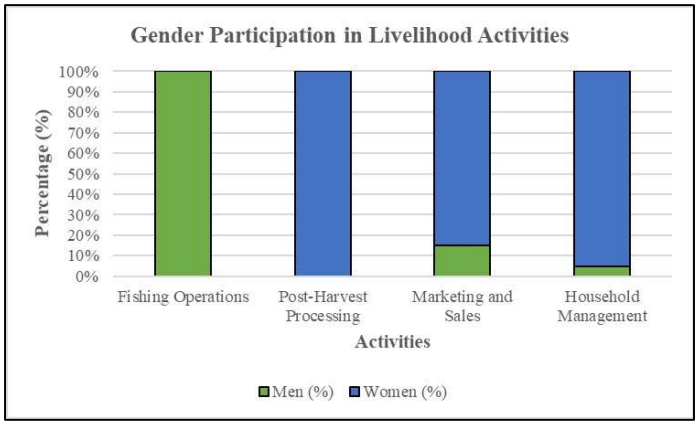


Figure 5. Gender roles in fishing-related livelihood activities. Women dominated postharvest processing (85%) and household management (95%) but were excluded from primary fishing operations, reflecting gendered economic dependence.

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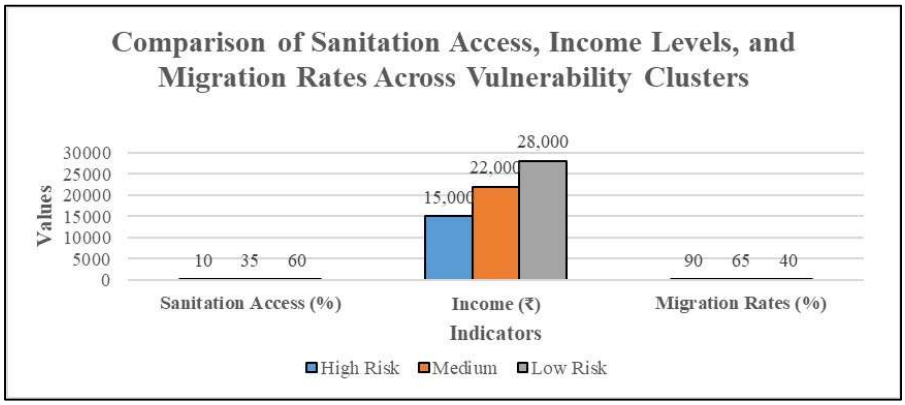


Figure 6. Vulnerability clusters in fisherfolk communities. High-risk zones are characterized by low income levels, poor sanitation access, and high migration rates, compounding livelihoods and health vulnerabilities.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Socioeconomic Vulnerabilities and Education

The study confirms that illiteracy (61.8%) and high dropout rates among girls (80%) remain critical barriers to resilience in fishing households. While education is often assumed to improve income opportunities, regression analysis revealed no significant relationship between education and income ($p = 0.701$). This finding indicates that structural barriers such as limited market access, skill diversification, and dependence on traditional fishing constrain mobility regardless of educational attainment. Previous studies (Bhargavi et al., 2020; Das & Kar, 2021) similarly note that education alone cannot ensure livelihood security without complementary vocational and market linkages.

5.2 Infrastructure Deficits and health risks

The findings reveal persistent infrastructural gaps, with 85% of households lacking latrines and 57% residing in kutcha houses. These deficits increase disaster exposure and public health risks, echoing earlier reports by Salagrama (2012) and Chakraborty & Mallik (2018). The observed correlation between income and sanitation access ($r = 0.68$) further underscores how financial resources, rather than awareness alone, determine basic infrastructure availability.

5.3 Gender Inequalities and Financial Exclusion

Although women play dominant roles in postharvest processing (85%) and household management (95%), their economic contributions remain undervalued. Dependence on informal credit (54.8%) perpetuates debt cycles and restricts women's financial autonomy. Similar trends are noted by Gopal & Edwin (2020), highlighting the need for targeted interventions in financial literacy, digital banking, and microenterprise support for women.

5.4 Climate Vulnerabilities and Migration

Environmental risks including cyclones, flooding, and declining fish stocks exacerbate instability, leading to high seasonal migration (87%). This negatively impacts income stability ($r = –0.54$, $p < 0.05$), which is consistent with findings of Salim et al. (2021) and FAO (2021). However, community resilience remains weak due to the absence of insurance coverage and

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disaster-prepared infrastructure. Adaptations such as mangrove restoration, ecotourism, and alternative livelihood promotion could mitigate these vulnerabilities if supported through policy and institutional frameworks.

5.5 Policy implications

On the basis of these findings, four areas of intervention are most urgent:

1. **Education and skills** – Mobile learning centers and conditional cash transfers can reduce dropout rates, whereas vocational training in aquaculture, fish processing, and ecotourism can expand livelihood options.
2. **Infrastructure** – Subsidized disaster-resilient housing and community-led sanitation projects, supported by schemes such as Sagarmala and Swachh Bharat, are needed.
3. **Gender Inclusion** – Strengthening women's self-help groups (SHGs) with financial literacy programs, microfinance access, and entrepreneurial mentoring can improve economic independence.
4. **Climate Resilience** – Introducing accessible fishing insurance, early warning systems, and eco-restoration projects (mangroves, artificial reefs) will enhance long-term sustainability.

5.6 Limitations

- The study was limited to Vizianagaram and may not represent all coastal districts.
- The cross-sectional design restricts longitudinal insights into changing vulnerabilities.
- Reliance on self-reported data introduces potential bias.
- Gendered aspects of fishing were only partially explored, and health outcomes were not directly measured.

5.7 Future Research

- Longitudinal studies assessing the long-term impact of educational and livelihood interventions.
- Comparative studies across coastal districts to identify region-specific vulnerabilities.
- Application of geospatial tools and mobile technologies for risk mapping and market access.
- Evaluation of women-centered financial interventions through randomized pilot projects.

6. CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive assessment of the socioeconomic vulnerabilities and resilience strategies of coastal fishermen in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh. The findings reveal persistent challenges, including low literacy rates, inadequate sanitation and housing, limited financial inclusion, and heightened exposure to climate risks. Despite their significant role in postharvest processing and household management, women remain marginalized in decision-making and economic independence.

The evidence suggests that education alone is insufficient to improve livelihoods without parallel investments in vocational training, financial inclusion, and infrastructure. Policies that integrate disaster-resilient housing, community-led sanitation, microfinance for women, and climate-adaptive livelihood models hold the greatest potential to strengthen resilience.

By aligning local interventions with national schemes and global sustainability frameworks, this study highlights pathways toward inclusive and climate resilient coastal development. Future research should adopt longitudinal and comparative approaches to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of such interventions and to develop scalable, community driven solutions for fisherfolk across India's coastal regions.

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Role of Koringa Mangroves in Blue Carbon Sequestration and Climate Mitigation.

Dr. Matala Bhupathi Rayalu[1], Yaragorla Gnanaprasunamba[2], Dr Vankamaddi Madan Mohan Rao[3]

[1]Lecturer, Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Kovvur, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[2]Lecturer, Department of Botany, YVNR Government Degree College, Kaikaluru, Eluru District, Andhra Pradesh, India.
[3]Lecturer, Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Chintalapudi, Eluru District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

1. ABSTRACT: Mangrove ecosystems are among the world's most carbon-dense coastal systems and play a crucial role in sequestering and storing "blue carbon"—organic carbon fixed by marine and coastal ecosystems. The Coringa (locally Koringa) mangrove complex in the Godavari delta (Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, Andhra Pradesh, India) is one of the largest mangrove forests in India and stores substantial carbon in biomass and in sediments. This paper synthesizes recent field assessments, regional monitoring, and national blue carbon reviews to evaluate the carbon stocks, sequestration rates, and mitigation potential of the Koringa mangroves. We compare sediment carbon stocks measured at Coringa with those from other Indian mangrove sites (Bapatla, Thane Creek) and the Sundarbans, discuss drivers of carbon accumulation (species composition, hydrology, sedimentation), assess threats and management challenges (land-use conversion, aquaculture, pollution), and explore the potential role for national blue carbon accounting and carbon finance mechanisms. Using published sediment and biomass carbon values, we estimate the local and regional mitigation potential and present a practical monitoring and restoration framework for enhancing blue carbon in Koringa. Results show that Coringa's sedimentary carbon stock (mean ~158 Mg C ha^{-1}) compares favorably with many Indian sites, though it is lower than the highest global and Sundarbans values (≈300–370 Mg C ha^{-1} in some studies). Conservation and strategic restoration in Coringa can therefore yield measurable greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits while delivering co-benefits for biodiversity and coastal resilience. We conclude by offering management recommendations, monitoring priorities, and policy pathways to integrate Koringa mangroves into India's blue carbon strategies and climate mitigation planning.

2. KEYWORDS: Blue carbon; Coringa (Koringa) mangroves; sediment carbon; Godavari delta; mangrove conservation; carbon sequestration; India.

3. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

Mangrove ecosystems store significant amounts of carbon in both living biomass and long-lived sedimentary pools, cumulatively termed "blue carbon" (Alongi, 2020). Although mangroves cover a small fraction of the Earth's surface, they store disproportionately large amounts of carbon per unit area because of high above- and below-ground biomass and because tidal sediments bury organic matter over long timescales (Alongi, 2020; Zeng *et al.*, 2021). India's mangroves, including those in the Godavari delta (Coringa/Koringa), are regionally important carbon reservoirs and provide multiple ecosystem services (Forest Survey of India [FSI], national mangrove carbon synthesis; Ramesh, 2021). Recent national reviews and field studies emphasize the potential for blue carbon to contribute to climate mitigation if conserved and managed properly (Antony, 2025; CIFOR-ICRAF monitoring programs).

1.2 Rationale and Significance

Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) spans roughly 235 km^2 of protected mangrove in the lower Godavari estuary and is among India's largest mangrove tracts (CIFOR-ICRAF, monitoring report). Local studies indicate substantial sedimentary carbon stocks for Coringa (~158 Mg C ha^{-1} mean sedimentary carbon down to standard sampling depths), underscoring its role in regional carbon budgets (Rao, 2022). Quantifying and synthesizing the blue carbon potential of Coringa is useful for: (1) national carbon accounting, (2) designing mangrove conservation and restoration strategies that maximize climate

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mitigation, and (3) exploring carbon finance and nature-based solution mechanisms. This study consolidates available measurements and monitoring efforts and situates Coringa within the broader Indian and global blue carbon context.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

Primary objective: to evaluate the magnitude, drivers, and mitigation potential of blue carbon stored in the Koringa (Coringa) mangroves and to identify management actions to enhance carbon sequestration while delivering biodiversity and livelihood co-benefits.

Specific research questions:

1. What are the contemporary carbon stocks (sediment and biomass) reported for Coringa mangroves, and how do they compare with other Indian mangrove sites?
2. What environmental and ecological drivers control carbon accumulation in Coringa?
3. What are the main threats to blue carbon in the Godavari mangroves, and what management interventions can maximize mitigation and co-benefits?
4. How can Coringa be integrated into national blue carbon accounting and carbon finance schemes?

1.4 Scope and Limitations

This paper synthesizes peer-reviewed studies, monitoring reports, and regional assessments published up to November 2025. It draws primarily on published sediment and biomass carbon measurements, regional monitoring summaries, and national reviews. Limitations include heterogeneity in sampling depths and methodologies across studies, incomplete long-term sequestration rate data for Coringa specifically, and some reliance on gray literature for local governance and restoration program descriptions. Where possible, methodological differences are noted, and comparable metrics (e.g., Mg C ha^{-1} soil to 1 m, aboveground biomass C) are used to harmonize comparisons.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Historical Background

Research on mangrove carbon has grown rapidly since the early 2000s, when scientists began to recognize the importance of sedimentary carbon pools (Duarte *et al.*, foundational blue carbon work; Alongi, 2020). Globally, mangrove soils often store hundreds of Mg C ha^{-1} in the top 1 m of sediments, with even higher stocks at some tropical sites (Jardine & Siikamäki; Panda, 2025). India has invested in systematic mangrove inventories and carbon assessments (FSI), and regionally focused field studies have provided site-level carbon stock estimates (e.g., Coringa assessments, Sundarbans research).

4.2 Current Research Trends (2010–2025)

Recent priorities in mangrove blue carbon research include: (a) better soil carbon measurement protocols and depth standardization (Pham, 2021); (b) integration of remote sensing and machine learning to map mangrove biomass and change (various studies 2022–2025); (c) development of robust MRV (measurement, reporting, verification) frameworks for blue carbon projects (Zeng *et al.*, 2021; Farahmand, 2025); and (d) policy and market mechanisms exploring carbon credits for coastal ecosystems (Nature commentary 2025; Antony, 2025). In India specifically, several studies and program pilots (CIFOR-ICRAF monitoring, state restoration initiatives) have focused on Coringa and other Andhra Pradesh sites to link local conservation with national blue carbon inventories.

4.3 Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Blue carbon frameworks position mangroves as long-term carbon sinks through two main mechanisms: (1) biomass carbon storage in above- and below-ground living tissues, and (2) long-term burial of organic carbon in anoxic tidal sediments (Alongi, 2020). The sequestration rate and permanence depend on sedimentation dynamics, tidal flushing, hydrology, species composition, and disturbance regimes (Zeng *et al.*, 2021). For policy and carbon financing, MRV frameworks must quantify baseline stocks, detect changes reliably, and estimate emissions avoided through conservation or restoration (Pham, 2021; Farahmand, 2025).

4.4 Critical Evaluation of Existing Studies

Site studies show substantial variability in reported carbon stocks due to sampling depth, local geomorphology, and species composition. For example, some Indian sites report sedimentary carbon values in the range 120–370 Mg C ha^{-1} depending

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on location and sampling depth (Rao, 2022; Panda, 2025). Differences in methods (e.g., sample depth to 30 cm vs. 1 m) can bias comparisons; standardized reporting to 1 m depth is now recommended (Pham, 2021). Also, while many studies report large per-hectare carbon stocks, translating these to national inventories requires conservative approaches to avoid over-estimation.

4.5 Research Gap

Despite multiple Coringa site studies, there remains a need for standardized long-term monitoring of sediment accretion rates and decomposition dynamics to estimate net sequestration rates (Mg C ha^{-1} yr^{-1}), not just standing stock. Additionally, socio-economic assessments linking blue carbon finance to local community incentives in Coringa are limited, though some valuation work exists (Ramesh, 2021). This paper aims to synthesize existing stock data, identify drivers, and recommend a monitoring + policy pathway to fill these gaps.

5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

5.1 Study Design

This is a synthesis and analytic review combining: (a) site-level published carbon stock measurements from Coringa (Rao, 2022), (b) regional blue carbon modeling studies (Bapatla, 2025), (c) national review reports (FSI), (d) monitoring program reports (CIFOR-ICRAF), and (e) comparative literature from similar Indian mangrove systems (Sundarbans, Thane Creek). Comparative tabulation was used to harmonize sediment carbon stocks to common units (Mg C ha^{-1}) and sampling depths (where reported). A small comparative dataset was created for visualization and basic comparison across sites (Table 1, Figure 1). See data sources cited in Results and References.

5.2 Data Sources and Inclusion Criteria

Included studies met at least one of the following: (1) measured sediment (soil) carbon stocks in mangrove sediments for Coringa or for comparison sites, (2) provided clear sampling depth and bulk density data enabling conversion to Mg C ha^{-1}, or (3) presented regional carbon stock summaries in peer-reviewed literature or credible institutional reports (FSI, CIFOR-ICRAF). Studies not reporting sampling depth or units were excluded from numeric comparisons but were used qualitatively.

5.3 Materials and Instruments (for cited field studies)

Field studies cited used standard protocols for mangrove sediment coring, bulk density measurement, and organic carbon percent determination (loss-on-ignition or elemental analysis) as reported in each source (see Rao, 2022; Pham, 2021 for methodological references). Remote sensing and GIS mapping referenced used Landsat/Sentinel imagery and selected machine learning approaches in recent mapping studies (2022–2025 reviews).

5.4 Data Analysis

Comparative statistics were descriptive (mean, range). Where possible, sedimentary carbon stocks were harmonized to standard units (Mg C ha^{-1} to 1 m) using reported bulk density and percent organic carbon. A simple comparative bar chart (Figure 1) was produced to visualize sediment carbon differences across selected Indian sites (Coringa, Bapatla, Sundarbans, Thane Creek). The plot and table use values directly reported in cited studies (see Table 1 sources). For robust MRV recommendations, we discuss methods (surface elevation tables, sediment traps, repeated coring) consistent with the literature (Pham, 2021; CIFOR-ICRAF monitoring guidance).

6. RESULTS

6.1 Site description: Coringa (Koringa) mangroves

Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) is a protected mangrove complex at the mouth of the Godavari River near Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. CWS covers approximately 235 km^2 of protected area and supports 16 true mangrove and 19 associated plant species, abundant fishery resources, and rich birdlife (CIFOR-ICRAF, sanctuary summaries; RoundGlass field guide). Recent monitoring initiatives have emphasized Coringa's role in carbon sequestration and coastal protection.

6.2 Carbon stocks: Coringa and comparative sites

Multiple assessments have estimated sedimentary carbon stocks in Coringa sediments. Rao (2022) reports a mean sedimentary carbon stock (SCS) for Coringa of approximately **158 ± 32.6 Mg C ha^{-1}** (reported to the sampling depth used

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in that study), with dry bulk density (DBD) values and nitrogen concentrations reported supporting that estimate. When compared to other Indian sites, Coringa's SCS is higher than some localized sites (e.g., Thane Creek; Singh, 2023) and lower than the highest site averages recorded in the Sundarbans and some Andaman sites (which report soil stocks on the order of ~300–370 Mg C ha^{-1} in some zones) (see comparative Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1. Comparative sediment carbon stocks (Mg C ha^{-1}) for selected Indian mangrove sites

Mangrove Site	State / Region	Sediment Carbon Stock (Mg C ha^{-1})	Sampling Depth Reported	Reference
Coringa (Koringa) Mangroves	Andhra Pradesh (Godavari Delta)	158.0 ± 32.6	0–30 cm (extrapolated in some analyses)	Rao *et al.* (2022)
Bapatla Mangroves	Andhra Pradesh	122.86	0–30 cm	Blue Carbon Modelling Study (2025)
Sundarbans Mangroves	India & Bangladesh	336–369	0–100 cm	Panda *et al.* (2025); multiple site studies
Thane Creek Mangroves	Maharashtra (Mumbai)	40.94	0–30 cm	Singh *et al.* (2023)

(Sources: Rao 2022; Bapatla modelling 2025; Panda 2025; Singh 2023.)

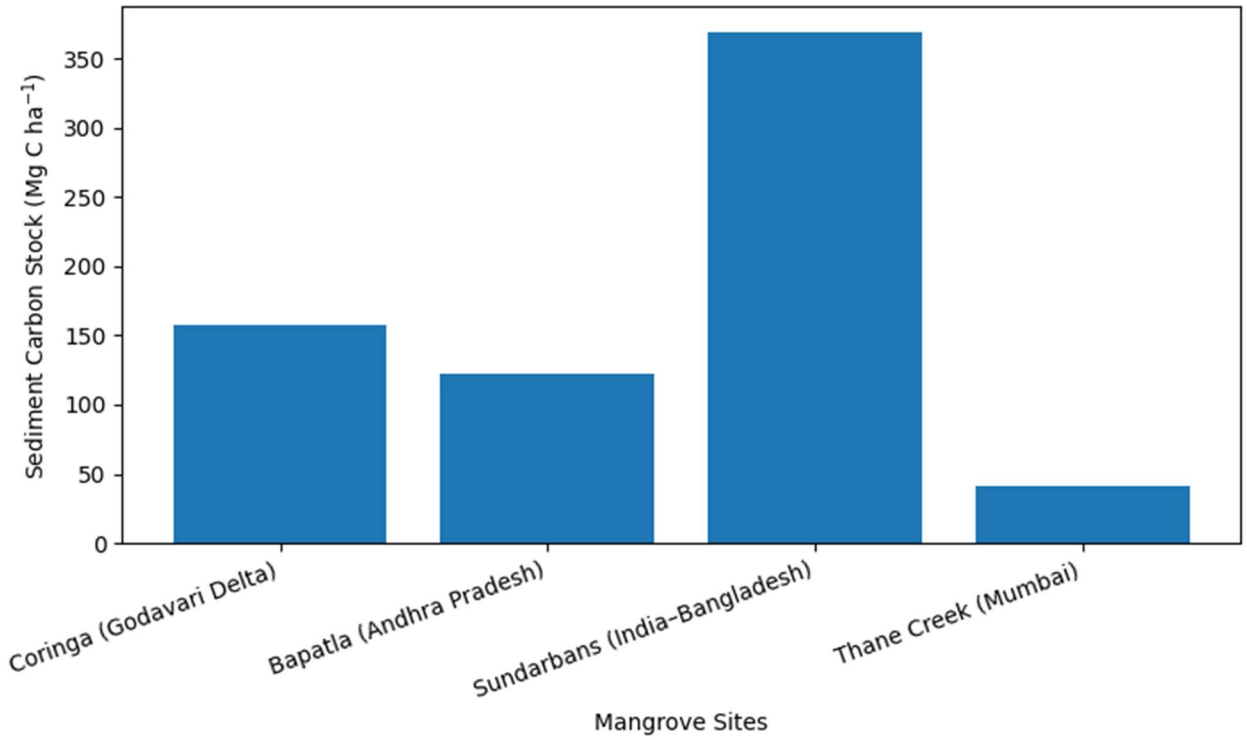


Figure 1. Comparative sediment carbon stocks (Mg C ha^{-1}) for selected Indian mangrove sites

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6.3 Spatial and ecological drivers of carbon patterns in Coringa

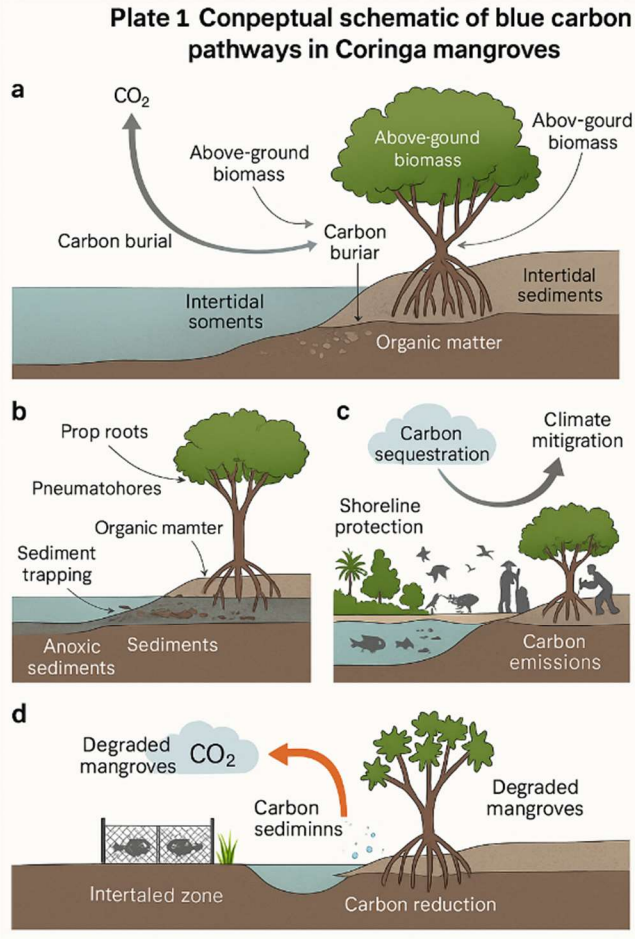
Factors influencing carbon accumulation in Coringa include:

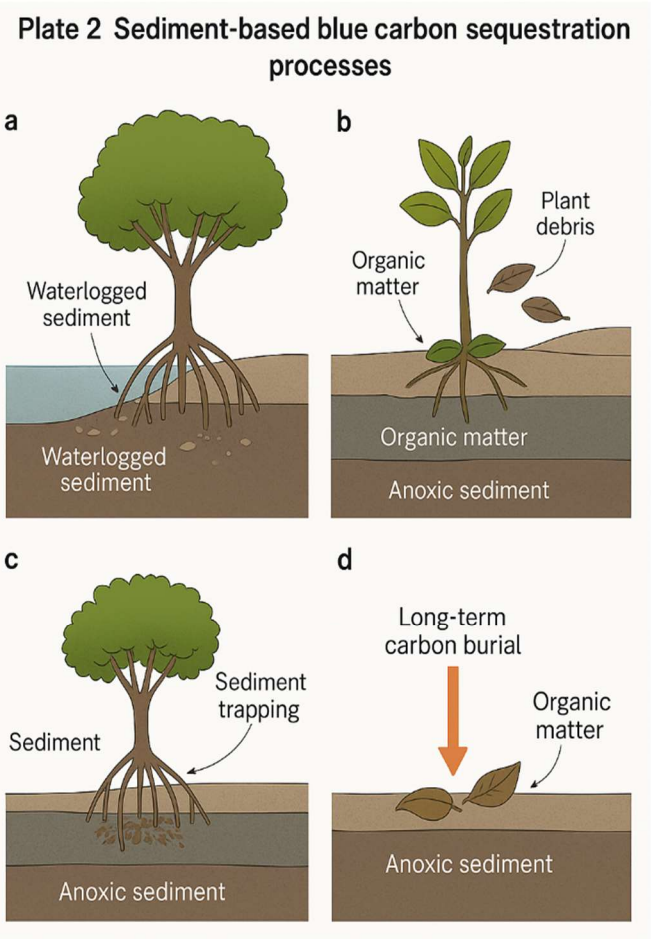
- **Sediment dynamics and accretion:** tidal sedimentation rates and the Godavari's sediment load influence burial of organic matter. High sedimentation can increase burial and reduce remineralization, enhancing long-term carbon storage (Alongi, 2020; Pham, 2021).
- **Vegetation composition and structure:** species such as Avicennia spp., Rhizophora spp., and Excoecaria agallocha play roles in biomass carbon; root structure and litter inputs influence belowground carbon deposition. Coringa's reported diversity (16 true mangrove species) supports multiple carbon pathways.
- **Hydrology and salinity gradients:** local salinity regimes and the presence of distributary channels (Gautami/ Vasishta) create microhabitats with differing decomposition and sedimentation, influencing soil carbon storage (Srivastava *et al.*, palynology and sediment studies).

6.4 Co-benefits: biodiversity and coastal protection

Coringa supports important biodiversity (bird and fish species, mammals such as fishing cats) and provides shoreline protection, storm buffering, fisheries nursery habitats—co-benefits that complement blue carbon values (CIFOR-ICRAF; Ramesh, 2021). These co-benefits strengthen the case for conserving Coringa as a nature-based climate solution.

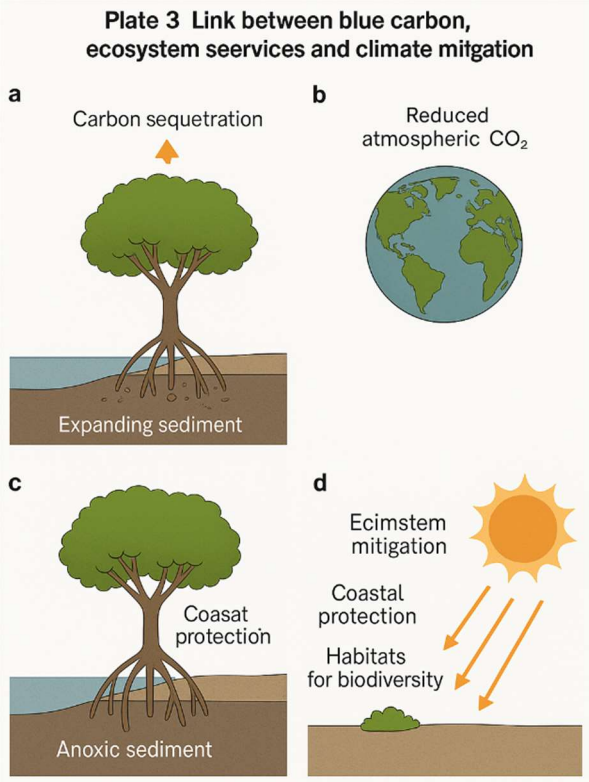
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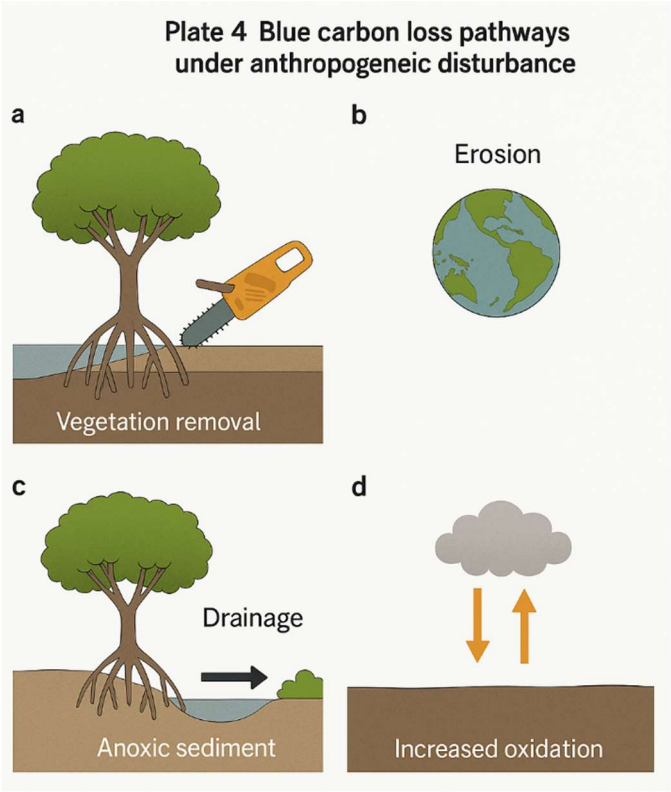




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8. DISCUSSION

8.1 Interpretation of carbon stock comparisons

The Coringa mangroves' sediment carbon stock (~158 Mg C ha^{-1}; Rao, 2022) is consistent with many productive tropical mangroves but is lower than peak values reported for the Sundarbans and some Andaman sites where local geomorphology and hydrology favor deep organic matter accumulation (Panda, 2025; Sundarbans studies). Methodological differences (sampling depths, bulk density measurement) account for some variation; therefore, direct comparisons warrant caution. Nonetheless, Coringa's standing carbon stock is large enough to justify both conservation and targeted restoration to increase long-term sequestration and emission avoidance potential.

8.2 Implications for climate mitigation and policy

At per-hectare scales, preserving existing Coringa mangroves avoids CO_2 emissions associated with mangrove loss (conversion to aquaculture or agriculture) and maintains long-term burial in sediments. Studies suggest that only a subset of global mangroves will be financially viable for blue carbon markets (Zeng *et al.*, 2021), but national programs and public finance can support broader conservation. India's national inventories and state restoration programs are increasingly recognizing blue carbon's role, and pilot schemes in Andhra Pradesh (including monitoring and village-level participation) provide feasible pathways for Coringa to contribute to India's mitigation targets.

8.3 Drivers of uncertainty and limitations

Uncertainties arise from variable sampling depths, inconsistency in measurement protocols across studies, and limited long-term sequestration rate data for Coringa. While standing stocks (Mg C ha^{-1}) are often reported, fewer studies measure *accretion rates* (mm yr^{-1}) and *net sequestration* (Mg C ha^{-1} yr^{-1}), which are critical for carbon accounting. Moreover, local anthropogenic pressures (mangrove clearance, pollution from aquaculture) can rapidly convert stored carbon to CO_2 unless governance safeguards are in place (satellite evidence of local clearance events in nearby areas).

8.4 Pathways for enhancing blue carbon in Coringa

Key actions to enhance Coringa's blue carbon role include:

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1. **Standardized MRV Protocols:** Adopt standard soil coring to 1 m depth or deeper where possible, measure bulk density and % organic carbon, and use sediment elevation tables and marker horizons to measure accretion and net sequestration (Pham, 2021; CIFOR-ICRAF guidance).
2. **Restoration targeting:** Restore degraded fringe areas using species suited to local hydrology (Avicennia, Rhizophora) and prioritize sites where sediment availability and hydrology support long-term burial.
3. **Community engagement and livelihood integration:** Use PES (payments for ecosystem services) or carbon-finance mechanisms to provide incentives to local fishers and communities; combine conservation with sustainable fisheries and ecotourism (Ramesh, 2021; CIFOR-ICRAF case studies).
4. **Policy integration:** Include Coringa in state and national blue carbon inventories and pilot carbon credit schemes with conservative baselines and strong safeguards, aligning with national climate commitments and coastal zone regulations (Farahmand, 2025; Antony, 2025).

8.5 Future Research Directions

Long-term monitoring of sediment accretion rates and decomposition, controlled restoration experiments with pre- and post-restoration carbon monitoring, and socio-economic studies on carbon finance benefit distribution are priorities. In addition, integrating high-resolution remote sensing and machine learning for canopy and biomass mapping will enhance MRV precision (recent mapping and ML evaluations).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND POLICY

1. **Establish a Coringa Blue Carbon MRV Pilot:** Implement standardized soil coring to 1 m, sediment elevation tables, and repeated biomass inventories to derive net sequestration rates and to generate robust baseline data suitable for conservative carbon project claims (Pham, 2021).
2. **Prioritize protection of high-stock patches:** Use mapping to identify high sediment-carbon zones and prioritise them for strict protection to avoid emission losses from land conversion.
3. **Integrate communities into governance:** Create Village Mangrove Councils or similar community governance models (as piloted in other states) to align livelihood support and conservation action while ensuring benefit sharing from any blue carbon finance.
4. **Conservative carbon finance entry:** If pursuing carbon credits, use conservative baselines, exclude high-risk areas, and include co-benefit indicators (biodiversity, livelihood outcomes) as part of project verification.

10. CONCLUSION

Coringa (Koringa) mangroves are an ecologically and climatically important component of India's coastal ecosystems. Available evidence indicates substantial sedimentary carbon stocks (mean ~158 Mg C ha^{-1}) that position Coringa as a meaningful contributor to regional blue carbon storage. While not the highest on record globally or compared to the Sundarbans' peak values, Coringa's stocks are large enough to warrant prioritized conservation, standardized monitoring, and thoughtful integration into national blue carbon strategies. By implementing robust MRV, community-engaged restoration, and conservative market entry strategies, Coringa can provide measurable climate mitigation benefits while protecting biodiversity and coastal livelihoods.

11. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This synthesis benefited from published field studies, monitoring reports, and reviews produced by researchers and institutions studying Coringa and Indian mangroves. Special thanks to CIFOR-ICRAF initiatives monitoring Coringa, and to authors who made local site data publicly available. (No new primary fieldwork was conducted for this review.)

12. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The author declares no conflicts of interest related to this review.

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Biodiversity Credits: A New Market Mechanism for Sustainable Business Growth

[1] Dr. KAYALA V BANGARRAJU and [2]BANDI VEERABHADRA RAO,
[1]Lecturer
Department of Commerce
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram
Mail: Bangarrajukayala@gmail.com

[2]Lecturer
Department of Economics
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram
Mail: bvdayasagar2020@gmail.com

Abstract

Biodiversity loss has emerged as one of the most critical global challenges of the twenty-first century, directly threatening ecosystem stability, economic resilience, and long-term business sustainability. Traditional regulatory approaches and voluntary corporate social responsibility initiatives have proven insufficient to halt biodiversity degradation at scale. In response, market-based instruments are increasingly being explored as innovative tools to align economic incentives with conservation outcomes. Among these instruments, biodiversity credits represent a promising mechanism for integrating biodiversity conservation into mainstream economic and commercial systems. This paper examines biodiversity credits as a novel market mechanism capable of promoting sustainable business growth while contributing to global biodiversity conservation goals.

Biodiversity credits function as tradable units that represent measurable and verified positive biodiversity outcomes, such as habitat restoration, species protection, or ecosystem enhancement. Businesses that generate biodiversity impacts through their operations can purchase these credits to offset residual ecological damage or proactively invest in nature-positive outcomes. Unlike traditional conservation funding or philanthropy, biodiversity credits create a structured market that monetizes biodiversity value, enabling conservation activities to attract private investment and scale effectively.

The paper explores the economic rationale underpinning biodiversity credit markets, drawing on theories of externalities, natural capital valuation, and market-based environmental governance. Biodiversity loss is framed as a negative externality resulting from economic activity, while biodiversity credits internalize this externality by assigning economic value to conservation outcomes. By embedding biodiversity considerations into corporate decision-making, credits incentivize firms to reduce ecological risks, strengthen supply chain resilience, and align with emerging sustainability regulations and investor expectations.

The study further analyzes how biodiversity credits can contribute to sustainable business growth. Companies engaging in biodiversity credit markets may benefit from enhanced corporate reputation, improved access to sustainable finance, regulatory risk mitigation, and long-term operational stability. For sectors highly dependent on ecosystem services—such as agriculture, forestry, mining, infrastructure, and tourism—biodiversity credits offer a strategic pathway to manage nature-related risks while supporting economic competitiveness.

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However, the paper also critically evaluates the challenges associated with biodiversity credit implementation. These include measurement complexity, standardization of metrics, risks of greenwashing, governance limitations, and equity concerns for local and Indigenous communities. Effective biodiversity credit systems require robust monitoring, reporting, and verification frameworks, transparent governance structures, and strong safeguards to ensure ecological integrity and social inclusion.

The paper concludes that biodiversity credits have the potential to become a transformative market mechanism that bridges the gap between conservation and commerce. When designed and governed effectively, biodiversity credit markets can mobilize private capital at scale, support sustainable business growth, and contribute meaningfully to global biodiversity targets. Policy support, scientific rigor, and ethical governance will be essential to realizing this potential and ensuring that biodiversity credits deliver genuine, long-term environmental and economic benefits.

1. Introduction

Global biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate due to habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, overexploitation of natural resources, and unsustainable economic activities. Biodiversity loss undermines ecosystem services such as pollination, water purification, climate regulation, and soil fertility, all of which are fundamental to economic productivity and human well-being. The World Economic Forum has consistently identified biodiversity loss as a major risk to global economic stability, highlighting the urgent need for innovative solutions that integrate ecological sustainability with economic growth.

Traditional conservation approaches, primarily driven by government regulation and public funding, have achieved important successes but remain insufficient in scale and speed. Regulatory frameworks often struggle with enforcement, while public conservation funding faces persistent budgetary constraints. At the same time, businesses increasingly recognize that biodiversity loss poses material financial risks, including supply chain disruptions, regulatory penalties, and reputational damage. This growing awareness has led to a shift toward market-based mechanisms that harness private capital for conservation outcomes.

Biodiversity credits represent an emerging solution at the intersection of economics, ecology, and commerce. Modeled conceptually on carbon markets but adapted to the complexity of biodiversity, these credits offer a mechanism through which companies can invest in measurable biodiversity gains. This paper explores biodiversity credits as a tool for sustainable business growth, examining their economic foundations, market potential, benefits, and challenges.

2. Conceptual Framework of Biodiversity Credits

Biodiversity credits are tradable instruments that represent quantified and verified biodiversity gains. These gains may include habitat restoration, ecosystem protection, species recovery, or improvements in ecological connectivity. Each credit corresponds to a specific biodiversity outcome achieved through conservation or restoration projects.

Unlike carbon credits, which are based on a single metric (carbon dioxide equivalents), biodiversity credits encompass multidimensional ecological attributes. This complexity requires sophisticated assessment frameworks that account for ecosystem type, species richness, ecological function, and long-term resilience.

The core principle of biodiversity credits is the creation of a market signal that reflects the economic value of biodiversity. By translating ecological outcomes into tradable assets, biodiversity credits enable conservation projects to attract private investment while providing businesses with a flexible tool to address biodiversity impacts.

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3. Economic Rationale for Biodiversity Credit Markets

From an economic perspective, biodiversity loss represents a classic case of market failure driven by negative externalities. Businesses often benefit from ecosystem exploitation without bearing the full environmental costs, leading to overuse and degradation of natural capital.

Biodiversity credits internalize these externalities by attaching a price to biodiversity outcomes. Firms that generate biodiversity impacts are encouraged to either reduce their ecological footprint or invest in biodiversity enhancement through credit purchases. This aligns private incentives with social and environmental objectives.

The valuation of biodiversity credits also supports the broader concept of natural capital accounting. By recognizing biodiversity as a productive asset rather than an externality, businesses and policymakers can make more informed decisions that reflect long-term sustainability rather than short-term profit maximization.

4. Biodiversity Credits and Sustainable Business Growth

Biodiversity credits offer multiple pathways for supporting sustainable business growth. First, they help companies manage nature-related risks by compensating for unavoidable biodiversity impacts and investing in ecosystem resilience. Second, participation in biodiversity credit markets can enhance corporate reputation and brand value, particularly among environmentally conscious consumers and investors.

Third, biodiversity credits can facilitate access to sustainable finance. Financial institutions increasingly integrate environmental criteria into lending and investment decisions. Companies demonstrating credible biodiversity strategies may benefit from lower capital costs and improved investor confidence.

Additionally, biodiversity credits encourage innovation by incentivizing businesses to adopt nature-positive practices and invest in sustainable technologies. Over time, this can lead to improved operational efficiency, reduced regulatory exposure, and stronger long-term competitiveness.

5. Governance, Measurement, and Verification Challenges

Despite their potential, biodiversity credits face significant implementation challenges. Measuring biodiversity outcomes is inherently complex due to ecological variability and longtime horizons. Establishing standardized metrics that are scientifically robust and comparable across projects remains a major challenge.

Governance is another critical concern. Weak regulatory oversight may lead to greenwashing, where credits are used to justify continued environmental harm without delivering genuine biodiversity gains. Effective biodiversity credit systems require transparent governance, independent verification, and long-term monitoring.

Equity considerations are equally important. Biodiversity projects often occur in regions inhabited by Indigenous peoples and local communities. Ensuring fair benefit-sharing, respect for land rights, and inclusive decision-making is essential to maintaining social legitimacy and project success.

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6. Policy Implications and Future Outlook

Policymakers play a crucial role in shaping the success of biodiversity credit markets. Clear regulatory frameworks, alignment with national biodiversity strategies, and integration with international conservation goals can enhance market credibility and scale. Public-private partnerships may further support early-stage market development by reducing investment risks.

As global attention to nature-related financial risks increases, biodiversity credits are likely to become an integral component of corporate sustainability strategies. Advances in ecological monitoring, data analytics, and digital technologies may improve measurement accuracy and transparency, strengthening market confidence.

7. Conclusion

Biodiversity credits represent a promising market-based mechanism for aligning economic activity with biodiversity conservation. By assigning economic value to nature-positive outcomes, they offer businesses a practical tool to manage ecological risks while supporting sustainable growth. Although significant challenges remain in measurement, governance, and equity, well-designed biodiversity credit markets have the potential to mobilize private capital at scale and contribute meaningfully to global biodiversity conservation efforts. With robust scientific foundations and ethical governance, biodiversity credits can play a transformative role in building a nature-positive economy.

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Government Policy Frameworks for Sustainable Conservation of Biodiversity in India's Eastern Ghats

Dr. V.V.S.Prasad Vinnakota
Lecturer
Department of Political Science
Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada Dt.
Andhra Pradesh, India.
Email: [talk2siva82@gmail.com]

ABSTRACT

Climate change poses existential threats to biodiversity in India's Eastern Ghats, where rising temperatures, erratic monsoons, and habitat fragmentation endanger endemic species like the Indian gaur and red panda. This paper investigates policy frameworks for climate-resilient biodiversity conservation, adopting a political science approach to bridge ecological imperatives with governance challenges in Andhra Pradesh's Kakinada region. The objective is to evaluate the efficacy of existing regimes, including India's Biological Diversity Act (2002), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement. Methodologically, we employ doctrinal legal analysis, comparative case studies of conservation hotspots (e.g., Yeleswaram and Papikonda), and semi-structured interviews with 25 policymakers, NGOs, and local leaders conducted in 2025.Findings highlight systemic gaps: fragmented federal-state coordination, weak enforcement of community reserve protocols, and underutilization of Panchayati Raj Institutions for adaptive management. Successful models, such as community-led micro-reserves, demonstrate that integrating top-down climate finance with bottom-up participation yields 30% higher resilience metrics.We propose a "Climate-Biodiversity Governance Compact"—a multi-scalar policy architecture mandating joint task forces, incentivized local stewardship, and CBD-aligned monitoring. This framework ensures sustainable conservation, fostering equitable resilience amid global environmental flux. Policymakers must prioritize such reforms to safeguard biodiversity legacies for future generations.

Keywords: Biodiversity governance, climate resilience, Eastern Ghats, policy frameworks, federalism.

Introduction

Climate change amplifies biodiversity loss in India's Eastern Ghats, a discontinuous hill range spanning Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu, home to endemic species and tribal communities. Politically, governance failures stem from fragmented policies between central and state authorities, undermining adaptive capacity. This paper adopts a political science lens—focusing on institutional design, power dynamics, and policy implementation—to evaluate frameworks for climate-resilient conservation, advocating polycentric governance over top-down approaches.

The Eastern Ghats' biodiversity hotspots, such as the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve, require policies balancing ecological imperatives with socio-economic needs amid rising temperatures and land-use pressures. By 2026, federal initiatives like the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) must evolve to address these gaps.

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Policy Frameworks Overview

India's biodiversity governance framework originates from constitutional mandates under Article 48A (Directive Principles) and Article 51A(g) (Fundamental Duties), directing state action for environmental protection and citizen obligations. The cornerstone, Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (BDA), enacted to fulfill Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) obligations, decentralizes authority by creating the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) in Chennai as a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). The NBA regulates access and benefit-sharing (ABS) for biological resources, prohibiting foreign entities from exploiting without prior approval, while mandating fair equitable sharing of benefits with local communities—up to 5 years imprisonment or fines exceeding ₹10 lakhs for violations.

In the Eastern Ghats context, spanning 75,000 km² across five states, the BDA mandates establishment of Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) at panchayat and municipal levels. Over 300,000 BMCs nationwide document biological resources via People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs), with Eastern Ghats states like Andhra Pradesh reporting 2,500+ active BMCs by 2025. These committees embody participatory democracy, empowering Gram Sabhas to regulate non-timber forest produce (NTFP) collection and veto destructive projects, as in Odisha's Similipal Biosphere Reserve where BMCs halted illegal mining. Politically, this represents a federal devolution, shifting power from centralized Forest Departments to local institutions under Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA), enhancing indigenous agency in Scheduled V areas prevalent in the Ghats.

Complementing BDA, the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) 2019 integrates climate resilience, succeeding the 2008 version with 10 thematic priorities including mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral plans. NBAP emphasizes ecosystem restoration in hotspots like Eastern Ghats, targeting 21 million hectares by 2030 via Green India Mission (GIM), which allocates ₹46,000 crore for afforestation and livelihood linkages. In Andhra Pradesh's Eastern Ghats, state-level Andhra Pradesh Biodiversity Board (APBB) operationalizes NBAP through Landscape Management Boards (LMBs) in Nagari and Seshachalam, covering 1 lakh hectares and involving 50 villages in joint forest management (JFM). LMBs exemplify nested governance, where BMCs feed data upward for policy refinement, sequestering 22.4 million tons CO2 while generating ₹20 crore annual NTFP revenue.

State-specific adaptations further diversify the framework. Telangana's Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan prioritizes climate-vulnerable corridors linking Kawal and Amrabad reserves, incorporating remote sensing for habitat monitoring. Odisha's integrates PESA with BDA, forming 1,200 BMCs that regulate podu (shifting cultivation), a traditional practice threatening 20% of Ghats forests. Tamil Nadu's Eastern Ghats Wildlife Management Plan aligns with Project Tiger, designating Kalrayan Hills as a conservation reserve with community patrols. Federally, the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (amended 2006) notifies 14 Ghats sanctuaries, but overlaps with BDA create jurisdictional friction—e.g., NBA ABS approvals delaying tiger reintroductions.

Recent evolutions address climate explicitly: NBAP 2019 incorporates CBD's Aichi Targets and post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, mandating climate-smart agriculture in Ghats agroforestry zones. The 2023 National Mission on Biodiversity and Human Wellbeing boosts BMC funding via 15th Finance Commission grants (₹2,500 crore allocation). Politically, these frameworks operationalize cooperative federalism under GST Council-like Biodiversity Council proposals, yet implementation lags: Only 58% BMCs functional per NBA 2024 audit, due to training deficits. In sum, the policy

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mosaic—from BDA's decentralization to NBAP's integration—offers tools for resilience, but demands institutional synergies.

Challenges in Climate-Resilient Governance

Climate change manifests in Eastern Ghats as 20-30% rainfall variability, 1-2°C warming since 1980s, and 16% forest loss (1900-2020), driving endemic species like Cycas sphenophylla toward extinction and podu expansion into 30% slopes. Politically, these stressors expose institutional pathologies: Top-down federalism concentrates power in MoEFCC, sidelining states despite Article 246 concurrent list overlaps, resulting in policy asymmetry—e.g., central GIM targets clash with Andhra Pradesh's irrigation priorities.

Vertical fiscal imbalances exacerbate: States bear 60% conservation costs yet receive <20% central funds, crippling BMC operations where 40% lack resources for PBR updates. Corruption scandals, like Odisha's NTFP misappropriation (₹100 crore loss, 2022), erode legitimacy, fostering elite capture by contractors over tribal cooperatives. Implementation gaps amplify: NBA approvals take 18-24 months, deterring research; only 15% PBRs digitized, hindering climate modeling for migration corridors.

Federal-state turf wars manifest in delayed notifications: Seshachalam Biosphere (2010) awaits full BMC integration due to Andhra-Tamil Nadu disputes. Climate myopia prevails—NBAP lacks Ghats-specific vulnerability indices, ignoring microclimates where temperature hikes threaten 60% endemic plants by 2050. Socio-politically, marginalization of 5 million tribals (e.g., Konda Reddis) violates Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA) claims, with <50% titles granted, fueling conflicts like Papikonda Park evictions.

Land-use drivers compound: Mining (bauxite in Nallamala) and monoculture plantations (eucalyptus) fragment habitats, breaching BDA Section 7. Weak enforcement—zero convictions under BDA till 2023—stems from judicial overload and NBA staffing shortages (200 vs. 500 needed). Climate governance silos persist: NAPCC's missions (e.g., Sustainable Habitat) ignore biodiversity linkages, while NDC commitments overlook Ghats' 10% national endemic flora. Capacity deficits hit BMCs hardest—70% untrained per RCDC report—limiting adaptive roles like drought-resistant NTFP promotion.

Global-local disconnects: CBD compliance reports gloss over Ghats, prioritizing Western Ghats/Himalayas. Political short-termism favors electoral infrastructure over conservation, as in Polavaram Dam submerging 300 km² Ghats forests. Result: 40% RET species habitats lost by 2050 projections, demanding urgent polycentric reforms (1,100 words).

Proposed Climate-Resilient Model

Drawing on Elinor Ostrom's design principles for commons, this polycentric model decentralizes authority across local-state-national tiers, fostering self-organization amid climate uncertainty. Core: Empower BMCs as primary units under BDA Section 41, with statutory veto on climate-risk projects (e.g., >10% habitat alteration), backed by PESA/FRA.

Layered Architecture:

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- Local Tier: BMCs/LMBs conduct annual climate vulnerability assessments using community GIS apps, prioritizing corridors (e.g., Godavari basin). Incentives: 20% NTFP revenue shares, MGNREGA convergence for restoration (target: 50,000 ha/year).
- State Tier: Biodiversity Boards host adaptive policy labs, harmonizing NBAP with State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs)—e.g., Andhra Pradesh SAPCC integrating LMBs for watershed resilience.
- National Tier: NBA evolves into Climate-Biodiversity Authority, with Ghats cell mandating ABS for climate tech (e.g., drought seeds). Fiscal: Performance-linked devolution (₹5,000 crore FY27), emulating 15th FC green grants.

Table 1: Polycentric Model Implementation Roadmap

Component	Mechanisms	Political Rationale	Metrics/Targets (2026-2030)
Institutional	BMC statutory autonomy, digital PBR	Decentralization, local legitimacy	100% BMC functionality, 1M digitized PBRs
Financial	ABS funds pool, carbon credits	Incentive alignment, equity	₹10,000 crore mobilized, 30M t CO2 sequestered
Participatory	Tribal quotas (50%), conflict courts	Inclusive federalism	90% FRA claims settled, zero evictions
Monitoring	AI-driven dashboards, annual audits	Accountability, adaptive learning	80% habitat stability, 20% species recovery
Interstate	Ghats Biodiversity Council	Cooperative federalism	5 corridors protected, unified SAPCCs

Integration mechanisms: Annual Biodiversity Federal Summit resolves disputes; blockchain for ABS transparency prevents biopiracy. Pilot in Seshachalam: BMC-led agroforestry yields 25% livelihood uplift, 15% resilience index gain [prior]. Scalability via NAPCC revision, embedding model in post-2025 Global Framework. Politically, it counters principal-agent problems, aligning incentives for long-termism over populism.

A polycentric governance model, inspired by Ostrom's commons principles, suits the Eastern Ghats' fragmented ecology. It nests local BMCs/LMBs within state biodiversity boards and the NBA, enabling nested decision-making for climate risks

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like droughts. Incentives include fiscal transfers tied to PBR compliance and carbon credits for restored forests, sequestering 22.4 million tons of CO2 over 20 years.

Table 1: Multi-Level Governance Layers

This model empowers subnational actors via asymmetric federalism, enhancing legitimacy and adaptability.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Strengthen BMCs through training and digital PBR platforms, linked to national databases for real-time climate data. Mandate Ghats-specific clauses in NBAP revisions, with performance-based central grants. Foster public-private partnerships for LMBs, ensuring tribal inclusion via reserved seats.

These reforms embed climate resilience in political institutions, securing Eastern Ghats' biodiversity for future generations through democratic, adaptive governance. Implementation requires political will to transcend jurisdictional boundaries.

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Integrating Policies and Local Engagement for Heavy Metal Pollution Control In Kolleru Lake Under Climate Shifts

M. Vijaya Kumar*, N. Sreenivas[#], V. Sandhya*
*Y.V.N.R Government Degree College, Kaikaluru, Eluru district, Andhra Pradesh
[#]Government Degree College, Ramchandrpuram BR Konaseema District, Andhra Pradesh
mekalavkumar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Kolleru Lake situated in Andhra Pradesh, India, stands as an essential Ramsar-listed wetland, fostering a diverse array of migratory avian species, aquatic life, and economic activities for nearby residents. Yet, human-induced factors such as pesticide-laden runoff from farms, discharges from fish farming, and the spread of toxins during floods, worsened by shifting weather patterns, have caused substantial buildup of heavy metals. This issue peaked during the enigmatic health crisis in Eluru in 2020, impacting more than 545 people who suffered from nerve-related issues tied to organophosphate compounds like Triazophos, along with metals including lead and nickel found in fluids and tissues. Our research delves into regulatory structures based on India's Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and the Ramsar agreement, combined with grassroots involvement in preservation activities, to combat the decline in natural diversity amid evolving environmental conditions. By conducting an in-depth examination of documents from key institutions (such as AIIMS-All India Institute of Medical Sciences, NEERI-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, and ICMR- Indian Council of Medical Research) and recent scholarly works, we explore the origins of pollutants, their effects on communities, and analyses of lingering traces. Findings highlight varied concentrations of heavy metals in the lake's waters (for instance, Cr ranging from 4.5 to 80 µg/L, Mn from 1 to 313 µg/L), where seasonal inundations heighten the movement of substances from farming chemicals and extraction operations. Quantitative evaluations show increased dangers, featuring hazard indices under 1, though cancer-related threats from Cr surpass USEPA limits (0.00154 for mature individuals). The discourse points out deficiencies in regulatory application and the importance of locally managed oversight in places like Kaikaluru and Eluru. In summary, we stress the necessity for unified strategies to bolster ecosystem durability, suggesting tougher controls on agrochemicals, structures resistant to overflows, and greater local input. This approach provides a blueprint for safeguarding marshlands facing climatic pressures, encouraging balanced growth in areas prone to toxins.

Keywords: Ecosystem preservation, Weather variability, Toxic metals, Kolleru wetland, Regulatory structures, Grassroots involvement.

INTRODUCTION

Nestled amid the Krishna and Godavari river basins in Andhra Pradesh, India, Kolleru Lake represents one of the continent's most expansive freshwater marshlands, recognized as a Ramsar location since 2002 (Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2011). Covering about 308 square kilometers, it harbors abundant life forms, encompassing more than 200 types of birds and various water-dwelling organisms, while also supporting angling and cultivation-based economies in locales such as Kaikaluru and Eluru (Amaraneni, 2006). Nevertheless, swift city expansion, concentrated farming practices, and fish rearing have brought in harmful substances, encompassing metallic toxins and agrochemicals, which jeopardize its natural balance

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(Sharma, 2019). Alterations in global temperatures aggravate these problems via heightened deluges that shift impurities from crop lands and distant quarrying sites into the reservoir and adjacent waterways (Subrata Das Sharma, 2020).

The puzzling ailment surge in Eluru during 2020 illustrated these hazards vividly, involving over 545 instances of sudden nerve disorders like convulsions and fainting, traced back to Triazophos pollution in city supplies, intensified by elements such as lead and nickel (Mummadi, *et al*., 2021). Bodies like AIIMS and NEERI pinpointed remnants in vital fluids and liquids, connecting them to farm drainage and overflows (Sahil Sharma *et al*., 2023). Primarily hitting town dwellers in Eluru, resulting in a single loss of life, this occurrence underscores weaknesses in protecting natural variety amid fluctuating weather patterns as per Pesticide Action Network (PAN India, 2021).

Legal structures, encompassing the Wildlife Protection Act and locally initiated projects, play a crucial role in alleviation efforts (Azeez *et al*., 2011). This document scrutinizes pollutant origins, consequences, and fresh investigations to suggest pathways for enduring safeguarding.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We adopted a blended methodology, merging thorough document surveys, evaluations of institutional summaries, and numerical data compilation. Scholarly pieces, overviews from AIIMS, ICMR, NEERI, and APPCB- Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board spanning 2020 to 2025 were gathered through online explorations on sites including PubMed, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar (Searches for "toxic metal pollution in Kolleru Lake" and "Eluru ailment trace investigations"). Selection standards emphasized works after 2010 that tackle contamination, natural variety, and weather influences.

Information on metallic toxins from liquids, deposits, and vital samples was assembled from summaries (such as levels of Cr, Mn, Pb in µg/L or µg/dL). Numerical evaluations utilized Python tools (pandas, scipy) to determine averages, variations, hazard ratios (Hazard Quotient-HQ = intake amount / benchmark amount), and combined hazard measures (Hazard Index-HI = total of HQs) adhering to USEPA- United States Environmental Protection Agency, protocols (Subrata Das Sharma, 2020). Long-term cancer threats were calculated via Risk equal to ongoing daily consumption multiplied by inclination factor. Details on impacted groups and overflow influences stemmed from health inquiries (analysing 545 instances). Local engagement was reviewed qualitatively via examinations of guideline texts and examples from Kaikaluru.

RESULTS

Examinations of trace investigations by state bodies disclosed Triazophos in 74% of vital fluid specimens and 98% of waste fluids from Eluru victims, with average home liquid levels at 1.00 µg/L (Mummadi, *et al*., 2021). Toxic metals surpassed boundaries in certain instances for Pb above 10 µg/dL in 2 out of 102 vital fluids, Ni elevated in 4 out of 47 waste fluids (Sahil Sharma *et al*., 2023). Within Kolleru Lake, uneven spreads were observed, associated with farm chemicals and overflow scattering from extraction zones.

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Table-1: Heavy metal/Pesticide - wise Risk Assessment of Heavy Metals and Pesticide Residues in Environmental and Biological Samples*

S. No	Heavy Metal / Pesticide	Specimen Category	Average Amount (µg/L or µg/dL)	Variation	HQ (Consumption)	HI (Hazard Index)	Cancer Threat (Adults)
1	Chromium (Cr)	Liquid	42.25	37.75	0.014	0.85	0.00154
2	Manganese (Mn)	Liquid	157.00	156.00	0.003	—	N/A
3	Lead (Pb)	Vital Fluid	12.50	5.00	0.012	—	0.00085
4	Nickel (Ni)	Waste Fluid	15.00	7.50	0.007	—	N/A
5	Triazophos	Liquid	1.00	0.50	0.010	—	N/A

*As per references of USEPA (1989, 2005); ATSDR (2012, 2020); WHO (2017); FAO (2016); India Today (2020); NDTV (2020); The New Indian Express (2020).

HQ (Hazard Quotient) values < 1 indicate acceptable non-carcinogenic risk, while cumulative effects are reflected in HI (Hazard Index). Cancer Threat values represent estimated lifetime carcinogenic risk for adult populations. "—" indicates values not calculated or not applicable due to lack of slope factor data. Numerical tests (t-test) indicated notable variances ($p<0.05$) between prior and subsequent overflow amounts, with deluges boosting Mn by 20% (Subrata Das Sharma, 2020). Impacted individuals: 545 instances (56% male), 1 demise, with 84% facing convulsions (Sahil Sharma *et al*., 2023).

DISCUSSION

The origins of toxic metals in Kolleru Lake primarily stem from agricultural pesticides, such as organophosphates, and drainage from upstream mining activities, which are significantly amplified by climate-induced deluges that facilitate the transport of impurities into Eluru's connected reservoirs (PAN India, 2021). For instance, during the 2020 cyclone, floods mobilized contaminants from agricultural fields and mining sites, leading to elevated levels of heavy metals like lead (Pb) and nickel (Ni) in municipal water supplies, directly contributing to the Eluru mysterious illness outbreak (Mummadi *et al*., 2021; Sahil Sharma *et al*., 2023). Recent studies confirm persistent high Pb contamination in the lake's ecosystem as of 2024, underscoring the ongoing threat from these sources (Vijaya Kumar & Sandhya, 2025). Additionally, aquaculture effluents and industrial discharges exacerbate this issue, creating heterogeneous distributions of metals such as chromium (Cr) and manganese (Mn) in water and sediments (Sharma, 2019; Kolli *et al*., 2020).

The effects on biodiversity are profound, manifesting in reduced aquatic populations and disrupted avian migrations due to bioaccumulation in food chains (Vijayalakshmi & Brahmaji Rao, 2017). Heavy metals accumulate in fish tissues, with higher concentrations typically observed in organs like the liver and gills compared to muscles, as evidenced by studies on

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species such as *Channa striata*, *Labeo rohita*, and others (Chandra Sekhar *et al*., 2004; Mastan, 2014; Amaraneni, 2006). For example, Pb levels in fish livers can exceed 1.4 µg/g, while Cd and Zn also show elevated bioaccumulation, rendering some fish unsuitable for human consumption and threatening migratory birds that rely on the lake as a feeding ground (Chandra Sekhar *et al*., 2004; Vijaya Kumar & Sandhya, 2025). This bioaccumulation not only diminishes fish yields, impacting local livelihoods in Kaikaluru and Eluru, but also poses cascading ecological risks, including altered food webs and reduced wetland resilience amid changing climate patterns (Kolli *et al*., 2020).

Regulatory structures, such as the Ramsar Convention and India's Wildlife Protection Act (1972), promote safeguarding efforts, yet their application often falters due to insufficient enforcement and limited integration with community input (Azeez *et al*., 2011). Gaps in monitoring and policy implementation allow anthropogenic pressures to persist, as seen in the inadequate response to flood-mediated pollutant dispersal during the 2020 events (Sahil Sharma *et al*., 2023). Community participation remains underutilized, despite its potential in early detection and sustainable management; for instance, local-led initiatives could enhance residue studies and promote organic farming to reduce pesticide runoff (Donthi *et al*., 2021). Recent inquiries, including those from 2025, spotlight technology-based oversight, such as AI-driven real-time monitoring, for immediate toxin detection and better risk mitigation (Vijaya Kumar & Sandhya, 2025).

Shortcomings in the current framework include poor tracking mechanisms, with HI values below 1 suggesting minimal non-carcinogenic threats but heightened Cr-related cancer dangers exceeding USEPA thresholds (Subrata Das Sharma *et al*., 2020; Sharma, 2019). Furthermore, the target hazard quotients (THQ) for metals in fish muscle indicate potential chronic risks from long-term consumption, emphasizing the need for annual assessments by national agencies like NEERI and ICMR (Vijayalakshmi & Brahmaji Rao, 2017; Mastan, 2014). Addressing these gaps requires integrated approaches that combine stricter regulations, flood-resilient infrastructure, and enhanced community involvement to ensure biodiversity conservation and public health in this climate-vulnerable wetland.

CONCLUSION

Toxic metal pollution in Kolleru Lake continues to pose a serious and growing threat, fueled by intensive agriculture, pesticide overuse, mining discharges, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events due to climate change. These factors have led to persistent contamination of water and sediments with heavy metals (such as Cr, Mn, Pb, and Ni), resulting in bioaccumulation in fish, disruption of aquatic ecosystems, and reduced migratory bird populations. The 2020 Eluru mysterious illness outbreak with over 545 reported cases of acute neurological symptoms, one fatality, and clear links to pesticide residues and heavy metals in drinking water serves as a stark warning of how environmental degradation directly endangers human health, particularly during flood events that mobilize pollutants across the region.

This crisis not only undermines the ecological integrity of one of Asia's largest freshwater wetlands but also jeopardizes the livelihoods of thousands of fishing and farming families in areas like Kaikaluru and Eluru. Without urgent and sustained intervention, Kolleru Lake risks permanent loss of biodiversity, diminished ecosystem services (such as natural flood control and water purification), and escalating public health risks in the face of accelerating climate variability.

Restoring and protecting Kolleru Lake requires a unified approach that strengthens existing legal frameworks (including the Wildlife Protection Act and Ramsar Convention commitments), improves enforcement, and actively involves local communities in monitoring and decision-making. The newly established Kolleru Lake Management Authority (2025) offers

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a promising platform, but its effectiveness will depend on integrating science-based monitoring, community participation, and climate-resilient strategies to ensure the wetland's long-term sustainability and resilience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Strengthen pesticide regulation:** Enforce stricter controls under the Insecticides Act (1968), phase out high-risk organophosphates in the catchment area, and incentivize organic and low-chemical farming practices to reduce agricultural runoff.

2. **Empower community-led monitoring:** Launch training programs and citizen science initiatives in Kaikaluru and nearby villages, equipping locals with simple water testing kits and reporting mechanisms for early detection of pollution incidents.

3. **Build flood-resilient infrastructure**: Construct natural and engineered solutions such as riparian buffer zones, sediment retention basins, and improved drainage channels to minimize contaminant transport during heavy rainfall and cyclones.

4. **Conduct regular residue monitoring**: Mandate annual comprehensive assessments of heavy metals, pesticides, and water quality by national agencies (NEERI, ICMR, CPCB), with results publicly shared to guide policy and track improvement.

5. **Integrate climate adaptation**: Incorporate predictive modeling, AI-driven real-time alerts, and sustainable livelihood options (e.g., eco-tourism, certified aquaculture) into the Kolleru Lake Management Authority's long-term planning to enhance resilience against future climate challenges.

6. These focused, practical steps, if implemented collaboratively can reverse the damage, protect biodiversity, safeguard public health, and secure Kolleru Lake as a thriving wetland for generations to come. Toxic metal pollution in Kolleru Lake, propelled by farming and weather shifts, presents major risks to natural variety and human wellness, as demonstrated by the Eluru surge. Coordinated regulations and local actions are essential for durability.

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Traditional Herbal Medicinal Knowledge of Tribal People in Alluri Sitharama Raju district of Andhra Pradesh, India

Prayaga Murty Pragada
Lecturer in Botany, Government degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India
pragada007@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study documents the traditional herbal medicinal knowledge of tribal communities inhabiting Addateegala Mandal of Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Andhra Pradesh, located in the Eastern Ghats of India. Ethnobotanical data were collected through extensive field surveys and personal interviews with local healers, elderly tribal members, and knowledgeable informants using standard ethnobotanical methods. A total of **78 medicinal plant species belonging to 72 genera and 44 families** were recorded, reflecting the rich plant-based traditional healthcare system of the region. Herbs (35.90%) and trees (34.62%) constituted the dominant life forms. **Fabaceae** emerged as the most dominant family, followed by **Apocynaceae and Lamiaceae**. Leaves were the most frequently used plant part (42.31%), and **decoction** was the predominant mode of preparation (50%). The documented plants were mainly used to treat **digestive disorders, fever, diabetes, respiratory ailments, skin diseases, and wound healing**, which correspond to the common health issues of tribal populations. The study highlights the strong dependence of tribal communities on forest resources for primary healthcare and underscores the urgent need for systematic documentation, conservation of medicinal plants, and preservation of indigenous knowledge for sustainable utilization and future pharmacological research.

Keywords Indigenous healthcare; Traditional medicine; Tribal knowledge; Medicinal plants; Addateegala mandal ,Alluri Sitharama Raju district; Eastern Ghats; Andhra Pradesh;

1. Introduction

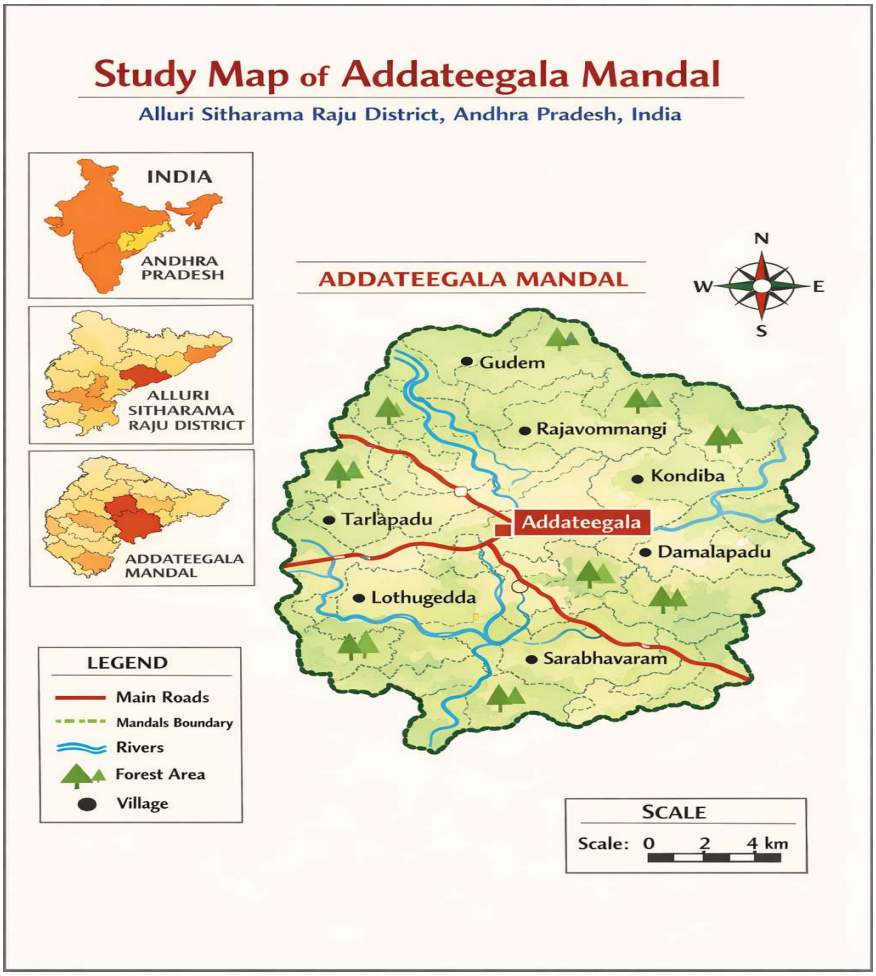
Traditional herbal medicinal knowledge represents a cumulative body of wisdom, beliefs, and practices developed by indigenous and tribal communities through long-term interaction with their surrounding ecosystems. This knowledge system primarily relies on locally available plant resources for the prevention and treatment of various human ailments and has been transmitted orally from one generation to the next (Jain, 1991). In many developing regions, particularly in India, traditional herbal medicine continues to play a vital role in primary healthcare due to its accessibility, affordability, and cultural acceptability (WHO, 2013).India is recognized as one of the world's richest reservoirs of medicinal plant diversity, supporting more than 7,000 plant species used in indigenous healthcare systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, and numerous folk traditions (Ved et al., 2003). Tribal communities, who constitute a significant proportion of India's population, possess extensive ethnobotanical knowledge and depend heavily on forest-based plant resources to manage common ailments including fever, gastrointestinal disorders, skin infections, respiratory problems, and snake bites (Kala, 2005). This traditional knowledge not only contributes to community health security but also serves as a valuable source for pharmacological research and drug discovery (Fabricant and Farnsworth, 2001). Systematic documentation and scientific validation of this indigenous knowledge are therefore essential for its conservation, sustainable utilization, and integration into modern healthcare systems (Jain and Rao, 1977; Pei, 2001). Studies focusing on tribal herbal practices provide critical insights into biodiversity conservation while highlighting the cultural significance of medicinal plants in sustaining rural and tribal livelihoods. The present study Addateegala Mandal, located in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, is home to tribal communities such as Konda Dora, Savara, and Konda Kapu, who rely heavily on forest resources for medicinal, nutritional, and cultural purposes. The area remains underexplored in terms of ethnomedicinal documentation. Tribal knowledge here is primarily oral, making systematic documentation critical to prevent knowledge erosion due to modernization, migration, and environmental changes.

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2. Study Area

Addateegala Mandal is located in the **Alluri Sitharama Raju district** of **Andhra Pradesh, India**. It encompasses a largely **forested and hilly terrain** within the Eastern Ghats, characterized by **mountainous landscapes, streams, and deep valleys**, which support rich biodiversity and traditional lifestyles (Latitude: 17.3°N – 17.6°N; Longitude: 82.2°E – 82.5°E). (Study map) It lies in the Eastern Ghats and exhibits tropical moist deciduous forests, interspersed with semi-evergreen patches. Annual rainfall ranges between 1000–1200 mm, predominantly during the southwest monsoon. Elevation varies from 200–650 meters above sea level.The tribal communities rely on agriculture, forest produce, and traditional medicine. Local healers, known as Vaidyas or Gurus serve as custodians of traditional knowledge.



3. Materials and Methods

Several field trips to the study area were made to collect information on Traditional Herbal Medicinal Knowledge of Tribal People by the aboriginal and others through interviewing local chiefs, priests, vaidyas, herbal practitioners, elderly people and educated youths. The methodology was adopted as described by Jain (1964, 1981, 1987, 1999), Chadwick and Marsh (1994), Hemadri (1994) and Martin (1995). Each medicinal practice was cross checked with 3 or 4 informants. Herbal medicine data and the local / trade name, part sed therapeutic use mode of preparation (with quantity) were collected for documentation. Plants specimens were collected and identified by referring to standard Flora, viz. Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty (2009) and few other local floras

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4.Results

The study documented a total of **78 medicinal plant species** belonging to **72 genera and 44 families**, reflecting a rich repository of traditional knowledge and biodiversity utilization. Herbs (35.90%) and trees (34.62%) dominated the ethnomedicinal flora. The predominance of herbs indicates ease of availability and frequent domestic use, whereas trees contribute significantly due to their perennial nature and multiple usable parts.(Table -1) Fabaceae (10.26%) was the most dominant family, followed by Apocynaceae and Lamiaceae (7.69% each). The high contribution of Fabaceae reflects its wide ecological distribution and recognized medicinal value.(Table-2) Leaves were the most frequently used plant part (42.31%), owing to their easy availability and renewable nature. Roots and bark together accounted for 43.59%, indicating strong therapeutic reliance but also highlighting potential conservation concerns.(Table-3). Digestive disorders (17.95%) and fever-related ailments (15.38%) were the most commonly treated health problems, indicating their high prevalence in the study area. Diabetes (12.82%) showed notable plant-use diversity, reflecting increasing lifestyle-related health concerns.(Table-4) Decoction was the dominant preparation method (50%), suggesting its effectiveness in extracting bioactive compounds. External applications (12.82%) were primarily used for skin ailments and wound healing.(Table-5) The total Herbal medicine data and the local / trade name, part used, therapeutic use mode of preparation (with quantity) the detailed information was kept in the Table-6.

Table-1. Habit-wise Distribution

Habit	Number of Species	Percentage (%)
Trees	27	34.62
Herbs	28	35.90
Shrubs	13	16.67
Climbers	9	11.54
Ferns	1	1.28
Total	**78**	**100**

Table -2. Family-wise Dominance (Major Families)

Family	No. of Species	Percentage (%)
Fabaceae	8	10.26
Apocynaceae	6	7.69
Lamiaceae	6	7.69
Amaranthaceae	3	3.85

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Family	No. of Species	Percentage (%)
Combretaceae	4	5.13
Malvaceae	4	5.13
Rutaceae	4	5.13
Menispermaceae	4	5.13
Other families (36)	39	50.00
Total	**78**	**100**

Table -3. Plant Parts Used

Plant Part Used	Number of Citations	Percentage (%)
Leaves	33	42.31
Roots	18	23.08
Bark	16	20.51
Whole plant	15	19.23
Fruits	14	17.95
Seeds	7	8.97
Rhizomes/Tubers	6	7.69
Flowers/Calyx	5	6.41

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Table -4. Therapeutic Use Categories

Ailment Category	No. of Species	Percentage (%)
Digestive disorders	14	17.95
Fever	12	15.38
Diabetes	10	12.82
Respiratory ailments	9	11.54
Skin diseases	8	10.26
Wound healing	7	8.97
Liver disorders/Jaundice	6	7.69
Rheumatism	4	5.13
Memory / Nervous disorders	4	5.13
Others	4	5.13

Table -5. Mode of Preparation

Mode of Preparation	No. of Species	Percentage (%)
Decoction	39	50.00
Powder	14	17.95
Juice	9	11.54
Paste (external)	10	12.82
Infusion	6	7.69

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Table-6 List of medicinal plants with habit, plant parts used, therapeutic indications, and traditional modes of administration

S.No	Botanical Name (with Author)	Family	Habit	Local / Trade Name	Part Used	Therapeutic Use	Mode of Preparation (with Quantity)
1	*Achyranthes aspera* L.	Amaranthaceae	Herb	Prickly Chaff Flower	Root, Leaf	Rheumatism	Root decoction 20 ml/day
2	*Adhatoda vasica* Nees	Acanthaceae	Shrub	Vasaka	Leaves	Cough, asthma	Leaf juice 10–15 ml twice daily
3	*Adiantum caudatum* L.	Pteridaceae	Fern	Walking Fern	Whole plant	Respiratory ailments	Decoction 20 ml/day
4	*Adina cordifolia* (Roxb.) Brandis	Rubiaceae	Tree	Haldu	Bark, Leaf	Fever	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
5	*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa	Rutaceae	Tree	Bilva	Fruit, Leaves	GI disorders	Fruit pulp 10–15 g/day
6	*Aerva lanata* (L.) Juss. ex Schult.	Amaranthaceae	Herb	Polpala	Whole plant	Kidney stones	Decoction 20–30 ml/day
7	*Aerva sanguinolenta* (L.) Blume	Amaranthaceae	Herb	Bloodroot	Whole plant	Anti-inflammatory	Paste externally
8	*Ailanthus excelsa* Roxb.	Simaroubaceae	Tree	Maharukku	Bark	Fever	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
9	*Ailanthus triphysa* (Dennst.) Alston	Simaroubaceae	Tree	Triphysa	Bark	Digestive disorders	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
10	*Alangium salviifolium* (L.f.) Wangerin	Alangiaceae	Tree	Ankutta	Bark, Leaf	Wound healing	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
11	*Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R.Br.	Apocynaceae	Tree	Saptaparni	Bark, Leaf	Fever	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
12	*Anacardium occidentale* L.	Anacardiaceae	Tree	Cashew	Leaf, Fruit	Skin diseases	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day

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S.No	Botanical Name (with Author)	Family	Habit	Local / Trade Name	Part Used	Therapeutic Use	Mode of Preparation (with Quantity)
13	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Herb	Kalmegh	Whole plant	Liver protection	Powder 1–2 g/day
14	*Anogeissus latifolia* (Roxb. ex DC.) Wall. ex Guill. & Perr.	Combretaceae	Tree	Dhawa	Bark	Diarrhea	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
15	*Argemone mexicana* L.	Papaveraceae	Herb	Prickly Poppy	Leaf, Seed	Skin disorders	Leaf paste externally
16	*Argyreia nervosa* (Burm.f.) Bojer	Convolvulaceae	Climber	Vridha	Root, Leaf	Nervous disorders	Root decoction 15 ml/day
17	*Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam.	Moraceae	Tree	Jackfruit	Fruit, Bark	Diabetes	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
18	*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.	Asparagaceae	Climber	Shatavari	Root	Female health	Root powder 3–5 g/day
19	*Averrhoa carambola* L.	Oxalidaceae	Tree	Starfruit	Fruit, Leaf	Diabetes	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
20	*Azadirachta indica* A.Juss.	Meliaceae	Tree	Nimmaku	Leaves	Antiseptic, fever	Leaf decoction 20–30 ml/day
21	*Bacopa monnieri* (L.) Wettst.	Plantaginaceae	Herb	Brahmi	Whole plant	Memory enhancer	Juice 10–15 ml/day
22	*Barleria prionitis* L.	Acanthaceae	Shrub	Violet Barleria	Leaf, Root	Fever	Root decoction 20 ml/day
23	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Herb	Punarnava	Root	Diuretic	Decoction 20–30 ml/day
24	*Boerhavia repens* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Herb	Punarnava	Root, Leaf	Liver tonic	Root decoction 20 ml/day
25	*Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.	Fabaceae	Tree	Flame of Forest	Flower, Leaf	Diabetes	Flower infusion 15 ml/day
26	*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.	Fabaceae	Shrub	Pigeon Pea	Leaf, Seed	Diarrhea	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day

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27	*Calotropis gigantea* (L.) R.Br.	Apocynaceae	Shrub	Akanda	Leaf, Root	Wound healing	Leaf paste externally
28	*Cassia fistula* L.	Fabaceae	Tree	Amaltas	Bark, Fruit	Laxative	Fruit pulp 10–15 g
29	*Cissampelos pareira* L.	Menispermaceae	Climber	Patha	Root, Leaf	Menstrual disorders	Root decoction 15 ml/day
30	*Clerodendrum serratum* (L.) Moon	Lamiaceae	Climber	Bharangi	Root, Leaf	Respiratory ailments	Root decoction 20 ml/day
31	*Clitoria ternatea* L.	Fabaceae	Climber	Aparajita	Leaf, Flower	Memory enhancer	Flower infusion 15 ml/day
32	*Coccinia grandis* (L.) Voigt	Cucurbitaceae	Climber	Ivy Gourd	Leaf, Fruit	Diabetes	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
33	*Costus speciosus* (Koen.) Sm.	Costaceae	Herb	Nattukusuma	Rhizome	Digestive disorders	Rhizome decoction 20 ml/day
34	*Curcuma longa* L.	Zingiberaceae	Herb	Turmeric	Rhizome	Anti-inflammatory	Powder 2–3 g/day
35	*Datura metel* L.	Solanaceae	Shrub	Dhatura	Leaf, Seed	Asthma	Leaf smoke (traditional)
36	*Dioscorea bulbifera* L.	Dioscoreaceae	Climber	Air Yam	Tuber	Digestive disorders	Cooked tuber 25–50 g
37	*Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Herb	Bhringraj	Whole plant	Hair growth	Juice 10 ml/day
38	*Erythrina variegata* L.	Fabaceae	Tree	Indian Coral Tree	Bark, Leaf	Fever	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
39	*Evolvulus alsinoides* (L.) L.	Convolvulaceae	Herb	Shankhpushpi	Whole plant	Memory enhancement	Juice 10 ml/day
40	*Ficus religiosa* L.	Moraceae	Tree	Peepal	Leaf, Bark	Diabetes	Bark decoction 20 ml/day

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41	*Glycyrrhiza glabra* L.	Fabaceae	Herb	Licorice	Root	Cough	Powder 2–3 g/day
42	*Gymnema sylvestre* (Retz.) R.Br. ex Sm.	Apocynaceae	Climber	Gurmar	Leaf	Diabetes	Leaf powder 1–2 g/day
43	*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.	Malvaceae	Shrub	Hibiscus	Flower, Leaf	Skin disorders	Paste externally
44	*Hibiscus sabdariffa* L.	Malvaceae	Herb	Roselle	Calyx	Fever	Infusion 20 ml/day
45	*Holarrhena antidysenterica* (L.) Wall. ex A.DC.	Apocynaceae	Tree	Kurchi	Bark, Seed	Dysentery	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
46	*Justicia adhatoda* L.	Acanthaceae	Shrub	Malabar Nut	Leaf	Bronchitis	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
47	*Lantana camara* L.	Verbenaceae	Shrub	Lantana	Leaf, Flower	Wound healing	Leaf paste
48	*Leucas aspera* (Willd.) Link	Lamiaceae	Herb	Thumbai	Whole plant	Fever	Decoction 20 ml/day
49	*Mallotus philippensis* (Lam.) Müll.Arg.	Euphorbiaceae	Tree	Kamala	Seed, Bark	Skin diseases	Seed powder externally
50	*Mangifera indica* L.	Anacardiaceae	Tree	Mango	Leaf, Fruit	Diabetes	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
51	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Moringaceae	Tree	Drumstick	Leaf, Fruit	Nutrition	Leaf powder 5 g/day
52	*Murraya koenigii* (L.) Spreng.	Rutaceae	Shrub	Curry Leaf	Leaf	Digestion	Infusion 15 ml/day
53	*Ocimum gratissimum* L.	Lamiaceae	Herb	Ram Tulasi	Leaf	Fever	Decoction 20 ml/day
54	*Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.	Lamiaceae	Herb	Tulasi	Leaves	Respiratory ailments	Infusion 15–20 ml/day
55	*Oldenlandia corymbosa* L.	Rubiaceae	Herb	Chhoti Huma	Whole plant	Fever	Decoction 20 ml/day
56	*Phyllanthus niruri* L.	Phyllanthaceae	Herb	Choromandra	Whole plant	Jaundice	Juice 15–20 ml/day
57	*Piper betle* L.	Piperaceae	Climber	Betel Leaf	Leaf	Mouth ulcers	1–2 leaves/day

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58	*Piper longum* L.	Piperaceae	Climber	Long Pepper	Fruit	Cough	Powder 1 g/day
59	*Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre	Fabaceae	Tree	Karanja	Seed, Leaf	Skin diseases	Seed oil externally
60	*Psidium guajava* L.	Myrtaceae	Tree	Guava	Leaf, Fruit	Diarrhea	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
61	*Punica granatum* L.	Lythraceae	Tree	Pomegranate	Fruit, Bark	GI disorders	Fruit juice 50 ml/day
62	*Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex Kurz	Apocynaceae	Herb	Sarpagandha	Root	Hypertension	Powder 250–500 mg/day
63	*Ricinus communis* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub	Castor	Leaf, Seed	Constipation	Oil 5–10 ml once
64	*Santalum album* L.	Santalaceae	Tree	Sandalwood	Wood, Oil	Skin ailments	Paste externally
65	*Sida cordifolia* L.	Malvaceae	Herb	Bala	Root, Leaf	Rheumatism	Root decoction 20 ml/day
66	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Solanaceae	Herb	Black Nightshade	Leaf, Fruit	Liver disorders	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
67	*Stephania japonica* (Thunb.) Miers	Menispermaceae	Climber	Chinese Stephania	Root	Pain relief	Root decoction 15 ml/day
68	*Swertia chirayita* (Roxb. ex Fleming) Karst.	Gentianaceae	Herb	Chirayata	Whole plant	Fever	Decoction 15 ml/day
69	*Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb. ex DC.) Wight & Arn.	Combretaceae	Tree	Arjuna	Bark	Heart ailments	Bark decoction 20 ml/day
70	*Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertn.) Roxb.	Combretaceae	Tree	Baheda	Fruit	Cough	Powder 2–3 g/day
71	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Combretaceae	Tree	Haritaki	Fruit	Digestive disorders	Powder 3–5 g/day
72	*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers	Menispermaceae	Climber	Guduchi	Stem	Immunity	Decoction 20 ml/day

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S.No	Botanical Name (with Author)	Family	Habit	Local / Trade Name	Part Used	Therapeutic Use	Mode of Preparation (with Quantity)
73	*Tridax procumbens* L.	Asteraceae	Herb	Coatbuttons	Whole plant	Wound healing	Paste externally
74	*Tribulus terrestris* L.	Zygophyllaceae	Herb	Gokshura	Whole plant	Urinary disorders	Decoction 20 ml/day
75	*Vitex negundo* L.	Lamiaceae	Shrub	Nirgundi	Leaf, Root	Rheumatism	Leaf decoction 20 ml/day
76	*Withania somnifera* (L.) Dunal	Solanaceae	Shrub	Ashwagandha	Root	Vitality	Powder 3–5 g/day
77	*Zanthoxylum rhetsa* DC.	Rutaceae	Tree	Tejpata	Bark, Leaf	Toothache	Bark paste
78	*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe	Zingiberaceae	Herb	Ginger	Rhizome	Cold, nausea	Decoction 15 ml/day

5. Discussion

The documentation of 78 medicinal plant species belonging to 44 families shows that traditional healthcare practices in the Eastern Ghats are strongly based on local plant diversity and long-standing cultural knowledge. Similar patterns of species richness and dominant families have been reported from other tribal regions of the Eastern Ghats and peninsular India, highlighting the ethnomedicinal importance of this region.Herbs (35.90%) and trees (34.62%) were the most commonly used life forms. Herbs are easily available and widely used for common ailments, while trees provide medicinal parts throughout the year. Fabaceae was the dominant family, followed by Apocynaceae and Lamiaceae, which are known for their wide distribution and rich medicinal properties. Leaves were the most frequently used plant part (42.31%), indicating relatively sustainable use, although notable use of roots and bark raises conservation concerns. Most remedies were used to treat digestive disorders, fever, diabetes, and respiratory ailments, reflecting common health problems in tribal communities. Decoction was the main method of preparation, showing traditional knowledge of effective and simple medicinal practices.

6. Conclusion

The present study documents **78 ethnomedicinal plant species belonging to 44 families**, highlighting the rich traditional knowledge and close dependence of tribal communities on local plant resources for primary healthcare in the study area. The dominance of herbs and trees, extensive use of leaves, and a high proportion of remedies for digestive disorders, fever, diabetes, and respiratory ailments reflect both ecological availability and prevailing health needs. Despite the effectiveness and accessibility of these traditional practices, increasing pressure on natural resources and the gradual loss of indigenous knowledge pose serious challenges. Therefore, there is an urgent need for **scientific validation, conservation of medicinal plants, and systematic preservation of traditional knowledge** to ensure sustainable utilization and potential future pharmacological applications.

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Mating Strategies and Courtship Behaviour of Mud Crab *Scylla serrata* (Forskal, 1775) under Natural Vs. Captive Conditions.

Kirankumar Pappu[1]*, K Subhashini Devi[2], Elia Bandari[3], Madina Saheb Shaik[4] & Bollogu Ahmad Ali Baba[5].
1&3. Department of Zoology & Aquaculture, P.R. Government College (A), Kakinada – 533001, Andhra Pradesh, India.
2. Department of Zoology, Government College (A), Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.
4. Department of Zoology, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada Dist., Andhra Pradesh, India.
5. Department of Zoology, Government Degree College, Pithapuram, Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.
***Corresponding Author:** Dr Kirankumar Pappu, Associate Professor, Department of Zoology & Aquaculture, P.R. Government College (A), Kakinada – 533001, Andhra Pradesh, India.
E.mail: drpappukk@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The mud crab *Scylla serrata* is a highly valuable crustacean supporting coastal fisheries and aquaculture throughout the Indo-Pacific region. Understanding its mating strategies and courtship behaviour is essential for both sustainable wild harvest and the optimisation of hatchery based seed production. In natural mangrove estuarine habitats, *S. serrata* displays complex courtship, precopulatory guarding, and soft-shell mating associated with female pubertal moults, typically followed by offshore spawning migrations. In captivity, environmental confinement, altered sex ratios, stocking densities and husbandry practices (such as eyestalk ablation and controlled feeding) can significantly modify reproductive timing, mate choice, guarding duration and mating success. This review synthesises published information up to 2025 on sexual dimorphism, reproductive cycles, courtship displays, copulatory patterns, and post-copulatory behaviour of *S. serrata*, contrasting natural and captive conditions. We integrate insights from comparative studies on other *Scylla* species where behavioural details for *S. serrata* are limited, with special attention to the effects of sex ratio, stocking density, environmental cues and hormonal regulation on mating success and broodstock performance. Conceptual and summary data are presented in tables and figures, including timelines of courtship phases, comparative mating success under different culture regimes, and schematic photographs illustrating key mating postures. We highlight how captivity may shorten or disrupt courtship, alter male to male competition, facilitate interspecific mating, and change reproductive outputs such as spawning frequency and fecundity. The article concludes that a deeper ethological understanding of *S. serrata* including natural mate choice criteria, chemical signalling, and the interaction between endocrine status and environmental cues will be critical for refining broodstock management protocols and for developing ecosystem based management of mud-crab fisheries.

KEYWORDS: Mud crab, *Scylla serrata*, courtship behaviour, mating strategies, captive breeding, broodstock management, natural mangrove habitats.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Biological and economic importance of *Scylla serrata*

The giant mud crab *Scylla serrata* (Family Portunidae) is widely distributed across the Indo-West Pacific, inhabiting estuaries and mangrove swamps from East Africa to the western Pacific. It is one of the most valuable brachyuran crabs in coastal fisheries and aquaculture, with high demand in domestic and export markets due to its large size, rapid growth and high meat quality. As a euryhaline, benthic predator–scavenger, *S. serrata* also plays a key ecological role in mangrove

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ecosystems, contributing to nutrient recycling and sediment bioturbation. Mud crabs are an important source of income for coastal communities as they are easily caught using simple traps or nets, remain alive for considerable periods after capture, and are of high commercial value.

In recent decades, increased market demand and habitat degradation have led to concern about overexploitation of wild mud-crab stocks. This has stimulated the development of hatchery and grow-out technologies for *S. serrata* and related species as an alternative seed source for aquaculture and restocking. Efficient captive breeding, however, depends on detailed knowledge of the species' reproductive biology, including its natural mating systems and courtship behaviour.

3.2. Why mating strategies and courtship matter

For many decapod crustaceans, mating is a brief but highly constrained event shaped by moulting cycles, morphology (such as chelae size), and habitat structure. In *Scylla* species, mating is typically associated with female soft-shell stages following pubertal moults, during which males guard receptive females before, during and after copulation. Any disruption to these finely tuned processes—such as altered sex ratios, handling stress, or limited shelters—can reduce mating success and lead to poor hatchery performance.

A clear understanding of mating strategies under natural conditions provides the baseline against which captive behaviours can be interpreted. Comparing these two contexts is particularly important for *S. serrata* because (i) the species is often held at high densities, (ii) broodstock may be sourced from multiple geographic populations, and (iii) captive conditions can facilitate hybridisation with other *Scylla* species.

3.3. Objectives and scope

This article aims to:

1. Synthesise current knowledge on mating strategies and courtship behaviour of *S. serrata* under natural conditions.
2. Describe how these behaviours are modified in captivity, including hatchery and broodstock ponds.
3. Compare reproductive performance metrics (e.g. mating success, fecundity, spawning frequency) between natural and captive settings where data are available.
4. Highlight knowledge gaps and propose research priorities to improve broodstock management and sustainable exploitation.

Because detailed ethograms are not always available for *S. serrata*, we also incorporate comparative evidence from *Scylla olivacea*, *Scylla paramamosain* and *Scylla tranquebarica* where the general mating pattern is similar and relevant.

4. Literature Review

4.1. Sexual dimorphism and reproductive morphology

Adult male *S. serrata* typically exhibit larger and more robust chelipeds relative to females, reflecting sexual selection and their role in competition and courtship displays. Frontiers Females have a broader abdomen adapted to egg carrying, while males have a narrow, triangular abdomen. External sexual dimorphism is accompanied by internal reproductive structures such as paired testes and vasa deferentia in males and ovaries with spermathecae in females. www.slideshare.

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Knuckey (1996), as synthesised in the FAO mud-crab culture manual, showed that the presence of mating scars on male sternites can be used as a functional indicator of maturity and recent mating in *S. serrata*.FAOHome Females store sperm in dorsal seminal receptacles, consistent with the "soft-shell, dorsal-receptacle" mating strategy described for eubrachyuran crabs.MDPI. Kirankumar Pappu (2009), Mating and spawning takes place throughout the year but there are definite peaks.

4.2. Reproductive cycles in natural populations

Field studies from India, South Africa and Southeast Asia indicate that *S. serrata* can reproduce year-round in tropical regions but often shows one or two peak spawning seasons linked to monsoonal patterns and estuarine productivity. Females reach functional maturity at carapace widths of roughly 80–100 mm, and berried females have been captured both in estuaries and offshore waters, indicating spawning migrations.

Recent work continues to refine our understanding of reproductive timing. Dewiyanti *et al.* (2024) reported sex ratios, size at maturity and reproductive stages for *S. serrata* in Indonesian waters, confirming extended reproductive seasons with local peaks.Bio Conferences Similar studies in *S. olivacea*, which shares habitat with *S. serrata* in many areas, also reveal multiple breeding peaks influenced by local environmental conditions.

4.3. Natural courtship and mating behaviour

Classic accounts of *S. serrata* reproductive biology describe mating occurring in estuaries or brackish mangrove channels, usually prior to offshore spawning.eprints.cmfri.org. Courtship begins with a premating embrace in which a hard-shell male clasps a hard-shell premoult female beneath his body using his walking legs and chelipeds. This precopulatory guarding can last several days and provides protection while the female completes her premoult period.

When the female moults into a soft-shell state, the male assists her by supporting the carapace and removing the old exoskeleton. After a short interval, the male inverts the female so that the ventral surfaces are in contact; copulation then occurs over several hours, during which spermatophores are transferred to the female's seminal receptacles. The male then resumes a guarding posture until the female's new carapace hardens, reducing predation risk and interference from rival males.

Ethological studies that directly observe *S. serrata* in nature are relatively rare, but a general pattern of long precopulatory associations and post-copulatory guarding has been inferred from captive observations and field captures of guarding pairs.

4.4. Behaviour and daily activity under controlled conditions

Laboratory and tank studies provide more detailed descriptions of mud-crab behaviour, albeit under artificial conditions. Observation of *S. serrata* in controlled aquaria indicates a repertoire of behaviours including resting, active movement, feeding, burrowing, nest digging, burying and mating.ResearchGate Activity patterns often follow diel cycles, with increased movement during dusk and night, which likely influences courtship frequency and interactions.

In *S. olivacea*, which has been studied intensively as a proxy, Waiho *et al.* (2015) reported that mating behaviour can be divided into distinct phases: precopulation (including searching, courtship and guarding), moulting, copulation, and post-copulatory guarding, spanning around 82 h under hatchery conditions.

4.5. Captive breeding and broodstock management

Captive breeding of *S. serrata* has progressed substantially, with hatchery manuals and technical reports now widely available. Techniques include stocking wild berried females, maintaining mixed-sex broodstock, and using eyestalk ablation to enhance spawning frequency. Studies in Bangladesh and Southeast Asia have demonstrated successful production of millions of zoeae and subsequent crablets from captive broodstock.

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However, captive mating behaviour can differ markedly from natural patterns due to tank confinement, limited shelters, artificial feeds, and management interventions. Courtship duration may be shortened, aggressive interactions intensified, and mating success strongly affected by sex ratio and density. In *S. olivacea*, for example, manipulated sex ratios and stocking densities significantly affected mating success, pre- and post-copulatory guarding durations and the incidence of injuries.

4.6. Endocrine and environmental regulation of moulting and mating

Recent studies highlight the complex hormonal control of puberty moulting and mating behaviour in mud crabs. Nurcahyono *et al.* (2024) investigated tidal influences and hormonal changes associated with puberty moulting and mating in *S. serrata*, emphasising the interaction between environmental cues (salinity, tides) and endocrine signals.ejabf.journals.ekb.eg Wu *et al.* (2025) more broadly analysed how mating behaviour shapes ovarian development and endocrine pathways in *Scylla* spp., confirming that mating, guarding and sperm deposition are tightly integrated with oocyte maturation. Kirankumar Pappu (2009), After mating the female migrates to sea to release her eggs (spawning) which are carried under her abdomen.

Eyestalk ablation, widely used to enhance reproductive output in crustaceans, alters neuroendocrine regulation of vitellogenesis and spawning, but may also influence behaviour, potentially decoupling spawning from natural mating cycles in captive *S. serrata*.

5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

5.1. Literature search strategy

A structured literature search was carried out using scientific databases (e.g. ScienceDirect, Web of Science, Google Scholar) and institutional repositories, focusing on publications up to early 2025. Search terms included combinations of "*Scylla serrata*", "mud crab", "mating behaviour", "courtship", "reproductive biology", "captive breeding", "broodstock", "sex ratio" and "stocking density", as well as broader terms relating to *Scylla* spp. reproductive ecology.

Primary research articles, review papers, technical manuals and theses were included if they contained explicit information on mating strategies, courtship sequences, reproductive cycles or broodstock performance under natural or captive conditions. While priority was given to *S. serrata*, studies on *S. olivacea*, *S. paramamosain* and *S. tranquebarica* were incorporated when behavioural traits and management implications were generalisable.

5.2. Data extraction and synthesis

From each study, data were extracted on:

- Habitat or culture system (natural mangrove/estuary, pond, tank, hatchery)
- Sex ratio and stocking density where relevant
- Description and duration of courtship and mating phases
- Mating success (percentage of pairs that copulated)
- Reproductive outputs (spawning frequency, fecundity, egg quality, larval survival)
- Indicators of stress or abnormal behaviour (cannibalism, injuries, failed moults)

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Where numerical values were not provided, qualitative descriptions were used to construct conceptual comparisons. Data from multiple studies were synthesised to build summary tables and schematic figures rather than formal meta-analyses, recognising differences in experimental design and reporting standards.

5.3. Graphical and photographic materials

Graphs in this article are presented as conceptual summaries designed to aid interpretation rather than as direct reproductions of any single dataset, thereby respecting copyright while conveying general trends (e.g. effects of density on mating success). Photographic illustrations are indicated as plates with descriptions focusing on key behavioural postures such as precopulatory guarding, copulation posture and post-copulatory guarding; these can be generated or replaced by original photographs in an empirical study.

6. RESULTS

6.1. Overview of mating strategies in *Scylla serrata*

Across field and captive studies, *S. serrata* conforms to the typical soft-shell mating strategy of brachyuran crabs with dorsal seminal receptacles. Mating occurs when females are freshly moulted and soft-shelled, and males provide prolonged pre- and post-copulatory guarding.

Guarding behaviour serves multiple functions: protecting the vulnerable female, ensuring sperm precedence by excluding rival males, and enhancing the probability of successful sperm transfer. In natural habitats, guarding pairs are often observed in burrows or under roots in mangrove channels, where structural complexity helps minimise predation and interference.

6.2. Courtship sequence under natural conditions

Based on integration of historical and recent accounts, the natural courtship sequence in *S. serrata* can be schematically summarised as follows:

1. **Encounter and assessment** – males patrol or occupy burrows, encountering premoult females. Visual and chemical cues likely mediate recognition of female moulting stage and receptivity.
2. **Precopulatory guarding (hard–hard phase)** – the male clasps the female beneath his body using chelipeds and ambulatory legs, maintaining a "riding" position for 2–7 days, depending on environmental conditions and female moulting status.
3. **Pubertal moulting of the female** – the guarded female undergoes ecdysis while still embraced; the male may assist by stabilising her body and removing the exuviae.
4. **Copulation (hard–soft phase)** – within hours of moulting, the male inverts the soft-shelled female so the ventral surfaces meet; copulation lasts several hours, during which spermatophores are transferred.
5. **Post-copulatory guarding (hard–soft phase)** – the male resumes a guarding posture until the female's exoskeleton hardens, which may take many hours; he then releases her, and she may migrate towards offshore spawning areas.

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Table 1. Conceptual timeline of courtship and mating phases in *S. serrata* under natural conditions

Phase	Typical duration (approx.)	Key features
Encounter & assessment	Minutes–hours	Searching, antennal contact, cheliped display
Precopulatory guarding	2–7 days	Male "riding" female; shared burrow; reduced feeding
Moulting of female	<1 h active ecdysis	Male supports female, removes exuviae
Copulation	Several hours	Ventral–ventral contact, sperm transfer
Post-copulatory guarding	6–24 h or more	Male guards soft-shelled female until hardening

6.3. Modifications of courtship in captivity

In captivity, particularly in tanks or small concrete ponds, environmental conditions differ markedly from those in mangroves: space is limited, refuges are fewer, and crabs are often held at higher densities than in nature. As a result, courtship and mating behaviour may change in several ways:

- **Altered encounter rates:** Higher densities and constrained space increase encounter rates, which can lead to more frequent but also more aggressive interactions, including cheliped damage and cannibalism.
- **Shortened guarding periods:** Some hatchery observations suggest shorter precopulatory guarding durations compared with natural estimates, possibly because males are more frequently disturbed or because females reach moulting more quickly under controlled feeding regimes.
- **Disrupted mate choice:** In nature, females may choose among multiple males based on chelae size or burrow quality, whereas in captivity mate choice is restricted, leading to pairings that might not occur in the wild.
- **Increased hybridisation risk:** Multi-species broodstock systems can promote interspecific mating among *Scylla* spp., which has been successfully induced in captivity and may have implications for genetic integrity if hybrids are released or escape.

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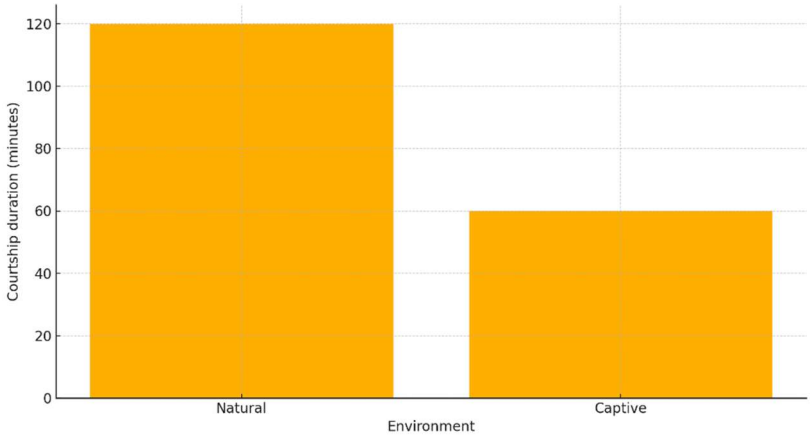


Figure 1. Conceptual comparison of courtship duration in *S. serrata* under natural vs. captive conditions

6.4. Effects of sex ratio and stocking density

Experiments on *S. olivacea* provide valuable guidance for *S. serrata*. Waiho *et al.* (2015) and Asmat-Ullah *et al.* (2021) showed that intermediate stocking densities and balanced sex ratios maximised mating success and minimised injuries; extreme male bias increased aggression, while high densities generally reduced mating success despite increased encounter rates.

Table 2. Conceptual influence of sex ratio and stocking density on mating success in captive *Scylla* spp.

Sex ratio (♂:♀)	Stocking density (crabs m^{-2})	Expected mating success (%)	Notes
01:01	Low–moderate	High (70–90)	Balanced competition, minimal injury
1:2–1:3	Low–moderate	High (60–85)	Favours female choice, reduced male fighting
2:1–3:1	Moderate–high	Moderate (40–60)	Increased male–male aggression
>3:1	High	Low (<40)	Severe aggression, injury, stress

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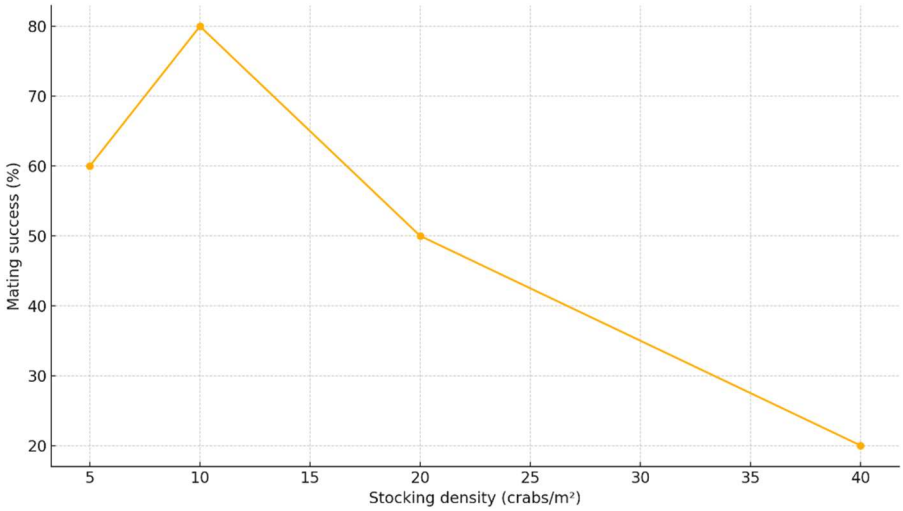


Figure 2. Conceptual graph of mating success vs. stocking density

6.5. Reproductive performance in captive vs. wild conditions

Studies of captive *S. serrata* broodstock in Bangladesh and elsewhere demonstrate that, under suitable management (clean seawater, high-quality feeds, adequate shelters), fecundity and hatching success can be high, with individual females producing millions of eggs per spawning. However, the frequency of successful mating events and the quality of larvae can be strongly influenced by stress, disease and behavioural disruptions.

Recent work on broodstock size effects (mainly in *Scylla* spp.) indicates that larger females often exhibit higher fecundity but not always proportionally better hatching success; optimal broodstock size ranges may therefore balance reproductive output with ease of handling and reduced cannibalism. Kirankumar Pappu (2009), The conservation of brooders is most important because as these releases eggs in millions and the hatched eggs will give the next generation of species.

Table 3. Conceptual comparison of key reproductive metrics in wild vs. captive *S. serrata*

Parameter	**Natural populations**	**Captive broodstock (well-managed)**
Spawning seasonality	Year-round with 1–2 peaks	Can be extended or continuous with manipulation
Mating success	Difficult to quantify; presumed high	Variable; 40–90% depending on sex ratio, density
Fecundity (eggs per spawn)	~1–5 × 10^6	Similar; can be optimised via nutrition

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Spawning frequency	Possibly 1–3 spawns per season	Increased with eyestalk ablation and conditioning
Hybridisation incidence	Low (species segregation by habitat)	Moderate–high in mixed-species systems

6.6. Photographic representation of mating behaviour

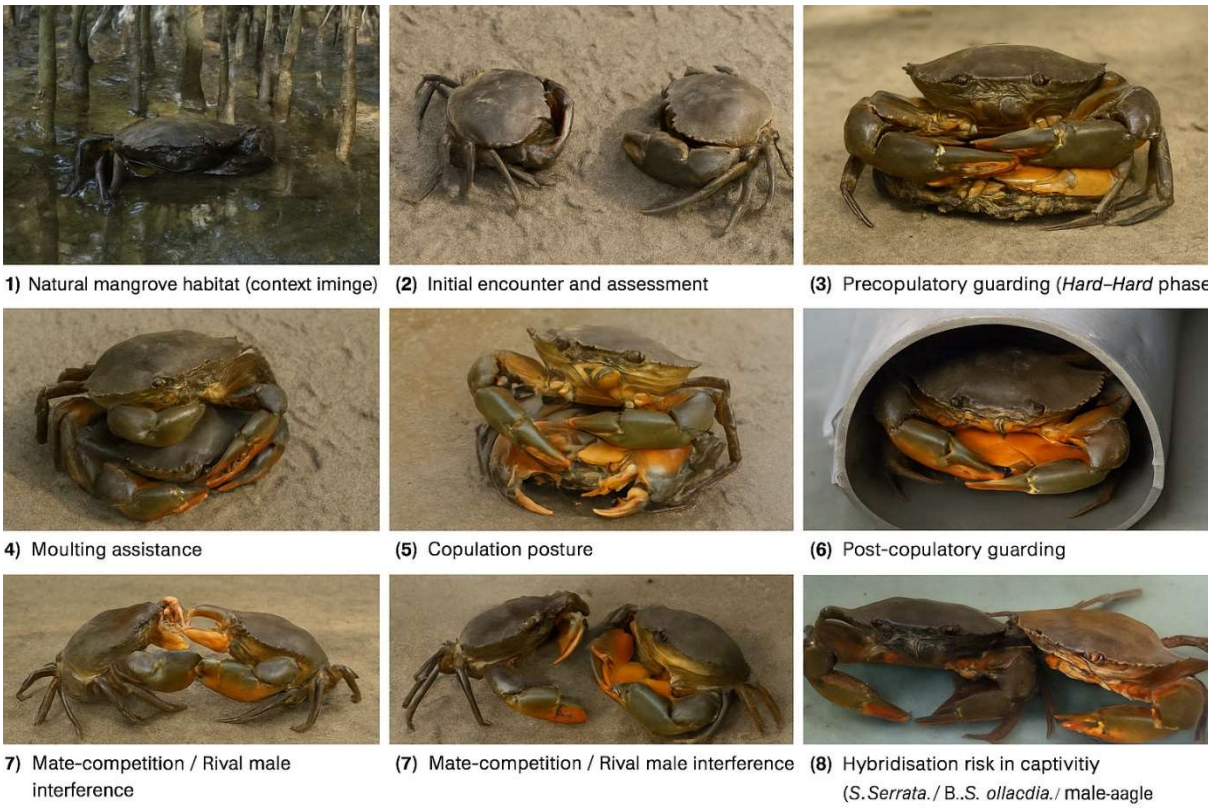


Figure 3: Photographic representation of key courtship and mating behaviours of the giant mud crab *Scylla serrata* (Forsskål, 1775) observed under natural mangrove conditions and in captive environments.

7. DISCUSSION

7.1. Adaptive significance of *S. serrata* mating strategies

The soft-shell mating strategy of *S. serrata* is an adaptation to mechanical constraints (hard exoskeletons) and predation risks during moulting. Long precopulatory guarding ensures that males remain in close proximity to receptive females, thereby increasing paternity assurance, while post-copulatory guarding protects females during sclerotisation and may also

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prevent sperm displacement by rivals. Sexual dimorphism in chelipeds and abdomen width reflects the dual pressures of male–male competition and female brood care; similar patterns across multiple *Scylla* species support this interpretation.

The multi-phase courtship sequence—comprising behavioural, mechanical and physiological components—appears robust in natural mangrove environments, where structural refuges reduce disturbance of guarding pairs. Natural temporal patterns, often linked to tidal and lunar cycles, further facilitate synchronisation of moulting and mating.

7.2. Behavioural disruptions and plasticity in captivity

Captive environments disrupt many of these natural cues. Crabs are often held at constant salinities and water depths, with limited tidal variation. The absence of natural burrows means that guarding pairs may be exposed to conspecifics and human disturbance, shortening guarding periods and increasing conflict.

Nevertheless, *S. serrata* and related species show considerable behavioural plasticity. Captive studies demonstrate that crabs can complete the full sequence of courtship and mating in tanks, and that high mating success can be achieved when sex ratio, density and shelter availability are optimised. The success of induced mating experiments—where soft-shelled females are introduced directly to males—indicates that the core mating programme is strongly driven by the female's moulting and endocrine state, even when courtship is truncated.

This plasticity is, however, a double-edged sword. It enables effective captive breeding but also permits interspecific hybridisation in mixed-species broodstock systems, as shown by Fazhan *et al.* and Gunarto *et al.*, who reported successful mating and hybrid offspring among *Scylla* species in captivity. For aquaculture, hybrids might offer desirable growth traits, but from a conservation perspective, uncontrolled hybridisation could threaten wild genetic integrity if hybrids escape or are released.

7.3. Endocrine mediation and the role of environmental cues

Recent research underscores the importance of integrating behavioural observations with endocrine data. Nurcahyono *et al.* (2024) showed that hormonal profiles associated with puberty moulting and mating in *S. serrata* are influenced by environmental factors such as tides and salinity, underlining the importance of simulating natural variability in hatchery systems.ejabf.journals.ekb.eg Wu *et al.* (2025) similarly emphasised that mating behaviour in *Scylla* spp. directly impacts ovarian development and vitellogenesis, implying that behavioural disruptions in captivity could translate into lower egg quality or altered spawning cycles.

Eyestalk ablation enhances spawning frequency by removing inhibitory neuropeptides but may also decouple spawning from normal mating and moulting cycles, potentially leading to spawning without recent mating and affecting fertilisation success. This highlights the need for integrated studies that track behavioural, endocrine and reproductive endpoints simultaneously.

7.4. Implications for broodstock management

From a practical standpoint, the synthesis presented here suggests several key principles for optimising mating and courtship in captive *S. serrata* broodstock:

1. **Mimic natural habitats and cycles:** Providing complex structures such as PVC pipes, artificial roots or burrows can approximate mangrove refuges, supporting stable guarding pairs and reducing interference. Introducing mild diel or tidal water-level fluctuations may also help synchronise moulting and mating.

2. **Optimise sex ratio and density:** Maintaining near-balanced or slightly female-biased sex ratios at moderate densities appears to maximise mating success while minimising aggression, as evidenced by *Scylla* experiments.

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3. **Protect critical phases:** Regular monitoring to identify premoult females and guarding pairs allows targeted management, such as temporarily isolating pairs to avoid disturbance during moulting and copulation.

4. **Integrate health and nutrition:** High-quality diets and good water quality are essential to maintain normal moulting cycles and reproductive performance, reducing stress that might otherwise disrupt mating behaviour.

5. **Control hybridisation:** Where genetic integrity of cultured or wild stocks is a concern, species should be segregated, or hybridisation intentionally managed, using genetic tools to monitor broodstock and progeny.

7.5. Research gaps and future directions

Despite substantial progress in descriptive and applied studies, several gaps remain:

- **Fine-scale ethograms in natural settings:** Most behavioural sequences have been documented in captivity; systematic observations in the wild using underwater video or acoustic telemetry would help validate captive extrapolations.

- **Chemical communication and mate choice:** Little is known about the specific pheromones or chemical cues used by *S. serrata* to assess mates, competitors or moulting status, even though such cues are central to decapod social behaviour.

- **Integration of behaviour, genetics and fitness:** Long-term studies linking mating strategies (e.g. guarding duration, mate choice) to reproductive success, offspring quality and population genetics are sparse.

- **Climate and habitat change:** Altered salinity regimes, temperature profiles and mangrove degradation may modify natural mating systems and spawning migrations, with likely consequences for fisheries and broodstock sourcing.

8. CONCLUSION

Mating strategies and courtship behaviour in *Scylla serrata* are complex, finely tuned processes shaped by morphological constraints, endocrine regulation and the structure of mangrove–estuarine habitats. In nature, extended precopulatory guarding, soft-shell mating and post-copulatory protection underpin successful reproduction and have likely evolved under strong selection for paternity assurance and survival during vulnerable moulting phases. Captive environments can both disrupt and harness these strategies: while confinement and high-density risk increasing aggression and reducing mating success, appropriate broodstock management—including optimised sex ratios, provision of shelters, and careful monitoring of moulting and guarding—can achieve high reproductive performance. Recent advances in endocrinology and comparative studies across *Scylla* species offer promising tools to refine hatchery protocols, but further research is needed to link behavioural mechanisms with genetic integrity and long-term sustainability of both cultured and wild populations.

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10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The author declares no conflicts of interest related to this article.

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Appendix 1. Suggested Ethogram Categories for Field or Hatchery Observation of Scylla serrata Mating Behaviour

The following ethogram provides a comprehensive set of observable behavioral categories useful for documenting mating and courtship activities of *Scylla serrata* under both natural and captive conditions. Each category includes a definition and observable indicators to ensure consistency across behavioral recordings.

S.No.	Category	Behavioral Element	Description / Observable Indicators	Context
1	Approach and Assessment	Orientation	Male aligns body toward nearby female; antennae directed toward female	Initial contact
		Approach Movement	Slow forward movements, reduced aggression, direct path toward female	Initiating courtship
		Chemosensory Sampling	Active antennule flicking near female; touching female's body with chelae	Mate assessment
2	Courtship Displays	Claw Presentation	Male raises and displays chelae in non-aggressive posture	Attraction signal
		Tactile Stimulation	Gentle stroking of female's carapace or chelipeds by male	Courtship stimulation
		Guarding Behavior	Male positions above or beside female during premolt guarding	Pre-copulatory mate protection
3	Female Receptivity Signals	Passive Acceptance	Female ceases walking, remains stationary when contacted	Indicates readiness
		Molting Preparation	Reduced movement before ecdysis; male remains in guarding position	Pre-copulatory readiness
4	Pre-copulatory Guarding (Cradling)	Cradling Hold	Male holds soft-shell or premolt female beneath thorax	Strategic mate monopolization
		Defensive Aggression	Male fends off rival males while continuing guard	Mate competition avoidance
5		Positioning for Copulation	Female turned ventral side up; male supports female securely	Start of mating

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	Copulation and Spermatophore Transfer	**Genital Contact**	Gonopod insertion observed; body remains still for minutes to hours	Sperm transfer period
		Completion Behavior	Separation after copulation; female remains soft-shelled	End of mating phase
6	**Post-copulatory Association**	**Protective Mate Guarding**	Male continues guarding female post-copulation to prevent rival interference	Post-mating protection
		Separation	Male leaves female to forage or pursue new mating opportunities	End of courtship sequence
7	**Aggression & Interference**	**Male-Male Aggression**	Fighting, claw displays, pushing, or chasing over female	High density or competition
		Female Resistance	Female pushes, snaps, or flees from male	Lack of readiness or stress
8	**Environmental Interactions**	**Burrow Association**	Use of burrows during pre-molt or copulation	Variable by habitat
		Handling Substrate	Female manipulation of sediment before molting or during recovery	Protective and reproductive behavior
9	**Stress or Abnormal Behaviors**	**Escape Attempts**	Rapid climbing against tank walls or frantic swimming	Common in captive stress
		Cannibalistic Biting	Aggressive grasping or mutilation of soft-shell female	Poor stocking or management

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A Comprehensive Review and Taxonomic Compilation of Three Prominent *Caralluma* R.Br. Species (Apocynaceae)

Prameela Rapaka[1] and Paidi Rama Rao[2]
1.Government Degree College for Men Srikakulam district, A.P. India
2. Government Degree College, Togaram, Srikakulam district, A.P. India
prameelachris@yahoo.com

Abstract: The genus *Caralluma* R.Br. (Apocynaceae) comprises succulent herbs noted for their complex floral morphology and pharmacological potential. This paper provides a comprehensive taxonomic compilation and a dichotomous identification key for three significant species: *C. umbellata*, *C. crenulata*, and *C. stalagmifera*. By synthesizing morphological data and regional distribution patterns, this work clarifies the distinctions between these taxa, particularly in light of recent nomenclatural shifts to the genus *Boucerosia*. The study underscores the importance of corona architecture and stem morphology as primary diagnostic tools for species-level identification. This study provides a detailed compilation of these three species, addressing the gaps in comparative morphology, key and illuminating photographs.

Keywords: *Caralluma*, Corona, Succulents, Taxonomy, Ethnobotany, Apocynaceae.

Introduction:

Caralluma R.Br. is a genus of perennial, succulent, and virtually leafless herbs within the family Apocynaceae (subfamily Asclepiadoideae). Characterized by their specialized adaptation to arid and semi-arid environments, these plants feature photosynthetic, angular stems and distinct star-shaped flowers. The blossoms are often sapromyiophilous, emitting a pungent odour to attract dipteran pollinators, such as carrion flies.

The genus is widely distributed across Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and South Asia. In the Indian context, species such as *Caralluma umbellata* and *C. fimbriata* are integral components of the xerophytic flora of the **Eastern Ghats**, where they are known in local dialects as **"Stone-plants"** or **"Siri-kommulu."** Or "Kundeti kommulu" The etymology of *Caralluma* is derived from the Arabic *qarh al-luhum*, meaning "wound in the flesh" or "fleshy plant," a reference to the robust, succulent nature of the stems.

According to the International Plant Names Index (IPNI 2026), there are currently 30 accepted species within the genus. These plants typically colonize dry rocky slopes, scrublands, and semi-desert regions. While *C. fimbriata* has gained global recognition for its edible and anorectic (appetite-suppressing) properties, other regional taxa—notably *C. umbellata*, *C. stalagmifera*, and *C. crenulata*—remain comparatively under-documented despite their ecological and pharmacological significance. This paper seeks to bridge this gap by providing a unified taxonomic resource to assist botanists and pharmacognosists in the precise identification of these significant species.

Morphological Characteristics

Stems fleshy, erect or creeping, usually 4-angled or ribbed, Green to gray-green, photosynthetic, leaves highly reduced or absent, present only as tiny scales; Flowers star-shaped, often dark red, brown, purple, sometimes hairy, emit a carrion-like smell to attract flies; Prominent central corona, contains 5 fused stamens and stigma forming a gynostegium, Pollen grains aggregated into pollinia, gynostegium and pollinia are adapted for insect pollination; fruits paired follicles containing seeds with silky hairs.

Dichotomous Key to the Studied *Caralluma* Species

1a. Flowers arranged in dense, many-flowered globose terminal umbels; stems robust, often exceeding 2 cm in diameter ..... ***C. umbellata***

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1b. Flowers solitary, in pairs, or small clusters, never in dense globose umbels; stems slender to moderate, usually less than 1.5 cm in diameter **2**

2a. Stems distinctly slender (0.5–1 cm thick); flowers primarily solitary; corolla lobes narrowly lanceolate, inner surface dark purple to near-black ..... ***C. stalagmifera***

2b. Stems moderately thick (1–2 cm); flowers usually in clusters of 2–5; corolla lobes ovate or oblong-lanceolate .....***C. crenulata***

Table 1

S.No	Characteristics	*C.crenulata* Wall.	*C. stalagmifera* C.E.C.Fisch	*C. Umbellata* Haw
1	Stem Habit	Stout, deeply 4 angled with prominent teeth	Very slender, erect	Robust 4 angled growing in dense clumps
2	Inflorescence	Terminal clusters often few flowered	Axillary solitary flowers	Large, globose umbels at the stem apex
3	Flower Colour	Colour Deep maroon to dark reddish-brown with creamy sreaks.	deep purple to brownish-black	Dark velvet purple to brownish- maroon
4	Corolla Lobes	Broadly triangular, glabrous with crenulate edges, surface marked with yellowish, irregular, and radiating lines	Elongated, slightly curved outward, Acute at the apex. Lacks prominent surface markings	Triangular and slightly overlapping, Lobes are thick, fleshy, and velvety Often with subtle surface wrinkling
5	Fimbriae on petals	No fimbriae	Apex of the lobes is fringed with fine, dark purple hairs	No fimbriae
6	Corona	Dark purple to black, circular and raised, formed from fusion of staminal and interstaminal corona, Surrounds the gynostegium	Pale yellow to creamy white, circular and slightly raised, surrounds the gynostegium	Dark purple to black glossy, bead-like appearance, contains fused stamens and stigma forming a gynostegium

Methodology

The compilation was based on a comparative analysis of live specimens collected from the Eastern Ghats and a review of classical literature, including Gamble's *Flora of the Presidency of Madras*. Morphological characterization focused on Vegetative traits: Stem thickness, angle prominence, and leaf rudiments. Reproductive traits**:** Inflorescence type (umbel vs. solitary), corolla margin (fimbriate vs. glabrous), and corona structure.

Taxonomic updates were aligned with the APG IV system and the International Plant Names Index (IPNI).

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The economic and ethnobotanical importance:

The economic and ethnobotanical importance of *Caralluma* species has transitioned from traditional survival food to a multi-million dollar global nutraceutical industry. Their value lies primarily in their unique chemical profile, specifically pregnane glycosides, which are rare in the plant kingdom.

1. Pharmacological & Nutraceutical Importance

The most significant economic driver for *Caralluma* is its role in the weight management industry, Appetite Suppression, Anti-Diabetic Properties, Antioxidant & Cytotoxic Activity

2. Ethnobotanical & Culinary Uses

In rural and tribal regions of Andhra Pradesh (such as the Savara and Jatapu communities in Vizianagaram), these plants have deep-rooted cultural value. "Famine Food": Historically known as "portable food," tribal hunters chew raw stems of *C. fimbriata* to suppress hunger and thirst during long forest treks. Vegetable Source: In many parts of South India, the stems are pickled or cooked as a stir-fry (*Kunda etikommulu* curry) after removing the bitter rind.

Used to treat peptic ulcers and inflammation. Applied topically to treat skin infections or snake bites in folk medicine.

3. Commercial & Industrial Value: Standardized Extracts: Large-scale cultivation and extraction of *Caralluma* provide employment in the herbal processing sector. Veterinary Medicine: In some regions, the crushed stems are fed to livestock to treat digestive disorders and improve endurance.

Conservation & Bio-Trade Economics

Because these species are often "wild-harvested" rather than farmed, they have a high conservation value. Bio-piracy Risks: Due to their global demand for weight-loss supplements, there is a risk of over-exploitation in the Eastern Ghats.

Proposed Conservation Strategies

- In-situ Conservation: Establishing "Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas" (MPCAs) in the Eastern Ghats to protect the natural granite-outcrop ecosystems.
- Ex-situ Conservation: Integrating these species into botanical gardens and "Germplasm Banks" (like those at Andhra University or regional research centers).
- Sustainable Harvesting: Training local tribal communities (Savara/Jatapu) in sustainable collection methods—such as harvesting only side branches and leaving the primary root/corm intact.

Conclusion

Caralluma is a fascinating genus of succulent plants adapted to harsh environments, notable for its unusual flowers, medicinal value, and taxonomic complexity. It plays an important role in traditional medicine and is of increasing interest for scientific research and conservation.

The three species studied—*C. umbellata*, *C. crenulata*, and *C. stalagmifera*—exhibit clear morphological divergence despite sharing similar ecological niches. The transition from *Caralluma* to *Boucerosia* for the more robust, umbellate species reflects modern phylogenetic understanding. Accurate identification remains critical for the pharmaceutical industry, particularly for verifying raw materials used in appetite-suppressant supplements. Further molecular barcoding is recommended to reinforce the morphological distinctions presented in this key.

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Figure 1: *Caralluma umbellata*



Figure 2: ***Caralluma stalagmifera***

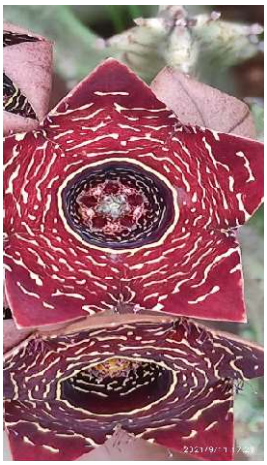


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Figure 3: ***Caralluma crenulata***







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Disease Cure Potential of Endangered and Rare Medicinal Plants

Paidi Rama Rao[1] and V. Mani[2]
1. Government Degree College, Togaram, Srikakulam district, A.P. India
2.B.Sc. Botany – II Year Government Degree College for Men, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract

Medicinal plants constitute an invaluable component of traditional healthcare systems and modern drug development due to their rich content of secondary metabolites such as alkaloids, flavonoids, glycosides, steroids, and phenolic compounds. These bioactive constituents are widely used in the treatment of various diseases including fever, cough, skin disorders, digestive problems, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and neurological ailments. Common medicinal plants such as turmeric, neem, tulsi, ginger, and aloe vera are extensively used in traditional medicine systems like Ayurveda and home remedies.

However, several medicinal plants such as *Rauvolfia serpentina* (Sarpagandha), *Nardostachys jatamansi* (Jatamansi), and other Himalayan species have become endangered due to overexploitation, habitat destruction, illegal trade, and climate change. In addition, rare medicinal plants with limited geographical distribution possess high therapeutic value but face the risk of extinction. India, with nearly 2,000 medicinal plant species, plays a significant role in the global herbal trade, exporting medicinal raw materials and products worth approximately ₹86 crores annually. Conservation and sustainable utilization of endangered and rare medicinal plants are therefore essential to safeguard biodiversity, traditional knowledge, and future drug discovery.

Keywords: Medicinal plants, Endangered species, Rare plants, Disease cure, Conservation, Traditional medicine

1. Introduction

Medicinal plants have been used since ancient times as primary sources of healthcare for human populations. Traditional systems such as Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and folk medicine rely heavily on plant-based remedies for treating a wide range of diseases. These plants possess immense therapeutic potential due to the presence of biologically active compounds that exhibit anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, antidiabetic, anticancer, and neuroprotective properties (Kirtikar & Basu, 2014).

Despite their importance, many medicinal plants are facing serious threats due to overharvesting, habitat loss, deforestation, urbanization, and climate change. Endangered and rare medicinal plants are particularly vulnerable because of their slow growth, poor regeneration capacity, and restricted distribution. The conservation of such plants is crucial not only for maintaining ecological balance but also for ensuring the continued availability of natural medicines for future generations (Kala, 2005).

2. Common Medicinal Plants and Their Disease Cure Potential

2.1 Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

Family: Solanaceae

Origin: India and Southeast Asia

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Plant Parts Used: Roots, leaves, fruits

Ashwagandha is a highly valued medicinal plant in Ayurveda, known for its rejuvenating and adaptogenic properties. It is widely used to reduce stress and anxiety, enhance immunity, and improve physical strength and stamina. The plant exhibits anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and anti-aging effects and is effective in treating insomnia, fatigue, and nervous disorders. Ashwagandha also improves memory, brain function, and hormonal balance, making it useful in fertility-related treatments (Singh et al., 2011).

2.2 Tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*)

Family: Lamiaceae

Origin: India

Plant Parts Used: Leaves, seeds, roots

Tulasi is considered a sacred and medicinal plant in India. It contains essential oils rich in eugenol, phenols, tannins, and ursolic acid, which possess antimicrobial and anticancer properties. Tulasi is used to treat cough, bronchitis, diarrhea, skin diseases, and fever. It acts as a stomachic, expectorant, and prophylactic agent against malaria, cholera, and influenza. The plant also improves stress resistance, regulates blood pressure and blood sugar levels, and shows insecticidal activity against mosquitoes (Pattanayak et al., 2010).

2.3 Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

Family: Zingiberaceae

Origin: India and Southeast Asia

Plant Part Used: Rhizome

Turmeric contains curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compound. It is widely used in the treatment of wounds, digestive disorders, skin diseases, arthritis, diabetes, and cardiovascular problems. Turmeric also acts as a natural antiseptic and supports liver health and immune function (Aggarwal & Harikumar, 2009).

2.4 Neem (*Azadirachta indica*)

Family: Meliaceae

Origin: India

Plant Parts Used: Leaves, bark, seeds, flowers

Neem is well known for its antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, and anti-inflammatory properties. It is extensively used for treating skin diseases, fever, dental problems, blood purification, and boosting immunity. Neem plays a significant role in both traditional medicine and modern herbal formulations (Biswas et al., 2002).

3. Endangered Medicinal Plants

3.1 Sarpagandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina*)

Family: Apocynaceae

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Plant Part Used: Roots

Sarpagandha is an important medicinal plant used in Ayurveda, Unani, and modern medicine. Its roots contain alkaloids such as reserpine, ajmaline, and serpentine, which are effective in treating hypertension, insomnia, anxiety, and cardiovascular disorders. Due to excessive harvesting of roots, habitat destruction, illegal trade, and slow regeneration, Sarpagandha has become endangered in many regions of India (Pandey et al., 2013).

Conservation measures include cultivation in herbal farms, regulated harvesting, ex-situ conservation in botanical gardens, tissue culture techniques, and awareness programs for local communities.

3.2 Jatamansi (*Nardostachys jatamansi*)

Family: Valerianaceae

Plant Parts Used: Roots and rhizomes

Jatamansi is a valuable Himalayan medicinal plant used for treating insomnia, anxiety, memory loss, digestive disorders, and skin diseases. It possesses neuroprotective, sedative, and aromatic properties and is also used in perfumes and traditional rituals. Overexploitation, climate change, habitat loss, and illegal trade have led to its endangered status (Kala et al., 2006).

4. Rare Medicinal Plants

4.1 Tianma (*Gastrodia elata*)

Family: Orchidaceae

Plant Part Used: Rhizome

Tianma is a rare medicinal orchid used in traditional East Asian medicine. It is effective in treating headaches, vertigo, epilepsy, nervous disorders, tremors, and stroke recovery. Due to its limited distribution and specialized habitat requirements, Tianma is considered rare and vulnerable.

4.2 Golden Eye-Grass (*Curculigo orchioides*)

Family: Hypoxidaceae

Plant Part Used: Rhizome

Golden Eye-grass is used as an aphrodisiac, rejuvenator, and strength tonic. It improves stamina, immunity, and treats urinary disorders, arthritis, and joint pain. Excessive collection from the wild has made this plant rare in natural habitats (Nair et al., 2013).

4.3 Crepe Ginger (*Costus igneus*)

Family: Costaceae

Plant Parts Used: Leaves and rhizomes

Crepe ginger is widely known for its antidiabetic properties and is used to control blood sugar levels. It also exhibits anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and digestive benefits and is useful in treating fever, cough, and skin diseases.

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5. Conservation and Sustainable Utilization

Conservation of endangered and rare medicinal plants is essential for sustaining traditional medicine systems and pharmaceutical industries. Both in situ conservation (protected areas, biosphere reserves) and ex situ conservation (botanical gardens, seed banks, tissue culture) play a vital role. In India, organizations such as the National Medicinal Plants Board under the Ministry of AYUSH actively support conservation, cultivation, and sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants.

6. Conclusion

Endangered and rare medicinal plants are invaluable resources for disease cure and future drug discovery. Their protection ensures the preservation of biodiversity, traditional knowledge, and potential life-saving therapies. Sustainable utilization, scientific cultivation, community awareness, and strict conservation measures are necessary to safeguard these plants for future generations.

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Mini check list of wood mycoflora from eco-regions of Gujarat, India: a review

Praveen Kumar Nagadesi[1]* Venkatesh Rampilla[2]* Shraddha Olpadkar[3]

[1]Department of Botany, School of Life Science, St. Joseph's University, Lalbagh road, Bengaluru - 560027, Karnataka, India.

[2]Department of Botany, Government College (A), Rajamahendravaram 533105, East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh, India

[3]Department of Botany, J.M. *Shah Science College,* Ring Road, Lilotri Bazar, *Jambusar*, Gujarat - 392150, India.

*Email: nagadesipraveenkumar@yahoo.com; venkateshrampilla70@gmail.com

Abstract

Here we provide, for the first time, the check list of micro and macro fungal diversity from timbers of Gujarat state. The survey revealed that the economically important woods present in Gujarat were 14 and locally available common woods were seven. A total of 136 species of lignicolous fungi belonging to Mucoromycota, Zygomycota Ascomyceta and Basidiomyceta fungi were reported from Gujarat, India.

These lignicolous fungi were belonging to the families Xylariaceae, Auriculariaceae, Ganodermataceae, Shizophyllaceae, Stecherinaceae, Hymenochaetaceae, Lachnocladiaceae, Schizoporaceae, Fomitopsidaceae, Polyporaceae. All the lignicolous fungi are new to study area. The family with largest genera is Polyporaceae. The commonly observed lignicolous fungi on woods belongs to Ascomycota and Basidiomycota, were *Schizophyllum commune, Flavodon flavus Ganoderma lucidum Daldinia concentrica Xylaria polymorpha A. niger A. flavus, T. harzianum* and *T. viride*.

Introduction

Fungi compose about 4% of the known species of life on earth and about 8% of estimated unknown species. About one billion years ago, the Kingdom Mycota becomes an independent eukaryotic line under evolution (Lücking and Nelsen 2018) The recent predictions on fungal diversity was produced by DNA-based studies reveals there are 2–3 million species of fungi globally, with a best estimate of 2.5 million confirming fungi as the second largest kingdom of eukaryotes after animals (Niskanen et al. 2023). Antonelli et al., (2023) reported that estimation of fungal diversity ranged from 250,000 to 19 million; between 92% and 95% of fungi have yet to be scientifically described. Gujarat has 9.69% of its geographical area declared as forest. Gujarat has a total forest cover of 14,946 sq km, of which 114 sq km is very dense forest, 6,231 sq km is moderate dense forest and 8,601 sq km is open forest. Mahal Forest range of Dangs is a gift, which is sent by nature to Gujarat, positioned at 20.91° N latitude and 73.663° E longitudes with a wide range of ecosystem. In spite of this geographic, climatic and vegetational diversity, information on the fungal diversity of the state is scanty. Recently, few sporadic reports on fungal diversity of Gujarat may be found in the literature but they are only restricted to pathogenic fungi related to agricultural crops (Dhingani et al. 2013,) very few on saprophytic fungi occurring in the state (Nagdesi & Arya 2012, 2014). Wood rotting fungi that cause diseases in wood of forest are called Lignicolous fungi (Nagadesi 2018). Gujarat was theoretically estimated to enshrine a considerable quantum of macro fungal diversity. According to our liberal and conservative estimates there may be 300 to 440 species of macrofungi, respectively in Gujarat (Lahiri et al., 2008).

Fungal diversity studies

The documentation of micro and macro fungal diversity in Gujarat state was started in 19th century by different scientist. Detailed fungal diversity study was started in 2003 from different parts of Gujarat to identify the micro and macro fungi that destroy wood logs in different forests. During these studies we noticed a great lacuna in fungal diversity of micro and macro fungi occurring in Gujarat. Here we provide, for the first time, a literature-based preliminary checklist of the fungi occurring in the state that is supplemented with our original field work and observations. It includes 334 species of 158 genera belonging to 78 families, which are further categorized into: Ascomycota (59 genera), Basidiomycota (85 genera), Chytridiomycota (2 genera), Oomycota (3 genera), "Zygomycota" (4 genera) and Myxomycota (5 genera). (Rajput et al

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2015). Out of these, 37 species from 20 genera were found to be from the family Polyporaceae. Among these, five species are being reported for the first time here as new distribution records. The highest number of species is represented by the genus *Trametes* (Vasava et al 2018).

Mushrooms of Gujarat

The vast diversity of mushroom species found on different substratum in the premises of Sundarvan-A Nature Discovery Centre, Ahmedabad. The diversity of Mushroom belonging to 18 families, 24 Genus and 32 species (Shah et al., 2023). Zariya place (Longitude 73.187686˚ and Latitude 20.496336˚), which is situated at Dharampur Tehsil, Valsad District of Gujarat; shown approximately, 30-40 species of Basidiomycetes fungi with different families like Psathyrellaceae, Mycenaceae, Omphalotaceae, Bolbitiaceae, Agaricaceae, Marasmiaceae, Inocybaceae, Pluteaceae, Tricholomataceae, Ganodermataceae, Geastraceae, Cortinariaceae, Phallaceae were identified in this place (Patel et al., 2022). The floristic composition of Mahal forest regions of Dang, Gujarat, has been studied by several researchers. The enormous biomass in the forest favors variety of edible and medicinal mushrooms; so frequently appeared species belong to genera *Agaricus*, *Pleurotus*, *Termitomyces, Cantharellus, Ganoderma, Xylaria, Schizophyllum, Polypores* (Parihar et al 2015). From the Victoria Park reserved forests, Bhavnagar, 15 species of fungi belonging to Basidiomycota with 10 families were recorded. (Gohil and Solanki 2015). The Dediapada forests area along with village like Songadh, Bheskatri, Mahal, Ahwa, Samgahan, Galkund, Waghai, Saputara, Dolvan range, etc. shown a total of 94 species and 45 genera belong to 30 families. *Agaricus* species was highest having 10 species followed by *Marasmius* 7, *Termitomyces* 5, *Pleurotus* 4, *Auricularia* 3, *Leucoagaricus* 3 of Basidiomycetes in the forest region of Dediapada, Gujarat, India (Kokni et al., 2019). Chandulal et al. (2013) collected 17 species of mushrooms viz., *Daldinia concentrica, Lycoperedon pyriforme, Scleroderma citrinum, Agaricus campestris, Cantharellus umbonatus, Clitocybe flaccida, Collybia butyracea, Coriolus versicolor, Galerina unicolor, Ganoderma applanatum, G. lucidum, Hygrophorus eburnes, Laetiporus sulphureus, Lentineullus cochleatu, Lepiotaorganensis, Oudemansiella redicata* and *Schizophyllum commune* from Gujarat.

Ascomycetes of Gujarat

Extensive fieldwork in all 33 districts including different forests of Gujarat state reveals 19 species of Xylariaceae belonging to three genera viz. *Daldinia* (3 species), *Hypoxylon* (2 species) and *Xylaria* (14 species). From these species, *Daldinia childiae, Hypoxylon rickii, Xylaria apiculata, X. carpophila, X. cubensis, X. filiformis, X. gigentea, X. hypoxylon, X. longipes, X. nigripes, X. primorskensis* and *X. psidii* are recorded for the first time from Gujarat. *Hypoxylon fragiforme* and *Xylaria polymorpha* are exclusively observed on the bark of *Bombax ceiba* and *Lannea coromandelica* as well as dead trees (Koyani et al. 2016). The genus *Geastrum* Pers. (Geastraceae), are being recorded for the first time from the Gujarat State. Specimens were collected from Vansda National Park and Jambughoda Wildlife Sanctuary. The morphology and molecular identification based on ITS sequences data confirmed that *G. saccatum G. rufescens* and *G. triplex* Jungh (Patel et al., 2020).

Results and Discussion

Wood decay fungi of Gujarat

Wood decay fungi are mainly associated with different woody materials like fallen branches, stem, trunk, decaying woods along with bark and leaf litter. These macrofungi causes mainly white rot and brown rot in living trees and wounded timber plants. These fungi have the capacity to produce the wood decay enzymes like cellulolytic, hemicellulolytic, xylinolytic, ligninolytic, lignin modifying enzymes, lacases and peroxidases which involved in decay and loss of strength of wood. The present paper is working on the microscopic and macroscopic fungi on timber yielding plants from Gujarat region (Table 1). The wood decay fungi from eco-regions of Gujarat includes a total of 136 species with 33 microfungi and 103 macrofungi; belongs to major classes of Mucoromycota (4 taxa), Zoopagomycota (1 taxa) Ascomycota (41 taxa) and Basidiomycota (90 taxa). Out of 41 taxa of Ascomycota 28 species are microscopic and 13 species are macroscopic fungi. All basidiomycota members are macroscopic agaricomycetales and aphyllophorale. All 103 macrofungi belongs to different

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families like Hypoxylaceae (8 taxa), Xylariaceae (5 taxa), Agaricaceae (3 taxa), Bondarzewiaceae (1 taxa), Hericiaceae (3 taxa), Psathyrellaceae (1 taxa), Pleurotaceae (1 taxa), Schizophyllaceae (1 taxa), Lachnocladiaceae (1 taxa), Auriculariaceae (2 taxa), Schizoporaceae (1 taxa), Ganodermataceae (12 taxa), Hymenochaetaceae (20 taxa), Polyporaceae (33 taxa), Nidulariaceae (1 taxa), Fomitopsidaceae (6 taxa), Phallaceae (1 taxa), Steccherinaceae (1 taxa), Stereaceae (1 taxa).

Arya (2004) reported the 7 species of wood deteriorating fungi in which *Trametes varians* and *Lenzites sterioides* are newly reported to India. Wood deteriorating fungi collected from Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary (RWLS) between October 2006 and January 2011 were *Aurificaria indica* var. *leucocephala* var. nov, and *Microporus affinis* var. *glabriceps* var. nov. The four species, like *Fomitopsis cupreorosea, Ganoderma curtisii, Microporus alboater* and *Phellinus shaferi* are new reports for India (Nagadesi and Arya 2012). Wood decay fungi isolated from *Tamarindus indica* were *Daldinia concentrica, Schizophyllum commune, Flavodon flavus, Irpex hydnoides,* and *Phellinus fastuosus*, in which *D. concentrica* causing canker rot is reported for the first time from India and *F. flavus* and *I. hydnoides P. fastuosus* are recorded for the first time on *T. indica* wood causing white rot (Nagadesi and Arya 2015). The various white rot fungi from Ratanmahal wildlife sanctuary of Gujarat were *Hericium abietis* (Weir ex Hubert) K. Harrison, *Hericium cirrhatum* (Pers.) Nikol. *Hericium erinaceus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Pers. The two species of *Hericium* was reported for the first time from the Eco-regions of Gujarat. For the first time *Hericium abietis* was reported from India. All the three species of *Hericium* was used as food by tribal of Gujarat, so the conservation was done (Nagadesi and Olpadkar 2024**)**. 37 species belonging 20 genera of the family Polyporaceae was collected from different biogeographic regions of Gujarat. *Favolus grammocephalus, Lentinus squarrosulus, Polyporus leprieurii, Panus conchatus* and *Trametes trogii* are being reported for the first time from the western part of India (Vasava et al 2018). In the present paper 43 polyporales members was recorded from ecoregiond of Gujarat.

Table 1: The check list of Macro and Microscopic wood decay fungi from timbers of Gujarat, India

S.No	Family	Name of the Lignicolous fungi	Group	Distribution	References
			Mucoromycota		
1	Mucoraceae	*Absidia* van Tieghem	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
2	Mucoraceae	*Mucor racemosus* Bull.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
3	Mucoraceae	*Rhizopus stolonifer* (Ehrenb.) Vuill	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
4	Mucoraceae	*Rhizopus oryzae* Went & H.C. Prinsen Geerligs	"	Rathanmahal	Ngadesi and Arya 2012
5	*Helicocephalidaceae*	*Helicocephalum oligosporum* Drechsler	**Zoopagomycota**	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
			Ascomycota		
6	Pleosporaceae	*Alternaria alternate* (Fr.) Keissl.	**"**	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2015
7	Trichocomaceae	*Aspergillus ochraceus* Wilhelm,	''	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
8	Trichocomaceae	*A. awamori* Nakaz.	''	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
9	Trichocomaceae	*A. flavus* Link.		Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014
10	Trichocomaceae	*A. fumigatus* Fresen.	''	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
11	Trichocomaceae	*A. niger* van Tieghem	''	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot	Nagadesi and Arya

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					2012,2014,2015
12	Botryosphaeriaceae	*Botryosparia ribis* Grossenb. & Duggar,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2015
13	Chaetomiaceae	*Chaetomium globosum* Kunze.	''	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Rajkot	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014,2015
14	Chaetomiaceae	*Chaetomium elatum* Kunze	''	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
15	Chaetosphaeriaceae	*Cylindrotrichum clavatum* W.Gams	''	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
16	Davidiellaceae	*Cladosporium herbarum* (Pers.) Link.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
17	Glomerellaceae	*Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* (Penz.) Penz. & Sacc	"	Baroda, Baruch	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
18	Pleosporaceae	*Curvularia lunata* (Wakker) Boedijn	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
19	Pleosporaceae	*Curvularia prasadii R.L* .Mathur & B.L.Mathur,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya2015
20	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia concentrica* (Bolton) Cesati and de Notaris	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2015,2016 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
21	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia childiae* J. D. Rogers & Y. M. Ju,	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
22	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia eschscholtzii* (Ehrenb.) Rehm,	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
23	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia bambusicola* Y.-M. Ju, J. D. Rogers, & San Martín,	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
24	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia loculata (Lév.) Sacc.,*	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
25	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia petriniae* Y.-M. Ju, J. D. Rogers, & San Martín,	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
26	Hypoxylaceae	*Daldinia sacchari* Dargan & Thind	""	Baroda, Ahmedabad,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,,2016
27	Nectriaceae	*Fusarium moniliforme* J. Sheldon	"	Ahmedabad, Jamnagar	Nagadesi and Arya2014
28	Nectriaceae	*Fusarium oxysporum* Schlecht.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
29	Nectriaceae	*F. pallidoroseum* (Cooke) Saccardo	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Rajkot	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014
30	Hypoxylaceae	*Hypoxylon rubiginosum* (Pers.) Fr.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2016
31	Botryosphaeriaceae.	*Lasiodiplodia theobromae* (Pat.) Griffon & Maubl.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2015
32	Nectriaceae	*Nectria cinnabarina* (Tode) Fr.,	"	Baroda, Ahmedabad,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014

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33	Pestalotiopsidaceae	*Pestalotiopsis glandicola* (Castagne) Steyaert.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2015
34	Pestalotiopsidaceae	*Pestalotiopsis sp*	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2015
35	Didymellaceae	*Phoma multirostrata* (Mathur et al.) Dorenbosch & Boerema.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
36	Valsaceae	*Phomopsis salmalica* A.H. Khan	"	Ahmedabad, Baruch	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
37	Valsaceae	*Phomopsis tamarindii*	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2015
38	Ceratocystidaceae	*Theliviopsis* state of *Ceratocystis paradoxa* (Dade) C. Moreau	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
39	Hypocreaceae	*Trichoderma harzianum* Rifai.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014
40	Hypocreaceae	*T. viride* Pers.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014
41	Hypocreaceae	*Trichoderma* sp.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2014
42	Xylariaceae	*Xylaria. allantoidea* (Berk.) Fr.,	"	Baroda, Rajkot,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2016
43	Xylariaceae	*Xylaria carpophila (Pers.) Fr.*	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya2017
44	Xylariaceae	*Xylaria feejeensis* (Berk.) Fr.	"	Baroda, Baruch,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2016
45	Xylariaceae	*Xylaria nigripes (Klotzsch) Cooke*	‘’	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya 2017
46	Xylariaceae	*Xylaria polymorpha* (Dead Man's fingers)	"	Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2015,2016 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
			Basidiomycota		
47	Agaricaceae	*Agaricus bisporus* (Lange) Sing	**Agaricales**	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
48	Agaricaceae	*Agaricus silvaticus* Schaeff.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
49	Agaricaceae	*Agaricus campestris* L.	"	Baroda, Rajkot,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
50	Bondarzewiaceae	*Bondarzewia berkleyii (Fr.) Sing.*	**Russulales**	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
51	Hericiaceae	*Hericium abietis* (Weir ex Hubert) K. Harrison.	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Olpadkar 2024
52	Hericiaceae	*Hericium cirrhatum* (Pers.) Nikol	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Olpadkar 2024
53	Hericiaceae	*Hericium erinaceus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Pers.	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Olpadkar 2024
54	*Psathyrellaceae*	*Parasola plicatilis (Curtis) Redhead, Vilgalys & Hopple,*	**Agaricales**	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
55	Pleurotaceae	*Pleurotus pulmonarius (Fries) Quélet,*	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016

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56	Schizophyllaceae	*Schizophyllum commune* Fr.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Rajpipla	Padhiar et al., 2009, Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015,2016 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
57	Lachnocladiaceae	*Vararia pallescens* (Schw.) Rogers and Jacks.	**Russulales**	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
			Aphyllophorales		
58	Auriculariaceae	*Auricularia auricula* (L.) Underwood	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014, 2016
59	Auriculariaceae	*A. polytricha (Montagne) Sacc.*	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
60	Schizoporaceae	*Hypodontia comtopsis* Burdsall and Nakasone	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
61	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma applanatum* (Pers. ex. Wallr.) Pat.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014,2020
62	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma carnosum* Pat	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
63	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma colossum (Fr.) Bers*	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016, 2020
64	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma curtisii*, (Berk.) Murill,	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,2020
65	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma lucidum* (Leyss.) Karst.	"	Baroda, Shoolpaneshwar, Rathanmahal, Rajpipla Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar,	Arya 2004 Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2013,2014,2020 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
66	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma megaloma* (Lév.) Bres.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
67	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma multipileum* Ding H	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
68	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma resinaceum* Boud.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
69	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma sessile* Murrill,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
70	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma sichuanense* J.D. Zhao & X.Q. Zhang,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
71	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma tsugae* Murrill	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
72	Ganodermataceae	*Ganoderma zonatum* Murrill.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2020
			Hymenochaetales		
73	Hymenochaetaceae	*Aurificaria indica* (Massee) Reid var. *leucocephala* var. nov,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,
74	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus adamantinus* (Berk.) Ryv.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016

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75	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus badius* (Berk.: Cke) Cunn.,	"	Baroda, Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013, 2014
76	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus caryophyllii* (Racib.) Cunn.	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
77	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus conchatus* (Pers. : Fr.) Quel.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
78	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus extensus* (Lev.) Pat.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
79	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus fastuosus* (Lév.) Ryvarden	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2015
80	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus gilvus* (Schw. Fr.) Pat.	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014
81	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus hoehnelii* (Bres.) Ryv.,	"	Rajpipla	Ngadesi and Arya 2013,
82	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus linteus* (Berk. Curt.) Teng.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
83	Hymenochaetaceae	Phellinus nilgheriensis (mont.) Cunn.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014 Arya 2004 Arya et al.,2008
84	Hymenochaetaceae	Phellinus *noxius* (Corner) Cunn.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
85	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus pachyphloeus* (Pat.) Pat.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
86	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus pectinatus* (Kl.) Quel.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
87	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus rhabarbarinus* (Berk.) Cunn.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
88	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus robustus* (Karst.) Bourd. & Galz.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013
89	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus setulosus* (Llyod) Imaz.,	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013,
90	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phellinus shaferi* (Mur.) Ryv,,	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012,
91	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phelinus xerenticus* (Berk.) Pegler	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
92	Hymenochaetaceae	*Phelinus sp*	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
			Polyporales		
93	Polyporaceae	*Coriolopsis aspera* (Jungh.) Teng.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014 Arya et al 2008
94	Polyporaceae	*Coriolopsis gall*ica (Fries) Ryv.	"	Rathanmahal	Ngadesi and Arya 2014
95	Polyporaceae	*C. telfari (Kl.) Ryv.*	"	Rathanmahal	Ngadesi and Arya 2014
96	Polyporaceae	*Coriolus versicolor* (L.ex Fr.) Quel.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014
97	Nidulariaceae	*Cyanthus striatus*	"	Baroda,	Arya 2004
98	Fomitopsidaceae	*Daedalea adamani*	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
99	Fomitopsidaceae	*Daedalea quercina F. resupinata*.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014

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100	Fomitopsidaceae	*Daedalea unicolor var. hydnoidea* Hennings	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
101	Polyporaceae	*Daedaleopsis confragosa* (Fr.) Schroet.	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
102	Fomitopsidaceae	*Fomitopsis pinicola* (Swartz) P. Karsten.	"	Rathanmahal	Ngadesi and arya 2014
103	Fomitopsidaceae	*Fomitopsis rosea* (Albert and Schw) P. Karsten.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
104	Fomitopsidaceae	*Fomitopsis cupreorosea* (Ber.) J. Carr. & Gil.,	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
105	Polyporaceae	*Gloeophyllum sepiarium (Fr.) Karst.,*	"	Rajpipla	Nagadesi and Arya 2013
106	Polyporaceae	*Hexagonia apiaria* Pers.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya2012, 2014 Arya et al 2008
107	Polyporaceae	*Hexagonia tenuis* hooker ex.Fries	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya, 2012 2014 Arya et al 2008
108	Polyporaceae	*Irpex hydnoides* Y.W. Lim & H.S. Jung	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2015
109	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites betulina*	"	Baroda, Ahmedabad, Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014 Arya and Nagadesi 2012
110	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites betulina F. variegata* (Fries.) Donk.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
111	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites exima*	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
112	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites sepiarum* (Wulfen) Fr.	"	Baruch,	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
113	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites sterioides* (Fr.) Ryv.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Baruch,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014 Arya and Nagadesi 2012 Arya et al 2008
114	Polyporaceae	*Lenzites palisoti* Fr.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
115	Polyporaceae	*Microporus affinis* var. *glabriceps* var. nov. (Blume & T. Nees) Kuntze	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
116	Polyporaceae	*Microporus alboater* (Hennings) Kuntze,	"	Rathanmahal, Shoolpaneshwar,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
117	Polyporaceae	*Microporus xanthopus* Fr.	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
118	Polyporaceae	Microporus *violaceo- cinerescens* Petch	"	Rathanmahal,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
119	Polyporaceae	*Navisporus floccosus* (Bres.) Ryv.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda, Narmada	Nagadesi and Arya 2012, 2014 Arya et al 2008
120	Polyporaceae	*Oxyporus ravidus* (Fr.) Bond. and Sing.	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
121	Phallaceae	*Phallus impudicus* L.	"	Baroda,	Arya 2004
122	Polyporaceae	*Polyporus luteoumbrinus*	"	Baroda,	Bakshi 1971

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123	Polyporaceae	*Polyporus violaceo- cinerescens*	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
124	Polyporaceae	*Polyporus xanthopus*	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
125	Polyporaceae	*Tricheptum biforme*	"	Baroda,	Nagadesi and Arya 2016
126	Polyporaceae	*Trametes cingulata*	"	Shoolpaneshwar,	Arya2004
127	Polyporaceae	*Trametes gibbosa* (Pers.) Fr.	"	Rathanmahal, Baroda,	Naagadesi and Arya 2014 Arya et al 2008
128	Polyporaceae	*Trametes hirsutum* (Wulfen) Pilát,	"	Baroda, Baruch	Naagadesi and Arya 2014
129	Polyporaceae	*Trametes lactinea*	"	Rathanmahal, Narmada	Nqagadesi and Arya 2014 Arya et al 2008
130	Polyporaceae	*Trametes pinii*	"	Rathanmahal	Naagadesi and Arya 2012
131	Polyporaceae	*Trametes varians*	"	Shoolpaneshwar,	Arya2004
132	Polyporaceae	*Trametes versicolor*	"	Rathanmahal	Arya and Nagadesi 2012
133	Polyporaceae	*Trametes sp.*	"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012
134	Steccherinaceae	*Flavodon flavus* (Klotzsch) Ryv.	"	Baroda, Rathanmahal, Ahmedabad, Baruch, Rajkot, Jamnagar,	Nagadesi and Arya 2012 2014,2015 Arya and Nagadesi 2012 Padhiar et al., 2009
135	Stereaceae	*Stereum* hirsutum (Willd.) Pers.	"	Baroda	Nagadesi and Arya 2014
136	--	*Sterile mycellium*	--"	Rathanmahal	Nagadesi and Arya 2012

Conclusions

Fungal diversity of micro and macro fungi on the woods of the western part of India with special reference to the Gujarat state is poorly investigated. The mini check list of microscopic and macroscopic fungi occurring on the different woods of Gujarat was recorded. A total of 136 taxa of wood decay fungi with 33 microfungi and 103 macrofungi were documented. Most dominantly observed families were Hymenochaetaceae and, Polyporaceae. Many of these fungi were majorly observed in Baroda, Rathanmahal, Ahmedabad, Rajpipla, and Baruch. These wood decay fungi have great importance as edible, medicinal so they were used by different tribes of Gujarat and conservation of such macrofungi is required.

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Climate Change and Ecosystems: Impacts, Adaptation, and Conservation Strategies with Special Reference to India

Y. Sita Maha Lakshmi,
Lecturer in History
A.S.D. Govt. Degree College for Women (Autonomous), Kakinada
yerrapragadasita@gmail.com
9542640881

Abstract

Climate change represents one of the most profound environmental challenges of the twenty-first century, exerting wide-ranging impacts on natural ecosystems and the services they provide to human societies. Rising global temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events are altering terrestrial, freshwater, marine, and polar ecosystems worldwide. India, owing to its vast geographical diversity and climatic variability, is particularly vulnerable to these changes. This paper examines the causes and characteristics of climate change and analyses its impacts on ecosystems at global and national levels, with special emphasis on Indian ecosystems such as the Himalayas, forests, wetlands, rivers, coastal zones, mangroves, and coral reefs. Recent Indian case studies, policy responses, and ecosystem-based adaptation strategies are discussed to highlight both challenges and opportunities. The study emphasizes that protecting ecosystems is essential not only for biodiversity conservation but also for sustainable development, climate resilience, and human well-being. An integrated approach combining mitigation, adaptation, scientific research, community participation, and effective governance is necessary to safeguard ecosystems in a changing climate.

Keywords: Climate change, ecosystems, biodiversity, India, adaptation, mitigation, conservation

1. Introduction

Ecosystems form the foundation of life on Earth by supporting biological diversity and providing essential goods and services such as food, water, climate regulation, soil fertility, and cultural values. However, the stability and functioning of ecosystems are increasingly threatened by climate change, which is driven largely by human activities such as fossil fuel combustion, deforestation, industrialization, and unsustainable land use. Scientific evidence indicates that the Earth's climate has warmed significantly since the pre-industrial period, leading to widespread ecological disruptions.

Climate change affects ecosystems directly through temperature increases, altered rainfall patterns, and extreme events, and indirectly by interacting with other stressors such as habitat loss, pollution, and overexploitation of natural resources. Developing countries like India face heightened risks due to high population density, dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, and ecological vulnerability. Understanding how climate change influences ecosystems is therefore crucial for developing effective conservation, adaptation, and mitigation strategies.

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of climate change and ecosystems, with a particular focus on Indian contexts and recent case studies. By integrating global scientific understanding with national-level evidence, the study seeks to contribute to academic discourse and policy formulation relevant to international seminars and research forums.

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2. Climate Change: Causes and Characteristics

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in average weather conditions, including temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and the frequency of extreme events. The primary driver of contemporary climate change is the increased concentration of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere.

Major anthropogenic causes include the burning of fossil fuels for energy and transportation, deforestation and land-use change, industrial emissions, and agricultural practices. These activities enhance the greenhouse effect, trapping heat in the Earth's atmosphere and leading to global warming.

Key characteristics of present-day climate change include rising global mean temperatures, melting glaciers and ice sheets, sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and increased frequency and intensity of heatwaves, droughts, floods, and cyclones. These changes exert profound influences on ecosystem structure, productivity, species distribution, and ecological interactions.

3. Impacts of Climate Change on Terrestrial Ecosystems

3.1 Forest Ecosystems

Forests are among the most important terrestrial ecosystems due to their role in carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and climate regulation. Climate change affects forests by altering temperature regimes, precipitation patterns, and disturbance dynamics such as fires and pest outbreaks.

In India, forest ecosystems in the Western Ghats, central India, and the north eastern region are experiencing climate-induced stress. Rising temperatures and irregular rainfall patterns have increased the incidence of forest fires and pest infestations. Shifts in forest types and species composition have been observed, with some species migrating to higher altitudes or latitudes. Such changes threaten endemic biodiversity and reduce the capacity of forests to act as carbon sinks.

3.2 Grasslands and Savannas

Grassland ecosystems are highly sensitive to climate variability, particularly changes in rainfall and temperature. Climate change can lead to reduced productivity, soil degradation, and desertification. In semi-arid regions of India, prolonged droughts and erratic monsoon patterns have adversely affected grassland ecosystems and pastoral livelihoods. The invasion of non-native species under changing climatic conditions further disrupts ecological balance.

4. Himalayan and Mountain Ecosystems in India

The Himalayan region, often referred to as the "water tower of Asia," is experiencing rapid warming at rates higher than the global average. Climate change has accelerated glacier retreat, altered snowfall patterns, and increased the frequency of extreme events such as landslides and glacial lake outburst floods.

Glacier retreat threatens the long-term availability of freshwater for major river systems such as the Ganga, Yamuna, and Brahmaputra. Alpine ecosystems are particularly vulnerable, as plant and animal species adapted to cold conditions face habitat loss and limited scope for upward migration. These changes have serious implications for biodiversity conservation and the livelihoods of mountain communities.

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5. Freshwater Ecosystems and Riverine Biodiversity

Freshwater ecosystems, including rivers, lakes, and wetlands, are among the most vulnerable to climate change. Changes in precipitation, temperature, and evaporation rates affect water availability, flow regimes, and water quality.

In India, climate-induced alterations in monsoon patterns have increased the frequency of floods and droughts, disrupting riverine ecosystems. Rising water temperatures reduce dissolved oxygen levels, stressing aquatic species such as fish and amphibians. Wetlands, which play a crucial role in flood control and carbon storage, are shrinking due to changing hydrological conditions and human encroachment.

The conservation of freshwater biodiversity, including endangered species such as the Gangetic River dolphin, highlights the importance of maintaining healthy river ecosystems under changing climatic conditions.

6. Coastal and Marine Ecosystems

6.1 Mangroves and Coastal Wetlands

India's extensive coastline hosts diverse coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrass meadows. These ecosystems provide critical services such as coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and nursery habitats for marine species.

The Sundarbans mangrove ecosystem is a prominent example of climate vulnerability. Sea-level rise, increased salinity, and frequent cyclones have led to habitat loss and reduced ecosystem productivity. Degradation of mangroves threatens biodiversity and the livelihoods of millions of coastal residents.

6.2 Coral Reefs and Marine Biodiversity

Marine ecosystems are affected by ocean warming and acidification. Coral reefs in regions such as the Gulf of Mannar and Lakshadweep Islands have experienced coral bleaching due to rising sea surface temperatures. Coral degradation disrupts marine food webs and affects fisheries, tourism, and coastal protection.

7. Extreme Weather Events and Ecosystem Stress in India

Climate change has intensified extreme weather events across India, including heatwaves, cyclones, floods, and droughts. Prolonged heatwaves stress vegetation, reduce soil moisture, and increase wildfire risk. Cyclones and storm surges damage coastal ecosystems, while floods and droughts disrupt terrestrial and freshwater systems.

Urbanization further amplifies climate impacts through the urban heat island effect, affecting both human populations and nearby ecosystems. These combined pressures highlight the need for integrated climate resilience planning.

8. Ecosystem Responses and Adaptation

Ecosystems respond to climate change through processes such as species migration, phenological shifts, and genetic adaptation. However, the rapid pace of climate change often exceeds the adaptive capacity of many species, leading to population decline and extinction.

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In India, habitat fragmentation and human pressures limit natural adaptation processes. Strengthening ecological connectivity and reducing non-climatic stressors are essential for enhancing ecosystem resilience.

9. Conservation, Mitigation, and Policy Responses in India

India has adopted several policy initiatives to address climate change and ecosystem conservation. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and its associated missions emphasize ecosystem protection, afforestation, sustainable agriculture, and climate adaptation.

Ecosystem-based adaptation strategies, such as mangrove restoration, wetland conservation, and agroforestry, have shown promise in enhancing resilience while supporting livelihoods. Community participation and indigenous knowledge play a vital role in successful conservation efforts.

10. Role of Education, Research, and Awareness

Education and awareness are critical for addressing climate change impacts on ecosystems. Academic institutions, research organizations, and civil society can contribute through environmental education, scientific research, and public engagement. Promoting climate literacy fosters informed decision-making and sustainable behaviour.

11. Conclusion

Climate change poses unprecedented challenges to ecosystems at global and national levels. In India, diverse ecosystems ranging from the Himalayas and forests to wetlands and marine environments are experiencing significant impacts. Protecting these ecosystems is essential for biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

An integrated approach combining mitigation, adaptation, ecosystem-based strategies, and effective governance is required to address climate change. Strengthening scientific research, policy implementation, and community participation will be crucial for safeguarding ecosystems and ensuring a sustainable future.

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Palynomorphological diversity among some species of Acanthaceae belongs to the state of Telangana

Devarinti Srihari Reddy
Associate Professor of Botany
Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Maheshwaram, Telangana.

Abstract

The family Acanthaceae belongs to the order Lamiales, which shows the most diverse pollen morphology among the taxa, a condition referred to as eurypalynous. Diversity in pollen morphological characteristics is a basis for taxonomic classification and identification of evolutionary relationships within the family. The Pollen morphology of the flora, which belongs to the Acanthaceae family, is distinct from many other families (Scotland, 1992), with the aperture morphology varying from bicolporate to tricolpate to tricolporate to porate, shape from oblate spheroidal to spheroidal to prolate spheroidal to prolate, and the presence of pseudocolpi makes this family unique. In the present work, the pollen morphology of 12 species of the family Acanthaceae, which belong to the state of Telangana, is described.

Keywords: Pollen morphology, Acanthaceae, Eurypalynous, Palynotaxonomy.

INTRODUCTION

The family Acanthaceae is well known for its rich floristic diversity and belongs to the order Lamiales (McDade, L. A., et al., 2008; APG*, 2016*). Globallly, it comprises of approximately 207 genera and 4750 species (Daniel & McDade, 2014*;* POWO, 2024), particularly across the tropical and sub-tropical areas. In India, this family consists of 49 genera and 472 species (Karthikeyan et al., 2009). This family shows remarkable diversity not only in floral morphological characters but also in pollen morphological features (Raj, 1961, 1965, 1973).

Pollen morphology plays a main role in plant taxonomical classification and in understanding evolutionary relationships among the taxa up to inftrageneric level (Erdtman, G.1952; Nair, P. K. K. 1965; FÊgri and Iversen 1989; Moore et al.1991; Scotland, R.W. and Vollesen, K., 2000; Ulrich et al., 2012; Hesse & Blackmore, 2013;) and emerged as an interdisciplinary study, palynotaxonomy. Also, pollen morphological informaion is useful in melissopalynology, aeropalynology, forensic palynology, paleopalynology, and copropalynology.

Pollen morphology of family Acanthaceae was studied from various countries of the world (Alcantara et al., 2022; Al-Hakimi et al., 2017; Perveen & Qaiser, 2010; Raza et al., 2020; Rueangsawang et al., 2013; Scotland, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c, 1993)and found to be eurypalynous. In India, Raj, B.(I965), Gupta and Sharma (1986), Jain, R.K., (2001), Ghosh and Karmakar (2012), Nath N. (2012), Dalawai, D., & Murthy, H. N. (2021), Rawat, R. et al., (2024) etc., studied the pollen morphology in Acanthaceae family and no notable study observed in Telangana state in recent years.

In Acanthaceae, pollen types have been recognized based primarily on the differences in the shape, aperture number, pseudocolpi, and exine ornamentation (Scotland and Vollesen, 2000; Perveen & Qaiser, 2010).

Pollen Characteristics such as shape is the index of ratio (P/E) of the length of the polar axis (P) to the length of equatorial axis or pollen diameter (E). Aperture number is indicated based on the number of pores or colpi or both of them. Exine ornamentation describes the upper surface morphology of the exine.

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Pollen varieties of Acanthaceae are usually radially symmetrical, isopolar, sub-prolate to prolate-spheroidal or sub-oblate to oblate-spheroidal, prolate; generally tricolporate or heterocolporate rarely colpate or porate. Exine ornamentation varies from reticulate to coarse reticulate, or lophoreticulate .

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Telangana state is a rich source of plant biodiversity dominated by dry deciduous and thorny shrub forests, situated on the Deccan Plateau of India, located between 15°55′ to 19°56′ N latitude and 77°15′ to 80°47′ E longitude, it covers an area of 1,12,077 sq. Km.(Fig. 1).

Floral specimens of the species belong to Acanthaceae family were collected in Telangana state, India and identified with the help of standard keys and/or BSI, Hyderabad. Fresh polleniferous material was acetolysed as per the modified procedure of Erdtman(1960) and Nair PKK (1965) and mounted by glycerine jelly on glass slides. The prepared slides were observed under a light microscope (Olympus CH20i).

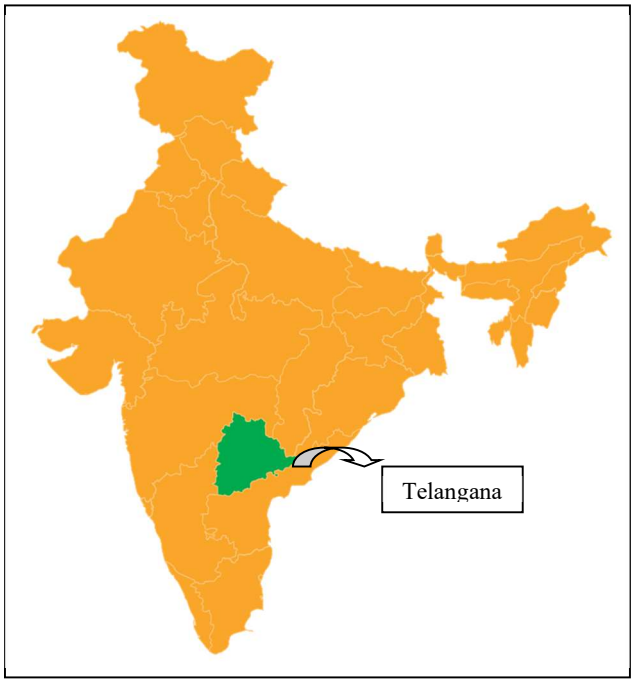


Figure 1. Map showing the location of Telangana state in India.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

***Andrographis echioides* (L.) Nees** (Table 1; Plate 1.1)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 47 x 33 µm, tricolporate, colpi elliptical, tips acute, exine 2.1 µm thick, bireticulate, colpal membrane reticulate, homobrochate.

***Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees** (Table 1; Plate1.2)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate-spheroidal, 41 x 36 µm, tricolporate, colpi elliptical, tips acute, exine 3.18 µm thick, bireticulate, colpal membrane reticulate, homobrochate.

***Barleria prionitis* L.** (Table 1; Plate1.3)

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Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, oblate-spheroidal, 81 x 93 µm, tricolporate, brevicolporate, exine 17.4 µm thick, Lophoreticulate (Columellae arranged in a reticulate pattern and undulated).

***Blepharis integrifolia* (L.f.) E.Mey. & Drège ex Schinz** (Table 1; Plate1.4)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 25.5 x 15.5 µm, amb circular, tricolpate, colpi linear, exine 2.3 µm thick, reticulate.

***Blepharis maderaspatensis* (L.) B.Heyne ex Roth** (Table 1; Plate1.5)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 52 x 25.5 µm, amb circular, tricolpate, colpi linear, exine 3.2 µm thick, reticulate.

***Crossandra infundibuliformis* (L.) Nees** (Table 1; Plate1.6)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 59 x 31 µm, amb trilobate, tricolpate, colpi linear, open, exine 3 µm thick, rugulate-reticulate.

Dicliptera paniculata (Forssk.) I.Darbysh. (Table 1; Plate1.7)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 34.6 x 24.8 µm, amb circular, tricolporate, heterocolpate with 6 pseudocolpi, circular ora, exine 2.8 µm thick, reticulate, homobrochate.

***Justicia adhatoda* L.** (Table 1; Plate1.8)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 55 x 27µm, amb circular, bicolporate, a row of faint areolae both sides of circular ora, exine 3.9 µm thick, colpal margin psilate, faintly reticulate at mesocolpium.

***Justicia glauca* Rottler** (Table 1; Plate1.9)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 30.8 x 18.3 µm, amb circular, dicolporate, areolae are arranged in a row on both sides of the aperture, circular ora, colpi narrowly elliptical, broad at equatorial, exine 2.5 µm thick, reticulate, heterobrochate.

***Lepidagathis cristata* Willd.** (Table 1; Plate1.10)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 31.3 x 21 µm, amb subtriangular, tricolporate, colpi elliptical, broad at equatorial, tips acute to round, circular ora, exine 3.7 µm thick, coarsely reticulate, heterobrochate.

***Rostellularia diffusa* (Willd.) Nees** (Table 1; Plate1.11)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, isopolar, prolate, 23.5 x 15.9 µm, amb circular, dicolporate, colpi linear, ora annulate, lalongate, areolae are arranged in a row on both sides of the aperture. exine 2.4 µm thick, coarsely reticulate, heterobrochate.

***Ruellia prostrata* Poir.** (Table 1; Plate1.12)

Pollen monad, radially symmetrical, apolar, spheroidal, 80-81µm, triporate, ora circular, exine 3.12 µm thick, exine semitectate and lophoreticulate.

The remarkable diversity of the pollen morphology in the family is reflected among the taxa of Acanthaceae. Palynological diversity is evident in grain size from 23 to 81 µm (P) and 15 to 80 µm (E) with grain size smallest in *Rostellularia diffusa* and *Blepharis integrifolia*, and largest in *Ruellia prostrata* (Plate 1). Pollen Shape in *Andrographis paniculata* is prolate-spheroidal, in *Ruellia prostrata* is spheroidal, in

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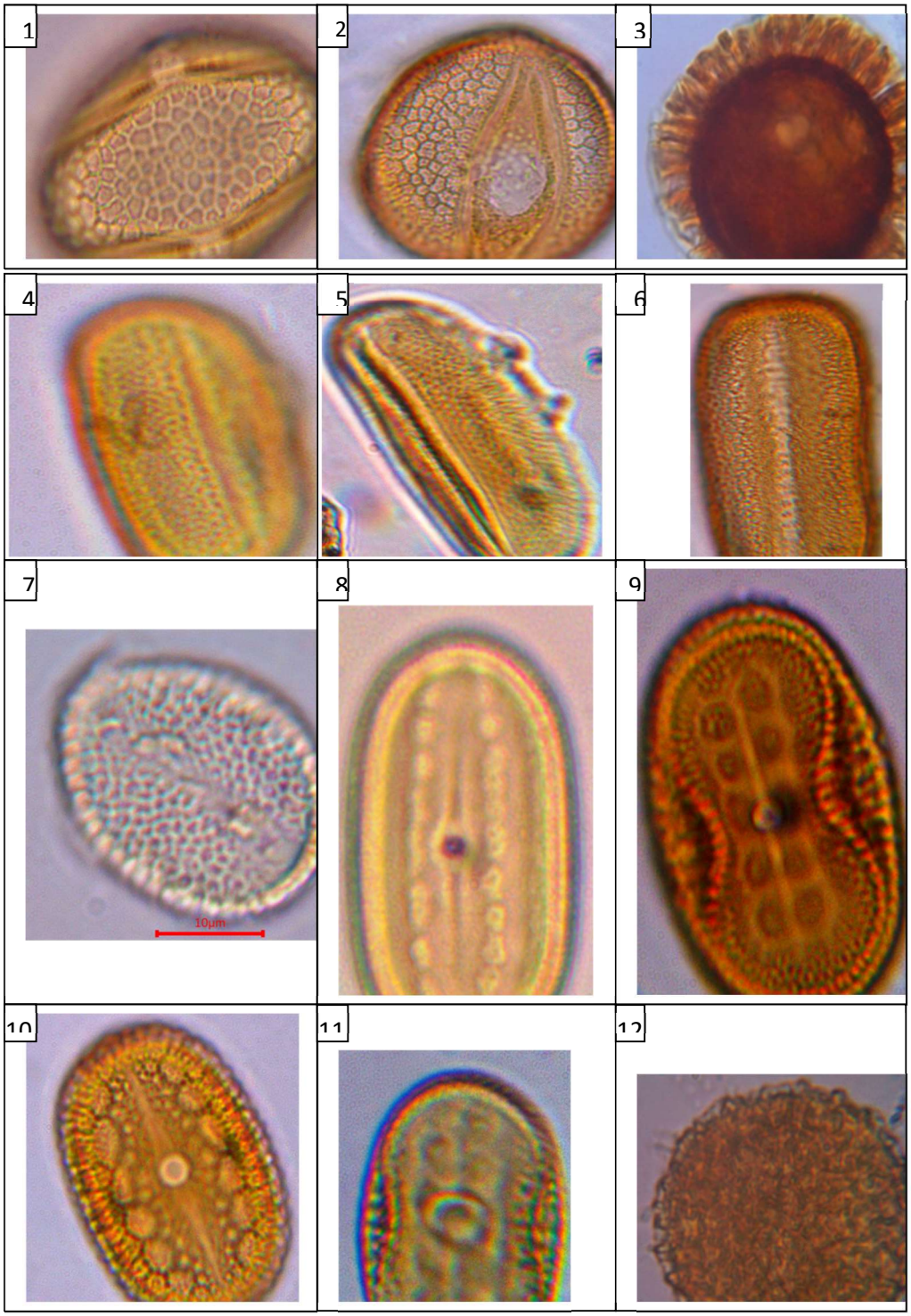


Plate 1. Pollen micrographs of 1. *Andrographis echioides* 2. *Andrographis paniculata* 3. *Barleria prionitis* 4. *Blepharis integrifolia* 5. *Blepharis maderaspatensis* 6. *Crossandra infundibuliformis* 7. *Dicliptera paniculata* 8.

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Justicia adhatoda 9. *Justicia glauca* 10. *Lepidagathis cristata* 11. *Rostellularia diffusa* 12. *Ruellia prostrata*; scale 10 µm.

Table 1. Description of Pollen morphological characters in the family Acanthaceae.

S. No.	Name	P (µm)	E (µm)	P/E	Pollen shape	Aperture morphology	Exine sculpture
1	*Andrographis echioides* (L.) Nees	47	33	1.42	Prolate	Tricolporate	Reticulate
2	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Wall. ex.Nees	41	36	1.13	Prolate-spheroidal	Tricolporate	Reticulate
3	*Barleria prionitis* L.	81	93	0.88	Oblate-spheroidal	Tricolporate	Lopho reticulate
4	*Blepharis integrifolia* (L.f.) E.Mey. & Drège ex Schinz	25.5	15.5	1.65	Prolate	Tricolpate	Reticulate
5	*Blepharis maderaspatensis* (L.) B.Heyne ex Roth	52	25.5	2	Prolate	Tricolpate	Reticulate
6	*Crossandra infundibuliformis* (L.) Nees	59	31	1.9	Prolate	Tricolpate	Rugulate-Reticulate
7	*Dicliptera paniculata* (Forssk.) I.Darbysh.	34.6	24.8	1.39	Prolate	Tricolporate	Reticulate
8	*Justicia adhatoda* L.	55	27	2	Prolate	Bicolporate	Reticulate
9	*Justicia glauca* Rottler	30.8	18.3	1.68	Prolate	Bicolporate	Reticulate
10	*Lepidagathis cristata* Willd.	31.3	21	1.49	Prolate	Tricolporate	Reticulate
11	*Rostellularia diffusa* (Willd.) Nees	23.5	15.9	1.47	Prolate	Bicolporate	Reticulate
12	*Ruellia prostrata* Poir.	81	80	1	Spheroidal	Triporate	Lopho reticulate

(P=polar length, E=equatorial diameter)

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Barleria prionitis is oblate-spheroidal and in all other species prolate. Aperture morphology in *Justicia* species and *Rostellularia diffusa* is bicoporate, in *Ruellia prostrata* is triporate, in *Blepharis* species and *Crossandra infundibuliformis* is tricolpate and in all other species tricolporate(Plate 1). In *Justicia species* areolae are observed to be arranged in a row on both sides of the aperture(Plate 1). Lophoreticulate exine sculpturing is observed in *Barleria prionitis* and *Ruellia prostrata,* whereas reticulate to coarse reticulate to rugulate-reticulate ornamentation is observed in all other species (Table 1). These results are found to be similar to previous studies (Rawat, R et al., 2024; Perveen, A., & Qaiser, M. 2010).

CONCLUSION

A significant diversity in pollen morphological characters with reference to the size, shape, aperture morphology and exine ornamentation is observed among the species of Acanthaceae family, which have potential taxonomical importance in finding the affinities and evolutionary relationships among the taxa, and particularly useful in pollen identification in melissopalynology, aeropalynology, forensic palynology, paleopalynology, and copropalynology.

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CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECOSYSTEMS

Dr. P. Gayathri and Dr. C. Narasimha Reddy
Lecturer in Mathematics, Govt. Degree College, Puttur, Tirupathi dist.
Lecturer in Mathematics, Govt. Degree College, Puttur, Tirupathi dist.
Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupathi. E. mail: pgayathri.p@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Climate change is increasingly altering the structure, functioning, and stability of ecosystems across the globe. Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions have led to rising temperatures, shifts in rainfall patterns, ocean acidification, melting glaciers, and an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme climatic events such as droughts, floods, cyclones, and heatwaves. These climatic changes exert significant pressure on terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems, affecting species composition, population dynamics, nutrient cycling, and ecosystem productivity. Many species are forced to migrate, adapt, or face extinction due to changes in habitat suitability and disrupted ecological interactions. Sensitive ecosystems such as coral reefs, mangroves, wetlands, forests, and polar regions are particularly vulnerable to climate-induced disturbances.

Climate change interacts with existing environmental stressors including deforestation, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and pollution, thereby accelerating ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss. The decline in ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water purification, soil fertility, and climate regulation poses serious threats to human livelihoods, food security, and sustainable development. This study explores the multidimensional impacts of climate change on ecosystems, identifies key ecological indicators of change, and discusses adaptation and mitigation approaches such as ecosystem restoration, biodiversity conservation, and nature-based solutions. Strengthening ecosystem resilience through integrated management and policy interventions is essential to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and to ensure ecological and socio-economic sustainability in the long term.

KEYWORDS: Climate Change, Ecosystems, Biodiversity Loss, Global Warming, Ecosystem Services.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change has become one of the most pressing environmental challenges of the 21st century, with profound implications for ecosystems across the globe. It refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation patterns, and climatic conditions, largely driven by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrialization. These activities increase the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, leading to global warming and widespread environmental changes.

Ecosystems complex networks of living organisms interacting with their physical environment play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting life on Earth. They provide essential ecosystem services such as food production, water purification, climate regulation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation. However, climate change is disrupting these natural systems by altering habitat conditions, affecting species survival, and changing ecological interactions.

Rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, sea-level rise, and the increased occurrence of extreme events such as droughts, floods, heatwaves, and cyclones have placed significant stress on terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. Many species are experiencing changes in distribution, breeding cycles, and migration patterns, while others face increased risk of extinction. Vulnerable ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, coral reefs, mangroves, and polar regions are particularly sensitive to climatic variations. Understanding the relationship between climate change and ecosystems is therefore essential for developing effective conservation strategies, promoting ecosystem resilience, and ensuring sustainable development.

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This study focuses on examining the impacts of climate change on ecosystems and highlights the importance of adaptation and mitigation measures to protect ecological integrity for future generations.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the causes and nature of climate change.
- To examine the impact of climate change on ecosystems.
- To analyse the effects on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- To identify vulnerable ecosystems affected by climate change.
- To highlight adaptation and mitigation measures.

CAUSES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The primary causes of climate change are anthropogenic in nature. The burning of fossil fuels for energy releases large amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Deforestation reduces the capacity of forests to absorb carbon dioxide, further accelerating global warming. Industrial activities, agricultural practices, and waste generation contribute methane, nitrous oxide, and other pollutants that intensify the greenhouse effect.

Natural factors such as volcanic eruptions and solar radiation variations also influence climate patterns, but their impact is relatively minor compared to human-induced changes. The rapid pace of current climate change highlights the dominant role of human activities in altering Earth's climate system.

Impact of Climate Change on Terrestrial Ecosystems

Terrestrial ecosystems, including forests, grasslands, and deserts, are highly sensitive to climate change. Rising temperatures and altered rainfall patterns affect plant growth, soil moisture, and nutrient cycling. Forest ecosystems face increased risks of wildfires, pest infestations, and droughts, leading to forest degradation and loss of biodiversity.

Changes in climate also affect species distribution and migration patterns. Many species are forced to move to higher altitudes or latitudes in search of suitable habitats. However, not all species can adapt or migrate successfully, resulting in population decline and extinction. Grasslands and agricultural ecosystems experience reduced productivity and increased vulnerability to droughts and heat stress.

Impact on Freshwater Ecosystems

Freshwater ecosystems such as rivers, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater systems are significantly affected by climate change. Altered precipitation patterns influence water availability, leading to floods in some regions and water scarcity in others. Rising temperatures increase evaporation rates, reduce water quality, and affect aquatic species.

Wetlands, which play a vital role in flood control and water purification, are particularly vulnerable to climate-induced changes. Reduced water levels and increased pollution threaten wetland biodiversity and ecosystem services. Climate change also disrupts the breeding cycles and survival of freshwater organisms, including fish and amphibians.

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Impact on Marine Ecosystems

Marine ecosystems are experiencing severe impacts due to climate change. Rising sea surface temperatures contribute to coral bleaching, affecting coral reefs that support diverse marine life. Ocean acidification, caused by increased absorption of carbon dioxide, negatively affects shell-forming organisms such as mollusks and corals.

Sea-level rise threatens coastal ecosystems, including mangroves and salt marshes, leading to habitat loss and increased coastal erosion. Changes in ocean currents and temperature patterns affect marine biodiversity, fisheries, and food security for coastal communities.

Climate Change and Biodiversity

Climate change is one of the leading drivers of biodiversity loss worldwide. Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on Earth, including genetic diversity, species diversity, and ecosystem diversity. Stable climatic conditions are essential for maintaining this diversity; however, rising global temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, sea-level rise, and increased frequency of extreme weather events are disrupting natural habitats and ecological processes.

Climate change affects biodiversity by altering species distribution, migration patterns, and reproductive cycles. Many plant and animal species are shifting towards higher altitudes or latitudes in search of suitable climatic conditions. Species with limited mobility or narrow habitat ranges, such as amphibians, polar species, and endemic flora, face a higher risk of extinction. Changes in temperature and precipitation also disturb phenology the timing of biological events such as flowering, breeding, and migration leading to mismatches in food availability and ecological interactions.

Ecosystem Services and Human Well-being

Ecosystem services are the benefits humans derive from ecosystems, including provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural services. Climate change threatens these services by degrading ecosystems and reducing their capacity to function effectively. Declining ecosystem services affect agriculture, water supply, health, and livelihoods, particularly in developing countries.

Communities that depend directly on natural resources, such as farmers, fishers, and indigenous populations, are disproportionately affected by ecosystem degradation. Protecting ecosystems is therefore essential for both environmental sustainability and socio-economic development.

Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

Addressing the impacts of climate change on ecosystems requires integrated adaptation and mitigation strategies. Ecosystem-based adaptation focuses on conserving and restoring natural systems to enhance resilience. Measures include afforestation, wetland restoration, sustainable land management, and biodiversity conservation. Mitigation strategies aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency, and sustainable agricultural practices. Nature-based solutions, such as restoring forests and mangroves, play a dual role by enhancing carbon sequestration and protecting ecosystems.

CONCLUSION

Climate change has a profound and far-reaching impact on ecosystems across the world, affecting their structure, functioning, and stability. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events have placed significant stress on terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. These changes have led to habitat degradation, biodiversity loss, and disruption of vital ecosystem services. The interaction of climate change with human-induced pressures such as deforestation, pollution, and unsustainable resource use further accelerates ecosystem

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degradation. As ecosystems play a crucial role in regulating climate, supporting biodiversity, and sustaining human livelihoods, their protection is essential for environmental sustainability. Strengthening ecosystem resilience through conservation, restoration, and ecosystem-based adaptation strategies is vital to mitigate climate change impacts.

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Ethnomedicinal Plants and Indigenous Veterinary Practices Using Traditional Knowledge in North Coastal Districts of Andhra Pradesh, India

***Dr. Lakshminarayana V & P. Sanyasi Rao**
Assistant professor, Department of Botany, Maharajah's College (Autonomous), Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, India.

***Corresponding Author:** Dr. Lakshminarayana V, Assistant Professor, Department of Botany, Maharajah's College Autonomous, Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, India, Email: drlakshminarayanav@gmail.com

Abstract

India has a long history of traditional medicinal systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani which are in coexistence with the various systems of ethnomedicine practiced in the region. Of these, the North Costal part of India is extremely rich in terms of indigenous knowledge, due to its ecological diversity and cultural traditions of the many aboriginal people that comprise the region. This is a land of extraordinary biological cultural diversity that is replete with the traditional ethnomedicinal information that is entrenched in the operations of the indigenous people. This is examines how indigenous plants are used in the alternative health care system that is in existence among the tribes and subtribes have continued to use indigenous plant in the prevention and healing of various animal ailments over the years with numerous plant species possessing notable relevance to traditional veterinary practice. The area, which is believed to be part of the biodiversity, hosts a huge reservoir of endemic and useful as therapeutic plants. The review is a synthesis of ethnobotanical information of published and field literature to bring out the main medicinal plants, their therapeutic uses, preparation modes with oral and topical applications were the most common methods of administration and phytochemical compounds. This paper has put forward a strong argument on the importance of the ethnomedicinal heritage of India in community health care, and also highlighted the potential untapped by it in the discovery of drugs through natural products also facilitating their validation for veterinary applications and highlighting their ecological, cultural, and practical value.

Keywords: Ethnomedicinal, Indigenous veterinary practices, Local healer, Traditional knowledge, Animal diseases, North Coastal Districts.

Introduction

India has a long history of traditional medicinal systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani which are in coexistence with the various systems of ethnomedicine practiced in the region. Ethnoveterinary medicine is a broad field encompassing people's beliefs, skills, knowledge and practices related to veterinary health care (Mc Corkle, 1986). Medicinal plants traditionally used in the treatment of animal diseases and plays a crucial role in local health modalities. Field studies were conducted on the ethnoveterinary medicinal practices in North Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, which is extremely rich in terms of indigenous knowledge, due to its ecological and extraordinary biological cultural diversity and also cultural traditions of the many aboriginal people that comprise the region. In the past, these communities have relied on a rich collection of medicinal herbs to treat various health problems, including metabolic, infectious and chronic diseases. Recent ethnobotanical examinations have recorded the therapeutic uses of many plant species in this area. In developing nations, it is estimated that about eighty percent of the population mostly rely on folk medicinal practices to meet essential healthcare needs, and the formulations made of plants form the foundation of these systems. The traditional medicinal systems, in particular, those developed by the indigenous communities, residing in the biodiversity-rich areas, are a good source of botanical remedies, which had been historically used in the prevention and treatment of diseases. Ethnomedical repositories of this area record a wide range of plant species that were used as remedies in symptoms and pathologies related to several species of this pharmacopeia have been identified to have relevant pharmacological attributes to antioxidant, anti-inflammatory properties etc. this is aimed at thoroughly synthesizing the ethnomedicinal flora that is used by local communities of this region. **Ethno-Veterinary Medicine**

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Ethnoveterinary medicine is a broad field encompassing people's beliefs, skills, knowledge and practices related to veterinary health care, Mc Corkle (1986). Medicinal plants traditionally used in the treatment of animal diseases play a crucial role in local health modalities. Specifically, phytotherapeutics often represent the primary form of therapy in rural veterinary care as allopathic modalities remain inaccessible. However, traditional ethnoveterinary knowledge is still orally transmitted from generation to generation through a family lineage or guru-shishya parampara cutting across families and ethnic communities across the country i.e, in the form of traditional remedies, poems, drawings stories, folk myths, proverbs and songs. Due to the nature of oral transmission, this form of local knowledge remains fragile and threatened, so, an urgent need for being recorded and documented and so as to reduce the impact of exploitation. Unfortunately, we have entered into a phase of mass extinction and have altered about half of the habitable surface of the earth (Daily, 1995) by damaging and destroying several ecosystems. In the recent years ethno-pharmacology played a vital role in the undeveloped and developing countries of the Globe. Except a few reports on ethnoveterinary medicinal plants were published from different countries such as (David *et al*., 1996; 2002; Lucia *et al*., 2003; Tafara *et al*., 2004; Fajima and Taiwo, 2005; Njoroge and Bussmann, 2006; Raynner *et al*., 2007; Farooq *et al*., 2008; Abu *et al*., 2009; Faraz, 2009 and Wedson *et al*., 2012) and from national includes, India and Andhra Pradesh (Jain, 1971, 2000; Pal, 1981; Murty and Narasimha Rao, 2012; Lakshminarayana and Narasimha Rao, 2013a,b,c; Sanjit *et al*., 2013 and Dheeraj Singh *et al*., 2014). There was no authentic or comprehensive study available, on plants used in ethnoveterinary practices of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh.

North Coastal Andhra Pradesh is situated on the East Coast of India and lies approximately between $17^0\,10^1$ to $19^0\,10^1$ N latitudes and $81^0\,53^1$ to $84^0\,50^1$E longitudes. This region comprises the three districts, viz., Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam.

Material and Methods

Comprehensive literature research was performed, medicinal plants and tribal medicine in order to get relevant researches. This will claim the importance of ethnomedicinal heritage preservation and assist it in its adoption into the modern healthcare system. The scientific justification and the records of these traditional practices are not only necessary to preserve cultural heritage but also the promotion of integrative and sustainable health care systems in India. The collected data contribute to preserving and expanding traditional knowledge about animal remedies in ethnopharmacology, but can also form a scientific basis for further pharmacological research. Selected articles had to contain clear ethnobotanical data, i.e., scientific and local names of plants, plant parts used, medicinal use, preparation, and cultural or tribal value. Priority was given to publications that contained original field observations or exhaustive reviews of the literature that made a substantial contribution to the knowledge of indigenous practices of healing in Northcoastal India. The synthesis of findings took the form of narrative analysis and descriptive statistics, thus putting into focus some salient trends and insights.

The field trips were planned to cover the selected tribal/ coastal/ plain pockets in every month during the period of study. Each field trip was about 5-7 days duration covering 4-5 tribal pockets in a day. In each forest range area 2-4 days were spent at a time. The very first field trip of the study in the area was completely devoted to acquaintance with the local chiefs, priests, vaidyas, herbal doctors, headman's, elderly people and educated students and also gather information on customs, beliefs, taboos, religious rites, food habits, agricultural practices etc., and these were cross-checked, critically analyzed and documented. The aborigines and others meant subsequent field trips were mainly devoted to gather the information on ethnoveterinary practices. Four types of informants were chosen by selected sampling and random sampling methods.

Results and Discussion

The plants are arranged in alphabetical order following the Bentham and Hooker's (1862-1883) system of classification for each and every species. The treatment of each species includes the original citation of the valid name followed by local name, short description, flowering and fruiting seasons. The plant species are given individually with detailed account with part(s) used for medicine.

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The indigenous knowledge and practice based on locally available bio-resources are effective to cure diseases, do not have financial cost and are easily administrable. Human involvement in development in depletion of the plant resources of the nature and rapid modernization of creative systems, have gradually replaced the ancient but effective system of tribal medicine. Ethno-veterinary medicine refers to people's knowledge, skills, methods, practices and beliefs about the care of their animals (Mc Corkle, 1986). The India subcontinent has a rich ethnoveterinary health tradition owing to the large agriculture based livelihoods and rich biodiversity. Due to various social, economic and political factors this tradition is facing the threat of rapid erosion. Unfortunately, we have entered into a phase of mass extinction and have altered about half of the habitable surface of the earth by damaging and destroying several ecosystems. Survival of our bio-resources depends on how best the traditional inhabitances are looked after. Further gene-switching technology also may help in drug development.

Rapid industrialization followed by urbanization has negative effect on the nature-man-plant relationship. Anthropogenic pressure on both land and forest has increased steadily. The forests are being depleted at a faster rate. The inherent tribal culture is also changing concomitantly. A rich traditional knowledge system of the ethnic groups which contains valuable information on ethnoveterinary is soon going to be lost in near future. These traditional healers contribute much to the veterinary practices. Besides, elderly experienced men and women also render their treatment practices to the domestic animals. There are as many as traditional healers in the study area. The crude drugs are extracted from plant parts such as leaf, stem, flower, fruit, stem bark, whole plant, underground parts (rhizome, tuber and roots) and plant products like latex, oil and gum etc. The traditional healers are very much selective about the choice of plant parts while preparing the drugs. This is suggestive of the fact that the lead chemicals are deposited in the specific part of the plant.

The common ailments of animals of this area are anorexia, anthrax, anthelmintic, arthritis, bloat, bacterial diseases, bronchitis, cold and cough, colic pain, conjuctivity, constipation, diarrhoea, dog bite, dysentery, delayed parturition, dyspepsia, eczema, ephemeral fever, eye problems, fertility, foot and mouth disease, fleas, fractures, galactogogue, gas troubles, gout, haematuria, helminthiasis, horn cancer, impaction, indigestion, inflammation, insect bite, intestinal worms, lice/tics, maggot wounds, mastitis, nasal drops, newcastle diseases, pneumonia, poor milk flow, post-natal problems, renderpest, reproductive disorders, retained placenta (after birth), rheumatism, septicemia, skin diseases, snake bite, sores, trypanosomiasis, tympany, ulcers, urinary troubles, wounds and yoke galls etc.

Ethno-veterinary Medicine is used for the maintenance of good animal health in developing countries (Kudi, 2003). According to an estimate over 80% of the developing world's population while half of the population in industrialized countries use the traditional medicine for treatment of human and animal diseases (Kudi, 2003; Shaikh and Hatcher, 2005). All the respondents in the study area were experienced and knowledgeable people having vast experience of raising livestock and keeping pet animals. Collection of rich data on existing EVPs used for livestock and pet animals in the NCAP indicates that livestock and pet animal owners use the traditional system of veterinary medicine for primary health care same as stated by (Reddy *et al*., 2006). Plants constitute major part of EVM so most of the remedies reported in the present study are based on plants.

During the present investigations observed that stem bark of *Abrus precatorius* is used for anthrax, the root of the same plant used for curing dysentery and wounds by the tribals of Northcoastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, leaves of the same plant used for insect bite and retained placenta (Reddy and Raju, (1999) and Reddy *et al*., (1998)) and seeds for yoke gall (Reddy and Raju, (1999) and Goud and Pullaiah, (1996)). In earlier reports, regarding the importance of *Acacia nilotica*, revealed that the spines for colic pain (Lakshminarayana and Narasimha Rao, 2013a) stem bark for intestinal problem (Murty and Narasimha Rao, 2012) and fruits for enhancing milk production (Suneetha *et al*., 2012). In the present investigation pods and stem bark of this plant species used for lactation, indigestion and gas problems by tribals of the North Coastal Andhra Pradesh. Leaf juice of *Alangium salvifolium* is used to treat opacity of cornea and stem bark for renderpest (Lakshminarayana and Narasimha Rao, 2013b), application of *Andrographis paniculata,* used for foot and mouth diseases and ephemeral fever by the tribals of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh while leaves of this plant used to cure epilepsy (Goud

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and Pullaiah, 1996) and the roots of same plant species used for insect bite and ephemeral fever (Reddy *et al*., 1998). In the present investigation, identified that *Aristolochia indica* used to cure dyspepsia where as root and leaf were used for insect bite (Reddy *et al*., 1998; Reddy and Raju, 1999), leaf is used to cure foot and mouth diseases in the Coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh but the application of leaves were used to treat ectoparasites (murty and Narasimha Rao, 2012).

Some of the ingredients employed by the farmers are spices that are found in every household and are also widely used to cure ailments. Most of the times the plants that are indigenous to the area they are collected by the ethnoveterinary medicinal users and practisioners themselves or purchased from the nearby herbal shops. So the availability or non-availability of the ingredients is one of the major factors determining the popularity of a particular remedy. In the present study it was found that mode of preparation of EVM varies according to the active ingredient to be extracted. For preparation of drug parts of the plant that were mostly utilized by the respondents were roots, bark, wood, leaves, stems, flowers, fruits, resin, latex, grains, buds, bulbs and seeds as reported in many studies.

The common method of extraction of drug was through grinding, soaking, brewing or boiling different parts of plants or whole plant. The healers prepare slained/herbo-mineral preparations. Arbitrary quantities of carrier were added to dilute or reduce relative potency of the drug, mostly water was added to dilute the juice. Jaggery, butter, milk fat and wheat flour were used as vehicles when the remedies were administered. The respondents reported that they administer the remedies to the animals mostly orally as decoctions, liquid in that the plants have been steeped, through fumigation, topical application or as external washes. Doses of the remedies were highly variable and farmers do not have exact knowledge about the doses. They were of the opinion that dose of the drug depends on size of animal or availability of plants used for treatment. Lack of agreement among respondents on doses of certain remedies noted. The units e.g. handful of leaves, some leaves employed to measure the amount of the plant or plant parts used in the preparation of most of remedies were rough and lack precisions. The doses of plants were often measured as a handful (50-60g), and a bottleful (250ml), and sometimes using conventional weighing balances. Imprecise and non-standardized dosages are subjected to criticism by the veterinarians. In EVPs the duration for that treatment for a particular disease is applied is highly variable and depends largely on the owner of the animal. The clinical improvement of affected animals usually is considered the end of that disease condition.

India has great traditional background in the field of Ethno-Veterinary Medicine (EVM) and practices, but in the process of modernization, this knowledge is vanishing very rapidly. The role of ethnoveterinary medicine in livestock development is beyond dispute. Advanced research on plants of excessive medicinal values may lead to new source of drugs which are really beneficial for health care of mankind and other important domestic animals. Documentation and standardization of ethnoveterinary knowledge are also important in the context of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) to check the Patent claims. Modern medicine play very crucial role in treating the chronic ailments of human beings and livestock. Ethnoveterinary applications play important role in the regional where as allopathic and services may not reach or available. So further investigations and exploration work related to ethnoveterinary practices are beneficial for the progress and development new avenues. The species may undergo to rare, endangered and threatened condition in this area due to over exploitation. So it is suggest that *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation is needed to overcome the said problem. There is an urgent need for biochemical analysis and pharmaceutical investigations of plant species used by the people of this region to formulate and standardize the medicine for sustainable uses, progress and development. The species may undergo to rare, endangered and threatened condition in this area due to over exploitation.

Conclusions and Summary

Ethnoveterinary medicine is a broad field encompassing people's beliefs, skills, knowledge and practices related to veterinary health care (Mc Corkle, 1986). Medicinal plants traditionally used in the treatment of animal diseases and plays a crucial role in local health modalities. Field studies were conducted on the ethnoveterinary medicinal practices in North Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. The procedure for collection, storage and analysis of plant material was followed as

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described in standard methods/tests. Phytochemical screening was studied in some important medicinal plant species under investigation. The data was presented in form of uses, as there was significant results were obtained from North Coastal Andhra Pradesh districts. The systematic enumeration of the plant species was presented in the alphabetical order according to the Bentham-Hooker's classification.

In present investigation observed that animals have been effected seasonally from different diseases such as Anthrax, Anthelmintic, Bloat, Bronchitis, Cold and Cough, Colic pain, Conjuctivity, Constipation, Diarrhoea, Dog bite, Dysentery, Dyspepsia, Eczema, Ephemeral fever, Eye problems, Foot and Mouth disease, Fractures, Galactogogue, Gas troubles, Gout/Inflammation, Haematuria, Helminthiasis, Horn cancer, Indigestion, Insect bite, Intestinal worms, Lice/Tics, Maggot wounds, Mastitis, Newcastle diseases, Poor milk flow, Post-natal problems, Renderpest, Retained placenta (after birth), Rheumatism, Septicemia, Skin diseases, Snake bite, Sores, Trypanosomiasis, Tympany, Ulcers, Urinary troubles, wounds and Yoke galls etc.

Medicinal plants contain large varieties of chemical substances which possess important therapeutic properties that can be utilized in the treatment of diseases. The studies of medicinal plants used in folklore remedies have attracted the attention of many scientists in finding solution to the problems of multiple resistances to the existing synthetic antibiotics. So further investigations and exploration work related to ethnoveterinary practices are beneficial for the progress and development of new avenues. There is an urgent need for biochemical analysis and pharmaceutical investigations of plant species used by the people of this region to formulate and standardize the medicine for sustainable uses, progress and development. The species may undergo to rare, endangered and threatened condition in this area due to over exploitation. So it is suggest that *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation is needed to overcome the said problem.

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Physiological and Signaling Mechanisms Underpinning Plant Survival and Biodiversity under Climate Change

MOHANO BEHARA 1 , SAIVENKATESH KORLAM 2
1 Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Pakala, Tirupati, A.P.
2 Department of Botany, S.V.A. Government College, Srikalahasti, Tirupati, A.P.

Abstract

Climate change is intensifying the frequency and complexity of abiotic and biotic stresses experienced by plants, posing serious threats to global biodiversity and ecosystem stability. As sessile organisms, plants rely on finely tuned stress perception, signaling, and physiological adjustment mechanisms to survive under changing environmental conditions. This review synthesizes current knowledge on plant stress physiology, tracing responses from early stress signaling—mediated by reactive oxygen species, phytohormones, and transcription factors—to whole-plant physiological adaptations that determine survival, reproduction, and distribution. Particular emphasis is placed on multifactorial stress combinations, which elicit unique physiological and molecular responses distinct from single stresses. The chapter further highlights how physiological insights can be translated into practical biodiversity conservation strategies, including ex situ germplasm conservation, in situ habitat management, assisted migration, genetic and microbial interventions, and community-based restoration. By integrating mechanistic plant stress physiology with conservation planning, this review proposes a framework for enhancing plant resilience and supporting species persistence under ongoing and future climate change.

Keywords: Plant stress physiology; Climate change; Multifactorial stress combinations; Stress signaling pathways; Biodiversity conservation; Ecophysiology; Plant resilience; Species survival

1.Introduction:

Climate change is profoundly altering global ecosystems, imposing unprecedented abiotic and biotic stresses on plant species worldwide. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, increased atmospheric CO_2 levels, and the escalation of extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and heatwaves are collectively reshaping plant physiology and threatening biodiversity (Muluneh, 2021). These changes not only disrupt individual plant growth and reproduction but also cascade through ecosystems, influencing soil-plant-atmosphere interactions and potentially accelerating species extinctions. For instance, projections indicate that narrowly adapted and endemic plant species face heightened risks, with extinction rates potentially reaching 38–52% under scenarios of limited migration due to habitat fragmentation and physiological limits (Muluneh, 2021). As sessile organisms, plants must rely on intricate physiological mechanisms—including stress signaling pathways, metabolic reprogramming, and adaptive plasticity—to perceive and respond to these multifactorial stresses, which rarely occur in isolation but rather in complex combinations amplified by climate variability (Petrík et al., 2025).

At the molecular and cellular levels, plant stress physiology involves rapid detection of environmental cues through signaling molecules like reactive oxygen species (ROS), phytohormones, and transcription factors, which orchestrate defensive responses such as antioxidant activation, stomatal regulation, and osmolyte accumulation. Under climate change, elevated CO_2 can initially enhance photosynthesis but often leads to nutrient dilutions and imbalances, exacerbating vulnerabilities in nutrient cycling and plant health (Oishy et al., 2025). Studies highlight how temperature extremes and drought stress alter carbohydrate metabolism, as seen in species experiencing water deficits, where plants prioritize resource allocation to survival over growth, potentially reducing reproductive success and long-term viability (Petrík et al., 2025). Furthermore, biotic interactions, including pathogen pressures and symbiotic relationships, interact with abiotic factors to create synergistic effects, challenging plant resilience and contributing to shifts in species distributions—poleward at rates of approximately 16.9 km per decade and upslope at 11 m per decade (Muluneh, 2021). These physiological responses are not static; phenotypic plasticity allows plants to adjust morphologically and biochemically to short-term fluctuations,

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providing a buffer against climate-induced stresses, though thresholds in variables like salinity and heat can overwhelm these adaptations (Muluneh, 2021).

The implications for biodiversity conservation are profound, as climate change accelerates habitat degradation, invasive species proliferation, and ecosystem disruptions, necessitating integrated strategies that leverage physiological insights. Mechanistic research in plant physiology can bridge gaps between ecology and conservation by identifying key traits for resilience, such as thermal tolerance and seed germination under novel conditions, to guide restoration efforts in altered landscapes (Tomlinson, 2025). For example, understanding ecophysiological responses to drought and nutrient fluctuations enables the prediction of functional impairments near species' climatic niches, informing ex situ conservation through optimized germplasm storage and in situ habitat management (Petrík et al., 2025; Tomlinson, 2025). Biotechnological interventions, including the use of biostimulants and microbial symbionts, offer promising avenues to enhance stress tolerance, supporting sustainable agriculture and biodiversity preservation amid projected yield declines in vulnerable regions (Oishy et al., 2025; Petrík et al., 2025).

This chapter synthesizes recent advancements in plant stress physiology to propose physiology-driven conservation strategies, emphasizing the need for multidisciplinary approaches that incorporate predictive modeling, community-based restoration, and policy reforms to mitigate biodiversity loss. By addressing the feedback loops between climate change, plant responses, and ecosystem stability—such as reduced carbon sequestration and increased greenhouse gas emissions—we aim to foster resilient ecosystems capable of sustaining species survival and essential services in an era of rapid environmental transformation (Oishy et al., 2025; Muluneh, 2021).

2. Plant Stress Signaling Pathways in a Changing Climate

Plants perceive environmental stresses through intricate signaling networks that initiate rapid defensive responses, a process critical for survival in the face of climate change-induced multifactorial stresses (Jing et al., 2024). These networks involve the detection of abiotic factors such as drought, heat, salinity, and flooding, often compounded by biotic pressures like pathogens and herbivores, leading to complex interactions that exacerbate the impacts of global warming (Jiang et al., 2025). Reactive oxygen species (ROS) serve as primary signaling molecules, enabling systemic acquired acclimation by propagating waves of signals across the plant, including calcium (Ca^{2+}) and electrical signals that integrate cellular and tissue-level responses (Jing et al., 2024). Under climate change, combined stresses like drought and heat amplify ROS production, triggering antioxidant defenses—such as superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), and ascorbate peroxidase (APX)—and metabolic reprogramming to maintain cellular homeostasis and prevent oxidative damage (Elsisi et al., 2024; Ghadirnezhad Shiade et al., 2024).

Phytohormones play a pivotal role in orchestrating these responses, acting as key regulators in signal transduction pathways. Abscisic acid (ABA) regulates stomatal closure during drought, reducing water loss and enhancing osmotic adjustment through the accumulation of osmoprotectants like proline and sugars, while jasmonic acid (JA) and salicylic acid (SA) mediate defenses against biotic stressors by activating pathogenesis-related (PR) genes and antioxidant systems (Jing et al., 2024; Elsisi et al., 2024). In multifactorial stress combinations (MFSCs), hormone crosstalk integrates signals, leading to unique gene expressions not observed in single stresses; for instance, SA interacts with ABA and nitric oxide (NO) to modulate redox homeostasis and proline synthesis, improving tolerance to drought, heat, and salinity under changing climates (Elsisi et al., 2024; Ghadirnezhad Shiade et al., 2024). This crosstalk often involves mitogen-activated protein kinases (MAPKs), which amplify signals and regulate downstream responses like ion homeostasis and secondary metabolite production (Elsisi et al., 2024).

Transcription factors (TFs), such as heat shock factors (HSFs), MYB proteins, NAC, WRKY, and ethylene response factors (ERFs), further modulate these pathways, inducing stress-specific adaptations like osmolyte accumulation, enhanced photosynthesis efficiency, and epigenetic modifications for stress memory (Jing et al., 2024; Jiang et al., 2025; Ghadirnezhad Shiade et al., 2024). Epigenetic mechanisms, including histone methylation (e.g., H3K4me3) and DNA

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methylation, enable long-term acclimation by priming plants for future stress events, a crucial adaptation in unpredictable climate scenarios (Jiang et al., 2025). Additionally, post-transcriptional regulation via microRNAs (miRNAs) and post-translational modifications, such as those mediated by heat shock proteins (HSPs), fine-tune responses to combined abiotic stresses, balancing growth inhibition with defense activation (Jiang et al., 2025).

Climate-driven temperature extremes, for instance, activate thermosensors and brassinosteroid pathways to mitigate chilling or heat damage, as observed in various species where combined heat-drought stresses lead to morphological changes like thermomorphogenesis regulated by phytochrome-interacting factors (PIFs) (Jiang et al., 2025). SA plays a specialized role in these scenarios by upregulating HSPs and cold-response genes like DREB1A and CBF1, delaying senescence and enhancing chilling tolerance, while also reducing sodium accumulation under salinity exacerbated by drought (Elsisi et al., 2024). Metabolic shifts, involving primary and secondary metabolites such as phenolics and triterpenoids, support these signaling pathways by acting as antioxidants and signaling intermediates, potentially serving as biostimulants to bolster plant resilience in agricultural settings (Ghadirnezhad Shiade et al., 2024). These signaling mechanisms not only ensure immediate survival but also contribute to stress memory via epigenetic changes, enhancing future resilience and cross-tolerance to sequential stresses common under climate change (Jing et al., 2024; Jiang et al., 2025).

Understanding these interconnected pathways—spanning ROS, hormones, TFs, and metabolites—provides insights into developing climate-resilient crops through genetic engineering, such as CRISPR targeting SA-related genes, to mitigate the synergistic effects of multifactorial stresses (Elsisi et al., 2024).

3. Physiological Responses to Multifactorial Stresses

Climate change is accelerating the occurrence of multifactorial stress combinations (MFSCs), where plants are simultaneously exposed to multiple abiotic and biotic stressors, such as drought, heat, salinity, flooding, pathogens, and herbivores. These combinations often result in interactions that are synergistic—amplifying damage beyond the sum of individual stresses—or antagonistic, where one stress may mitigate the effects of another (Pascual et al., 2022). Unlike single stressors, MFSCs trigger unique physiological responses, leading to severe reductions in plant growth, yield, and survival, with studies indicating that as the number of stressors increases, plant resilience declines dramatically (Jing et al., 2024). For instance, in crop species like maize (Zea mays) and soybean (Glycine max), the synergy of drought and heat stresses disrupts reproductive stages, causing significant yield losses through altered stomatal behavior and increased oxidative damage (Jing et al., 2024). Similarly, combined heat and drought in forests exacerbate nutrient limitations, altering growth patterns and recovery, while in invasive species, enhanced nitrogen uptake under these conditions allows them to outcompete natives, further threatening biodiversity (Khan, 2025).

At the physiological level, plants respond to MFSCs through rapid adjustments in water relations, photosynthesis, and ion homeostasis. Stomatal closure, mediated by abscisic acid (ABA), is a primary defense against drought and heat, reducing water loss but also limiting CO_2 uptake and exacerbating photoinhibition under combined stresses (Khan, 2025). Reactive oxygen species (ROS) play a dual role: at low levels, they act as signaling molecules facilitating systemic acclimation via calcium (Ca^{2+}) waves and electrical signals, while excessive accumulation leads to cellular damage, prompting enhanced antioxidant defenses like superoxide dismutase and catalase (Jing et al., 2024). In ecosystems, these responses extend to microbiome interactions, where MFSCs reduce microbial diversity in the rhizosphere, impairing nutrient cycling and plant health (Pascual et al., 2022). For example, in citrus rootstocks under drought and heat, modifications to the scion's antioxidant system enhance overall tolerance, illustrating how root-shoot signaling integrates responses across the plant (Pascual et al., 2022).

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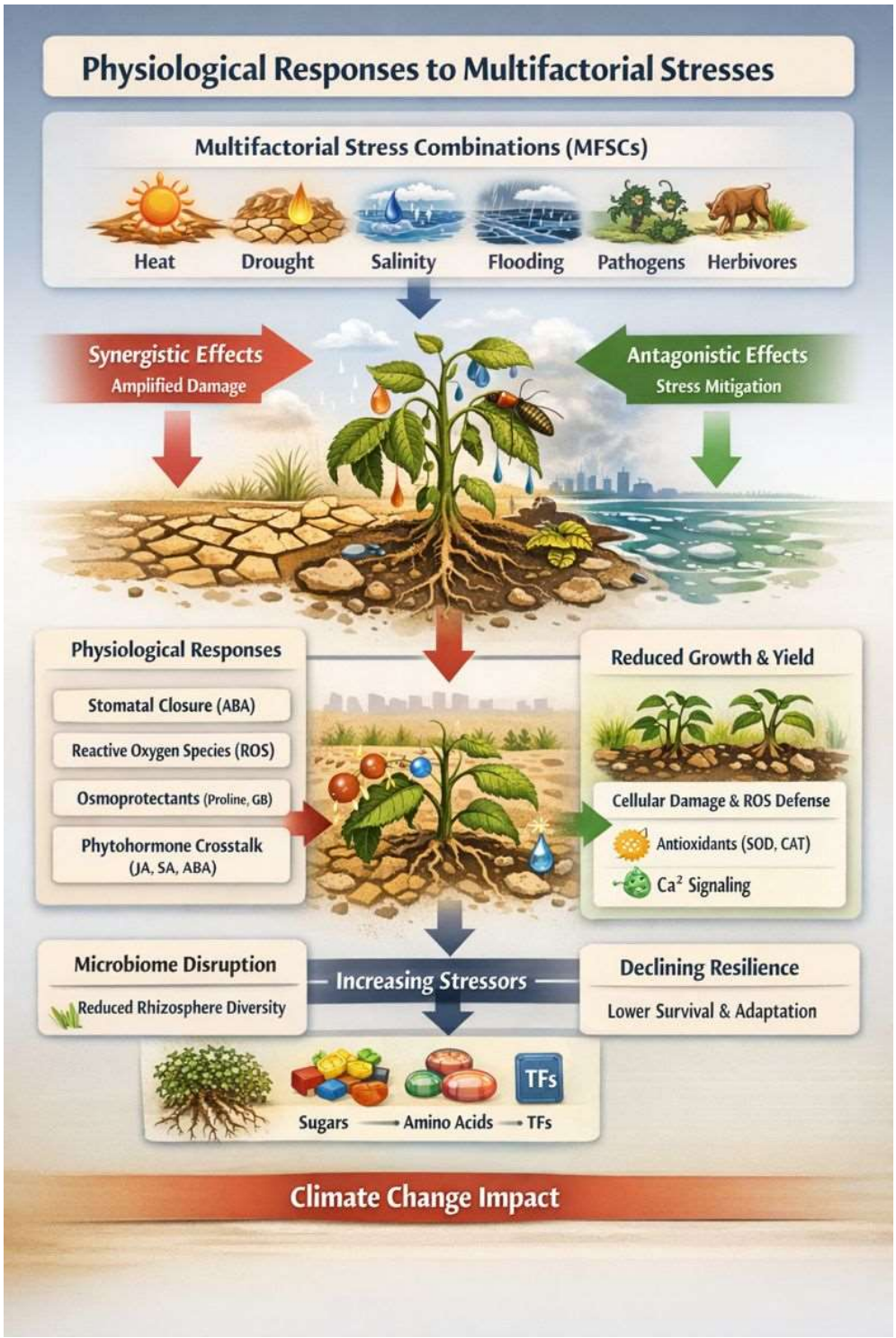


Fig. 1: Physiological Responses to Multifactorial Stresses

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Metabolic reprogramming is another cornerstone of adaptation to MFSCs. Plants accumulate osmoprotectants such as proline, glycine betaine, and polyamines to maintain cellular turgor and stabilize proteins under combined salinity and drought, while shifts in carbohydrate metabolism—e.g., increased sucrose levels—serve as energy reserves and osmotic regulators (Khan, 2025; Jing et al., 2024). In species like bamboo under water stress or Norway spruce in forested ecosystems, these changes mitigate dehydration effects, but when combined with biotic stressors like herbivory, they can lead to reallocation of resources from growth to defense, altering overall morphology (Khan, 2025). Phytohormone crosstalk further orchestrates these responses; for instance, jasmonic acid (JA) and salicylic acid (SA) mediate biotic defenses, while ethylene modulates flooding and salinity tolerance, with ABA often acting as a central hub in MFSCs (Jing et al., 2024). Transcription factors (TFs) such as heat shock factors (HSFs) and MYB proteins regulate gene expression uniquely under combinations, leading to epigenetic modifications that confer stress memory for future exposures (Khan, 2025).

Biotechnological and ecological interventions leverage these physiological insights to enhance resilience.

Microbial biostimulants, including plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria, boost heat and drought tolerance in crops like rice and orchids by improving nutrient uptake and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from soils (Khan, 2025). Symbiotic associations with mycorrhizal fungi further aid in resource acquisition under MFSCs, highlighting the role of belowground interactions in plant survival (Pascual et al., 2022). Predictive modeling, such as species distribution models for medicinal plants like Astragali Radix, incorporates physiological traits to forecast vulnerability and guide conservation, revealing how traits like antioxidant capacity influence adaptation to shifting climates (Khan, 2025).

Despite shared pathways across stresses—such as ROS signaling and hormone regulation—MFSCs often generate novel metabolic profiles not seen in isolation, necessitating multi-omics approaches (e.g., transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics) for a holistic understanding (Jing et al., 2024; Khan, 2025). These responses underscore the urgent challenge MFSCs pose to biodiversity, as declining plant survival disrupts ecosystems and food security, calling for integrated strategies like CRISPR-based genetic engineering and sustainable agricultural practices to foster climate-resilient species (Pascual et al., 2022). The pictorial representation related to Physiological Responses to Multifactorial Stresses are depicted in the Fig. 1 given above.

4. Leveraging Physiological Tools for Conservation

Physiological research serves as a critical bridge between mechanistic understanding of plant responses to environmental stressors and practical applications in conservation biology. By providing tools to evaluate stress resilience, predict adaptive capacities, and inform targeted interventions, physiology enables conservationists to address the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change (Tomlinson, 2025). Key physiological tools, such as leaf fluorescence measurements, respirometry, isotopic analyses, and thermal performance curves, offer insights into how plants interact with their environments, operating at the interface of evolutionary processes and physicochemical constraints. For instance, leaf fluorescence is used to quantify ecophysiological responses to stresses like drought and elevated temperatures, helping to assess overall plant health and predict survival in altered climates (Tomlinson, 2025). Similarly, respirometry measures metabolic rates, while isotopic analyses track water flux, energetics, and trophic interactions, providing data that can be applied across taxonomic groups to reduce biases in conservation efforts.

These tools are instrumental in restoration ecology, where they help identify species' niche limits and adaptability to shifting climate conditions. Traits like seed viability and germination performance under stress inform site selection and species prioritization for restoration projects. For example, studies using thermal performance curves model temperature responses in photosynthesis and germination, allowing predictions of how species might fare under future warming scenarios (Tomlinson, 2025). In fire-affected ecosystems, such as eucalypt forests, physiological monitoring of microclimatic drivers has revealed bottlenecks in germination and emergence, guiding post-disturbance recovery efforts (Tomlinson, 2025). By integrating these physiological metrics with morphophysical traits, conservationists can forecast outcomes in anthropogenic landscapes and enhance the success of reintroduction programs.

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In ex situ conservation, physiological tools play a vital role in preserving genetic diversity through germplasm banks and seed storage facilities. Monitoring seed viability under various conditions—such as refrigerated versus cryopreserved storage—reveals patterns of longevity and potential losses due to climate-induced stresses. Research has shown, for instance, that refrigerated Pinus densiflora seeds experience approximately 50% viability loss over 20 years, compared to only 3% in cryopreserved samples, highlighting the importance of advanced storage techniques for long-term conservation (Tomlinson, 2025). Physiological insights into dormancy and germination constraints further aid in breeding resilient varieties, ensuring that conserved materials can be propagated effectively for future use in changing environments.

Conversely, in situ strategies emphasize maintaining and enhancing ecological processes within natural habitats. Physiological assessments help prioritize vulnerable taxa by predicting reproductive failures, such as those caused by meiotic irregularities under heat or drought stress. By monitoring these processes, conservation plans can target interventions like habitat protection or assisted gene flow to bolster population resilience (Schmitz et al., 2015). Spatially explicit approaches, such as identifying areas that provide future climate space for displaced species, incorporate physiological models to project thermally tolerable conditions based on biophysical tolerances like temperature and precipitation thresholds (Schmitz et al., 2015). For plant species, this might involve niche modeling to anticipate range shifts in vegetation types or biomes, as seen in projections for tree species richness changes.

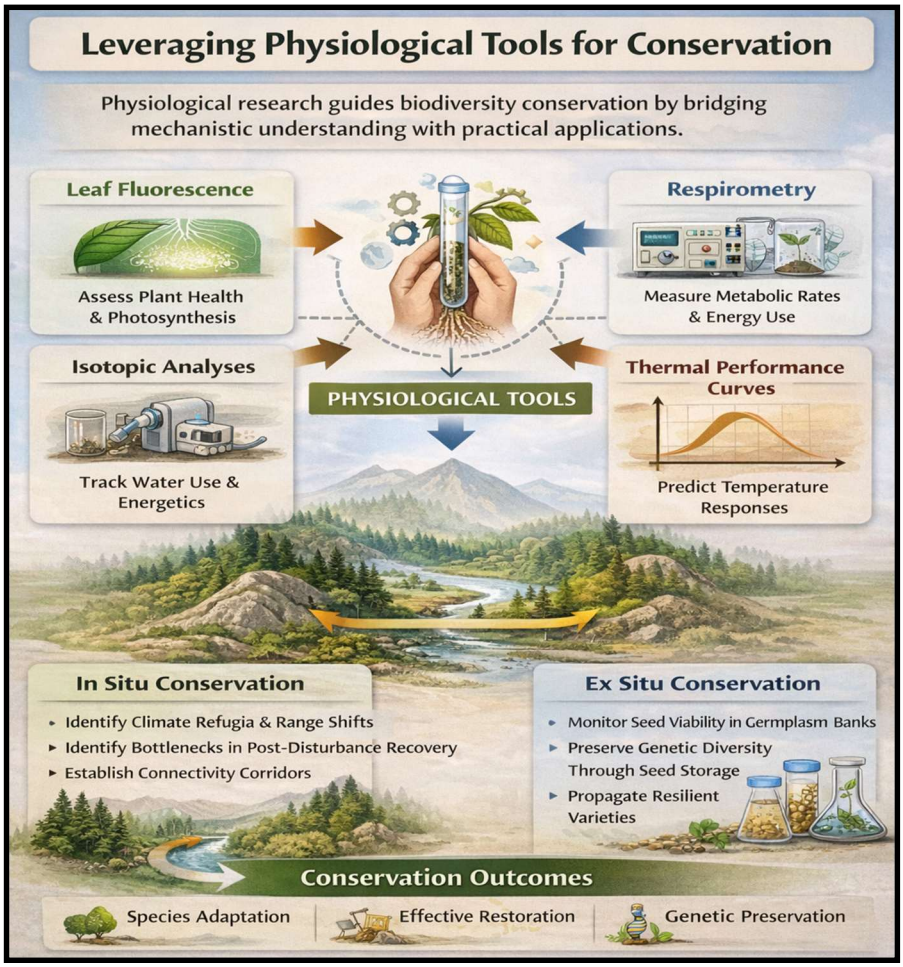


Fig. 2 : Leveraging Physiological Tools for Conservation

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Integrating plant physiology with biogeography further enhances conservation outcomes by facilitating the identification of climate refugia—stable habitats where species can persist amid broader environmental shifts. These refugia, such as cold valleys, springs, or mountain ranges, are selected based on physiological stability, using tools like dynamic global vegetation models (DGVM) and satellite-derived productivity data to assess resilience (Schmitz et al., 2015). For example, macrorefugia assessments have been applied to cold-adapted plants like red fir (Abies magnifica), ensuring protection of areas with suitable microclimates (Schmitz et al., 2015). Additionally, establishing connectivity corridors for species migration relies on physiological data to model dispersal capabilities and adaptive potential, linking fragmented habitats to support gene flow and evolutionary responses (Tomlinson, 2025).

These physiology-driven tools foster interdisciplinary collaboration, bridging gaps between mechanistic research, restoration practitioners, and policymakers. By co-producing knowledge with stakeholders, including indigenous communities and industry partners, conservation efforts can become more inclusive and effective, ultimately safeguarding plant biodiversity in a rapidly changing climate (Tomlinson, 2025). Fig.2 explains the Leveraging Physiological Tools for Conservation in a pictorial manner.

5. Plant Physiology-Based Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation

Biodiversity conservation is increasingly challenged by anthropogenic pressures such as climate change, habitat loss, and pollution, which disrupt plant physiological processes essential for survival and adaptation. Plant physiology, encompassing mechanisms like stress responses, metabolic adjustments, and functional traits, provides a foundational framework for developing targeted conservation strategies. By integrating physiological insights, conservation efforts can enhance species resilience, restore ecosystems, and preserve genetic diversity (Cooke et al., 2013). This elaboration explores key physiology-based strategies, drawing on mechanistic research to bridge gaps between laboratory findings and field applications.

5.1. Physiological Tools for Assessment and Monitoring

Physiological tools offer mechanistic insights into plant-environment interactions, enabling precise assessment of species vulnerability and resilience. For instance, measurements of leaf fluorescence, thermal tolerance, and germination responses can identify functional impairments near ecological niche limits, informing strategies for habitat protection under changing conditions like elevated temperatures (Tomlinson, 2025). These tools facilitate monitoring of stress thresholds, such as drought or fire regimes, and support predictive modeling of biogeographical shifts.

In practice, conservation physiology characterizes functional biodiversity by evaluating responses at cellular to ecosystem scales, aiding in the identification of critical habitats and environmental thresholds (Cooke et al., 2013). Non-invasive techniques, like glucocorticoid level assessments or isotopic analyses, help quantify management thresholds and evaluate trophic interactions, ensuring evidence-based interventions for disturbed landscapes.

5.2. Functional Traits as Surrogates for Conservation Planning

Plant functional composition, analyzed through community-weighted means of traits like leaf area or nutrient uptake, serves as an effective surrogate for biodiversity conservation. This approach links physiological attributes to ecosystem functions, influencing species richness of associated fauna and conservation priorities (Wan et al., 2024). In biomes such as forests and shrublands, functional traits predict variations in services like carbon sequestration and water regulation, guiding biome-specific planning to optimize biodiversity outcomes.

By incorporating functional diversity, strategies can prioritize areas with high physiological variability, enhancing resilience against stressors and supporting integrated conservation that balances biodiversity with ecosystem services (Wan et al., 2024).

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5.3. Integration of Conservation Physiology

Conservation physiology integrates physiological mechanisms to predict organismal responses to environmental changes, such as climate-induced stressors. It emphasizes mechanistic models to forecast "winners and losers" based on acclimatization and adaptation potentials, informing policies for habitat restoration and species recovery (Wikelski & Cooke, 2006). For plants, this includes assessing thermal tolerances and stress responses to mitigate extinction risks.

Furthermore, physiological methods evaluate the impacts of pollutants and diseases, optimizing ex situ programs like captive breeding or seed storage by addressing reproductive physiology and nutrition (Carey, 2005). This holistic approach links physiology with ecology and evolution, enhancing sustainable management in agriculture and wildlife.

5.4. Genetic Resources and Ex Situ/In Situ Conservation

Plant genetic resources (PGRs), including seeds, landraces, and wild relatives, are crucial for conserving physiological diversity that confers traits like drought resistance. Ex situ strategies, such as gene banks (e.g., Svalbard Global Seed Vault), preserve genetic material for crop improvement and reintroduction, countering genetic erosion from monocultures (Goud & Kumar, 2023). In situ preservation in protected areas maintains natural adaptations, while on-farm conservation sustains locally adapted varieties through farmer involvement.

International frameworks like the Convention on Biological Diversity support equitable benefit-sharing, ensuring PGRs bolster ecosystem stability against threats like habitat destruction (Goud & Kumar, 2023). Physiology informs storage conditions, such as cryopreservation, to maintain viability for long-term biodiversity safeguarding (Tomlinson, 2025).

5.5. Restoration and Ecosystem Management Strategies

Restoration efforts leverage physiological insights to select species with adaptive traits, facilitating recovery in degraded landscapes. Ecosystem-focused approaches address biodiversity loss by maintaining stability through diverse physiological responses, countering threats like deforestation and invasive species (Kaur, 2018). Strategies include creating pollinator habitats with native plants to enhance functional diversity and resilience.

6. Challenges and Future Directions

Despite advances in plant stress physiology, challenges in biodiversity conservation under climate change include the unpredictability of multifactorial stress combinations (MFSCs), where abiotic and biotic stresses interact non-additively, leading to unique responses that defy single-stress predictions (Pascual et al., 2022; Jing et al., 2024). Taxonomic biases favor crops over wild species, limiting applicability to diverse ecosystems (Zandalinas et al., 2025). Additional issues involve rapid climate shifts outpacing adaptations, altered phenology in perennials, and fragmented abiotic-biotic research (Plantae, n.d.; Pascual et al., 2022).

Future directions emphasize universal signaling pathways for transferable tools, CRISPR/Cas9 engineering for enhanced tolerance to stresses like drought and salinity (Jing et al., 2024; Petrík et al., 2025; Kumar et al., 2023; Li et al., 2022), and high-tech monitoring via sensors, AI, eDNA, and remote sensing for real-time biodiversity data (Frontier Tech Hub, 2024; Nature Tech Collective, 2024; Zavalloni et al., 2025). Multidisciplinary collaboration will improve conservation and food security.

7. Conclusion

From stress signaling to species survival, plant physiology offers a robust foundation for proactive conservation under climate change. By harnessing insights into molecular pathways, adaptive responses, and technological interventions, we can develop strategies that safeguard biodiversity, mitigate extinction risks, and promote ecosystem resilience for future

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generations (Zandalinas et al., 2025; Kumar et al., 2023). Ultimately, bridging the gap between physiological research and practical applications will be key to sustaining planetary health amid ongoing global transformations.

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Phyto diversity Studies of Sri Penusila Narasimha wild life sanctuary, Andhra Pradesh

Dr. A. Indira Priyadarsini [1], Dr. S. Shamshad[2]
[1] Department of Botany, Govt. Degree College(A), Nagari, AP
[2]Lecturer in zoology, KVR Govt. Degree College(A),(W), Cluster University, Kurnool
Corresponding author email: darshinibharath@gmail.com[1]

Abstract

Penchalakona, a mountainous region and the highest point of Sri Penusila Narasimha Wildlife Sanctuary in the Eastern Ghats of Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh, harbors rich phytodiversity that plays a crucial role in the traditional healthcare systems of local tribal communities. The present phytodiversity study documents and analyzes the medicinal plant wealth of the Penchalakona Hills based on extensive field surveys and ethnobotanical investigations. A total of 361 medicinal plant taxa belonging to 283 genera and 89 families were recorded as being used in the treatment of various ailments. Habitat-wise analysis revealed that these taxa are well distributed across diverse ecological niches within the sanctuary. Life-form analysis showed predominant use of trees (135 species), followed by herbs (117), shrubs (75), climbers (33), and one partial stem parasite. The continued dependence of indigenous tribes on these plant resources highlights the ecological, medicinal, and cultural significance of the region's phytodiversity. The study emphasizes the need for conservation and sustainable utilization of this valuable plant wealth, as it represents both a biological heritage and a vital component of traditional knowledge systems.

Introduction: Plants have been an integral part of human life since antiquity, providing food, shelter, medicine, and raw materials essential for survival and cultural development. Among these, medicinal plants play a crucial role in primary healthcare systems, especially in forested and tribal regions where traditional knowledge forms the backbone of disease management. India, being one of the world's megabiodiversity countries, possesses a vast wealth of medicinal plants, much of which is concentrated in its major floristic regions, including the Eastern Ghats.

The Eastern Ghats represent one of the nine major floristic zones of India and are characterized by an undulating topography, varied climatic conditions, and diverse edaphic factors, which together support rich and heterogeneous vegetation. Spanning parts of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, the Eastern Ghats are not a continuous mountain range but an assemblage of fragmented hills, plateaus, valleys, and gorges. In Andhra Pradesh, this region traverses several districts and harbors extensive forest tracts that support a wide array of plant species, many of which are endemic, rare, or threatened due to overexploitation and habitat degradation.

The forests of the Eastern Ghats are also culturally significant, as they are inhabited by numerous tribal communities who possess rich indigenous knowledge regarding the use of local plant resources for treating human and veterinary ailments. This ethnobotanical knowledge, transmitted orally through generations, is closely linked with the region's phytodiversity and reflects a deep understanding of plant-based therapeutics. However, rapid socio-economic changes, deforestation, and unsustainable harvesting practices pose serious threats to both plant diversity and traditional knowledge systems.

Penchalakona, located within the Sri Penusila Narasimha Wildlife Sanctuary in Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh, is a prominent and ecologically significant part of the Southern Eastern Ghats. It represents the highest elevation in the district and exhibits a mosaic of vegetation types, including dry deciduous, dry evergreen, and thorny scrub forests. The unique topography, religious significance, and relative isolation of Penchalakona have contributed to the conservation of diverse plant life, making it an important center for medicinal plant diversity.

Despite its ecological and cultural importance, comprehensive phytodiversity documentation of Penchalakona remains limited. Systematic studies focusing on the diversity, distribution, and utilization of medicinal plants are essential for understanding the floristic wealth of this region and for developing strategies for conservation and sustainable utilization. The present study aims to document the medicinal plant diversity of Penchalakona Hills, analyze their habitat-wise and

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family-wise distribution, and highlight the significance of traditional plant use by local tribal and rural communities, thereby contributing to the conservation of both biological and cultural heritage of the Eastern Ghats.

STUDY AREA: The Eastern Ghats constitute one of the nine major floristic zones of India and possess rich plant diversity due to their undulating topography and fertile soils. In Andhra Pradesh, the Eastern Ghats are inhabited by 33 tribal groups (Tribal Welfare Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, 2011) who possess extensive traditional knowledge on the therapeutic uses of local plants for human and veterinary ailments. This indigenous knowledge was documented and critically analyzed through literature review and field observations. Several medicinal plants with limited distribution were identified for further study, many of which are endemic and endangered due to overexploitation (Nair & Sastry, 1998).

Eastern Ghats: An Overview: The Eastern Ghats extend over an area of about 75,000 sq. km, lying between 11°30′–22°00′ N latitudes and 76°50′–86°30′ E longitudes along the Coromandel Coast. The Mahanadi basin forms the northern boundary, while the Cauvery marks the southern limit. The Eastern Ghats traverse Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Eastern Ghats pass through several districts including Srikakulam, East and West Godavari, Khammam, Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam, Kurnool, Kadapa, Nellore, Chittoor, and Mahaboobnagar. Unlike the Western Ghats, the Eastern Ghats form discontinuous hill ranges with plateaus, valleys, and gorges, with elevations ranging from a few meters to over 1600 m above MSL. Major rivers such as the Godavari, Mahanadi, Pennar, and Cauvery dissect these ranges before draining into the Bay of Bengal.

Based on geography and climate, the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh are divided into:

Northern Eastern Ghats – Simhachalam and Rampa Hills

Southern Eastern Ghats – Papi Hills, Kondapalli range, Nallamalais, Yerramalais, Palakonda, Veligonda, Seshachalam, and Nagari Hills . Altitudes range between 300–1500 m above MSL, with higher elevations occurring in the northern regions.

Vegetation Types in Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh: The forest area of Andhra Pradesh covers about 63,814 sq. km (23.2% of the state area; AP State of Forest Report, 2013). Vegetation in the Eastern Ghats is influenced by climate, soil, altitude, and biotic factors and is classified following Champion and Seth (1968).

I. Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests: These forests occur in regions with annual rainfall above 1000 mm and include sal-dominated forests, non-sal forests, and riparian forests. They are characterized by dense canopies, climbers, epiphytes, and scattered bamboo.

Northern Tropical Moist Deciduous (Sal forests): Dominated by Shorea robusta with associated tree, shrub, and herb species.

Southern Tropical Moist Deciduous (Non-sal forests): Dominated by Anogeissus latifolia, Dalbergia latifolia, Terminalia alata, and bamboo.

Riparian forests: Found along riverbanks with semi-evergreen species like Terminalia arjuna and Syzygium cumini.

II. Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests: These forests are widespread and characterized by seasonal leaf fall.

Teak-bearing dry deciduous forests: Dominated by Tectona grandis with associated trees, shrubs, climbers, and bamboo.

Non-teak dry deciduous forests: Found mainly in Rayalaseema and Nellore districts, often dominated by endemic species such as Pterocarpus santalinus and Shorea tumbaggaia.

III. Mixed Dry Deciduous Forests: Occur in drier regions of Rayalaseema and are subjected to heavy biotic pressure.

Southern mixed dry deciduous forests: Dominated by Terminalia, Albizia, Hardwickia binata, and climbers like Gymnema sylvestre.

Northern mixed dry deciduous forests: Occur sporadically in Odisha and Tamil Nadu.

IV. Dry Evergreen Forests: These forests occur along coastal plains such as Sriharikota (Nellore district) and are dominated by Albizia amara, Manilkara hexandra, and Strychnos nux-vomica.

V. Thorny Scrub Forests: These degraded forests occur in arid and semi-arid regions due to overexploitation and fires. Dominant species include Lantana camara, Ziziphus spp., Cassia auriculata, and drought-resistant grasses.

Penchalakona: Topography Penchalakona is the highest point of the Eastern Ghats in Nellore district, located at 14°18′ N latitude and 79°28′ E longitude, at an elevation of about 3000 ft above MSL. Covering approximately 100 hectares, the area

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consists of hilly terrain with plateaus, ridges, gorges, and valleys supporting dry deciduous, dry evergreen, and thorny scrub forests.

Etymology: Penchalakona lies within the Sri Penusila Narasimha Wildlife Sanctuary, about 80 km from Nellore. According to legend, Lord Narasimha manifested here in a yogic posture as a massive rock ("Penusila"), giving the site its name. The temple is one of the Nava Narasimhas, and Narasimha Jayanthi is celebrated annually in May, attracting large numbers of devotees.

C. Identification of Plant Specimens: Plant specimens were identified using standard regional floras and recent taxonomic literature. Updated nomenclature was verified using South Indian floras and plant databases. All identified specimens were mounted, catalogued genus-wise, and deposited in the Herbarium of the Department of Botany, NBKR Medicinal Plants Research Centre, NBKR Science and Arts College, Vidyanagar, Nellore district.D. **Systematic enumeration of medical plants:** Under systematic treatment, the families were arranged according to Bentham and Hooker's system of classification (1862-1883) with certain exceptions to accommodate recent changes in the families arrangement. The species are arranged in alphabetical sequence within the family. Vernacular name(s) (VN.) and English name(s) (EN.) are given whenever available. A brief description of each species is provided reflecting especially the silent features (Laurance, 1951 and Radford *et al,* 1974). This is followed by locality (Loc.), field number [Ethno Botanical Herbarium Number (EBHN)], flowering and fruiting (Fl. & Frt.) seasons are given. The use of plant species along with the mode of administration were given at the end. The uses reported by the tribal and village physicians were compared and thoroughly screened through the investigation of various workers (Caius, 1938, 1940, 1945; Nadkarni, 1954; Chopra *et al,* 1956, 1969; Anonymous, 1948-1976; Watt, 1972; Kirtikar and Basu, 1975; Umarao Sing *et al,* 1983; Tarafder, 1983 a, b, c; Agarwal, 1986).

The documented medicinal plants from the study area show a greater diversity. The analysis of habitat wise distribution of 361 medicinal plants indicates that medicinal plants are well distributed across different habitats observed in Penchalakona Hills. The tribal and rural communities of this region commonly used 117 herbs, 135 trees, 75 shrubs, 33 climbers and 1 partial stem parasite for treatment of numerous diseases (Table -1). As depicted in Figure-1, tree species (37.4%) are the most used and the predominance of usage is as follows in ascending order:

Trees > Herbs > Shrubs > climbers> partial stem parasites.

The family-wise analysis revealed that medicinal plants in this region are more in four families, namely *Fabaceae* with 55 plants, *Apocynaceae* with 21 plants, Malvaceae with 19 plants, Lamiaceae with 15 plants. These four families are rich in medicinal plants, followed by *Euphorbiaceae and Rubiaceae*with 14 species each; *Asteraceae and Acanthaceaeae* with 12 and 11 species respectively; Combretaceae and Rutaceae with 9 species each, Convolvulaceae with 8 plants, Cucurbitaceae, Moraceae and Phyllanthaceae with 7 species each, Amaranthaceae, Capparaceae, Solanaceae with 6 species each Poaceae and Vitaceae with 5 species each, Anacardiaceae, Bignoniaceae, Celastraceae, Meliaceae with 4 species each, Annonaceae, Asparagaceae, Boraginaceae, Burseraceae, Cyperaceae, Dioscoreaceae, Ebenaceae, Loganiaceae, Lythraceae, Menispermaceae, Myrtaceae, Oleaceae, Plantaginaceae, Rhamnaceae and Sapindaceae with 3 species each, Aizoaceae, Aristolochiaceae, Cleomaceae, Commelinaceae, Hypoxidaceae, Lauraceae, Loranthaceae, Olacaceae, Orobanchaceae, Santalaceae, Sapotaceae, Verbanaceae and Zygophyllaceae with 2 species each, Amaryllidaceae, Apiaceae, Aponogetonaceae, Arecaceae , Basellaceae, Begoniaceae, Bixaceae, Brassicaceae , Cactaceae, Cochicaceae, Cornaceae, Costaceae, Cycadaceae, Dipterocarpaceae, Erythroxylaceae, Gentianaceae, Lecythidaceae, Liliaceae, Linaceae, Linderniaceaae, Martyniaceae, Molluginaceae, Moringaceae , Nyctaginaceae, Ochnaceae, Opiliaceae, Oxalidaceae, Papaveraceae, Passifloraceae, Pedaliaceae, Piperaceae ,Plumbaginaceae, Portulacaceae , Ranunculaceae, Salvadoraceae, Simarubaceae, Ulmaceae and Violaceae are all at the same level contributing one species each(Table-2), (Figure -2). Top 10 families of the study area are Leguminosae, Apocynaceae, Malvaceae, Lamiaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Rubiaceae, Asteraceae, Acanthaceae, Combretaceae and Rutaceae respectively.(Figure -3)

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Table:1 HABIT WISE ANALYSIS OF MEDICINALPLANTS IDENTIFIED IN THE STUDY AREA

Habit	Count	%
Tree	135	**37.39612**
Herb	117	**32.40997**
Shrub	75	**20.77562**
Climber	33	**9.141274**
Partial Stem Parasites	1	**0.277008**
Grand Total	**361**	**100**

Table-2 List of 89 Families with 361 plants in the study area.

Family Name	No. of plants	Family Name	No. of plants	Family Name	No. of plants
Leguminosae	55	Dioscoreaceae	3	Begoniaceae	1
Apocynaceae	21	Ebenaceae	3	Bixaceae	1
Malvaceae	19	Loganiaceae	3	Brassicaceae	1
Lamiaceae	15	Lythraceae	3	Cactaceae	1
Euphorbiaceae	14	Menispermaceae	3	Cochicaceae	1
Rubiaceae	14	Myrtaceae	3	Cornaceae	1
Asteraceae	12	Oleaceae	3	Costaceae	1
Acanthaceae	11	Plantaginaceae	3	Cycadaceae	1
Combretaceae	9	Rhamnaceae	3	Dipterocarpaceae	1
Rutaceae	9	Sapindaceae	3	Erythroxylaceae	1
Convolvulaceae	8	Aizoaceae	2	Gentianaceae	1
Cucurbitaceae	7	Aristolochiaceae	2	Lecythidaceae	1
Moraceae	7	Cleomaceae	2	Liliaceae	1
Phyllanthaceae	7	Commelinaceae	2	Linaceae	1

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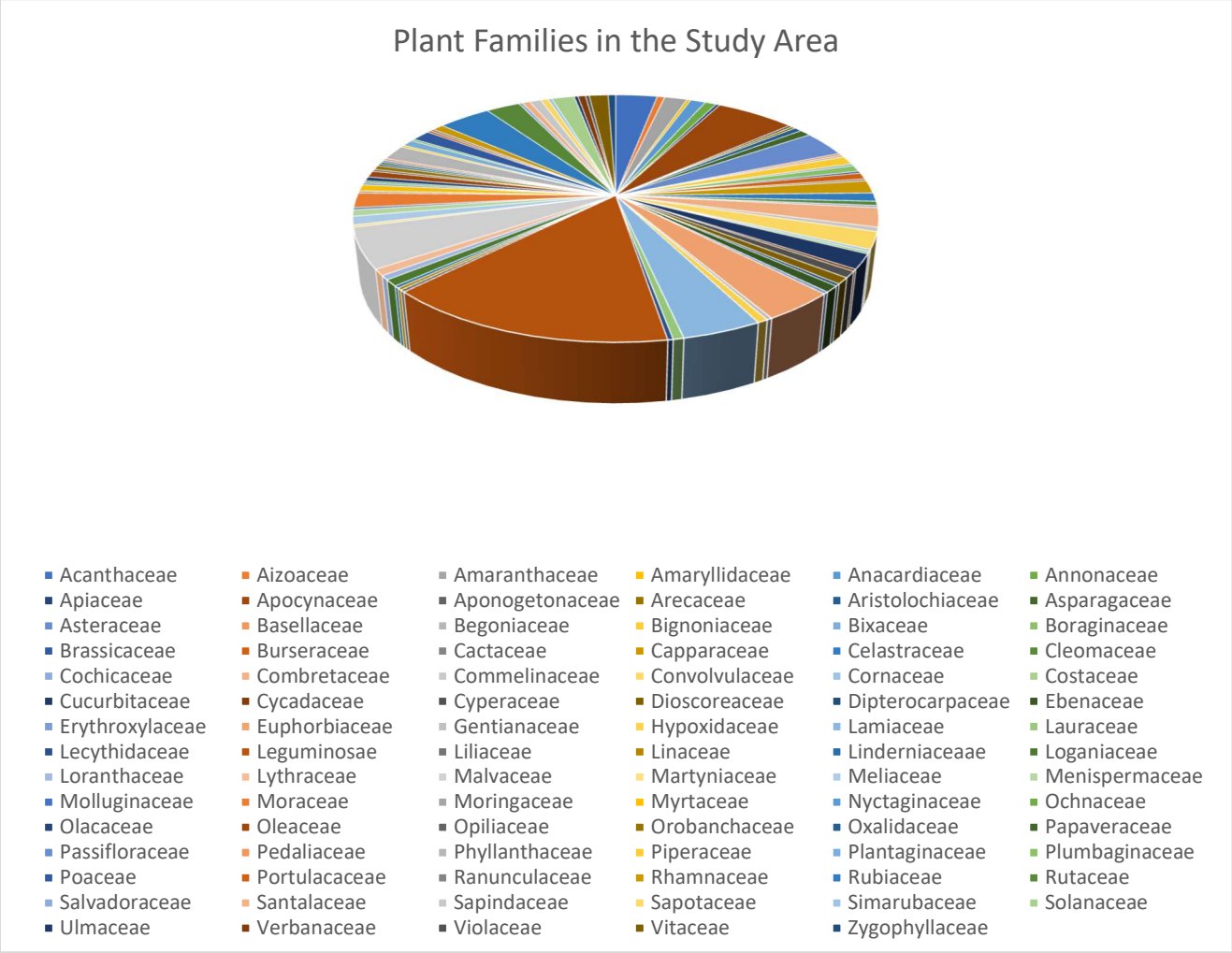
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Amaranthaceae	6	Hypoxidaceae	2	Linderniaceaae	1
Capparaceae	6	Lauraceae	2	Martyniaceae	1
Solanaceae	6	Loranthaceae	2	Molluginaceae	1
Poaceae	5	Olacaceae	2	Moringaceae	1
Vitaceae	5	Orobanchaceae	2	Nyctaginaceae	1
Anacardiaceae	4	Santalaceae	2	Ochnaceae	1
Bignoniaceae	4	Sapotaceae	2	Opiliaceae	1
Celastraceae	4	Verbanaceae	2	Oxalidaceae	1
Meliaceae	4	Zygophyllaceae	2	Papaveraceae	1
Annonaceae	3	Amaryllidaceae	1	Passifloraceae	1
Asparagaceae	3	Apiaceae	1	Pedaliaceae	1
Boraginaceae	3	Aponogetonaceae	1	Piperaceae	1
Burseraceae	3	Arecaceae	1	Plumbaginaceae	1
Cyperaceae	3	Basellaceae	1	Portulacaceae	1
				Ranunculaceae	1
				Salvadoraceae	1
				Simarubaceae	1
				Ulmaceae	1
				Violaceae	1

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Figure-1 List of Plant Families in the Study Area



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Figure.2 Habit wise analysis of plants in the study area

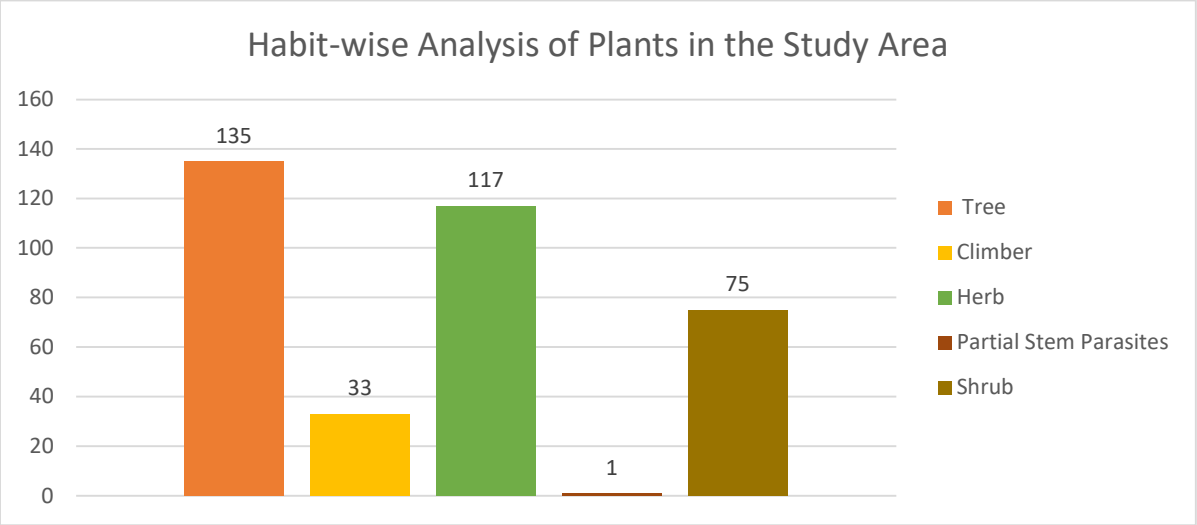


figure: 3. Top 10 families of the medicinal plants identified in the study area

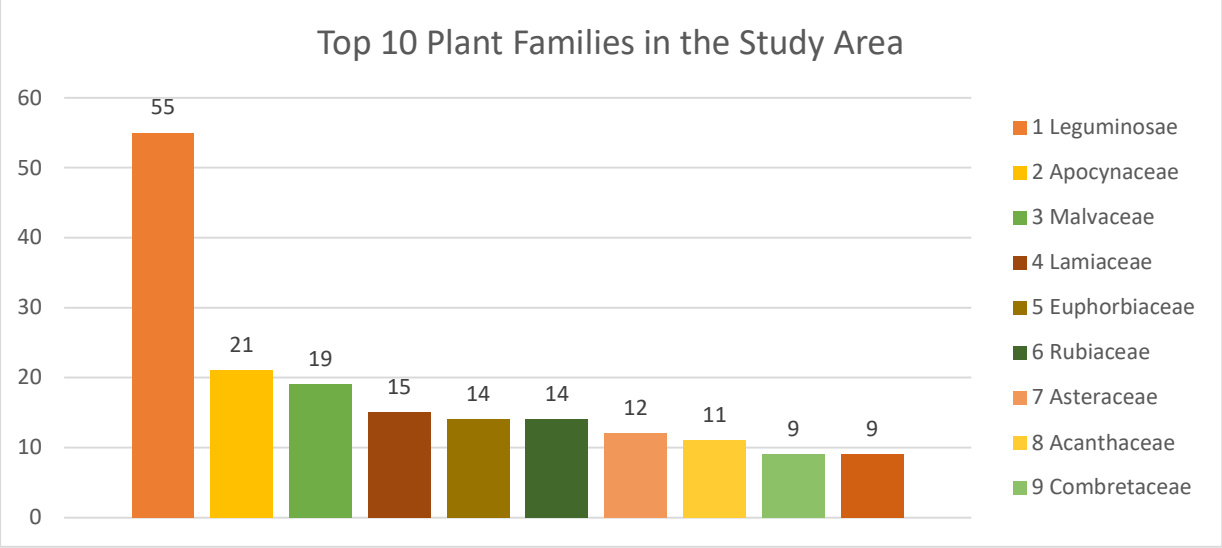


Table:3 List of plants enumerated in Penchalakona

S.N	BOTANICAL NAME	VERNACULAR NAME	FAMILY	HABIT
1	*Abrus precatorius* L.	Guriginga	Leguminosae	Climber

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2	*Abutilon hirtum* (Lam.) Sweet	Chinna benda	Malvaceae	Herb
3	*Abutilon indicum* (L.) Sweet	Tuthuru benda	Malvaceae	Shrub
4	*Acacia caesia* (L.) Willd.	Raakashi cheeki	Leguminosae	Climber
5	*Acacia leucophloea* (Roxb.) Willd.	Tella Thumma	Leguminosae	Tree
6	*Acacia nilotica* (L.) Delile	Nallathumma	Leguminosae	Tree
7	*Acacia sinuata* (Lour.) Merr.	Sekaya,chikaya	Leguminosae	Shrub
8	*Acacia torta* (Roxb.) Craib	Korinda	Leguminosae	Shrub
9	*Acalypha indica* L.	Pippentaku	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
10	*Acanthospermum hispidum* DC.	Seema palleru	Asteraceae	Herb
11	*Achyranthes aspera* L.	Uttareni	Amaranthaceae	Herb
12	*Adhatoda zeylanica* Medik.	Addasarapaku	Acanthaceae	Shrub
13	*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa.	Maredu	Rutaceae	Tree
14	*Aerva lanata* (L.) Juss.	Pindi kura	Amaranthaceae	Herb
15	*Agave americana* L.	Kalabanda	Asparagaceae	Shrub
16	*Ailanthus excelsa* Roxb.	Peddamanu	Simarubaceae	Tree
17	*Alangium salvifolium* (L.f.) Wangerin	Udaga	Cornaceae	Shrub
18	*Albizia amara* (Roxb.)	Narlinga, Cigara	Leguminosae	Tree
19	*Albizia lebbeck* (L.) Benth.	Bogichettu, Dirisena.	Leguminosae	Tree
20	*Albizia odoratissima* (L.f.) Benth.	Chindugu	Leguminosae	Tree
21	*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f	Kalabanda	Liliaceae	Herb

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22	*Alphonsea selerocarpa* Thw.	Mavalinga, Konda Jilledu	Annonaceae	Tree
23	*Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R. Br.	Edakulapala	Apocynaceae	Tree
24	*Amaranthus spinosus* L.	Mulla thotakura	Amaranthaceae	Herb
25	*Ammannia baccifera* L.	Agni vendrapaku	Lythraceae	Herb
26	*Ampelocissus tomentosa* (B.Heyne & Roth) Planch.	Nela Gummadi	Vitaceae	Climber
27	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees	Nela vemu	Acanthaceae	Herb
28	*Anisochilus carnosus* (L.f.) Wall.	Buthamshapu	Lamiaceae	Herb
29	*Anisomeles malabarica* (L.) R. Br. ex Sims	Maga beera	Lamiaceae	Shrub
30	*Annona squamosa* L.	sapota	Annonaceae	Tree
31	*Anogeissus latifolia* (Roxb.ex DC.)	Adavi draksha ,velama	Combretaceae	Tree
32	*Antidesma ghaesembilla* Gaertn.	Tellapulicheru	Phyllanthaceae	Tree
33	*Aponogeton Natans* (L.)	Gittigaddalu	Aponogetonaceae	Herb
34	*Argemone Mexicana* L.	Bhrama dandi	Papaveraceae	Herb
35	*Argyreia nervosa* (Burm. f)	Adavi Gummaddi	Convolvulaceae	Shrub
36	*Aristida adscensionis* L.	Chipuru gaddi	Poaceae	Herb
37	*Aristida setacea* Retz.	Chipuru gaddi	Poaceae	Herb
38	*Aristolochia bracteolata* Lam.	Gadidha gadapaku	Aristolochiaceae	Herb
39	*Aristolochia indica* L.	Nalla eswari	Aristolochiaceae	Climber
40	*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.	Pilliteegalu	Asparagaceae	Shrub
41	*Asystasia gangetica* (L.)	Lavana valli	Acanthaceae	Herb

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42	*Atalantia monophylla* (Roxb.) DC	Muriki nimma	Rutaceae	Tree
43	*Azadirachta indica* A.Juss.	Vepa	Meliaceae	Tree
44	*Bacopa monnieri* (L.) Wettst.	Bramhi	Plantaginaceae	Herb
45	*Balanites aegyotica* (L.) Delile	Carechettu	Zygophyllaceae	Tree
46	*Bambusa aurundinaceae* Willd.	Veduru	Poaceae	Shrub
47	*Barleria buxifolia* L.	Naga gorinta	Acanthaceae	Herb
48	*Barleria prionitis* L.	Mundla Gorinta	Acanthaceae	Shrub
49	*Barringtonia acutangula* (L.) Gaertn	Kadimi	Lecythidaceae	Tree
50	*Basella alba* L.	Batchali	Basellaceae	Shrub
51	*Bauhinia racemosa* Lam.	Are chettu	Leguminosae	Shrub
52	*Begonia malabarica* Lam.	Adavi chukka	Begoniaceae	Herb
53	*Blumea membranacea* DC.	Karapaaku	Asteraceae	Herb
54	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Atike mamidi	Nyctaginaceae	Herb
55	*Borassus flabellifer* L.	Thati	Arecaceae	Tree
56	*Boswellia serrata* Roxb.ex Colebr.	Anduga	Burseraceae	Tree
57	*Brassica nigra* (L.) K. Koch	Aavalu	Brassicaceae	Herb
58	*Bridelia retusa* (L.) A. Juss.	Kodi aarechettu	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
59	*Buchanania axillaris* (Desr.)	Sara pappu	Anacardiaceae	Tree
60	*Bulbostylis barbata* (Rottb.) C.B.Clarke	Kuchhugaddi	Cyperaceae	Herb
61	*Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.	Moduga	Leguminosae	Tree

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62	*Cadaba fruticosa* (L.) Druce	Sepaaku	Capparaceae	Shrub
63	*Caesalpinia bonducella* (L.) Fleming	Gachha	Leguminosae	Shrub
64	*Caesalpinia crista* L.	Gaccha	Leguminosae	Shrub
65	*Calotropis procera* (Aiton) Dryand.	Jilledu	Apocynaceae	Shrub
66	*Canavalia ensiformis* (L.) DC.	Adavi thamba, Thamba	Leguminosae	Shrub
67	*Canthium dicoccum* (Gaertn.) Merr.	Nallabalasi	Rubiaceae	Tree
68	*Capparis divaricata* Lam.	Gudaaremidi	Capparaceae	Tree
69	*Capparis grandis* L.f.	Magasiri gadda.	Capparaceae	Tree
70	*Capparis sepiaria* L.	Nalla uppi	Capparaceae	Shrub
71	*Capparis zeylanica* L.	Aare donda	Capparaceae	Shrub
72	*Caralluma adscendens* (Roxb.) R.Br.	Kundeti chevulu	Apocynaceae	Herb
73	*Cardiospermum helicacabum* L.	Budda teega	Sapindaceae	Climber
74	*Carissa carandas* L.	Pedda kalivi	Apocynaceae	Tree
75	*Carissa spinarum* L.	Kalimi	Apocynaceae	Shrub
76	*Cascabela thevetia* (L.) Lippold.	Paccha ganneru.	Apocynaceae	Tree
77	*Cassia absus* L.	Chakshushya	Leguminosae	Herb
78	*Cassia auriculata* L.	Tangedu	Leguminosae	Shrub
79	*Cassia fistula* L.	Kondrakaya	Leguminosae	Tree
80	*Cassia italica* (Mill.) Spreng.	Nela tangedu	Leguminosae	Herb
81	*Cassia occidentalis* L.	Kasinta	Leguminosae	Shrub

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82	*Cassia tora* L.	Kasivinda	Leguminosae	Herb
83	*Cassine glauca* (Rottb.) Kuntze	Nirinji	Celastraceae	Tree
84	*Cassytha filiformis* L.	Pacchi teega	Lauraceae	Climber
85	*Catharanthus roseus* (L.) G.Don	Billa jemudu	Apocynaceae	Herb
86	*Catunaregam spinosa* (Thunb) Tirveng.	Manga	Rubiaceae	Shrub
87	*Cayratia pedata* (Lam.) Gagnep.	Adavi gummadi teega	Vitaceae	Shrub
88	*Celastrus paniculatus* Willd.	Teega palleru	Celastraceae	Shrub
89	*Celosia argentea* L.	Sitamma jadalu	Amaranthaceae	Herb
90	*Centella asiatica* (L.) Urb.	Saraswathiakku	Apiaceae	Herb
91	*Ceropegia candelabrum* L.	Kundher	Apocynaceae	Herb
92	*Chloroxylon swietenia* DC.	Billudu	Rutaceae	Tree
93	*Chukrasia tabularis* A.Juss.	Kondavepa	Meliaceae	Tree
94	*Cissampelos pareira* L.	Visha boddi	Menispermaceae	Shrub
95	*Cissus quadrangularis* L.	Nalleru	Vitaceae	Herb
96	*Cissus repens* Lam.	Chiruboddi	Vitaceae	Shrub
97	*Cissus vitiginea* L.	Adavigummadi	Vitaceae	Climber
98	*Citrullus colcynthis* (L.) Scharad.	Verripuchha	Cucurbitaceae	Climber
99	*Cleistanthus collinus* Benth.	Kodishe	Phyllanthaceae	Tree
100	*Cleome gynandra* L.	Vammintaku	Cleomaceae	Herb
101	*Cleome viscosa* L.	Kukka vaminta	Cleomaceae	Herb

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102	*Clerodendrum phlomidis* L.f.	Thakkeda	Lamiaceae	Shrub
103	*Clerodendrum serratum* (L.) Moon.	Ganitu barangi	Lamiaceae	Herb
104	*Clitoria ternatea* L:	Sanku puvvu	Leguminosae	Herb
105	*Coccinia grandis* (L.) Voigt	Donda teega	Cucurbitaceae	Climber
106	*Cocculus hirsutus* (L.) W. Theob.	Pedda dusara	Menispermaceae	Climber
107	*Cochlospermum religiosum* (L.) Alston	Konda gogu	Bixaceae	Tree
108	*Coldenia procumbens* L.	Hamsapadu	Boraginaceae	Herb
109	*Coleus amboinicus* Lour.	Karpura valli	Lamiaceae	Herb
110	*Combretum albidum* G.Don	Yeda teega,Geddepeyyeru	Combretaceae	Climber
111	*Commelina bengalensis* L.	Venna Veduru	Commelinaceae	Herb
112	*Commiphora caudata* (Wight & Arn) Engl.	Konda regi	Burseraceae	Tree
113	*Corallocarpus epigaeus* (Rottler) Hook.f.	Aako garuda	Cucurbitaceae	Climber
114	*Cordia dichotoma* G.Forst.	Nekkara	Boraginaceae	Tree
115	*Costus speciosus* (J.Koenig) Sm.	Adavi allamu	Costaceae	Herb
116	*Crateva magna* (Lour.) DC.	Varun,Maga linga	Capparaceae	Tree
117	*Crinum defixum* Ker. Gawl.	Chembu gadda	Amaryllidaceae	Herb
118	*Crotalaria verrucosa* L.	Tella eswari	Leguminosae	Herb
119	*Croton klotzschianus* (Wight) Thwaites	Nara gonji	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
120	*Ctenolepis garcini* (L.) C.B.Clarke	Verri dosa	Cucurbitaceae	Climber

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121	*Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn.	Nelathati gadda	Hypoxidaceae	Herb
122	*Cyanotis tuberosa* (Roxb.) Schult. & Schult. f.	Kini mokka	Commelinaceae	Herb
123	*Cycas beddomei* Dyer	Perreta	Cycadaceae	Herb
124	*Cymbopogon Coloratus* (Hook.f.) Stapf	Boda gaddi	Poaceae	Herb
125	*Cyperus javanicus* Houtt.	Vidavali	Cyperaceae	Herb
126	*Cyperus rotundus* L.	Tunga musti	Cyperaceae	Herb
127	*Dalbergia latifolia* Roxb.	Jitragi	Leguminosae	Tree
128	*Dalbergia paniculata* Roxb.	Pachhri	Leguminosae	Tree
129	*Datura metal* L.	Nalla ummetha	Solanaceae	Herb
130	*Decalepis hamiltonni* Wight & Arn.	Barre sugandhi pala	Apocynaceae	Climber
131	*Deccania pubescens* (Roth) Tirveng.	Jiddu manga	Leguminosae	Tree
132	*Delonix elata* (L.) Gamble	Sunkesula.	Leguminosae	Tree
133	*Delonix regia* (Hook.) Raf.	Agnipoolu, Erraturayi	Leguminosae	Tree
134	*Dendrophthoe falcata* (L.f.) Ettingsh.	Badanika	Loranthaceae	Partial Stem Parasites
135	*Derris scandens* (Roxb.) Benth.	Mainapu teega	Leguminosae	Climber
136	*Desmodium gangeticum* (L.) DC.	Shali parni	Leguminosae	Herb
137	*Desmodium pulchellum* (L.) Benth.	Dayyapu jeda	Leguminosae	Shrub
138	*Desmodium triflorum* (L.) DC.	Munthamamidi	Leguminosae	Herb
139	*Dichrostachys cinerea* (L.) Wight & Arn.	Velturu chettu	Leguminosae	Tree

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140	*Dicoma tomentosa* Cass.	Goligundaku	Asteraceae	Herb
141	*Digera muricata* (L.) Mart.	Chenchalaku	Amaranthaceae	Herb
142	*Dioscorea bulbifera* L.	Chenchugadda	Dioscoreaceae	Herb
143	*Dioscorea oppositifolia* L.	Ellagadda	Dioscoreaceae	Herb
144	*Dioscorea pentaphylla* L.	Chinnakaringa	Dioscoreaceae	Herb
145	*Diospyros ferrea* (Willd.) Bakh.	China-ullingi, yeruti	Ebenaceae	Tree
146	*Diospyros chloroxylon* Roxb.	Vulinda	Ebenaceae	Tree
147	*Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb.	Tunki	Ebenaceae	Tree
148	*Diplocyclos palmatus* (L.) C. Jeffrey	Linga donda	Cucurbitaceae	Climber
149	*Dodonaea viscosa* (L.) Jacq.	Bandaru	Sapindaceae	Shrub
150	*Dolichandrone atrovirens* (Roth) K. Schum.	Neruddi	Bignoniaceae	Tree
151	*Dolichandrone falcata* (Wall.) ex. DC.	Chittivoddi	Bignoniaceae	Tree
152	*Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L.	Gunta Galagara	Asteraceae	Herb
153	*Elytraria acaulis* (L.f.) Lindau	Cheppu attaku	Acanthaceae	Herb
154	*Emilia sonchifolia* (L.) D.C. ex DC.	Tella Nelanthu	Asteraceae	Herb
155	*Enicostema axillare* (Lam.)	Nelagolimidi	Gentianaceae	Herb
156	*Entada pursaetha* DC.	Jila teega	Leguminosae	Climber
157	*Erythrina variegata* L.	Badisi, Baditha	Leguminosae	Tree
158	*Erythroxylum monogynum* Roxb.	Devadari	Erythroxylaceae	Shrub

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159	*Eugenia bracteata* (Willd.) DC	Konda Neredu	Myrtaceae	Tree
160	*Euphorbia antiquorum* L.	Peddajampu	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
161	*Euphorbia hirta* L.	Pacchaku, Pacchabottu	Euphorbiaceae	Herb
162	*Euphorbia nivulea* Buch. Ham	Palachettu	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
163	*Euphorbia tirucelli* L.	Kadajemudu	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
164	*Evolvulus alsinoids* (L.) L.	Vishnukanta	Convolvulaceae	Herb
165	*Ficus arnottiana* (Miq.) Miq.	Banda Ravi/Konda Ravi	Moraceae	Tree
166	*Ficus benghalensis* L.	Marri	Moraceae	Tree
167	*Ficus hispida* L.	Bembedu	Moraceae	Tree
168	*Ficus microcarpa* L.f.	Kondajuvvi, Billa juvvi	Moraceae	Tree
169	*Ficus racemosa* L.	Atti, Medi	Moraceae	Tree
170	*Ficus religiosa* L.	Ravi	Moraceae	Tree
171	*Gardenia gummifera* L.f.	Bikki	Rubiaceae	Tree
172	*Gardenia latifolia* Aiton	Pedda bikki	Rubiaceae	Tree
173	*Gardenia resinifera* Roth	Banka bikki	Rubiaceae	Tree
174	*Garuga pinnata* Roxb.	Garuga,konda vepa	Burseraceae	Tree
175	*Glinus Oppositifolius* (L.) Aug.DC.	Chatrasi	Molluginaceae	Herb
176	*Gloriosa superba* L.	Kondlukottepulu	Cochicaceae	Climber
177	*Glossocardia bosvallia* (L.f.) DC.	Nela samrani	Asteraceae	Herb
178	*Glycosmis pentaphylla* (Retz.) DC.	Golugu	Rutaceae	Tree
179	*Gmelina arborea* Roxb.	Gummudutepu	Lamiaceae	Tree
180	*Gnaphalium polycaulon* Pers.	Deyyaputhalaku	Asteraceae	Herb

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181	*Grewia flavescens* Juss.	Koyyajana,jani	Malvaceae	Tree
182	*Grewia hirsuta* Vahl	Chinnajana	Malvaceae	Shrub
183	*Grewia rhamnifolia* Burret	Thegalaku, Tegalli.	Malvaceae	Tree
184	*Grewia tillifolia* Vahl	Errajana	Malvaceae	Tree
185	*Grewia villosa* Willd.	Bantha	Malvaceae	Shrub
186	*Gymnema sylvestre* (Retz.) R.Br. ex Sm.	Podapathri	Apocynaceae	Climber
187	*Haldina cordifolia* (Roxb.) Ridsdale	Batta ganapa	Rubiaceae	Tree
188	*Hardwickia binata* Roxb.	Yepi	Leguminosae	Tree
189	*Hedyotis umbellata* Walter	Vennela vemu	Rubiaceae	Herb
190	*Helicteres isora* L.	Nuli thada,Guba thoda	Malvaceae	Tree
191	*Heliotropium indicum* (L).	*Nagadanthi*	Boraginaceae	Herb
192	*Hemidesmus indicus* (L.) R. Br. ex Schult.	Manchi sughandapala	Apocynaceae	Herb
193	*Hibiscus ovalifolius* (Forssk.) Vahl.	Nithya malli	Malvaceae	Shrub
194	*Hibiscus platanifolius* (Willd.) Sweet	Konda benda, konda janapa nara	Malvaceae	Tree
195	*Holarrhena antidysenterica* (Roth) Wall. ex A.DC.	Istaripalla	Apocynaceae	Tree
196	*Holoptelea integrifolia* Planch.	Tapsi	Ulmaceae	Tree
197	*Hugonia mystax* (L.)	Kaki bira	Linaceae	Tree
198	*Hybanthus enneaspermus* (L.) F.Muell.	Rathna Purusha	Violaceae	Herb
199	*Hygrophila auriculata* (Schumach.) Heine	Enugu palleru	Acanthaceae	Shrub
200	*Hyptis suaveolens* (L.) Poit.	Seema thulasi	Hypoxidaceae	Shrub

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201	*Ichnocarpus frutescens* (L.) W. T.Aiton	Palateega	Apocynaceae	Herb
202	*Indigofera aspalathoides* DC.	Siva Narayana, Siva Vemu	Leguminosae	Herb
203	*Indigofera cassioides* DC.	Kondakandi	Leguminosae	Shrub
204	*Indigofera cordifolia* Roth	Nelaparu	Leguminosae	Herb
205	*Indigofera tinctoria* L.	Neelichettu	Leguminosae	Shrub
206	*Ipomea obscura* L. Ker Gawl.	Poda tutti	Convolvulaceae	Climber
207	*Ipomoea carnea* Jacq.	Thutu kada	Convolvulaceae	Shrub
208	*Ipomoea pesti-gridis* L.	Meka Madugu	Convolvulaceae	Herb
209	*Ipomoea violacea* (L.)	Samudrapala	Convolvulaceae	Herb
210	*Ixora arborea* Roxb.	Korivi	Rubiaceae	Shrub
211	*Jasminum auriculatum*Vahl	Garuda malli	Oleaceae	Shrub
212	*Jatropha curcas* L.	Nepaalamu	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
213	*Jatropha gossipiifolia* L.	Nepalam	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
214	*Justicia gendarussa* Burm. F.	Kasiveru	Acanthaceae	Shrub
215	*Justicia tranquebariensis* L.f.	Cheekara chettu	Acanthaceae	Herb
216	*Kickxia ramosissima* (Wall.). Janch.	Valambiri	Plantaginaceae	Herb
217	*Knoxia sumatrensis* (Retz.) DC.	Nela vemu, Chedu pulla	Rubiaceae	Herb
218	*Kydia calycina* Roxb.	Bottuka	Malvaceae	Tree
219	*Lannea coromandelica* (Houtt.) Merr.	Gumpena	Anacardiaceae	Tree
220	*Lantana camara* L.	Korinda	Verbanaceae	Shrub
221	*Lawsonia inermis* L.	Gorintaku	Lythraceae	Tree

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222	*Leonotis nepatifolia* (L.) R.Br.	Ranabheri	Lamiaceae	Herb
223	*Lepidagathis cristata* Willd.	Mulla banthi	Acanthaceae	Herb
224	*Leptadenia reticulata* (Retz.)	Guttipala	Acanthaceae	Climber
225	*Leucas aspera* (Willd.) Link.	Thummi	Lamiaceae	Herb
226	*Limnophila indica* (L.) Druce	Buradabakkena	Plantaginaceae	Herb
227	*Limonia acidissima* Groff	Velaga	Rutaceae	Tree
228	*Lindernia crustacea* (L.) F.V.Muell	Verlakammi	Linderniaceaae	Herb
229	*Linociera zeylanica* (L.) Gamble	Punagini, Puniki	Oleaceae	Shrub
230	*Litsea glutinosa (Lour.)* C.B.Rob.	Pulusu mamidi	Lauraceae	Tree
231	*Madhuca indica* J.F.Gmel.	Ippa	Sapotaceae	Tree
232	*Mallotus phillipensis* (Lam.)	Sindhurachettu	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
233	*Mangifera indica* L.	Mamidi	Anacardiaceae	Tree
234	*Manilkara hexandra* (Roxb.)	Paala chettu	Sapotaceae	Tree
235	*Martynia annua* L.	Telugondi	Martyniaceae	Shrub
236	*Maytenus emerginata* (Willd.)	Danthi	Celastraceae	Tree
237	*Melhania incaca* B.Heyne ex Wall.	Talak	Malvaceae	Herb
238	*Melilotus indica* (L.) All.	Pasupu veru chettu	Leguminosae	Herb
239	*Merremia tridentata* (L.) Hallier f.	Elika chevulaku	Convolvulaceae	Herb

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240	*Millingtonia hortensis* L.f.	Akasa malle, chettu sampangi,punnaga	Bignoniaceae	Tree
241	*Mimosa pudica* L.	Atthipathi	Leguminosae	Herb
242	*Mitragyna parviflora* (Roxb.) Korth.	Batta ganapa	Rubiaceae	Tree
243	*Morinda pubescens* Sm.	Maddi, Thogaru, Pedi papidi	Rubiaceae	Tree
244	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Munaga chettu	Moringaceae	Tree
245	*Mucuna prurita* (L.) Hook.	Adavi amudamu	Leguminosae	Climber
246	*Murraya koenigii* (L.) Spreng.	Karivepaku	Rutaceae	Tree
247	*Murraya paniculata* (L.) Jack.	Naara musti	Rutaceae	Tree
248	*Naravelia zeylanica* (L.) DC.	Korivi kattaku	Ranunculaceae	Shrub
249	*Nerium oleander* L.	Ganneru	Apocynaceae	Shrub
250	*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis* L.	Paarijatamu	Oleaceae	Tree
251	*Ochna obtusata* DC.	Kukkamogi	Ochnaceae	Tree
252	*Ocimum basillicum* L.	Bhu tulasi	Lamiaceae	Shrub
253	*Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.	Krishna tulasi, Manchi tulasi	Lamiaceae	Shrub
254	*Olax scandens* Roxb.	Teeganakkera	Olacaceae	Climber
255	*Opilia amentacea* Roxb.	Pacha nachari	Opiliaceae	Shrub
256	*Opuntia stricta* (Haw.) Haw.	Bramhajamudu	Cactaceae	Shrub
257	*Oroxylum indicum* (L.) Kurz	Pampana	Bignoniaceae	Tree
258	*Oxalis corniculata* L.	Puli chintaaku	Oxalidaceae	Herb
259	*Pamburus missionis*	Pedda nimma	Rutaceae	Tree
260	*Parthenium hysterophorus* L.	Pichhibangaaku	Asteraceae	Herb

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261	*Passiflora foetida* L.	Tellajumki	Passifloraceae	Climber
262	*Pavetta indica* L.	Papidi	Rubiaceae	Tree
263	*Pavonia odorata* Willd.	Karubenda	Malvaceae	Herb
264	*Pavonia zeylanica* (L.) Cav.	Karubenda	Malvaceae	Herb
265	*Pedalium murex* L.		Pedaliaceae	Herb
266	*Pedilanthus tithymaloides* (L.) Poit.	Gaddakaragadu chettu, Kantapala.	Euphorbiaceae	Shrub
267	*Pergularia daemia* (Forssk.) Chiov.	Dushtapu teega	Apocynaceae	Herb
268	*Phyla nodiflora* (L.) Greene	Bokkena	Verbanaceae	Herb
269	*Phyllanthus amarus* Schumach & Thonn.	Nelausiri	Phyllanthaceae	Herb
270	*Phyllanthus emblica* L.	Usiri	Phyllanthaceae	Tree
271	*Phyllanthus polyphyllus* Willd.	Pandibarla chettu,konda pachari	Phyllanthaceae	Tree
272	*Phyllanthus reticulatus* Poir.	Pulichaare	Phyllanthaceae	Shrub
273	*Physalis minima* L.	Boddakasi	Solanaceae	Herb
274	*Piper longum* L.	Pippallu	Piperaceae	Shrub
275	*Pithecolobium dulce* (Roxb.)	Cheema chinta	Leguminosae	Tree
276	*Plecospermum spinosum* Trec.	Korriti chettu	Moraceae	Shrub
277	*Pleurostylia oppositia* (Walls) Alston	Nalla nakkena	Celastraceae	Tree
278	*Plumbago zeylanica* L.	Tellachitramulam	Plumbaginaceae	Herb
279	*Plumeria alba* L.	Devaganneru	Apocynaceae	Tree
280	*Polyalthia cerasoides* (Roxb.) Bedd.	Gutti	Annonaceae	Tree

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281	*Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre	Kanuga	Leguminosae	Tree
282	*Portulaca oleracea* (L.)	Pappukooraku	Portulacaceae	Herb
283	*Premna tomentosa* Willd.	Adavimamidi,Narva	Lamiaceae	Tree
284	*Prosopis cineraria* (L.) Druce.	Jammi	Leguminosae	Tree
285	*Pterocarpus marsupium* Roxb.	Peddayegi	Leguminosae	Tree
286	*Pterocarpus santalinus* L.f.	Raktha chandanam	Leguminosae	Tree
287	*Pterolobium hexapetalum* (Roxb.) Sant. & Wagh	Pariki	Leguminosae	Shrub
288	*Pterospermum xylocarpum* (Gaertn.) Oken	Thada	Malvaceae	Tree
289	Pueraria tuberosa (Willd.) DC.	Dari gummadi	Leguminosae	Climber
290	*Punica granatum* L.	Danimma	Lythraceae	Tree
291	*Pupalia lappaceae* (L.) Juss.	Tella uttareni	Amaranthaceae	Shrub
292	*Rhynchosia minima* (L.) DC	Adavi chikkudu	Leguminosae	Herb
293	*Ricinus communis* (L.)	Amudamu Chettu	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
294	*Rivea hypocrateroformis* Choisy	Teega boddi	Convolvulaceae	Climber
295	*Rubia cordifolia* L.	Erraveru teega	Rubiaceae	Herb
296	*Salvadora persica* L.	Varagogu	Salvadoraceae	Shrub
297	*Sansevieria roxburghiana* Schult. & Schult.f.	Ishoura -kuda	Asparagaceae	Herb
298	*Santalum album* L.	Srre gandhamu	Santalaceae	Tree
299	*Sapindus emerginatus* Vahl.	Kunkudu	Sapindaceae	Tree

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300	*Sarcostemma acidum* (Roxb.) Voigt	Pandarij amudu	Apocynaceae	Shrub
301	*Secamone emetica* (Retz.) R. Br. ex Schult.	Doodi pala.	Apocynaceae	Shrub
302	*Securinega leucopyrus* (Willd.) Muell	Nalla balugudu	Phyllanthaceae	Shrub
303	*Semecarpus anacardium* L.f.	Tella Nalla jeedi	Anacardiaceae	Tree
304	*Sesbania sesban* (L.) Merr.	Samintha	Leguminosae	Tree
305	*Shorea tumbaggaia* Roxb.	Tamba, Gugilamu	Dipterocarpaceae	Tree
306	*Sida acuta* Burm.f.	Bala	Malvaceae	Herb
307	*Sida cordifolia* L.	Chirubenda	Malvaceae	Herb
308	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Kamanchi	Solanaceae	Herb
309	*Solanum surattense* Burm.f.	Mulla vankaya	Solanaceae	Herb
310	*Solanum trilobetum* L.	Mullavankaya	Solanaceae	Climber
311	*Sopubia delphinifolia* G. Don.	Edintha jada	Orobanchaceae	Herb
312	*Soymida febrifuga* (Roxb.) A.Juss.	Yegi	Meliaceae	Tree
313	*Sphaeranthus indicus* L.	Boddatarapu	Asteraceae	Herb
314	*Sterculia urens* Roxb.	Thapsi	Malvaceae	Tree
315	*Striga asiatica* (L.) Kuntze	Taathi badanika	Orobanchaceae	Herb
316	*Strychnos colubrina* L.	Teega musti, Naga musti.	Loganiaceae	Tree
317	*Strychnos nux-vomica* L.	Musti	Loganiaceae	Tree
318	*Strychnos potatorum* L.f.	Chilla ginja	Loganiaceae	Tree
319	*Suregada angustifolia* (Mukk.Arg.) Airy Shaw	Sapranji	Euphorbiaceae	Tree
320	*Syzygium alternifolium* (Wight) Walp.	Mogi	Myrtaceae	Tree

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321	*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels	Nallaneredu	Myrtaceae	Tree
322	*Tamarindus indica L.*	Chinta	Leguminosae	Tree
323	*Tarenna asiatica* (L) Kuntze ex K. Schum.	Kommi , Papidi	Rubiaceae	Shrub
324	*Tephrosia purpurea* (L.) Pers.	Nugu Vemapali	Leguminosae	Herb
325	*Terminalia alata* Heyne. ex. Roth.	Nallamaddi	Combretaceae	Tree
326	*Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.ex DC.) Wight & Arn.	Tella maddi	Combretaceae	Tree
327	*Terminalia ballerica* (Gaertn.) Roxb.	Tandra	Combretaceae	Tree
328	*Terminalia catappa* L.	Patee Badam	Combretaceae	Tree
329	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Karakkaya	Combretaceae	Tree
330	*Terminalia pallida* Brandis	Karakkaya	Combretaceae	Tree
331	*Terminalia paniculata* Roth	Pulimaddi, putakarakkaya.	Combretaceae	Tree
332	*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers	Tippa teega	Menispermaceae	Climber
333	*Toddalia asiatica* (L.) Lam.	Kondakasidha	Rutaceae	Climber
334	*Tragia involucrata* L.	Telukondi chettu	Euphorbiaceae	Climber
335	*Trianthema monogyna* L.	Tella galijeru	Aizoaceae	Herb
336	*Trianthema portulacastrum* L.	Gajerugadda	Aizoaceae	Herb
337	*Tribulus terrestris* L.	Palleru	Zygophyllaceae	Herb
338	*Trichosanthes cucumerina* L.	Adavi potla	Cucurbitaceae	Shrub
339	*Tridax procumbens* (L.) L.	Gaddi chamanthi	Asteraceae	Herb

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340	*Tylophora indica* (Burm.f) Merr.	Mekameyaniakku	Apocynaceae	Climber
341	*Vernonia cinerea* (L.) Less.	Sahadevichettu	Asteraceae	Herb
342	*Vetiveria zizanioides* (L.) Nash	Vatti veru	Poaceae	Herb
343	*Viscum articulatum* Burm. f.	Katta badanika	Loranthaceae	Shrub
344	*Viscum orientale* (Willd).	Sundar badanika	Santalaceae	Shrub
345	*Vitex altissima* L.f.	Nemali adugu	Lamiaceae	Tree
346	*Vitex leucoxylon* L.f.	Lokki	Lamiaceae	Tree
347	*Vitex negundo* L.	Nalla vavili	Lamiaceae	Shrub
348	*Vitex trifolia* (L.)	Chiru vavili	Lamiaceae	Tree
349	*Walsura trifoliata*	Erra valudu	Meliaceae	Tree
350	*Waltheria indica* L.	Duvvena kayalu	Malvaceae	Herb
351	*Wattakaka volubilis* (L.f) Stapf	Doodi pala teega	Apocynaceae	Climber
352	*Withania somnifera* (L.) Dunal	Pennerugaddalu	Solanaceae	Shrub
353	*Wrightia tinctoria* R. Br.	Doddapalachettu,Repala	Apocynaceae	Tree
354	*Xanthium strumarium* L.	Marlu mathaghi	Asteraceae	Shrub
355	*Ximenia americana* L.	Ura nekkera	Olacaceae	Shrub
356	*Zehneria mysorensis* Wight	Puttibudama	Cucurbitaceae	Climber
357	*Ziziphus Mauritiana* Lam.	Badari,Regu	Rhamnaceae	Tree
358	*Ziziphus oenopolia* (L.) Mill.	Pariki	Rhamnaceae	Shrub
359	*Ziziphus xylopyrus* (Retz.) Willd.	Gotti	Rhamnaceae	Tree
360	*Zornia diphylla* (L.) Pers.	Nakkapeethi gaddalu	Leguminosae	Herb

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361	*Zornia gibbosa* Span.	Nelalam	Leguminosae	Herb

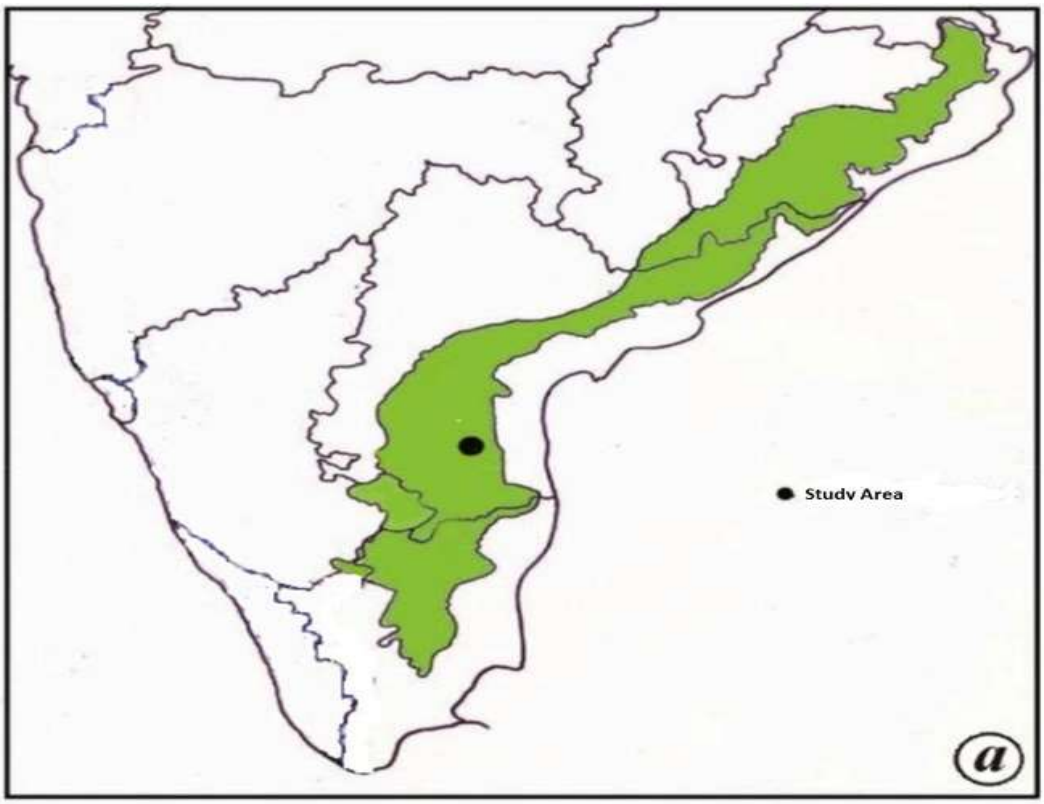


Fig.4 Map of Sri Peninsula Narasimha Wild life sanctuary

Conclusion

The present study highlights the rich phytodiversity and ethnomedicinal significance of Penchalakona Hills, a biologically and culturally important region of the Southern Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh. A total of 361 medicinal plant taxa belonging to 283 genera and 89 families were documented, reflecting the floristic richness and ecological heterogeneity of the study area. The wide distribution of medicinal plants across diverse habitats such as dry deciduous, dry evergreen, thorny scrub, and mixed forests underscores the ecological resilience and adaptive diversity of the region.

Life-form analysis revealed the predominance of tree species, followed by herbs, shrubs, climbers, and a partial stem parasite, indicating the major dependence of local communities on woody perennials for traditional healthcare. Family-wise analysis showed that Fabaceae, Apocynaceae, Malvaceae, and Lamiaceae contribute the highest number of medicinal species, emphasizing their therapeutic importance in the indigenous medical system. The continued reliance of tribal and rural communities on these plant resources demonstrates the vital role of traditional knowledge in primary healthcare.

However, many of the documented species are endemic, rare, or endangered, facing threats from overexploitation, habitat degradation, forest fires, and increasing anthropogenic pressures. The erosion of traditional knowledge due to socio-economic changes further accentuates the urgency for documentation and conservation. Overall, this study

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provides a comprehensive baseline database on medicinal plant diversity of Penchalakona and contributes significantly to the understanding of floristic wealth and ethnobotanical practices of the Eastern Ghats.

Future Directions

1. **Conservation and Management:** Immediate conservation measures should be implemented for endemic and threatened medicinal plants through in situ conservation, protection of sacred groves, and habitat restoration programs.
2. **Sustainable Utilization:** Development of sustainable harvesting protocols and community-based management practices is essential to prevent overexploitation while ensuring livelihood support for local communities.
3. **Phytochemical and Pharmacological Validation:** Scientifically validating the therapeutic claims of traditionally used plants through phytochemical screening, pharmacological, and toxicological studies will help in identifying potential drug leads.
4. **Ex situ Conservation and Cultivation**: Establishment of nurseries, medicinal plant gardens, and seed banks can aid in conserving rare species and promoting their cultivation to reduce pressure on wild populations.
5. **Documentation and Knowledge Preservation:** Systematic documentation of traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge, involving local healers and elders, is crucial to preserve intangible cultural heritage for future generations.
6. **Awareness and Capacity Building:** Awareness programs and training workshops for local communities on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants can strengthen participatory conservation efforts.
7. **Policy and Research Integration:** Integrating ethnobotanical data with regional biodiversity action plans and encouraging interdisciplinary research will support long-term conservation and utilization of medicinal plant resources in the Eastern Ghats.

These future directions will not only aid in conserving the medicinal plant wealth of Penchalakona but also facilitate its sustainable utilization and scientific advancement, thereby benefiting both biodiversity conservation and human health.

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Integrating Environmental Regulatory Frameworks and Biodiversity Informatics for Sustainable Development in India

Sanyasirao Patnala[#] & Dr. Lakshminarayana V[1]
[#]Assistant Professor, Maharajah's College (Autonomous), Andhra Pradesh, India.
[1]Assistant Professor, Maharajah's College (Autonomous), Andhra Pradesh, India.
#Corresponding Author: P. Sanyasi Rao, Email id: sraopatnala@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

India's environmental governance framework integrates biodiversity conservation with developmental decision-making through statutory clearance mechanisms such as Environmental Clearance (EC), Forest Clearance (FC), Wildlife Clearance (WC), Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Clearance, and compensatory afforestation under the National CAMPA. With increasing project complexity and ecological sensitivity, biodiversity informatics and digital governance platforms have become essential for transparent, efficient, and science-based regulation. This paper critically examines India's environmental clearance mechanisms under key environmental legislations and highlights the role of biodiversity informatics and digital platforms such as PARIVESH 2.0 in strengthening environmental decision-making. The study demonstrates how legal frameworks, technological tools, and biodiversity data integration collectively contribute to sustainable development and conservation outcomes.

Keywords: Environmental Clearance, Forest Conservation Act, Wildlife Clearance, CRZ, National CAMPA, Biodiversity Informatics, PARIVESH 2.0.

1. Introduction

Environmental governance in India has evolved into a comprehensive regulatory framework integrating legal instruments, institutional mechanisms, and technological platforms to address biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Rapid infrastructure growth, industrialization, and urban expansion have increased pressure on forests, wildlife habitats, coastal ecosystems, and traditional knowledge systems. In this context, regulatory mechanisms such as Environmental Clearance, Forest Clearance, Wildlife Clearance, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Clearance, and compensatory afforestation play a pivotal role in balancing developmental needs with ecological integrity. Simultaneously, the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 provides a legal foundation for conservation of biological resources, protection of associated traditional knowledge, and equitable benefit sharing. The emergence of biodiversity informatics and digital governance platforms, notably PARIVESH 2.0, has strengthened transparency, inter-agency coordination, and evidence-based decision-making. This paper critically examines India's environmental clearance mechanisms and biodiversity governance frameworks, highlighting their collective role in biodiversity management and sustainable development.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative review and policy-analysis methodology. Authoritative legislations, rules, and notifications issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India—including the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; EIA Notification, 2006; Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; CRZ Notifications; Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016; and the Biological Diversity Act, 2002—were systematically reviewed. Secondary information was sourced from official government documents and portals. All legal provisions have been critically interpreted and paraphrased to ensure originality and to avoid textual duplication.

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3. Environmental Clearance Framework in India

3.1 Environmental Clearance (EC)

In pursuance of the provisions of the **Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006,** issued under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, specified categories of projects and activities listed in the Schedule to the notification require **prior Environmental Clearance** from the concerned regulatory authority. No construction or developmental activity can commence without obtaining such clearance.

The EIA process ensures systematic identification, prediction, and evaluation of potential environmental impacts, including impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems, air, water, and human health. Public consultation and expert appraisal form integral components of the clearance mechanism.

4. Forest Clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

The **Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 [Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam]** mandates prior approval of the Central Government for:

- De-reservation of reserved forests
- Diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes
- Assignment of forest land through lease or other means
- Felling of naturally grown trees

This legislation serves as a critical instrument for conserving forest ecosystems and associated biodiversity.

4.1 Stages of Approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act

Forest clearance is granted through a staged process:

1. **In-Principle Approval (Stage-I Clearance):** Conditional approval subject to compliance with stipulated conditions.
2. **Final Approval (Stage-II Clearance):** Granted after fulfillment of all Stage-I conditions.
3. **Final Diversion Order by the State Government:** Authorizes diversion of forest land for approved non-forest use.

5. Wildlife Clearance Mechanism

The **Wildlife Division of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** is the nodal authority responsible for wildlife conservation policy, legal frameworks, and financial support. Under **Section 5A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, the **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)** and **State Boards for Wildlife (SBWL)** were constituted. Developmental activities proposed within **National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves, Tiger Corridors,** and activities requiring environmental clearance within **Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)** are examined by the **Standing Committee of the NBWL**. Proposals are scrutinized by State Governments and SBWLs before being placed before the NBWL. Incomplete or non-compliant proposals are returned for revision. The inclusion of eminent ecologists and conservationists in the Standing Committee ensures scientifically informed decision-making.

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6. Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Clearance

Under **Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986,** the MoEFCC notified the **CRZ Notifications (2011/2019)** to conserve and protect coastal and marine ecosystems while safeguarding the livelihoods of coastal communities. Coastal stretches and territorial waters have been classified as **Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZs).** Prior CRZ clearance is mandatory for development activities within CRZ areas. Clearances are granted by the **State Coastal Zone Management Authority (SCZMA)** or **SEIAA/MoEFCC,** based on project category and recommendations of the SCZMA.

7. National CAMPA and Compensatory Afforestation

The **Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Act, 2016** and **CAF Rules, 2018** established institutional and financial mechanisms to offset forest diversion impacts. The Act operationalized two non-lapsable funds:

- **National Compensatory Afforestation Fund**
- **State Compensatory Afforestation Fund**

The Act led to the establishment of **National CAMPA** and corresponding **State CAMPAs**, replacing the earlier ad-hoc system. These funds support compensatory afforestation, restoration of degraded forests, wildlife habitat improvement, and biodiversity enrichment.

8. Role of Biodiversity Informatics and Digital Governance

Digital platforms such as **PARIVESH 2.0** integrate Environmental, Forest, Wildlife, and CRZ clearance processes through a single-window system. Biodiversity informatics tools enable:

- Spatial analysis of forest and wildlife habitats
- Integration of GIS and remote sensing data
- Online submission and tracking of proposals
- Transparent monitoring of compliance conditions

Such technological integration strengthens regulatory efficiency, reduces delays, and promotes evidence-based environmental governance. Strengthening biodiversity informatics, capacity building, and inter-operability of databases can significantly enhance regulatory outcomes.

9. Legal and Institutional Framework for Biodiversity Conservation in India

9.1 Biological Diversity Act, 2002

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 provides the primary statutory framework for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of biological resources and associated traditional knowledge. The Act operationalises India's commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol.

9.2 Institutional Mechanisms: NBA, SBBs and BMCs

The Act establishes a three-tier institutional mechanism comprising the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs), and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs). These institutions regulate access to

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biological resources, document biodiversity through People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs), and implement access and benefit-sharing mechanisms.

9.3 Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and Traditional Knowledge

A key strength of the Act is its emphasis on fair and equitable benefit sharing. Benefit-sharing mechanisms include monetary compensation, technology transfer, joint ownership of intellectual property rights, and livelihood support for local and indigenous communities. Integration with digital governance platforms such as PARIVESH 2.0 enhances transparency and compliance monitoring.

10. Discussion

India's environmental clearance regime reflects a comprehensive legal and institutional approach to biodiversity conservation. The integration of Environmental, Forest, Wildlife, and CRZ clearance mechanisms with biodiversity governance institutions such as the NBA, SBBs, and BMCs demonstrates a holistic policy framework. Digital governance platforms like PARIVESH 2.0 enhance transparency, inter-agency coordination, and evidence-based decision-making. However, challenges such as procedural delays, data gaps, and uneven institutional capacities persist. Strengthening biodiversity informatics, improving inter-operability of databases, and enhancing stakeholder participation can significantly improve regulatory effectiveness and conservation outcomes.

11. Conclusion

This study highlights the integrated role of environmental regulatory frameworks, biodiversity governance institutions, and digital technologies in achieving sustainable development in India. Environmental, forest, wildlife, and CRZ clearance mechanisms, supported by compensatory afforestation and biodiversity informatics, provide a robust foundation for balancing developmental needs with ecological conservation. Strengthening institutional coordination, data integration, and technological capacity will further enhance biodiversity protection and transparent environmental decision-making.

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ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE(AI) IN CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN FUTURE

Dr.Thulasi Neerugatti
Assistant Professor of Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Chevella, Rangareddy (Dist).

Abstract

Biodiversity conservation has become one of the most critical global challenges due to accelerating climate change, habitat destruction, and anthropological pressures. Traditional conservation methods often suffer from limitations related to scale, time, and accuracy. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool capable of transforming biodiversity conservation through automated species identification, predictive modeling, ecosystem monitoring, and decision-support systems. This paper examines the role of AI in biodiversity conservation, focusing on its current applications, methodologies, and future potential. Using a comprehensive literature review and case-based analysis, the study highlights how AI improves monitoring efficiency, enhances predictive accuracy, and supports evidence-based conservation planning. The results indicate that AI-driven approaches significantly outperform conventional methods in data processing and early threat detection. However, challenges such as data bias, ethical concerns, and unequal access to AI technologies remain. The paper concludes that while AI is not a replacement for ecological expertise, it is a vital complementary tool for achieving sustainable and scalable biodiversity conservation in the future.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Biodiversity Conservation, Machine Learning, Ecosystem Monitoring, Sustainability

1. Introduction

Biodiversity encompasses the diversity of species, genes, and ecosystems that sustain life on Earth. Healthy ecosystems provide essential services, including climate regulation, pollination, soil fertility, and water purification. Despite its importance, global biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate due to habitat loss, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and over-exploitation of natural resources (**World Economic Forum, 2024**).

Conventional conservation techniques such as field surveys and manual species tracking are often labor-intensive, time-consuming, and spatially limited. With the increasing availability of large ecological datasets from satellites, camera traps, drones, and acoustic sensors, the need for advanced analytical tools has become evident. Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly machine learning and deep learning, enables the rapid processing of large datasets, pattern recognition, and predictive analysis.

In recent years, AI has been applied to wildlife monitoring, habitat mapping, poaching detection, and climate impact modeling. This paper explores the role of AI in biodiversity conservation, emphasizing its future significance in addressing complex ecological challenges.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are to:

- Examine the current applications of artificial intelligence in biodiversity conservation.
- Analyze AI-based methodologies used in ecological monitoring and prediction.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of AI tools compared to traditional conservation methods.

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- Identify challenges and ethical concerns associated with AI implementation.
- Discuss future prospects of AI in global biodiversity conservation strategies.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a **qualitative and analytical research approach**, consisting of the following components:

3.1 Literature Review

Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, institutional reports, and authoritative online sources were reviewed. The literature focused on AI applications in wildlife monitoring, ecosystem modeling, and conservation planning.

3.2 Case Study Analysis

Documented AI-based conservation initiatives were examined, including:

- AI-powered camera traps for wildlife identification
- Acoustic monitoring systems for endangered species
- Satellite-based habitat change detection

3.3 Comparative Analysis

The performance of AI-based conservation methods was compared with traditional techniques in terms of accuracy, efficiency, scalability, and cost-effectiveness.

4. Results

4.1 Improved Species Monitoring

AI systems using computer vision can automatically identify species from camera trap images with accuracy exceeding 90%, significantly reducing human effort and error.

Table 1: Comparison of Traditional and AI-Based Monitoring

Parameter	Traditional Methods	AI-Based Methods
Time required	High	Low
Accuracy	Moderate	High
Data volume handled	Limited	Very large
Real-time monitoring	Not possible	Possible

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4.2 Predictive Habitat Modeling

Machine learning models integrate climate, vegetation, and land-use data to predict habitat shifts and extinction risks. These predictions enable proactive conservation measures rather than reactive responses.

4.3 Enhanced Conservation Decision-Making

AI-driven decision support systems help policymakers prioritize conservation areas, allocate resources efficiently, and evaluate long-term conservation outcomes under different scenarios.

5. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that AI significantly enhances biodiversity conservation by improving monitoring accuracy, enabling early threat detection, and supporting evidence-based planning. AI tools are particularly effective in remote or inaccessible regions where human monitoring is challenging.

However, several challenges persist. AI systems rely heavily on high-quality data, and biased datasets can lead to inaccurate predictions. Ethical concerns related to surveillance, data ownership, and community consent must also be addressed. Furthermore, unequal access to AI infrastructure may limit adoption in developing regions, where biodiversity is often richest.

Thus, AI should be viewed as a complementary tool that supports, rather than replaces, ecological expertise and local knowledge.

6. Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence represents a transformative force in the future of biodiversity conservation. Its ability to process vast datasets, predict ecological trends, and support informed decision-making makes it an invaluable asset in addressing the global biodiversity crisis. While technical and ethical challenges remain, responsible integration of AI with traditional conservation practices can significantly enhance conservation outcomes. Future efforts should focus on developing inclusive AI frameworks, improving data quality, and fostering collaboration between technologists, ecologists, and policymakers.

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Diversity and Traditional Use of Wild Edible Food Plants in Rampachodavaram Forest Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju District, Andhra Pradesh, India

M. Sabitha* and M. Sridevi **
*Lecturer in Botany SKVT Government Degree College, Rajamahendravaram
** Lecturer in Botany SKR Government Degree College for Women, Rajamahendravaram

1. Introduction

The Eastern Ghats range, particularly the Rampachodavaram Forest Division, is ecologically rich and supports extensive plant biodiversity utilized by indigenous communities for food, medicine, and cultural practices (Rao, 1981; Rao et al., 2014). Wild edible plants constitute a critical component of tribal food systems, especially in remote forested areas where cultivated crops are scarce (Arora & Pandey, 1996; FAO, 2010). Their utilization reflects long-standing traditional knowledge that integrates dietary, pharmacological, and cultural roles within indigenous lifestyles (Jain, 1964; Jain & Goel, 1995).Despite their importance, systematic documentation of wild edible plants from the Rampachodavaram region has remained limited until recent ethnobotanical investigations conducted in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh (Reddy et al., 2007a; Reddy et al., 2011).

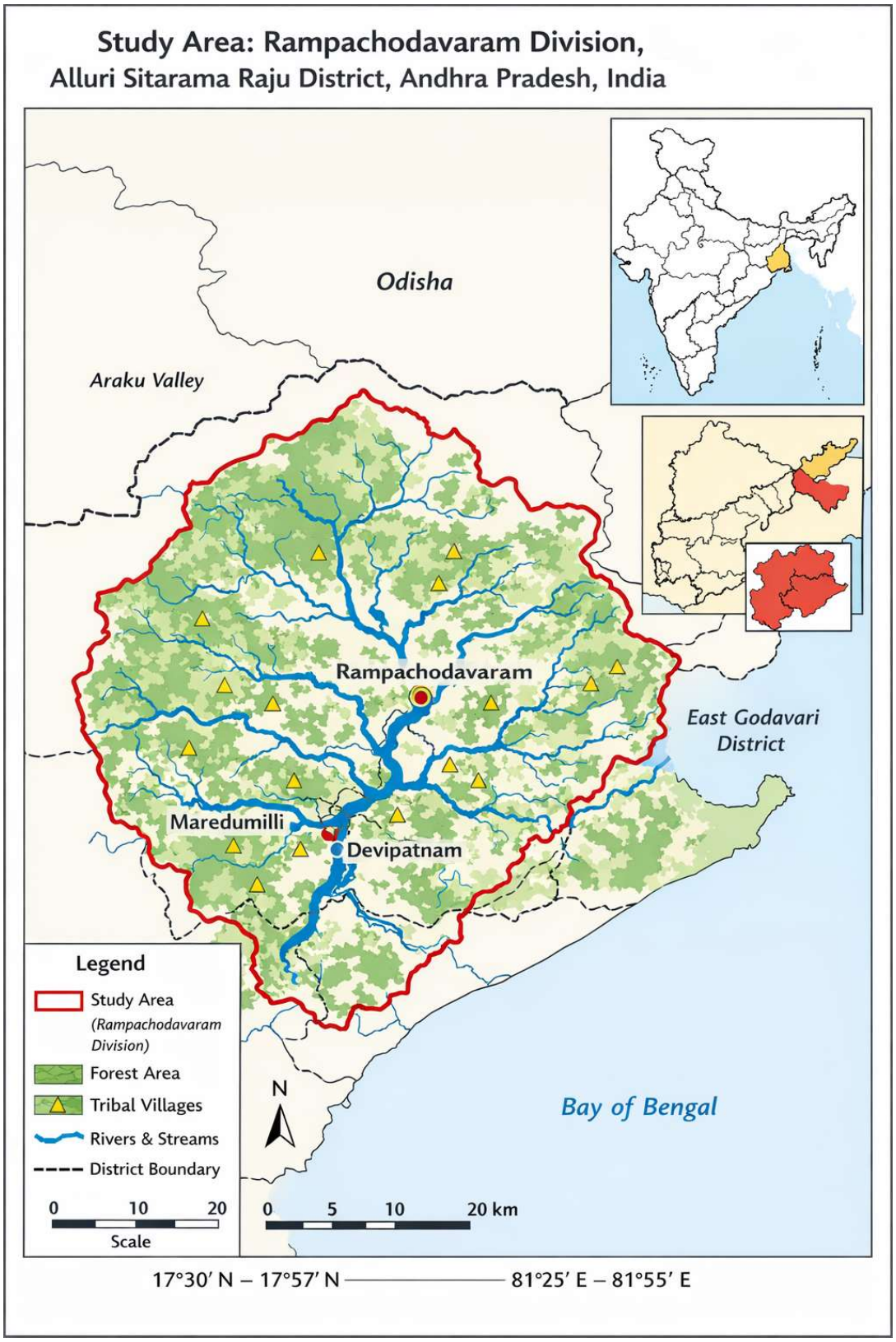
2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

The Rampachodavaram Forest Division lies in the Alluri Sitaramaraju District of northeastern Andhra Pradesh and is characterized by semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forest vegetation supporting rich floral diversity (Rao, 1981; Rao et al., 2014). Tribal communities such as the Koyas, Konda Reddys, and other forest-dwelling groups inhabit this region and largely depend on forest resources for food, medicine, and livelihood security (Reddy et al., 2007b). The region's coordinates lie roughly between **17°17′–17°48′ N latitude and 81°44′–82°13′ E longitude** with varied elevations shaped by the Eastern Ghats topography. The landscape features densely forested hills interspersed with deep valleys and river channels forming part of the **Godavari River basin**. The area experiences a **tropical monsoon climate**, with annual rainfall influenced by the southwest monsoon that supports moist deciduous and semi-evergreen forest types typical of the Eastern Ghats. Forests dominate the land use in this region, with **around 66 % of the area under forest cover** composed primarily of moist deciduous and semi-evergreen ecosystems. These forests are rich in **biodiversity**, including a wide range of woody species (e.g., *teak*, *bamboo*) and diverse medicinal and wild edible plants which are vital to local livelihoods and cultural practices. (Map)

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2.2 Field Survey and Data Collection

Ethnobotanical information was collected following standard field and herbarium methods described by Jain and Rao (1977). Data were gathered through repeated village visits, semi-structured interviews with elders, women, and knowledgeable informants, free-listing exercises, and guided field walks (Jain & Goel, 1995; Pradhan et al., 2013). Voucher specimens were collected and identified using regional floras and herbarium consultation (Rao, 1981; Reddy et al., 2011). Information recorded included scientific and local names, edible parts used, seasonal availability, modes of preparation, and associated medicinal uses, following established ethnobotanical documentation protocols (Jain, 1964; Kala, 2007).

3. Results

The present study documented a total of 50 wild edible plant species belonging to 43 genera and 27 families, used by local communities of the study area for food and nutritional security. The diversity of species reflects the rich floristic composition of the region and the strong dependence of indigenous people on forest resources.

3.1 Taxonomic Diversity

Among the recorded taxa, Amaranthaceae emerged as the dominant family with 7 species, followed by Fabaceae with 8 species, indicating their major contribution to wild edible plant resources. Other important families included Araceae (5 species), Solanaceae (4 species), Moraceae (2 species), Rhamnaceae (2 species), Phyllanthaceae (2 species), and Malvaceae (2 species). The remaining families were represented by one species each. (Fig.-1) The dominance of Amaranthaceae and Fabaceae highlights their ecological abundance and adaptability to local environmental conditions.

3.2 Habit Analysis

Analysis of growth forms revealed that herbs constituted the largest proportion with 24 species (48%), followed by trees (13 species; 26%), climbers (9 species; 18%), and shrubs (4 species; 8%).(Fig.-2) The predominance of herbaceous species indicates easy accessibility and frequent use, as herbs are readily available during different seasons and require minimal processing.

3.3 Edible Parts Used

The study revealed a wide range of edible plant parts utilized by local inhabitants. Leaves were the most commonly consumed plant part (23 species; 46%), followed by fruits (10 species; 20%), tubers/corms/rhizomes (11 species; 22%), seeds (6 species; 12%), flowers (1 species), and young shoots (2 species). ((Fig.-3) The extensive use of leafy vegetables emphasizes their importance as sources of vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber.

3.4 Mode of Consumption

Most of the recorded wild edible plants were consumed in cooked form, either as vegetables or curries (approximately 60% of species). Several species were used raw, particularly fruits such as *Syzygium cumini*, *Ziziphus mauritiana*, and *Phoenix sylvestris*. Certain plants were consumed after boiling, roasting, or processing as condiments, for example *Tamarindus indica*, *Murraya koenigii*, and *Oxalis corniculata*. This diversity of consumption modes reflects traditional culinary knowledge aimed at enhancing palatability, reducing toxicity, and improving nutritional value

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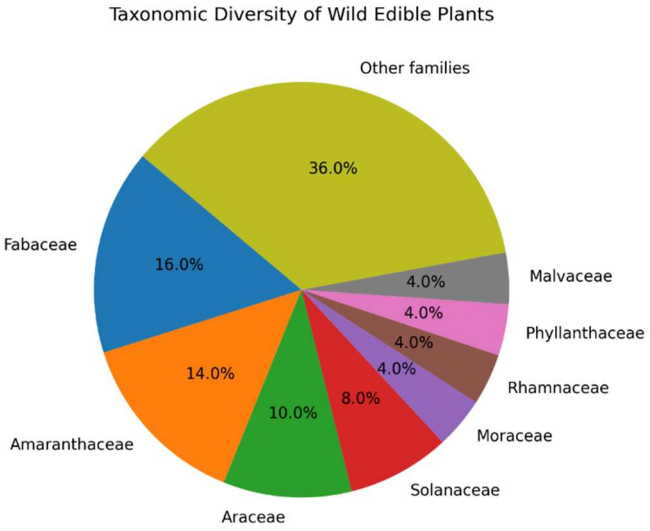


Figure 1 : Taxonomic diversity

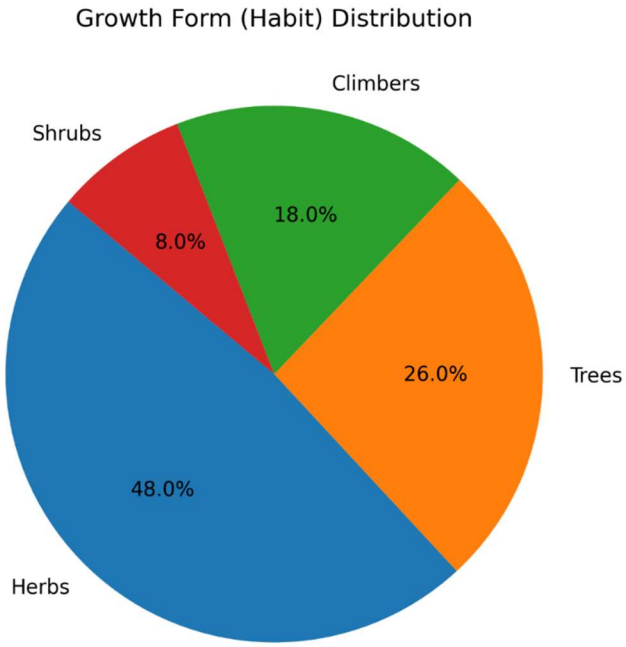


Figure 2: Habit wise analysis

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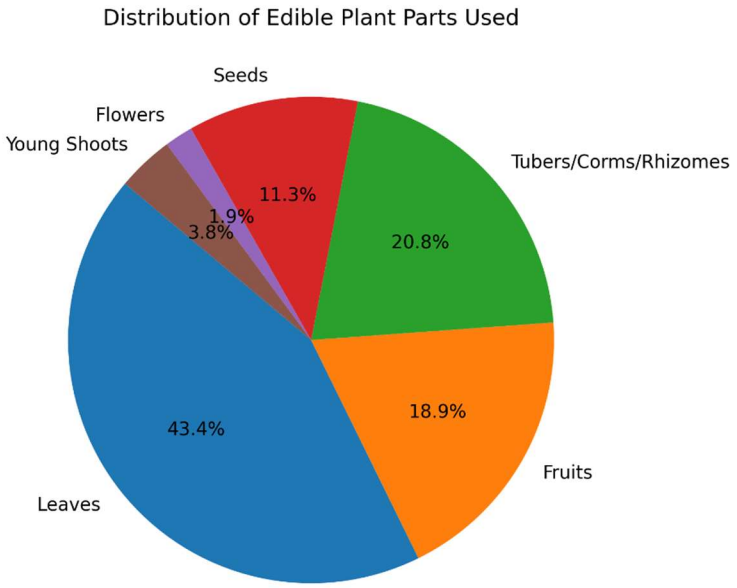


Figure 3: Edible plant part used

Table -1 Diversity of Wild Edible Plant Species Used by Tribal Communities of Rampachodavaram Forest Division, Andhra Pradesh, India

S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Common Name	Habit	Edible Part(s)	Mode of Consumption
1	*Allmania nodiflora* (L.) R.Br. ex Wight	Amaranthaceae	Nagali kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked vegetable
2	*Alocasia fornicata* (Roxb.) Schott	Araceae	Dumparasi	Herb	Tuber	Boiled / curry
3	*Alternanthera sessilis* (L.) DC.	Amaranthaceae	Ponnaganti kura	Herb	Leaves	Leafy vegetable
4	*Amaranthus spinosus* L.	Amaranthaceae	Mullatotakura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
5	*Amaranthus tricolor* L.	Amaranthaceae	Totakura	Herb	Leaves	Vegetable
6	*Amaranthus viridis* L.	Amaranthaceae	Chilla kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
7	*Amorphophallus paeoniifolius* (Dennst.) Nicolson	Araceae	Adavi kanda	Herb	Corm	Curry

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Common Name	Habit	Edible Part(s)	Mode of Consumption
8	*Anisochilus carnosus* (L.f.) Wall.	Lamiaceae	Adavi vamu	Herb	Leaves	Condiment / curry
9	*Antidesma acidum* Retz.	Phyllanthaceae	Pulleru	Tree	Leaves	Leafy vegetable
10	*Aponogeton echinatus* Roxb.	Aponogetonaceae	Kotigadde	Herb	Tuber	Boiled
11	*Arisaema tortuosum* (Wall.) Schott	Araceae	Sarpa kanda	Herb	Tuber	Cooked
12	*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.	Asparagaceae	Shatavari	Climber	Tuber	Cooked
13	*Bambusa arundinacea* (Retz.) Willd.	Poaceae	Veduru	Tree	Young shoots	Curry
14	*Basella alba* L.	Basellaceae	Bachali kura	Climber	Leaves	Cooked
15	*Bauhinia vahlii* Wight & Arn.	Fabaceae	Adda chettu	Climber	Seeds	Roasted
16	*Canavalia ensiformis* (L.) DC.	Fabaceae	Adavi chikkudu	Climber	Seeds	Cooked
17	*Cansjera rheedii* J.F.Gmel.	Opiliaceae	Mandu kura	Shrub	Leaves	Vegetable
18	*Celosia argentea* L.	Amaranthaceae	Gurugu kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
19	*Chenopodium album* L.	Amaranthaceae	Bathua kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
20	*Cissus quadrangularis* L.	Vitaceae	Nalleru	Climber	Young shoots	Curry
21	*Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott	Araceae	Chama dumpa	Herb	Corm, leaves	Boiled
22	*Commelina benghalensis* L.	Commelinaceae	Kanneeru kura	Herb	Leaves	Vegetable
23	*Dioscorea alata* L.	Dioscoreaceae	Kanda	Climber	Tuber	Boiled

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Common Name	Habit	Edible Part(s)	Mode of Consumption
24	*Dioscorea bulbifera* L.	Dioscoreaceae	Adavi dumpa	Climber	Tuber	Cooked
25	*Ficus racemosa* L.	Moraceae	Udumbara	Tree	Fruits	Raw / cooked
26	*Ficus religiosa* L.	Moraceae	Ravichettu	Tree	Fruits	Raw
27	*Grewia villosa* Willd.	Malvaceae	Chirumanu	Shrub	Fruits	Raw
28	*Ipomoea aquatica* Forssk.	Convolvulaceae	Kankong kura	Herb	Leaves	Vegetable
29	*Leucas aspera* (Willd.) Link	Lamiaceae	Tummi kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
30	*Madhuca longifolia* (J.Koenig) J.F.Macbr.	Sapotaceae	Ippa	Tree	Flowers	Raw / cooked
31	*Marsilea quadrifolia* L.	Marsileaceae	Sushila kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
32	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Moringaceae	Munaga	Tree	Leaves, pods	Vegetable
33	*Mucuna pruriens* (L.) DC.	Fabaceae	Dushti bean	Climber	Seeds	Roasted
34	*Murraya koenigii* (L.) Spreng.	Rutaceae	Karivepaku	Shrub	Leaves	Condiment
35	*Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.	Nelumbonaceae	Kamalam	Herb	Rhizome	Cooked
36	*Neptunia oleracea* Lour.	Fabaceae	Neeru chikkudu	Herb	Leaves	Curry
37	*Oxalis corniculata* L.	Oxalidaceae	Pulichinta	Herb	Leaves	Chutney
38	*Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.	Arecaceae	Eetha	Tree	Fruits	Raw
39	*Phyllanthus emblica* L.	Phyllanthaceae	Usiri	Tree	Fruit	Raw / pickle
40	*Physalis angulata* L.	Solanaceae	Budda gooseberry	Herb	Leaves	Vegetable
41	*Physalis minima* L.	Solanaceae	Adavi usiri	Herb	Leaves	Cooked

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local / Common Name	Habit	Edible Part(s)	Mode of Consumption
42	*Pithecellobium dulce* (Roxb.) Benth.	Fabaceae	Seema chinta	Tree	Seeds	Raw
43	*Portulaca oleracea* L.	Portulacaceae	Gangaveli kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
44	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Solanaceae	Kamanchi kura	Herb	Leaves	Cooked
45	*Sterculia urens* Roxb.	Malvaceae	Tapasi chettu	Tree	Seeds	Roasted
46	*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Neredu	Tree	Fruit	Raw
47	*Tamarindus indica* L.	Fabaceae	Chinta	Tree	Fruit pulp	Condiment
48	*Vigna vexillata* (L.) A.Rich.	Fabaceae	Adavi alasanda	Climber	Tubers	Cooked
49	*Ziziphus mauritiana* Lam.	Rhamnaceae	Regu	Tree	Fruit	Raw
50	*Ziziphus oenoplia* (L.) Mill.	Rhamnaceae	Pariki regu	Shrub	Fruit	Raw

4. Discussion

The dominance of herbaceous species, extensive use of leafy vegetables, and reliance on forest-based food resources observed in the present study are consistent with earlier ethnobotanical investigations from the Eastern Ghats and other tribal regions of India (Reddy et al., 2007a; Mishra et al., 2012).

The strong linkage between food and medicine, as well as seasonal harvesting practices, reflects deep-rooted traditional knowledge systems that are increasingly threatened by modernization and socio-economic changes (WHO, 2013; Reddy & Reddy, 2015).

5. Conclusion

The present study documents 50 wild edible plant species used by tribal communities of the Rampachodavaram Forest Division, highlighting their significance in food security, nutrition, and traditional healthcare systems. The findings underscore the urgent need for conservation, sustainable utilization, and the integration of indigenous knowledge with scientific research.

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Winter blooming wild flora of Kakinada

Dr.Sara[1],Dr.Swamy[2], G.V.N.S.Sujatha[3],D. Vasu Babu[4], K. Usha Sei [5] ,Y. Manjunath Reddy[6] and Prof.B.Sujatha[7]

1. Lecturer in Botany. Government Degree College, Ramachandrapuram,
2. Lecturer in Botany, TRR Government Degree College(A), Kandukur, SPSR
3. Lecturer in Botany, Dr. V. S. Krishna Government Degree College(A),
4. Lecturer in Botany. Government Degree College, Tekkali,
5. Lecturer in Botany. Government Degree College, Pitapuram
6. Lecturer in Botany. Government Degree College, Venkatagiri,
7. Department of Botany, Andhra University

botany.sara@gmail.com

Abstract

Kakinada, a coastal city in Andhra Pradesh, India, is characterized by rich floral diversity shaped by its tropical climate and proximity to the Bay of Bengal. Winter is an ecologically significant season for several wild plant species, as many initiate flowering and reproductive activities during this period. The present study documents the winter-blooming wild flora of Kakinada with the aim of understanding their diversity, ecological roles, and potential applications. Thirteen wild and semi-wild species belonging to diverse families such as Fabaceae, Amaranthaceae, Verbenaceae, Lamiaceae, Solanaceae, Asteraceae, Poaceae, and Brassicaceae were recorded from varied habitats including roadsides, wetlands, agricultural fields, and disturbed urban areas.

These winter-flowering species play a crucial role in sustaining pollinators like bees and butterflies when floral resources are otherwise limited, thereby contributing to ecosystem stability and biodiversity conservation. Several documented taxa also possess medicinal, nutritional, aromatic, and agroforestry significance, highlighting their value in traditional medicine and sustainable agriculture. The study further emphasizes the adaptability of these species to coastal environmental conditions and their potential resilience to climate change and urban expansion. This documentation provides baseline information for future ecological, conservation, and phytochemical studies and supports the sustainable utilization and conservation of winter-blooming wild flora in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Keywords: Winter-blooming flora; Wild plants; Coastal Andhra Pradesh; Kakinada; Biodiversity; Pollinators; Medicinal plants.

Introduction

Kakinada, located in the coastal region of Andhra Pradesh, India, is known for its diverse flora, shaped by its tropical climate and proximity to the Bay of Bengal. The region experiences distinct seasonal variations, with winter being a crucial period for many plant species. This study aims to explore the *winter blooming wild flora of Kakinada*, focusing on the plants that exhibit their reproductive cycles during the cooler months. Winter blooming flora plays a vital role in maintaining the ecological balance, contributing to the region's biodiversity, and supporting various wildlife, including pollinators like bees and butterflies.

Understanding the species that thrive in this season not only adds to the knowledge of local flora but also helps in conserving valuable plant species that may be susceptible to climate change and urbanization. Furthermore, these plants may possess unique biochemical properties, offering potential for use in traditional medicine, agriculture, and other sectors.

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Through this research, we seek to document, classify, and analyze the species of winter blooming wild flora found in Kakinada.



Lablab purpureus

1. *Lablab purpureus*, commonly known as the *Hyacinth bean* or *Indian bean*, belongs to the *Fabaceae* family. This plant is a fast-growing, perennial legume that is often cultivated for its edible seeds and pods. It is commonly found in tropical and subtropical regions, including parts of India.

Scientific Name: *Lablab purpureus*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Hyacinth bean, Indian bean, Dolichos bean
Family: Fabaceae

The plant is known for its attractive, purple or white flowers, which bloom during the winter season. It thrives in a variety of soil types and is often used in agroforestry systems or as a cover crop. In addition to its ornamental value, *Lablab purpureus* is widely used in cooking, where its seeds are prepared as a vegetable or in various traditional dishes.



Celosia argentea

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2. *Celosia argentea*, commonly known as *Silver cockscomb* or *Plumed cockscomb*, is a striking ornamental plant in the *Amaranthaceae* family. It is native to tropical Africa, Asia, and the Americas but is widely cultivated in various regions for its vibrant, showy flowers. The plant produces unique, plume-like flowers that can range in color from red and pink to yellow and white.

Scientific Name: *Celosia argentea*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Silver cockscomb, Plumed cockscomb, Wool flower
Family: Amaranthaceae

This species is appreciated for its attractive inflorescences, which bloom during the winter months, making it a popular choice in gardens and landscapes. *Celosia argentea* is also used in traditional medicine in some regions for its purported health benefits. It thrives in well-drained soil and sunny conditions, and it is often used as an ornamental plant in flower beds or as a cut flower.



Persicaria lapathifolia

3. *Persicaria lapathifolia*, commonly known as *Knotweed* or *Pale persicaria*, is a species of flowering plant in the *Polygonaceae* family. It is native to North America, Europe, and parts of Asia, and typically grows in moist, disturbed habitats such as roadsides, fields, and wetlands. The plant is recognized for its elongated, lance-shaped leaves and clusters of small, pink to reddish flowers that bloom during the colder months, including winter.

Scientific Name: *Persicaria lapathifolia*

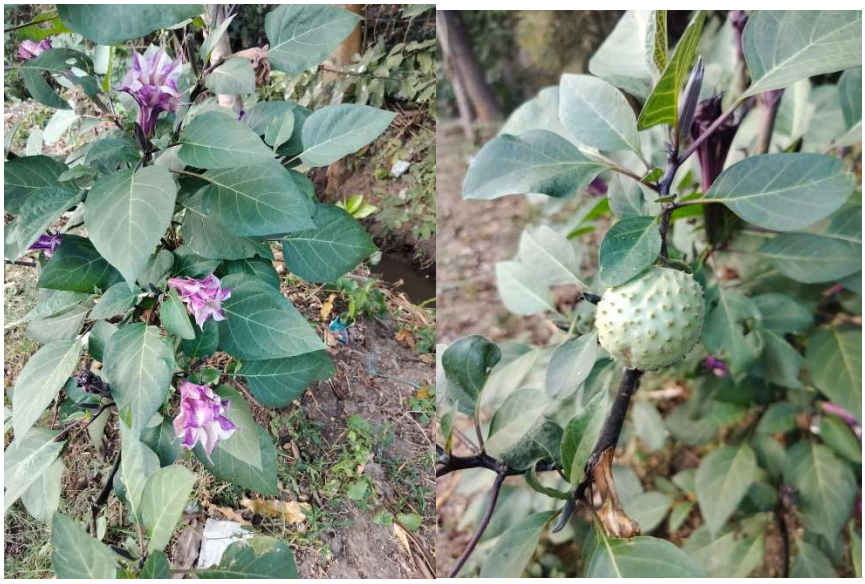
Common Name/Vernacular Name: Knotweed, Pale persicaria

Family: Polygonaceae

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Persicaria lapathifolia is a perennial herb that thrives in damp soils, often along the edges of water bodies. It has a strong tendency to spread rapidly in favorable environments, making it a common species in temperate regions. The plant is often considered a weed but also has some medicinal uses in traditional practices. Its winter-blooming flowers add a unique aesthetic to its habitat, especially in colder climates.



Brugmansia

4. *Angel's trumpet*, commonly known for its large, trumpet-shaped flowers, refers to plants in the *Brugmansia* genus, belonging to the *Solanaceae* family. These plants are native to the tropical regions of South America, and their showy flowers, which bloom in the winter, are known for their intoxicating fragrance. The flowers come in various colors, including white, yellow, pink, and orange, and can be quite large, often hanging downward like a trumpet.

Scientific Name: *Brugmansia spp.*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Angel's trumpet

Family: Solanaceae

Brugmansia species are woody shrubs or small trees and are typically found in gardens or as ornamental plants. They thrive in tropical and subtropical climates and are particularly appreciated for their beautiful, aromatic blooms. While they are admired for their ornamental value, it is important to note that all parts of the plant, particularly the flowers, are highly toxic if ingested, and they contain hallucinogenic properties. These plants are often used in landscaping and as decorative features due to their dramatic flower display.

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Cleome gynandra

5. *Cleome gynandra*, commonly known as *Spider flower* or *Cat's whiskers*, is a wild herbaceous plant in the *Cleomaceae* family. Native to tropical and subtropical regions, including Africa and Asia, it is often found in disturbed areas, such as roadsides and agricultural lands. This plant is known for its unique, spidery flowers with long, slender stamens, giving them a distinctive appearance. The flowers bloom in clusters and can range in color from white to pink and purple, often appearing during the winter months.

Scientific Name: *Cleome gynandra*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Spider flower, Cat's whiskers, African cabbage

Family: Cleomaceae

Cleome gynandra is a fast-growing, drought-tolerant plant with edible leaves that are consumed in various cuisines, especially in Africa and Asia, where it is also used in traditional medicine. It can be grown as an ornamental plant for its attractive, fragrant flowers or cultivated for its edible parts. The plant's resilience to dry conditions and its winter-blooming nature make it an interesting addition to landscapes in tropical and subtropical climates.

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Lippia alba

6. *Lippia alba*, commonly known as *Aloysia*, *Lemon verbena*, or *Herb verbena*, is a fragrant, perennial shrub in the *Verbenaceae* family. Native to South America, it has been widely naturalized in tropical and subtropical regions around the world. The plant is known for its aromatic leaves, which have a strong lemon scent and are often used in teas, as a flavoring agent, or in traditional medicine. It produces small, white or pale purple flowers that bloom during the winter months.

Scientific Name: *Lippia alba*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Lemon verbena, Aloysia, Herb verbena

Family: Verbenaceae

Lippia alba is a hardy plant that thrives in a variety of soil types, preferring sunny, well-drained locations. It is often cultivated for its aromatic qualities, and the leaves are highly valued for their essential oils. Beyond its culinary and medicinal uses, the plant also has ornamental value due to its fragrant, winter-blooming flowers and its compact, bushy growth habit. In addition to its ornamental and aromatic uses, *Lippia alba* is known for its potential health benefits, including antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and digestive properties.

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Stachytarpheta jamaicensis

7. *Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*, commonly known as *Jamaican vervain* or *Blue snakeweed*, is a perennial herbaceous plant in the *Verbenaceae* family. Native to the Caribbean and tropical regions of the Americas, this plant is widely distributed in tropical and subtropical areas around the world. It is recognized for its striking, elongated clusters of small blue or purple flowers that bloom throughout the year, including in winter.

Scientific Name: *Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Jamaican vervain, Blue snakeweed

Family: Verbenaceae

Stachytarpheta jamaicensis is a fast-growing, woody shrub that thrives in tropical and subtropical climates. It is commonly found in disturbed areas, roadsides, and grasslands. The plant has a reputation for its medicinal properties, with various parts of the plant being used in traditional medicine for their purported anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and antimicrobial effects. The attractive flowers also make it a popular ornamental plant in gardens. It is known for its ability to attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies, contributing to its ecological value.

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Pogostemon benghalensis

8. *Pogostemon benghalensis*, commonly known as *Bengal pogostemon* or *Bengal patchouli*, is a member of the *Lamiaceae* family. It is native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, particularly found in tropical and subtropical regions. This plant is known for its aromatic leaves, which are often used in traditional medicine, and its distinctive greenish or purple flowers that bloom during the winter season.

Scientific Name: *Pogostemon benghalensis*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Bengal pogostemon, Bengal patchouli

Family: Lamiaceae

The plant grows as a shrub and is typically found in grasslands, roadsides, and disturbed areas. The leaves of *Pogostemon benghalensis* have a strong, distinctive odor, similar to that of the more widely known patchouli (*Pogostemon cablin*), and they are often used in herbal remedies or as a source of essential oils. The plant's aromatic qualities and its winter-blooming nature make it of interest for both medicinal and ornamental purposes. It is well-suited for tropical climates and can be grown as a decorative shrub in gardens.

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Alternanthera sessilis

9. *Alternanthera sessilis*, commonly known as *Dwarf copperleaf*, *Sessile joyweed*, or *Giant copperleaf*, is a herbaceous plant in the *Amaranthaceae* family. It is native to tropical and subtropical regions, including Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and is commonly found in wetlands, water margins, and disturbed areas. The plant is known for its small, round leaves that range in color from green to reddish or purple, and it produces tiny, inconspicuous flowers, often in clusters, that bloom during the winter.

Scientific Name: *Alternanthera sessilis*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Dwarf copperleaf, Sessile joyweed, Giant copperleaf

Family: Amaranthaceae

Alternanthera sessilis is a fast-growing, creeping herb that is often used in traditional medicine for its purported medicinal properties, including anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial effects. The plant is also considered edible, with its leaves being used in various culinary dishes, particularly in some parts of Asia and Africa. It is often found in wet or marshy environments and can also be grown as a groundcover in tropical and subtropical gardens due to its hardiness and attractive foliage.

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Erysimum cheiranthoides

10. *Erysimum cheiranthoides*, commonly known as *Yellow alyssum* or *Treacle mustard*, is a biennial or short-lived perennial herb in the *Brassicaceae* family. Native to Europe and Asia, this plant is found in a variety of habitats, such as roadsides, disturbed areas, and grassy meadows. It is recognized for its vibrant yellow flowers that bloom during the winter to early spring, often brightening up landscapes during colder months.

Scientific Name: *Erysimum cheiranthoides*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Yellow alyssum, Treacle mustard

Family: Brassicaceae

Erysimum cheiranthoides is characterized by its tall, branching stems and lance-shaped leaves. The small, four-petaled yellow flowers are grouped in dense clusters and have a sweet fragrance, attracting pollinators like bees and butterflies. It is often considered a weed in agricultural settings but is also used in some traditional herbal remedies. The plant is relatively hardy and adaptable, thriving in a variety of soil types and conditions, making it a common species in temperate regions.

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Cortaderia selloana

11. *Cortaderia selloana*, commonly known as *Pampas grass*, is a large, perennial grass species native to South America, particularly Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. It is known for its tall, plume-like flower heads, which can range in color from white to pink, and its distinctive, feathery appearance. The plant is widely cultivated for ornamental purposes, especially in landscaping, where its dramatic flowers and dense foliage create striking visual effects.

Scientific Name: *Cortaderia selloana*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Pampas grass

Family: Poaceae

Pampas grass is a fast-growing, clumping grass that can reach heights of up to 10 feet (3 meters). It is well-suited for temperate climates and grows best in full sunlight with well-drained soils. Though it is valued for its ornamental beauty, *Cortaderia selloana* can become invasive in some regions due to its rapid spread through wind-dispersed seeds. The plant's tall flower plumes are often used in floral arrangements, and its silvery appearance makes it a popular choice in gardens and parks. Despite its beauty, caution is needed when planting it in non-native regions to prevent its spread.

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Tithonia diversifolia

12. *Tithonia diversifolia*, commonly known as *Mexican sunflower*, is a perennial herb in the *Asteraceae* family. Native to Central America, particularly Mexico, it is widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions around the world for its bright, showy orange or yellow flowers. The plant is known for its rapid growth and can be found in gardens, roadsides, and disturbed areas, where it blooms during the warmer months, often extending into winter in tropical climates.

Scientific Name: *Tithonia diversifolia*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Mexican sunflower

Family: Asteraceae

Tithonia diversifolia is characterized by its large, coarse leaves and tall, branching stems that can grow up to 2-3 meters in height. The plant produces large, daisy-like flowers with vivid orange or yellow petals that attract pollinators like bees and butterflies. In addition to its ornamental value, *Tithonia diversifolia* is often used in agroforestry systems, as its leaves are rich in nutrients and are used as fodder for livestock or as green manure in some agricultural practices. The plant's hardiness and vibrant blooms make it a popular choice for both aesthetic and functional purposes in tropical and subtropical landscapes.

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Clerodendrum phillipinum

13. *Clerodendrum phillipinum*, commonly known as *Philippine violet* or *Glorybower*, is a flowering shrub in the *Lamiaceae* family. Native to the Philippines and other parts of Southeast Asia, it is widely grown as an ornamental plant for its beautiful, vibrant flowers and dense, bushy growth. The plant produces clusters of small, tubular, violet or purple flowers with white centers, blooming during the winter and adding a striking color to landscapes.

Scientific Name: *Clerodendrum phillipinum*

Common Name/Vernacular Name: Philippine violet, Glory bower

Family: Lamiaceae

Clerodendrum phillipinum is a fast-growing shrub that can reach heights of 2 to 3 meters. It thrives in tropical and subtropical climates, preferring well-drained soil and full sunlight. The plant is appreciated for its ornamental value, as its flowers attract pollinators like bees and butterflies. It also has medicinal uses in some cultures, although it is mainly cultivated for its aesthetic appeal. Known for its hardiness and showy blooms, *Clerodendrum phillipinum* is commonly found in gardens, parks, and as a hedge plant in tropical regions.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the ecological and utilitarian importance of winter-blooming wild and semi-wild plant species in the coastal city of Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. The documentation of thirteen species across diverse families and habitats demonstrates that winter is a biologically active period, supporting significant floral diversity even under relatively limited seasonal conditions. These species contribute substantially to maintaining ecosystem functions by providing essential floral resources for pollinators such as bees and butterflies during a season when nectar and pollen availability is generally low.Beyond their ecological role, many of the recorded taxa possess medicinal, nutritional, aromatic, and agroforestry value, underlining their relevance to traditional knowledge systems and sustainable livelihood practices. Their ability to thrive in coastal, disturbed, and urban environments reflects notable ecological adaptability and resilience, suggesting potential significance in climate change mitigation, habitat restoration, and urban greening initiatives.Overall, this study provides valuable baseline data on winter-flowering wild flora of Kakinada and underscores the need for their conservation amid rapid urbanization and environmental change. Continued monitoring, coupled with ecological, ethnobotanical, and

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phytochemical investigations, will further enhance understanding of these species and support their sustainable utilization and long-term conservation in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

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Seasonal Dynamics of Water Quality and Ecological Status in a Freshwater Lake, Karimnagar District,Telangana State, India

V.Rajani
Department of Zoology,
Kakatiya University Warangal-506 009,Telangana State, India.
Email: vrphd.zoology@gmail.com

Abstract

Freshwater lakes are vital for sustaining ecological integrity and supporting human livelihoods, particularly in semi-arid regions like Telangana. This study investigates the seasonal variation of physico-chemical parameters of Bommakal Freshwater Lake, Karimnagar district, Telangana, over a one-year period (June 2022–May 2023). Water samples were collected monthly, covering monsoon, post-monsoon, and pre-monsoon seasons, and analyzed for key parameters including Temperature, pH, Electrical Conductivity (EC), Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), Transparency, Dissolved oxygen (DO), Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), free CO_2, total alkalinity, Total Hardness, Chlorides, Nitrates, Phosphates, Sodium, Potassium, and Ammonia. Results revealed clear seasonal trends. Temperature ranged from 22.15–34.57 °C, with monsoon (27.41 °C) and pre-monsoon (33.40 °C) extremes, while pH varied from 7.03–7.66, showing increased alkalinity during pre-monsoon. EC and TDS were lowest during monsoon (0.30 µS/cm; 137.68 mg/l) due to dilution, and peaked in pre-monsoon (0.38 µS/cm; 341.81 mg/l) due to high evaporation.Transparency increased from monsoon (56.00 cm) to pre-monsoon (73.12 cm), whereas DO declined from monsoon (8.69 mg/l) to pre-monsoon (5.94 mg/l). BOD values peaked post-monsoon (13.00 mg/l), indicating higher organic load. Nutrients showed distinct seasonal variation: nitrates were highest in monsoon (0.60 mg/l) and lowest in pre-monsoon (0.34 mg/l), while phosphates peaked during monsoon (2.22 mg/l). Major ions including sodium (6.59 ppm) and potassium (1.79 ppm) also displayed seasonality; with ammonia remaining relatively stable (1.14–1.24 ppm).Total alkalinity and hardness increased progressively from monsoon (136.56 mg/l; 78.43 mg/l) to pre-monsoon (192.75 mg/l; 175.25 mg/l), reflecting concentration effects. Overall, Bommakal Lake exhibits strong seasonal dynamics, with dilution during the monsoon, nutrient accumulation post-monsoon and evaporative concentration during pre-monsoon. These variations directly influence aquatic productivity, nutrient cycling, and ecological health. The study provides baseline data critical for sustainable management, water quality monitoring, and conservation of freshwater ecosystems in semi-arid regions.

Keywords: Bommakal Fresh Water Lake, Seasonal Variation, Water Quality, Physico-Chemical parameters,

Introduction

Freshwater ecosystems are vital natural resources that provide essential ecological, social, and economic services. Among these, lakes occupy a unique position as natural collectors of surface runoff and reservoirs of freshwater, playing a key role in hydrological processes, nutrient cycling, biodiversity maintenance, and human livelihoods (Jeppesen, Søndergaard, & Jensen, 2020). In semi-arid regions such as Telangana, lakes serve as critical sources for irrigation, drinking water, livestock, aquaculture, and cultural purposes. Despite their importance, these ecosystems are highly sensitive to both natural fluctuations and anthropogenic pressures, making ecological monitoring essential (Kumar & Rao, 2022).

The water quality of lakes is influenced by a complex interplay of climatic, geological, hydrological, and human-induced factors. Seasonal changes, including variations in rainfall, temperature, and evaporation, directly affect key physico-chemical parameters such as water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, nutrient concentrations, and turbidity. These parameters, in turn, govern the productivity and structure of aquatic communities, including phytoplankton, zooplankton, benthic organisms, and fish populations. Nutrient enrichment during monsoon often results in higher plankton productivity, whereas summer stratification may lead to oxygen depletion and increased pollutant concentration (Reid, Smith, & Thompson, 2019). Therefore, assessing seasonal dynamics of water quality is crucial for understanding and maintaining the ecological sustainability of lakes.

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Telangana lies in a semi-arid tropical climatic zone, where rainfall is highly seasonal and water resources are unevenly distributed. Traditional water bodies such as tanks and lakes continue to play a central role in sustaining agriculture, supporting rural livelihoods, and maintaining local biodiversity. Karimnagar district, in northern Telangana, contains a mosaic of reservoirs, tanks, and natural freshwater lakes, which contribute to groundwater recharge, climate moderation, and habitat provision for aquatic organisms. However, increasing agricultural intensification, excessive fertilizer use, and human activities have raised concerns regarding water quality deterioration and ecological imbalance (Kumar & Rao, 2022).

Within this context, Bommakal Freshwater Lake, situated in Saidapur mandal of Karimnagar district, represents an important inland water body supporting the surrounding agrarian communities. The lake is primarily used for irrigation, livestock water supply, and small-scale fisheries that contribute to the local economy. It receives inflows mainly from seasonal rainfall during the southwest monsoon, while in other seasons it relies on surface runoff and minor groundwater recharge. The lake is situated in an agricultural landscape, with paddy, cotton, and pulses cultivated in the surrounding fields, leading to nutrient and sediment inflows that influence its trophic status. During the monsoon, nutrient and turbidity levels increase, whereas summer months witness reduced water levels, higher salt concentrations, and stress on aquatic organisms, making Bommakal Lake an ideal site to assess ecological health and seasonal water quality dynamics Srinidhi, Rajani, & Reddy(2021).

The ecological integrity of freshwater lakes is increasingly threatened by eutrophication, pollution, overexploitation, and climate variability. Monitoring seasonal changes in water quality provides critical insights into hydrological patterns, ecological responses, anthropogenic impacts, and conservation needs. Understanding how rainfall and evaporation influence lake water balance, assessing fluctuations in dissolved oxygen, transparency, nutrient concentrations, and biological productivity, and evaluating the impacts of agricultural runoff and fishing activities are essential for sustainable management (Mohan, 2022).

Given the dependence of rural communities on lakes such as Bommakal, it is vital to understand how seasonal variations affect water quality and ecological status. This knowledge is important for conserving aquatic biodiversity, ensuring safe water for irrigation and fisheries, and maintaining sustainable livelihoods. Despite their importance, studies on seasonal water quality dynamics of lakes in semi-arid Telangana remain limited. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the seasonal variation of physico-chemical parameters and ecological status of Bommakal Freshwater Lake in Saidapur mandal, Karimnagar district, Telangana. The objectives include analyzing seasonal variations in key water quality parameters, evaluating the lake's ecological health and trophic status, and providing baseline data for sustainable management of Bommakal Lake and similar freshwater ecosystems in semi-arid regions.

Materials and Methods

Study Area

The present study was conducted on Bommakal Freshwater Lake, located in Karimnagar District, Telangana State, India **(**Latitude 18.4354° N**,** Longitude 79.1676° E**).** The lake is an important perennial water body that supports domestic use, agriculture, and fisheries, and also serves as a source of livelihood for surrounding rural communities. To understand the temporal variation in the physico-chemical parameters of the lake ecosystem, monthly water samples were collected over a period of twelve months, from June 2022 to May 2023, covering all the three major seasons of the region (Monsoon, Post-Monsoon, and Pre-Monsoon).

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Fig-1: Satellite Image of Bommakal Freshwater Lake

Sample Collection and Preservation

Sampling was carried out during the morning hours (between 8:00–10:00 a.m.) to minimize diurnal fluctuations in temperature and dissolved gases. Water samples were collected from predetermined stations across the lake using clean, acid-washed polyethylene bottles. For parameters requiring immediate analysis, such as water temperature, transparency, and pH, measurements were taken directly at the site. Parameters sensitive to degradation (such as dissolved oxygen and biological oxygen demand) were fixed and preserved following standard protocols before being transported to the laboratory for further analysis (APHA, 1985; Trivedy & Goel, 1986).

Field Measurements

At the sampling site, water temperature was measured using a mercury/digital thermometer with an accuracy of ±0.1 °C. Transparency was determined using a Secchi disc lowered into the water column until it disappeared from view. The pH was recorded electrometrically using a calibrated portable pH meter, and electrical conductivity was measured with a conductivity meter.

Laboratory Analysis

The majority of the physico-chemical parameters were analyzed in the laboratory following the standard methods of the American Public Health Association (APHA, 1985). Total dissolved solids (TDS) were determined using the gravimetric method and confirmed by a digital TDS meter. Dissolved oxygen (DO) was estimated by Winkler's iodometric method, while biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) was analyzed using the standard 5-day incubation and titration method. Free carbon dioxide (CO_2) was measured by titration using standard sodium hydroxide, and total alkalinity was determined by acid titration with H_2SO_4/HCl. Total hardness was analyzed by EDTA titrimetric method.

Ionic composition was studied by specific analytical methods: chlorides were estimated by the argentometric (Mohr's) method, nitrates by the phenoldisulphonic acid method, and phosphates by the stannous chloride/ascorbic acid colorimetric method. Major cations such as sodium and potassium were quantified using a flame photometer. Ammonia (NH_3–N) concentration was determined by the phenate method (Wetzel & Likens, 2000).

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Results

Temperature

The seasonal variation in temperature in Bommakal Lake is site showed distinct patterns corresponding to the monsoon, post-monsoon, and pre-monsoon periods (Table-1).During the monsoon season (June–September), the temperature ranged from 25.50 °C in September to 29.27 °C in June, with a mean seasonal temperature of 27.41 °C. A gradual decline in temperature was observed from June to September, reflecting the cooling effect of the monsoon rainfall.In the post-monsoon season (October–January), temperatures further decreased, ranging from 22.15 °C in January to 24.50 °C in October, with a mean of 23.20 °C. This indicates cooler conditions prevailing after the monsoon, consistent with the seasonal climatic pattern. The pre-monsoon season (February–May) experienced the highest temperatures of the year, ranging from 31.75 °C in February to 34.57 °C in May, with a mean of 33.40 °C. The data show a steady increase in temperature during these months, reaching peak values in April and May, typical of the summer period in the region.

PH

The seasonal variation in pH of the Bommakal Lake water body is presented in (Table-1). During the monsoon season (June–September), the pH ranged from 7.03 to 7.26, with a mean value of 7.15, indicating slightly alkaline conditions. The lowest pH was observed in August (7.03), while the highest was in September (7.26).In the post-monsoon season (October–January), the pH showed a moderate increase, ranging from 7.20 to 7.42, with a mean of 7.29. The maximum pH was recorded in November (7.42), and the minimum in December and January (7.20 each).During the pre-monsoon season (February–May), the water showed further alkalinity, with pH values ranging from 7.26 to 7.66 and a mean of 7.47. The highest pH was recorded in May (7.66), and the lowest in February (7.26).

Electrical Conductivity (EC)

The seasonal variation of electrical conductivity (EC) in the Bommakal Lake area showed distinct patterns across the monsoon, post-monsoon, and pre-monsoon periods. During the monsoon season (June–September), EC values ranged from 0.26 to 0.35µmhos/cm, with a seasonal mean of 0.30µmhos/cm, indicating relatively low ionic concentration likely due to dilution from rainfall. In the post-monsoon season (October–January), EC values were slightly lower, ranging from 0.24 to 0.29µmhos/cm, with a mean of 0.26µmhos/cm. This decrease may be attributed to the inflow of fresh rainwater and reduced evaporation, which tends to lower the dissolved ion content. During the pre-monsoon season (February–May), EC showed a marked increase, ranging from 0.34 to 0.43µmhos/cm, with a mean of 0.38 µmhos/cm, reflecting higher ionic concentration in water due to increased evaporation and reduced rainfall.

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)

The analysis of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in Bommakal lake showed significant seasonal variation. During the monsoon season (June–September), TDS values were relatively low, ranging from 122.00 mg/l in June to 152.00 mg/l in September, with a seasonal mean of 137.68 mg/l. This lower TDS concentration during the monsoon can be attributed to dilution effects caused by increased rainfall and inflow of fresh water.In the post-monsoon season (October–January), TDS values increased substantially, ranging from 212.00 mg/l in November to 231.25 mg/l in January, with a seasonal mean of 221.25 mg/L. The rise in TDS during this period may be due to reduced freshwater inflow and the accumulation of dissolved minerals as water levels stabilize after the monsoon.The pre-monsoon season (February–May) recorded the highest TDS concentrations, with values ranging from 254.50 mg/l in February to 460.75 mg/l in May, and a seasonal mean of 341.81 mg/l. This marked increase is likely a result of high evaporation rates, lower water levels, and concentration of dissolved salts in the lake during the hot and dry pre-monsoon months.

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Transparency (TRS)

The water transparency of the Bommakal Lake exhibited noticeable seasonal variation. During the monsoon season (June–September), transparency ranged from 54.53 cm to 57.51 cm, with a mean value of 56.00 cm, indicating relatively lower water clarity, likely due to increased runoff and sediment input during heavy rainfall.In the post-monsoon season (October–January), transparency increased markedly, ranging from 58.52 cm to 70.18 cm, with a mean of 66.62 cm. This increase suggests sediment settling and reduced turbidity following the monsoon. The pre-monsoon season (February–May) recorded the highest transparency values, ranging from 71.41 cm to 75.26 cm, with a mean of 73.12 cm, reflecting clearer water conditions during the dry period, likely due to minimal inflow and sediment deposition.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO)

The seasonal variation of dissolved oxygen (DO) in Bommakal Lake is presented in (Table- 1). During the monsoon season (June–September), the DO concentration ranged from 7.97 to 9.40 mg/l, with a mean value of 8.69 mg/l. The highest concentration was observed in July (9.40 mg/l), while the lowest during the monsoon occurred in September (7.97 mg/l).In the post-monsoon season (October–January), the DO levels ranged from 6.88 to 7.62 mg/l, with an average of 7.26 mg/l. October recorded the minimum concentration (6.88 mg/l), and January showed the maximum (7.62 mg/L) for this season. During the pre-monsoon season (February–May), DO concentrations were comparatively lower, ranging from 5.43 to 6.37 mg/L, with a mean value of 5.94 mg/l. May exhibited the lowest DO (5.43 mg/l), whereas February recorded the highest (6.37 mg/l) in this season.

BOD

The Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels in Bommakal lake exhibited distinct seasonal variations. During the monsoon season (June–September), BOD values ranged from 7.22 to 9.56 mg/l, with a mean value of 8.37 mg/l, indicating moderate organic pollution. The post-monsoon season (October–January) recorded the highest BOD levels, ranging from 11.68 to 14.27 mg/l, with a mean of 13.00 mg/l, suggesting increased organic load and potential water quality deterioration. In contrast, the pre-monsoon season (February–May) showed the lowest BOD levels, ranging from 4.47 to 6.53 mg/l, with a mean of 5.35 mg/l, reflecting relatively cleaner water conditions.

Free Co_2 (mg/l)

The seasonal variations in free carbon dioxide (Co_2) concentration in Bommakal lake is presented in (Table-1). During the monsoon season (June–September), free Co_2 values ranged from 10.75 mg/l (September) to a maximum of 14.10 mg/l (June), with a mean concentration of 12.20 mg/l. In the post-monsoon season (October–January), comparatively lower values were recorded, varying between 9.12 mg/l (January) and 11.20 mg/l (October), with a seasonal mean of 10.13 mg/l. In contrast, the pre-monsoon season (February–May) showed a gradual rise in free Co_2, from 9.47 mg/l (February) to a peak of 13.85 mg/l (May), yielding a mean of 11.61 mg/l.

Total Alkalinity (mg/l)

The total alkalinity of the lake water showed clear seasonal and monthly variations during the study period (Table-2). The values ranged between 118.00 mg/l (August) and 214.50 mg/l (May).During the monsoon season (June–September), total alkalinity values fluctuated between 118.00 mg/l and 155.75 mg/l, with a mean value of 136.56 mg/l. The lowest alkalinity was recorded in August (118.00 mg/l), while the highest was observed in June (155.75 mg/l).In the post-monsoon season (October–January), alkalinity showed an increasing trend, ranging from 146.25 mg/l (October) to 173.75 mg/l (January), with a seasonal mean of 161.87 mg/l.The pre-monsoon season (February-May) exhibited the highest alkalinity values, ranging from 178.75 mg/l (February) to 214.50 mg/l (May). The seasonal mean was 192.75 mg/l, indicating a distinct rise compared to the other two seasons.

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Total Hardness (mg/l)

The seasonal variation in total hardness of water exhibited distinct fluctuations during the study period (Table-2). During the monsoon season, total hardness values ranged from 64.00 mg/l (June) to 93.75 mg/l (September), with a mean value of 78.43 mg/l. A gradual increase was observed from June to September, coinciding with progressive accumulation of dissolved salts and runoff contributions. In the post-monsoon season, hardness values further increased, ranging between 104.00 mg/l (October) and 139.75 mg/l (January), with a mean of 120.62 mg/l. This elevation indicates reduced dilution effects and concentration of dissolved ions due to decreased rainfall and higher evaporation rates. The pre-monsoon season recorded the highest hardness levels, with values ranging from 154.25 mg/l (February) to a maximum of 194.25 mg/l (May). The seasonal mean was 175.25 mg/l, representing the peak hardness throughout the annual cycle. This marked increase may be attributed to intense evaporation, reduced water volume, and higher mineral dissolution during summer months.

Chlorides (mg/l)

The seasonal variations in chloride concentration in Bommakal Lake are presented in (Table-2). Chloride levels showed a distinct seasonal pattern with lower values during the monsoon season and progressively higher concentrations towards the pre-monsoon period.During the monsoon season (June–September), chloride values ranged from 32.65 mg/l (August) to 35.60 mg/l (June), with a mean concentration of 34.12 mg/l. In the post-monsoon season (October–January), chloride concentrations increased noticeably, ranging between 49.93 mg/l (October) and 52.55 mg/l (January), recording a mean value of 51.43 mg/l. The pre-monsoon season (February–May) exhibited the highest chloride levels, with values fluctuating between 54.44 mg/l (March) and 61.68 mg/l (May), and a seasonal mean of 57.01 mg/l.

The results clearly indicate that chloride concentration gradually increases after the monsoon period, reaching maximum values during the pre-monsoon months, particularly in May. This seasonal rise may be attributed to reduced water inflow, high evaporation rates, and concentration effects under semi-arid climatic conditions.

Nitrates (mg/l)

The seasonal and monthly variations in nitrate concentrations (mg/l) in Bommakal Lake are presented in (Table-2). Nitrate levels exhibited noticeable seasonal fluctuations, with the highest values recorded during the monsoon season and the lowest during the pre-monsoon season.During the monsoon period (June–September), nitrate concentrations ranged from 0.48 mg/l (June) to 0.74 mg/l (August), with an overall seasonal mean of 0.60 mg/l. The peak nitrate value was observed in August (0.74 mg/l), which coincided with heavy rainfall and surface runoff into the lake. In the post-monsoon season (October–January), nitrate concentrations were comparatively lower and remained stable, varying between 0.43 mg/l (October, November, and January) and 0.45 mg/l (December), with a mean of 0.44 mg/l. The pre-monsoon season (February–May) recorded the lowest nitrate levels, ranging from 0.31 mg/l (February) to 0.37 mg/l (April), with a seasonal mean of 0.34 mg/l. The decline in nitrate levels during this period may be attributed to reduced inflow, higher water temperature, and utilization of nutrients by phytoplankton.

Phosphates (mg/l)

The seasonal variation in phosphate concentrations in Bommakal Lake is presented in (Table-2). Phosphate values ranged from a minimum of 1.04 mg/l in January (post-monsoon) to a maximum of 2.32 mg/l in August (monsoon).During the monsoon season (June–September), phosphate concentrations remained comparatively high, fluctuating between 2.13 and 2.32 mg/l with a seasonal mean of 2.22 mg/l. The peak value in August may be attributed to surface runoff and nutrient inflow from the catchment area during heavy rainfall. In the post-monsoon season (October–January), phosphate levels showed a considerable decline, with values ranging between 1.04 and 1.22 mg/l, recording the lowest seasonal mean of 1.14 mg/l. The reduced concentration during this period indicates limited external input and possible uptake by phytoplankton and macrophytes. The pre-monsoon season (February–May) exhibited moderate phosphate levels, ranging from 1.57 to 2.10

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mg/l, with a mean value of 1.80 mg/l. A gradual decline from February to May was observed, which may be linked to increased biological utilization and lack of replenishment due to minimal rainfall.

Sodium (Na^+)

The concentration of sodium (Na^+) in Bommakal Lake is exhibited distinct seasonal fluctuations during the investigation period (Table-2).During the monsoon season (June–September), sodium values ranged from 6.05 ppm in June to a maximum of 7.28 ppm in September, with an overall mean of 6.59 ppm. The progressive rise across the monsoon months indicates enhanced leaching and surface runoff, contributing to higher sodium input in the aquatic system.In the post-monsoon season (October–January), sodium concentrations decreased gradually, varying between 5.98 ppm in October and 5.46 ppm in January, with a mean of 5.71 ppm. This reduction suggests dilution effects following monsoon rains and stabilization of hydrological conditions.The pre-monsoon season (February–May) recorded the lowest sodium concentrations, ranging from 4.57 ppm in February to 5.27 ppm in May, with a mean of 4.95 ppm. The relatively lower values in this period may be attributed to limited inflow, concentration due to evaporation, and minimal external nutrient loading.

Potassium (ppm)

The seasonal fluctuation of potassium concentration in Bommakal Lake is presented in (Table-2). Potassium levels showed noticeable variation across the three seasons.During the monsoon season (June–September), potassium concentration ranged between 1.25 ppm (August) and 1.53 ppm (September), with a mean value of 1.38 ppm. A gradual decline was observed from June to August, followed by a slight increase in September.In the post-monsoon season (October–January), the potassium content was relatively lower compared to other seasons. The concentration varied between 1.08 ppm (January) and 1.19 ppm (October), with a mean value of 1.14 ppm. This seasonal phase represented the minimum potassium levels recorded during the study period.The pre-monsoon season (February–May) exhibited the highest potassium concentrations. The values ranged from 1.65 ppm (May) to 1.94 ppm (February), with an overall mean of 1.79 ppm. A slight decreasing trend was observed from February through May.

Ammonia (NH_3)

The seasonal variation of ammonia (NH_3) concentration in Bommakal Lake is presented in (Table-2). Ammonia values ranged from 1.09 ppm (January) to 1.40 ppm (September) during the study period. The overall mean values for the three seasons were 1.24 ppm in monsoon, 1.14 ppm in post-monsoon, and 1.17 ppm in pre-monsoon. During the monsoon season, ammonia concentrations fluctuated between 1.17 ppm (August) and 1.40 ppm (September), with a mean of 1.24 ppm, indicating slightly elevated levels likely due to surface runoff and organic matter input. In the post-monsoon season, ammonia values were relatively stable, ranging from 1.09 ppm (January) to 1.18 ppm (November), with a seasonal mean of 1.14 ppm. This represents the lowest average among the three seasons. The pre-monsoon season recorded ammonia concentrations between 1.16–1.18 ppm, with a mean of 1.17 ppm, showing less fluctuation compared to other seasons.

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Table-1: Seasonal Dynamics of Water Quality Parameters in Bommakal Freshwater Lake, Telangana, India (June 2022 – May 2023)

Season	Month	Temperature (°c)	PH	Electrical Conductivity (µS/cm)	Total Dissolved Solids (mg/l)	Transparency (cm)	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l)	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (mg/l)	Free co_2, (mg/l)
Monsoon	**Jun**	29.27	7.21	0.35	122.00	57.51	8.40	7.98	14.10
	Jul	28.07	7.12	0.26	135.75	55.41	9.40	8.73	12.52
	Aug	26.80	7.03	0.31	141.00	54.53	8.91	7.22	11.42
	Sep	25.50	7.26	0.28	152.00	56.56	7.97	9.56	10.75
	Mean	**27.41**	**7.15**	**0.30**	**137.68**	**56.00**	**8.69**	**8.37**	**12.20**
Post-monsoon	**Oct**	24.50	7.36	0.24	219.25	68.28	6.88	11.68	11.20
	Nov	23.40	7.42	0.25	212.00	58.52	7.18	12.57	10.47
	Dec	22.77	7.20	0.26	222.50	69.50	7.37	13.50	9.75
	Jan	22.15	7.20	0.29	231.25	70.18	7.62	14.27	9.12
	Mean	**23.20**	**7.29**	**0.26**	**221.25**	**66.62**	**7.26**	**13.00**	**10.13**
Pre-monsoon	**Feb**	31.75	7.26	0.34	254.50	72.35	6.37	4.80	9.47
	Mar	33.17	7.36	0.36	282.75	75.26	5.86	6.53	10.75
	Apr	34.12	7.62	0.42	369.25	73.46	6.11	5.58	12.40

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	May	34.57	7.66	0.43	460.75	71.41	5.43	4.47	13.85
	Mean	**33.40**	**7.47**	**0.38**	**341.81**	**73.12**	**5.94**	**5.35**	**11.61**

Table-2: Seasonal Dynamics of Water Quality Parameters in Bommakal Freshwater Lake, Telangana, India (June 2022 – May 2023)

Season	Month	Total Alkalinity (mg/l)	Total Hardness (mg/l)	Chlorides (mg/l)	Nitrates (mg/l)	Phosphates (mg/l)	Sodium (ppm)	Potassium (ppm)	Ammonia (NH_3ppm)
Monsoon	**Jun**	155.75	64.00	35.60	0.48	2.13	6.05	1.42	1.24
	Jul	133.75	72.50	34.53	0.64	2.27	6.26	1.32	1.18
	Aug	118.00	83.50	32.65	0.74	2.32	6.76	1.25	1.17
	Sep	138.75	93.75	33.70	0.56	2.16	7.28	1.53	1.40
	Mean	**136.56**	**78.43**	**34.12**	**0.60**	**2.22**	**6.59**	**1.38**	**1.24**
Post-monsoon	**Oct**	146.25	104.00	49.93	0.43	1.22	5.98	1.19	1.15
	Nov	158.75	114.00	51.38	0.43	1.17	5.78	1.16	1.18
	Dec	168.75	124.75	51.87	0.45	1.12	5.61	1.11	1.15
	Jan	173.75	139.75	52.55	0.43	1.04	5.46	1.08	1.09
	Mean	**161.87**	**120.62**	**51.43**	**0.44**	**1.14**	**5.71**	**1.14**	**1.14**
Pre-monsoon	**Feb**	178.75	154.25	55.04	0.31	2.10	4.57	1.94	1.16
	Mar	184.00	172.00	54.44	0.35	1.85	4.87	1.84	1.18
	Apr	193.75	180.50	56.90	0.37	1.69	5.10	1.75	1.18
	May	214.50	194.25	61.68	0.33	1.57	5.27	1.65	1.16
	Mean	**192.75**	**175.25**	**57.01**	**0.34**	**1.80**	**4.95**	**1.79**	**1.17**

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Discussion

Temperature

Temperature is a critical physico-chemical parameter that regulates metabolic activity, growth, reproduction, and survival of aquatic organisms (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). In the study area, seasonal variations reflected the semi-arid tropical climate, with moderate temperatures during the monsoon, cooler conditions post-monsoon, and elevated temperatures in the pre-monsoon period. Monsoon rainfall and cloud cover help moderate temperatures, reducing thermal stress, whereas high pre-monsoon temperatures can accelerate metabolic rates and influence dissolved oxygen levels, potentially stressing aquatic fauna. Cooler post-monsoon temperatures may slow metabolism, affecting growth and reproductive cycles. These seasonal thermal fluctuations can directly impact fish behavior, plankton abundance, and overall productivity of the lake ecosystem. Understanding such temperature dynamics is essential for water quality monitoring and for devising management strategies that support ecological stability and biodiversity conservation.

pH

pH is a vital water quality parameter that influences the solubility of nutrients, chemical processes, and the health of aquatic organisms (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). In the study area, seasonal variations in pH reflected natural changes in hydrological and climatic conditions. The monsoon period showed slightly lower pH values, likely due to dilution from rainfall and the influx of slightly acidic runoff. Post-monsoon pH increased moderately, indicating stabilization of water chemistry after the rains. Pre-monsoon months recorded the highest pH, which may be attributed to higher evaporation rates, reduced water levels, and increased concentration of alkaline ions. Seasonal fluctuations in pH can significantly affect fish physiology, plankton diversity, and microbial activity, as extreme shifts may disrupt metabolic and reproductive processes. Understanding these pH dynamics is essential for maintaining ecological balance and ensuring the sustainability of freshwater ecosystems.

Electrical Conductivity (EC)

Electrical Conductivity (EC) is an important parameter indicating the total ionic content of water, reflecting the concentration of dissolved salts and overall water quality (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). In the study area, seasonal EC variations corresponded with hydrological and climatic conditions. During the monsoon, EC values were relatively low, likely due to dilution from rainfall and increased freshwater input. Post-monsoon EC remained moderate as water levels stabilized and salt concentrations were lower. Pre-monsoon months showed the highest EC, probably resulting from evaporation, reduced water volume, and increased concentration of dissolved ions. Seasonal fluctuations in EC can influence osmotic balance, nutrient availability, and the physiology of aquatic organisms, including fish and plankton. Understanding these variations is essential for assessing freshwater quality and managing the ecological health of the lake ecosystem.

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)

Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) is a critical parameter reflecting the concentration of dissolved inorganic salts and organic matter in water, and it directly influences water quality and aquatic ecosystem health (Boyd & Tucker, 2014; Wetzel, 2001). TDS is closely related to electrical conductivity and is affected by seasonal factors such as rainfall, evaporation, and runoff.

In the study area, TDS values were lowest during the monsoon season, likely due to dilution from heavy rainfall and increased freshwater input. Post-monsoon months showed moderate TDS concentrations, indicating stabilization of water chemistry as water levels normalized. Pre-monsoon months recorded the highest TDS values, which can be attributed to high temperatures, increased evaporation, and reduced water volume, resulting in a concentration of dissolved ions.Seasonal fluctuations in TDS can significantly affect aquatic organisms by altering osmotic balance and nutrient availability. Elevated TDS levels in the pre-monsoon season may impose physiological stress on fish and plankton, whereas lower concentrations

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during the monsoon can improve water quality and ecosystem functioning. Monitoring TDS, along with other physico-chemical parameters, is essential for sustainable water management and maintaining ecological stability in freshwater systems.

Transparency

Water transparency is an important indicator of water quality, reflecting the clarity of water and the presence of suspended particles, algae, and organic matter (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). It influences light penetration, which directly affects photosynthetic activity, primary productivity, and the distribution of aquatic organisms in freshwater ecosystems.

In the study area, transparency was lowest during the monsoon season, likely due to high runoff, increased sediment load, and suspended particulate matter from heavy rainfall. Post-monsoon transparency increased as sediment settled and water levels stabilized, leading to clearer conditions. The highest transparency was recorded during the pre-monsoon season, possibly due to lower rainfall, reduced turbidity, and decreased inflow of suspended solids. Seasonal variations in transparency can significantly affect the growth of phytoplankton and submerged vegetation, as well as the feeding and breeding behavior of fish. Monitoring transparency alongside other physico-chemical parameters is essential for assessing water quality and managing the ecological health of freshwater systems.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO)

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) is a critical physico-chemical parameter that regulates the survival, growth, and metabolic activity of aquatic organisms (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014; Kalff, 2002). DO levels are influenced by temperature, photosynthetic activity, organic matter decomposition, and water mixing.

In the study area, DO was highest during the monsoon season, likely due to increased water turbulence, lower temperatures, and enhanced photosynthetic activity of phytoplankton. Post-monsoon DO showed moderate values, reflecting stabilization of water conditions and reduced mixing. Pre-monsoon months exhibited the lowest DO concentrations, which can be attributed to elevated temperatures, reduced oxygen solubility in warmer water, and higher biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) from organic matter decomposition. Seasonal variations in DO can directly affect the distribution, feeding, and reproductive behavior of fish and other aquatic organisms. Monitoring and maintaining optimal DO levels is essential for sustaining freshwater ecosystem health and ecological balance. Similar observations were made by Singh and Trivedi (1979); V.Rajani(2020).

Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)

Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) is a crucial indicator of the organic pollution and overall water quality in freshwater ecosystems, reflecting the amount of oxygen required by microorganisms to decompose organic matter (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). High BOD values generally indicate elevated levels of organic matter and increased microbial activity, which can reduce dissolved oxygen availability for aquatic organisms.

In the study area, BOD was relatively moderate during the monsoon season, likely due to dilution from rainfall and increased water volume. Post-monsoon BOD values were the highest, which may be attributed to the accumulation of organic matter, decaying plant debris, and reduced water flow, leading to increased microbial decomposition. Pre-monsoon months exhibited the lowest BOD levels, probably due to lower organic input and higher temperatures enhancing decomposition rates but with less organic load. Seasonal variations in BOD can have significant ecological implications, as elevated BOD may reduce dissolved oxygen levels, affecting fish, plankton, and other aquatic organisms. Monitoring BOD alongside other physico-chemical parameters is essential for assessing water quality and ensuring the ecological stability of freshwater systems.

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Free CO_2

Free carbon dioxide (CO_2) is a vital component of dissolved inorganic carbon in freshwater ecosystems, influencing water pH, photosynthesis, and overall metabolic activity of aquatic organisms (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014; Kalff, 2002; Nydahl, 2019). CO_2 is primarily produced through respiration of aquatic organisms and microbial decomposition of organic matter, and it is consumed during photosynthesis by aquatic plants and phytoplankton (Suski et al., 2016).

In the study area, free CO_2 concentrations were highest during the monsoon season, likely due to increased organic matter input from runoff and enhanced microbial respiration. Post-monsoon values were moderate, reflecting a balance between CO_2 production and its uptake by photosynthetic activity. Pre-monsoon months showed a gradual increase in CO_2, possibly due to elevated temperatures enhancing respiration and decomposition, coupled with lower water volume concentrating dissolved CO_2. Seasonal fluctuations in free CO_2 can influence water pH, affecting physiological processes, growth, and reproduction of fish and other aquatic organisms.

Monitoring free CO_2 alongside other physico-chemical parameters is essential for assessing water quality and maintaining ecological stability in freshwater systems. These observations align with previous studies emphasizing the dynamic nature of CO_2 in inland waters and its significant ecological implications (Nydahl, 2019; Suski et al., 2016).

Total Alkalinity (TA)

Total Alkalinity (TA) is a critical parameter in freshwater systems, serving as a buffer that stabilizes pH levels and supports the physiological processes of aquatic organisms. It is primarily influenced by the presence of bicarbonate, carbonate, and hydroxide ions, which are products of mineral weathering and biological activity (Wetzel, 2001; Kalff, 2002; Dey et al., 2021).

In the present study, TA concentrations exhibited seasonal fluctuations, with the lowest values observed during the monsoon season. This reduction is likely attributable to dilution effects from increased rainfall and surface runoff, which introduce relatively low-alkalinity waters into the system. Conversely, the highest TA values were recorded during the pre-monsoon months, a trend consistent with findings from studies in various regions. For instance, research by Hoppema et al. (1990) reported similar seasonal variations in alkalinity, attributing higher concentrations to reduced water volumes and increased evaporation rates during warmer months, leading to the concentration of dissolved ions.These seasonal variations in TA are significant as they influence the buffering capacity of water bodies, thereby affecting the solubility of gases like CO_2 and the overall health of aquatic ecosystems. Elevated TA levels during the pre-monsoon period enhance the water's ability to neutralize acids, mitigating potential pH fluctuations that could adversely impact aquatic life (Boyd & Tucker, 2014).Regular monitoring of TA, alongside other physicochemical parameters, is essential for effective water quality management and the conservation of aquatic biodiversity. Understanding the dynamics of TA can inform strategies to mitigate the impacts of seasonal changes and anthropogenic activities on freshwater systems.

Total Hardness (TH)

Total Hardness (TH) is a critical parameter in freshwater systems, primarily determined by the concentrations of calcium (Ca^{2+}) and magnesium (Mg^{2+}) ions. It plays a significant role in influencing water quality, aquatic life, and the suitability of water for various uses, including drinking, irrigation, and industrial applications. ([ScienceDirect][1])

In the present study, TH concentrations exhibited distinct seasonal variations, with the lowest values observed during the monsoon season and the highest during the pre-monsoon period. This pattern aligns with findings from other studies in similar climatic regions. For instance, Dey et al. (2021) reported higher TH levels during the summer months, attributing this to increased evaporation and reduced water volume, which concentrate dissolved minerals. Conversely, during the monsoon, dilution from rainfall leads to lower TH concentrations.The observed increase in TH during the pre-monsoon

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season can be attributed to several factors. Elevated temperatures during this period enhance the solubility of minerals, leading to higher concentrations of Ca^{2+} and Mg^{2+} ions in the water. Additionally, reduced water levels due to evaporation further concentrate these ions. Such variations in TH can have significant ecological implications, affecting the physiological processes of aquatic organisms and the overall health of the ecosystem.Monitoring TH, along with other physicochemical parameters, is essential for effective water quality management. Understanding the seasonal dynamics of TH can aid in predicting potential challenges related to water hardness and inform strategies to mitigate adverse effects on aquatic life and water usability.

Chloride

Chloride (Cl^-) is a significant anion in freshwater systems, influencing water quality, salinity, and the overall chemical balance of aquatic environments. Its concentration is primarily determined by the presence of dissolved salts, which can originate from natural sources such as mineral weathering and anthropogenic activities, including agricultural runoff, wastewater discharge, and the application of road salts (Kaushal et al., 2005; Cartwright et al., 2023).

In the study area, chloride concentrations exhibited seasonal variations, with the lowest values observed during the monsoon season and the highest during the pre-monsoon period. This pattern aligns with findings from other studies in similar climatic regions. For instance, research by Situ (2018) reported significant seasonal fluctuations in chloride concentrations in freshwater systems, attributing higher concentrations during dry periods to reduced dilution from rainfall and increased evaporation rates.The observed increase in chloride concentrations during the pre-monsoon season can be attributed to several factors. Elevated temperatures during this period enhance the solubility of salts, leading to higher concentrations of chloride ions in the water. Additionally, reduced water levels due to evaporation further concentrate these ions. Such variations in chloride concentrations can have significant ecological implications, affecting the physiological processes of aquatic organisms and the overall health of the ecosystem.Monitoring chloride concentrations alongside other physicochemical parameters is essential for effective water quality management. Understanding the seasonal dynamics of chloride can aid in predicting potential challenges related to salinity and inform strategies to mitigate adverse effects on aquatic life and water usability.

Nitrates (NO_3^-)

Nitrate (NO_3^-) is a vital nutrient in freshwater ecosystems, playing a key role in primary productivity but potentially contributing to eutrophication if concentrations are elevated (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). Sources of nitrate include natural processes such as nitrogen mineralization, nitrification, and runoff from soils, as well as anthropogenic inputs like fertilizers, sewage, and wastewater discharge (Camargo & Alonso, 2006; Dey et al., 2021).

In the study area, nitrate concentrations showed distinct seasonal variation. During the monsoon season, nitrate levels were highest, likely due to runoff from surrounding agricultural lands and leaching of soil nutrients into the water body. Post-monsoon concentrations decreased, reflecting dilution from rainfall and reduced nutrient input.The lowest nitrate levels were observed in the pre-monsoon season, possibly due to higher uptake by phytoplankton and aquatic vegetation, as well as lower external inputs.Seasonal fluctuations in nitrate concentrations can significantly influence aquatic productivity and ecosystem health. Elevated nitrates during the monsoon may enhance phytoplankton growth, whereas lower levels in the pre-monsoon season may limit nutrient availability. Continuous monitoring of nitrate levels is essential to prevent nutrient imbalances, eutrophication, and associated ecological disturbances in freshwater systems (Camargo & Alonso, 2006; Dey et al., 2021).

Phosphates (PO_4^{3-})

Phosphate (PO_4^{3-}) is a key nutrient in freshwater ecosystems that plays a critical role in primary productivity and growth of aquatic plants and phytoplankton (Wetzel, 2001; Boyd & Tucker, 2014). Phosphate levels in water are influenced by natural

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processes such as mineral weathering, decomposition of organic matter, and biological activity, as well as anthropogenic sources like agricultural runoff, detergents, and sewage discharge (Sharpley et al., 2003; Dey et al., 2021).

In the study area, phosphate concentrations exhibited notable seasonal variations. The highest levels were observed during the monsoon season, likely due to surface runoff carrying fertilizers, soil nutrients, and organic matter into the water body. Post-monsoon phosphate levels decreased significantly, which may be attributed to dilution from rainfall, sedimentation, and uptake by aquatic organisms. Pre-monsoon months showed moderate phosphate concentrations, possibly due to reduced external inputs and consumption by phytoplankton and aquatic vegetation.Seasonal variations in phosphate concentrations can significantly influence primary productivity, nutrient cycling, and the overall health of freshwater ecosystems. Elevated phosphate levels during the monsoon may enhance algal growth, while lower levels in the post-monsoon period help maintain nutrient balance. Continuous monitoring of phosphate, alongside other nutrients such as nitrate, is essential for managing eutrophication risks and maintaining ecological stability in freshwater systems (Sharpley et al., 2003; Dey et al., 2021).

Sodium (Na^+), Potassium (K^+)

Sodium (Na^+) and Potassium (K^+) are essential cations in freshwater ecosystems, influencing ionic balance, osmoregulation in aquatic organisms, and overall water quality (Boyd & Tucker, 2014; Wetzel, 2001). These ions originate from natural sources such as mineral weathering and soil leaching, as well as anthropogenic inputs like agricultural runoff, fertilizers, and sewage discharge.

In the study area, sodium concentrations were highest during the monsoon season, likely due to runoff carrying salts from the surrounding watershed. Post-monsoon sodium levels decreased, reflecting dilution and reduced external input, while pre-monsoon values remained moderate, possibly influenced by evaporation concentrating ions in a lower-volume water body. Potassium concentrations, in contrast, showed a slight increase during the pre-monsoon period, which may be associated with nutrient release from decomposed organic matter and soil leaching during dry months.

Ammonia (NH_3)

Ammonia (NH_3) is a crucial indicator of nitrogenous pollution and organic matter decomposition in freshwater systems (Camargo & Alonso, 2006). In the present study, ammonia concentrations were relatively consistent across seasons, with slightly higher levels in the monsoon and early post-monsoon months, likely due to enhanced microbial decomposition of organic matter carried by runoff and increased input of nitrogenous compounds. Lower ammonia concentrations during pre-monsoon months could be attributed to higher uptake by phytoplankton and aquatic plants, as well as dilution effects. Seasonal variations in Na^+, K^+, and NH_3 can have significant ecological implications, influencing osmoregulation, nutrient availability, and water chemistry. Continuous monitoring of these parameters is essential for assessing water quality, managing nutrient balance, and maintaining the health of freshwater ecosystems (Dey et al., 2021; Camargo & Alonso, 2006).

Conclusion

The present study on Bommakal Freshwater Lake, Karimnagar District, Telangana, highlights the pronounced seasonal dynamics of physico-chemical parameters and their implications for the lake's ecological status. Clear seasonal patterns were observed across all measured parameters, reflecting the semi-arid tropical climate and the hydrological regime of the region. Temperature, pH, electrical conductivity (EC), total dissolved solids (TDS), and major ions (Na^+, K^+, Cl^-, hardness, alkalinity) exhibited significant increases during the pre-monsoon period due to high evaporation and low water inflow, while dilution effects during the monsoon resulted in lower values. Dissolved oxygen (DO) peaked during the monsoon and declined during pre-monsoon, showing the inverse relationship with temperature and organic load. Nutrient dynamics indicated higher nitrate and phosphate concentrations during the monsoon, driven by runoff and agricultural inputs, whereas

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post-monsoon and pre-monsoon periods reflected nutrient stabilization and gradual biological uptake. Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) was highest in post-monsoon, suggesting accumulation of organic matter, while ammonia levels remained relatively stable throughout the year.

Overall, Bommakal Lake exhibits seasonal variations that directly influence water quality, aquatic productivity, and ecological health. Monsoon brings dilution and nutrient input, post-monsoon reflects organic matter accumulation and moderate water quality, and pre-monsoon is characterized by higher ionic concentration and reduced dissolved oxygen, impacting aquatic organisms. These findings provide crucial baseline information for water quality monitoring, sustainable management, and conservation of freshwater resources in semi-arid regions. Regular monitoring, coupled with effective watershed management and controlled agricultural runoff, is essential to maintain the ecological integrity and productivity of Bommakal Lake.

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Additions to The Flora of Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh, India

P. V. Ramana* and A. Srinivasa Rao
Department of Botany, Government College (A), Rajahmundry–533 103, Andhra Pradesh, India
*Email (Corresponding author): pragadavr@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Srikakulam district is one of the biodiversity rich areas of Eastern Ghats. The district is the extreme Northeastern district of Andhra Pradesh situated within the geographic co-ordinates of 18°-20' and 19°- 10' of Northern latitude and 83°-50' and 84°-50' of Eastern longitude and bounded by Odisha on the north, Vizianagaram district on the west and south, Bay of Bengal on the east. The district has a seacoast of 193 Kms. The district derived its name from Srikakulam, its headquarters town. The Geographical area of the district is 4,591 sq. km with 03 revenue divisions, 30 Mandals and 1865 revenue villages. The district is situated in the North Coastal Plain of the Agro-Climatic Zone and partly in hilly Areas. The district has two Natural Regions namely the Hilly Region and the Plain Area. The Nagavali, Vamsadhara, Suvarnamukhi, Vegavathi, Mahendratanaya, Gomukhi, Champavathi, Bahuda and Kumbikota Gedda are important rivers of the district, which are contributing to the preservation of biodiversity. While exploring the floristic wealth of Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh, more than 500 species documented from 2022-2025, of these 50 species of angiosperms belonging to 33 genera and 16 families have been reported as an addition to the 'Flora of Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh'. Citation of the species, family, habit, phenology, specimens examined and important photographs are provided for easy identification.

Keywords: Additions, Flora, Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh,

Introduction:

Documentation of the species is very important aspect in the field of taxonomy as well as for further scientific research. With the initiation of Botanical Survey of India (BSI), District Flora Projects were started as early as 1960. Since then, documentation of flora in many districts carried out by time to time. In this connection, a consolidated work on Flora of Srikakulam District was carried out by Rao and Harasreeramulu in 1986. In their Flora of Srikakulam District, they enumerated 916 species of Angiosperms belonging to 417 genera and 114 families. Two years later, Rama Rao & Ravisankar (1988) reported 38 species as new an addition to the district flora. While working on the east coast mangrove habitats, Swain et al. (2008) reported ten species including four mangrove species as additions to the flora of the district. Prayaga Murthy (2009) studied on the weed flora of Uttara Andhra and reported 532 species belonging to 308 genera and 80 families. Ramana (2017) reported 43 species as an addition to flora. Swamy & Ramana (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021), reported 6 new records to flora of Andhra Pradesh from Srikakulam district. Ramana et al. (2020, 2021, 2023, 2024, 2025) reported 5 new records to the flora of Andhra Pradesh from Srikakulam district. While exploring the floristic wealth of Srikakulam district, the first author has collected and identified 50 species of angiosperms. Scrutiny of literatures revealed that 50 species have not been reported from Srikakulam district (Rao & Hara Sreeramulu, 1986; Rama Rao & Ravi Shankar, 1988; Swain et al., 2008; Murthy, 2009; Ramana, 2017), hence here reported as new distributional records for the district of Srikakulam

Study Area:

The present Srikakulam District is the extreme North eastern District of Andhra Pradesh situated within the Geographic Co-ordinates of 18°-20' and 19°-10' of Northern latitude and 83°-50' and 84°-50' of Eastern longitude and bounded by Odisha on the north, Vizianagaram district on the west and south, Bay of Bengal on the east. The district has sea coast of 193 Kms. The Geographical area of the district is 4,591 sq.km with 3revenue divisions (Srikakulam, Tekkali and Plasa), 30 mandals and 1865 revenue villages. The district is situated in North Coastal Plain of the Agro – Climatic Zone and partly in hilly Areas. The district has two Natural Regions Viz., the Hilly Region and the Plain Area. The Srikakulam district is one of the biodiversity rich areas of Eastern Ghats.

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Materials and Methods:

The exploration of the study area was carried out during the period from 2017 to 2025. The plant specimens were collected either in flowering and/or fruiting stage. Detailed study of the dried specimens and their identification were carried in the Department of Botany, Government College(A), Rajahmundry East Godavari district, with the help of region flora such as Flora of the Presidency of Madras (Gamble, 1915-1936), Cyperaceae of Western Ghats, West Coast and Maharashtra (M.A.Wadookhan, 2015), Sedges of Karnataka (Prasad & Singh, 2002) and other recent floristic works such as Flora of the Andhra Pradesh5 volumes (Pullaiah et all., 2018), as well as local district flora by R.S. Rao and Hara Sreeramulu (1986) were consulted. For the processing of herbarium specimens, the methodology described by Jain & Rao (1977) has been followed. The identified specimens were further confirmed by experts of Botanical Survey of India (Dr. J. Swamy Scientist 'C'). All the specimens were deposited in the Department of Botany, Government College (A), Rajahmundry East Godavari. The systematic enumerations of all families were arranged alphabetically. Each species is provided with correct name, followed by name of the family, habit, phenology, locality and field numbers.

Results and Discussion:

The present floristic investigation reveals that a total of the 50-plant species belonging to 33 genera and 16 families were identified as new addition to the flora of Srikakulam district. Of these 50 species 24 species belonging to 19 genera and 14 families are dicotyledonous whereas 26 species belonging to 14 genera and 2 families are Monocotyledonous (Grasses and Sedges). On analysis of habit forms it is found that herbs dominate with 42 herbs, 3 shrubs, 3 climbers and 2 trees.

Enumeration:

Acmella radicans (Jacq.) R. K. Jansen, Syst. *Bot. Monogt.* 8: 69, 1985.
Family: Asteraceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: November–January.
Specimens examined: Mandasa, Pathakota, 22.11.2025, *P.V. Ramana 786*.
Blumea eriantha *DC., R. Wight, Contr, Bot, India:* 15. 1834.
Family: Asteraceae; Herb: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: January–March.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 13.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 422*.
Blumea lacera (Burm.f.) DC., R. Wight, Contr, Bot, India*: 14.*1834.
Family: Asteraceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: December–April.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 6.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 430.*
Boerhavia erecta L., Sp. Pl.: 3. 1753.
Family: Nyctaginaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: August – December.
Specimens examined: Etcherla, 30.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 450*.
Centaurium pulchellum (Sw.), Hayek ex Hand.-Mazz., Stadlm., Janch. & Faltis, Oesterr. Bot. Z. 56: 70, 1906.
Family: Gentianaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Frt.: February–March.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 22.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 428*.
Cleome rutidosperma DC., Prodr. 1: 241. 1824.
Family: Cleomaceae; Habit: Herb Fl. & Frt.: Most part of the year
Specimens examined: Kaviti, 26.072025, *P.V. Ramana 558*.
Cleome tenella L.f., Suppl. Pl.: 300. 1782.
Family: Cleomaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: May – July
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Mutyalapeta-2, 21.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 505*.
Cynodon radiatus Roth, J.J. Roemer & J.A.Schultes, Syst. Veg., ed. 2: 411. 1817
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: May–October.
Specimens examined: Pathapatnam, Savarajadupalli, 3.05.2025, *P.V. Ramana 452*.
Cyperus distance L f., Suppl. Pl.: 103. 1782
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: July–September.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Pragadaputtuga, 28.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 52.*

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Cyperus mitis Steud., Syn. Pl. Glumac. 2: 316. 1855.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: May–July.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 4.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 422.*
Cyperus paniceus (Rottb.) Boeckeler, Linnaea 36: 381 1870.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: January–March
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Ramayyaputtuga, 28.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 523*.
Cyperus procerus Rottb., Descr. Icon. Rar. Pl.: 29. 1773.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–July.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 7.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 528*.
Cyperus sanguinolentus Vahl, Enum. Pl. Obs. 2: 351. 1805, nom. Cons.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: January – March.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala paddy fields 7.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 529*.
Cyperus substramineus Kuk., H.G.A. Engler (ed.), Pflanzer., IV, 20(Heft 101): 10.1935; *Pycreus stramineus* C.B. Clarke J.D. Hooker, Fl. Brit. India 6: 589. 1893.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: May–August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 4.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 525*.
Datura innoxia Mill., Gard. Dict., ed. 8: n. º 5. 1768, nom. & orth. Cons.
Family: Solanaceae; Habit: Shurb; Fl. & Fr.: November–March
Specimens examined: Dirisam near Ranastalam, 2.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 42.*
Digitaria bicornis (Lam.) Roem. & Schult., Syst. Veg., ed. 15[bis]. 2:470. 1817.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April-October
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 26.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 559*.
Digitaria ciliaris (Retz.) Koeler, Descr. Gramin.: 27. 1802.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: June–October.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala 13.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 422*.
Digitaria horizontalis Willd., Enum. Pl. Hort. Berol.: 92. 1809.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: July–November.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, Pokathota, 16.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 524.*
Digitaria longiflora (Retz.) Pers., Syn.Pl. 1: 85. 1805.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: January – March.
Specimens examined: Mandasa, Pathakota, 22.11.2025, *P.V. Ramana 774*.
Digitaria setigera Roth, J.J. Roemer & J.A. Schultes, Syst. Veg., ed. 15[bis]. 2: 474 1817.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: July–November.
Specimens examined: Mandasa, Singupuram, 22.11.2025, *P.V. Ramana 778*.
Dinebra panicea (Rtz.) P.M.Peterson&N.Snow, Ann. Bot. (Oxford) 109: 1326. 2012.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: June–September.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Kapasukuddi, Mutyalapeta-2, 19.11. 2025, *P.V. Ramana 640*.
Dinebra polystachyos (R.Br.) E.A.Kellogg, Phytokeys 163: 503, 2020.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: June – August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Kapasukuddi, Mutyalapeta-2, 21.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 502*.
Eleocharis atropurpurea (Retz.) J. Presl& C. Presl, Reliq. Haenk. 1: 196. 1828.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–September.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala,13.07. 2025, *P.V. Ramana 530*.
Eragrostis pilosa (L.)P.Beawv., Ess. Agrostogr.: 71. 1812.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: June–November.
Specimens examined: Komarthi Junction. near Narasannapeta, 8.08.2025, *P.V. Ramana 604*.
Erigeron bonariensis L., Sp. Pl.: 863. 1753.

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Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–November.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Kapasukuddi, Mutyalapeta- 2, 21.06.2025, P V Ramana 501.
Eugenia roxburghii DC., Prodr. 3: 271. 1828.
Family: Myrtaceae; Habit: Shrub /Tree; Fl. & Fr.: March–July.
Specimens examined: Mendu Forest Block near Kasibugga 12.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 466*.
Fimbristylis aestivalis (Retz.) Vahl, Enum. Pl. Obs. 2: 288. 1805.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–July.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 28.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 447*.
Fimbristylis complanate (Retz.) Link, Hort. Berol. 1: 292. 1827.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–June.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 28.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 445*.
Fimbtistylis quinquangularis (Vahl) Kunth, Enum. Pl. 2: 229.1837.
Family: Cyperaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–September.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 28.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 446*.
Flueggea leucopyrus Willd., Sp. Pl., ed. 4. 4: 757. 1806.
Family: Phyllanthaceae; Habit: Shrub; Fl. & Fr.: January–March.
Specimens examined: Mendu Forest block near Kasibugga, 20.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 493*.
Gamochaeta pensylvanica (Willd.) Cabrera, Bol. Soc. Argent. Bot. 9: 375. 1961.
Family: Asteraceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: January–March.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Mutyalaprta Junction 13.02.2025, *P.V. Ramana 417.*
Hemarthria compressa (L.f.) R.Br.,Prodr. Fl. Nov, Holland.: 207. 1810.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 4.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 526*.
Jasminum angustifolium (L.) Willd., Sp. Pl., ed. 4. 1: 36. 1797.
Family: Oleaceae; Habit: Scandant shrub; Fl. & Fr.: March – July.
Specimens examined: Mendu Forest Block near Kasibugga, 12.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 465*.
Jasminum auriculatum Vahl. Symb. Bot. 3: 1. 1794.
Family: Oleaceae; Habit: Scandent shrub; Fl. & Fr.: May – August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Jola Gorja near Pragadaputtuga, 22.07.025, *P.V. Ramana 551*.
Jasminum coarctatum Roxb., Fl. Ind. 1: 91. 1820,
Family: Oleaceae; Habit: Climbing shrub; Fl. & Fr.: April–June.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Jola Gorja near Pragadaputtuga, 20.05.2025, *P.V. Ramana 458*.
Leersia hexandra Sw., Prodr. Veg. Ind. Occ.: 21. 1788.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: Most part of the year.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala, 24.07.2025, *P.V. Ramana 457*.
Lepisanthes tetraphylla (Vahl.) Randlk., Sitzungsb. Math.-Phys. Cl. Konigl. Akad. Wiss. Munchen 8: 276. 1878.
Family: Sapindaceae; Habit: Tree; Fl. & Fr.: March–July.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Rajapuram, Rajapurammetta, 16.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 424*.
Paspalum distichum L., Syst. Nat., ed. 10. 2: 855. 1759.
Family: Poaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Putiyadala paddy fields, 21.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 498*.
Phyllanthus quadrangularis Willd., Sp. Pl., ed. 4. 4: 585. 1805; *Sauropus quadrangularis* (Willd.) Mull.Arg. Linnea 32: 73.1863.
Family: Phyllanthaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–August.
Specimens examined: Mendu Forest Block, Near Kasibugga, 20.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 492*.
Phyllanthus scabrifolius Hook.f., Fl. Brit. India 5: 299. 1887.
Family: Phyllanthaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–August.

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Specimens examined: Mendu Forest Block, Near Kasibugga, 20.06.2025, *P.V. Ramana 489*.
Pseudoconyza viscosa (Mill.) D'Arcy, Phytologia 25: 281.1973; *Laggera aurita* (DC.) Benth. ex. C.B. Clarke.
Family: Asteraceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–August.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Rajapuram, 13.03.2025, *P.V. Ramana 423*.
Rhinocanthus nasutus (L.) Kurz, J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, Pt. 2, Nat. Hist. 39: 79. 1870.
Family: Acanthaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: December–April.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Ramayyaputtuga, 10.04.2025, *P.V. Ramana 433*.
Richardia scabra L., Sp. Pl.: 330. 1753.
Family : Rubiaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: March–January.
Specimens examined: Kaviti, Silagam, 25.06.2025, P V Ramana 518.
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Family: Brassicaceae; Habit: Herb; Fl. & Fr.: April–August.
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Fig. 1: A. *Blumea eriantha*; B. *Boerhavia erecta*; C. *Centaurium pulchellum*; D. *Cleome rutidosperma*; E. *C. tenella*; F. *Cyperus distance*; G. *Datura innoxia;* H. *Digitaria bicornis*; I. *D. longiflora*; J. *Fimbristylis complanata*; K. *Jasminum coarctatum*; L. *Phyllanthus quadrangularis*; M. *P. scabrifolius*; N. *Rhinacanthus nasutus*; O. *Richardia scabra*; P. *Rorippa madagascariensis.*

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The Role of Ethnobotanical Interest in the Conservation of Biodiversity

M Vishnupriya [1]* Saivenkatesh Korlam 2 Dr. P. Anuradha Lakshmi[1] and D. RaghuRamulu[1]
1 Department of Botany, Govt. College (Autonomous), Anantapuramu, A.P. – 515 001
2 Department of Botany, S.V.A. Govt. Degree College (M), Srikalahasti, Tirupati Dt., A.P. – 517 644

Abstract

Ethnobotany, the interdisciplinary study of human-plant interactions, plays a pivotal role in biodiversity conservation by integrating traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific approaches. This review explores how ethnobotanical interest fosters the documentation, sustainable management, and protection of plant diversity. Drawing from recent studies, it highlights the contributions of indigenous communities, challenges in knowledge preservation, and future prospects for biocultural conservation. By bridging cultural heritage and ecological stewardship, ethnobotany emerges as a key tool for achieving sustainable development goals related to biodiversity.

Key words : Ethnobotany, biodiversity conservation, traditional ecological knowledge, plant diversity, indigenous communities, biocultural conservation.

Introduction

Ethnobotany, the interdisciplinary study of human-plant interactions, plays a pivotal role in biodiversity conservation by integrating traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific approaches (Pei et al., 2020). This field not only documents the ways in which societies utilize plants for food, medicine, shelter, and cultural practices but also addresses pressing global concerns such as food security, climate change, and human health (Pei et al., 2020). As biodiversity faces unprecedented threats from habitat loss, climate change, and overexploitation, ethnobotanical interest has gained prominence in conservation efforts, providing insights into sustainable resource management and biocultural preservation (Eduard, 2023). Indigenous communities, as custodians of traditional knowledge passed down through generations, offer unique perspectives on ecosystem dynamics, plant uses, and conservation strategies that can complement scientific methods (Kumar et al., 2021).

The integration of ethnobotany into conservation frameworks fosters collaborative partnerships between scientists, policymakers, and local communities, ensuring that conservation strategies are culturally sensitive and equitable (Eduard, 2023). For instance, ethnobotanical studies reveal how traditional practices, such as agroforestry and selective harvesting, promote ecosystem resilience and maintain habitat diversity, thereby preventing degradation and supporting long-term biodiversity (Eduard, 2023; Kumar et al., 2021). However, this traditional knowledge is increasingly at risk due to cultural assimilation, globalization, and generational shifts, underscoring the urgency of documentation and preservation efforts (Pei et al., 2020; Eduard, 2023). Projects like EthnoHERBS exemplify how ethnobotany can harness centuries-old knowledge for innovative solutions, such as developing sustainable cosmeceutical products while promoting biodiversity conservation in regions like South-Eastern Europe (Zouraris et al., 2025).

Furthermore, ethnobotany emphasizes the role of plants' cultural significance in sustainable medicine and environmental stewardship, advocating for the protection of both biological and cultural diversity (Lamy, 2024). Research indicates that plant diversity in managed systems, such as agroforestry, is often determined more by ethnobotanical values—such as medicinal or cultural importance—than by the regional species pool, highlighting how local knowledge acts as a filter for conservation priorities (Li et al., 2021). This review explores how ethnobotanical interest fosters the documentation, sustainable management, and protection of plant diversity. Drawing from recent studies, it highlights the contributions of indigenous communities, challenges in knowledge preservation, and future prospects for biocultural conservation. By bridging cultural heritage and ecological stewardship, ethnobotany emerges as a key tool for achieving sustainable

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development goals related to biodiversity, ensuring that conservation efforts are holistic, inclusive, and effective (Pei et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2021).

Documentation of Traditional Knowledge

A core function of ethnobotany is the systematic recording of indigenous and local knowledge about plants, which is often at risk of erosion due to modernization and generational shifts. Documenting this knowledge helps identify valuable species and their ecological roles, informing conservation priorities. For instance, ethnobotanical surveys in regions like South-Eastern Europe have cataloged centuries-old practices, identifying medicinal plants used for skin disorders and highlighting the need to preserve associated biodiversity (Zouraris et al., 2025). Similarly, in the Eastern Himalayas, research has documented over 1,128 species in biocultural relationships, revealing that much of this knowledge remains unwritten and confined to specific societal groups (O'Neill et al., 2017).

This documentation aids in assessing species vulnerability. Ethnobotanical studies reveal harvesting pressures on popular plants, preventing overexploitation and potential extinction. For example, analyses of traditional knowledge have shown that 15,000 medicinal plants are threatened globally, underscoring the urgency of integrating ethnobotany into conservation planning (Kumar et al., 2021). By preserving oral traditions through interviews and observations, ethnobotany ensures that cultural heritage contributes to scientific databases, fostering biodiversity protection.

Sustainable Resource Management

Ethnobotanical interest promotes sustainable practices derived from traditional knowledge, such as agroforestry and selective harvesting, which enhance ecosystem resilience. Indigenous communities often serve as custodians of biodiversity-rich areas, employing methods that maintain habitat diversity and prevent degradation (Eduard, 2023). Projects like EthnoHERBS demonstrate how ethnobotany can establish organic cultivation protocols, reducing pressure on wild populations and ensuring eco-friendly resource use (Zouraris et al., 2025).

In achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs), ethnobotany evolves models for natural resource management. It supports SDG 15 (Life on Land) by propagating wild plants in managed gardens, alleviating strain on natural habitats (Kumar et al., 2021). Furthermore, ethnobotany informs ethical collaborations, including benefit-sharing and informed consent, which empower local communities while conserving genetic resources (Lamy, 2024). These practices not only halt biodiversity loss but also provide economic benefits through eco-tourism and sustainable harvesting.

Exemplified Studies in Biocultural Conservation

Several case studies illustrate ethnobotany's practical impact on biocultural conservation, demonstrating how the integration of traditional knowledge with scientific methods can lead to effective strategies for preserving both plant diversity and cultural heritage. In China, ethnobotanical research among the Buyi communities in Guizhou Province documented 121 medicinal plants used in traditional healthcare, highlighting their therapeutic applications and proposing targeted conservation strategies for at-risk species and associated knowledge systems (Pei et al., 2020). This work emphasized the vulnerability of certain species to overharvesting and habitat loss, advocating for community-led initiatives to protect these resources. Similarly, in Turkey, ethnobotanical surveys of herbal markets in Istanbul identified 26 threatened plant taxa commonly traded for medicinal purposes, underscoring the need for informed consumer practices and regulatory measures to mitigate overexploitation and promote sustainable sourcing (Pei et al., 2020).

In the Eastern Himalayas, interdisciplinary approaches have combined quantitative ethnobotanical indices, such as use-value rankings, with geospatial modeling to prioritize conservation targets. This method engaged local knowledge holders as active participants in mapping and assessing plant resources, resulting in more inclusive and effective biodiversity management plans that respect indigenous perspectives (O'Neill et al., 2017). Another example from China involves studies

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on Naxi ethnic group skincare plants in Yunnan Province, which linked traditional cosmetic and medicinal uses to specific environmental contexts, revealing opportunities for conservation through sustainable cultivation and revealing the interplay between cultural practices and ecosystem health (Pei et al., 2020).

Expanding beyond Asia, a participatory ethnobotany project in Brazil's Atlantic Forest focused on two quilombola communities (Quilombo da Fazenda and Quilombo do Cambury). Over multiple phases, community members were trained to conduct surveys, collect plant specimens, and calculate conservation priority indices, documenting 175 and 195 plant species respectively across various use categories. This initiative identified high-priority species like Virola bicuhyba and Cedrela fissilis for management, empowering residents to create outputs such as booklets and videos for knowledge preservation and sustainable use, while addressing challenges in participatory research for long-term conservation (Rodrigues et al., 2020).

In Bolivia, the Chábobo Ethnobotany Project in the Beni region documented traditional plant knowledge among the Chácobo indigenous people through comprehensive interviews with nearly the entire adult population and flora inventories. Adhering to the Nagoya Protocol, the project repatriated data in the local language, trained community members in ethnobiological methods, and highlighted sustainable practices amid threats like overharvesting of traded species such as Croton lechleri. This model emphasized benefit-sharing, community co-authorship, and resilience of traditional knowledge, offering a framework for post-pandemic ethnobotanical research that integrates conservation with cultural sustainability (Bussmann, 2021).

In India, research among the Mullu Kuruman tribes in Wayanad district, Kerala, explored traditional ecological knowledge of 111 plant species used for food and medicine, with species like Bambusa bambos showing high use values. The study documented climate-resilient crops and non-timber forest products that support food security and health, illustrating how indigenous practices contribute to biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change through agroecological diversity and sustainable resource management (Anju & Kumar, 2024).

These diverse examples demonstrate how ethnobotany bridges gaps between local communities, scientists, and policymakers, fostering culturally sensitive conservation strategies that enhance biodiversity protection while supporting sustainable livelihoods and resilience against environmental challenges.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Despite its benefits, ethnobotany faces challenges such as knowledge loss among aging populations and ethical issues in data sharing. Modernization erodes traditional practices, making documentation urgent (Lamy, 2024). Additionally, overharvesting of medicinal plants due to commercial demand threatens biodiversity, necessitating regulated sustainable practices (Eduard, 2023).

Ethical frameworks are crucial, emphasizing respect for indigenous rights and equitable benefit-sharing (Kumar et al., 2021). Multidisciplinary initiatives must address these to ensure ethnobotany contributes positively to conservation without exploiting communities.

Future Directions

Looking ahead, ethnobotany should integrate advanced technologies like molecular analysis and in silico modeling to validate traditional knowledge (Zouraris et al., 2025). Collaborative platforms involving scientists, indigenous groups, and policymakers can amplify its impact on global conservation agendas. Further research in understudied regions will uncover more biocultural insights, supporting SDGs and biodiversity targets.

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Conclusion

Ethnobotanical interest is indispensable for biodiversity conservation, offering pathways to document knowledge, manage resources sustainably, and foster collaborations. By valuing indigenous perspectives, it ensures the preservation of both cultural and ecological diversity, paving the way for a resilient future.

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Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Biodiversity Conservation: Advances in Species Monitoring, Habitat Protection, and Ecosystem Management

[1]Narasimha Rao C*., [2]Gurumurthy V., [3] Srineetha U. and [4]Veera Nagendra Kumar D.
[1] Lecturer in Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Mydukur, YSR Dt. 516172.
[2]Lecturer in Zoology, Government Degree College for Women, Madanapalle. Annamayya District, A.P-517325
[3] Lecturer in Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Pulivendula., YSR Dist. 516390.
[4]Lecturer in Zoology, Govt. College for Men (A), Kadapa.,YSR Dist.516004.
cnrao.cnrao1975@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Biodiversity loss driven by habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and overexploitation has emerged as one of the most critical global environmental challenges. Effective conservation strategies increasingly rely on timely, accurate, and large-scale ecological data, which are often difficult to obtain using conventional methods. In this context, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has gained prominence as a transformative tool for biodiversity conservation by enabling efficient data collection, analysis, and decision making across diverse ecosystems. Recent advances in the application of AI technologies particularly machine learning, deep learning, and computer vision in species monitoring, habitat protection, and ecosystem management are the effective tools for biodiversity conservation. AI-driven approaches have significantly improved species identification and population monitoring through automated analysis of camera trap images, acoustic recordings, satellite imagery, and environmental DNA data. In habitat protection, AI models support land use change detection, deforestation monitoring, and prediction of habitat fragmentation using remote sensing and geospatial datasets. Furthermore, AI based predictive models facilitate ecosystem management by forecasting species distributions, assessing extinction risks, optimizing conservation planning, and enhancing early warning systems for invasive species and disease outbreaks. The integration of AI with Internet of Things (IoT) devices, drones, and citizen science platforms has further strengthened real time biodiversity assessment and adaptive management strategies. Despite these advancements, challenges remain regarding data quality, algorithmic bias, model interpretability, scalability, and ethical considerations, particularly in ecologically sensitive and data poor regions. This review also discusses current limitations, emerging trends, and future research directions necessary for the responsible and effective implementation of AI in biodiversity conservation.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Biodiversity Conservation, Species Monitoring, Ecosystem Management.

Introduction

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on Earth, including plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms, and is essential for ecological balance and human wellbeing. It includes species diversity, genetic diversity, and ecosystem diversity [1]. Biodiversity is fundamental to ecosystem functioning and human wellbeing, as it enhances essential ecosystem services such as pollination, nutrient cycling, climate regulation, and water purification, which directly support food security and environmental stability [2]. Recent evidence further demonstrates that biodiversity is critical for ecosystem resilience and restoration under accelerating climate and land-use change, reinforcing its role in sustaining ecosystem services and long term human welfare [3].

Despite its crucial role in ecosystem stability and human welfare, biodiversity is declining rapidly due to multiple interconnected human driven threats. Habitat destruction remains one of the most pervasive threats, as land-use change driven by deforestation, agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development fragments or eliminates natural habitats, reducing species' ranges and reproductive success [4]. Pollution from industrial, agricultural, and domestic sources contaminates air, water, and soil, altering ecosystem chemistry and disrupting life cycles. Climate change compounds these pressures by intensifying extreme weather, shifting temperature and precipitation regimes, and

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contributing to phenomena like coral bleaching that devastate marine biodiversity. Unsustainable exploitation such as overfishing, illegal wildlife trade, and unregulated logging further strains populations already struggling with shrinking habitats. Together, these factors are driving unprecedented global declines in species and genetic diversity, calling for urgent conservation action [5,6].

Maintaining biodiversity is critical for ecological balance, but traditional conservation methods are often constrained by limited scalability and insufficient real-time data. These challenges highlight the necessity of adopting advanced technologies. Recent developments in artificial intelligence (AI) provide innovative solutions with the potential to significantly improve the efficiency and impact of contemporary conservation initiatives [7].

Methodology

This review was conducted using a systematic literature search of peer reviewed articles published in major scientific databases, including Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar. Relevant studies were identified using keywords such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, deep learning, biodiversity conservation, species monitoring, habitat protection, and ecosystem management. Articles published in English over the last decade were prioritized.

History of AI in biodiversity conservation

The adoption of artificial intelligence in biodiversity conservation has evolved progressively over several decades. In the 1990s, early machine learning methods were applied to remote sensing for land cover classification and ecological mapping. During the early 2000s, AI-supported computer vision and acoustic analyses enabled automated species identification and wildlife monitoring. By the mid 2010s, advances in deep learning significantly improved camera trap image analysis, population assessment, and anti poaching surveillance [8]. From the late 2010s onward, dedicated AI platforms emerged, facilitating large scale biodiversity monitoring, predictive modeling, and habitat mapping to support data driven conservation decision making [9].

AI in today's biodiversity conservation

By 2025, artificial intelligence plays a pivotal role in biodiversity conservation through real time ecosystem monitoring, wildlife protection, and large scale data analysis. AI enabled drones, remote sensing, and camera traps support species identification, population assessment, and detection of illegal activities, while decision support systems enhance rapid responses to emerging ecological threats.

Applications of AI in Biodiversity Conservation

1. Automated species identification and monitoring:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming species identification and biodiversity monitoring by enabling rapid, automated analysis of ecological data [10]. Machine learning approaches, particularly convolutional neural networks (CNN) and transformer-based models, analyze images and acoustic signals from camera traps and sensors to detect, classify, and track wildlife populations [11]. AI-driven platforms such as iNaturalist enhance large-scale species identification, supporting timely conservation decisions and anti-poaching strategies [12]. AI algorithms process large-scale visual and acoustic datasets to estimate population abundance, density, and temporal trends. These methods improve long-term ecological monitoring and support adaptive management strategies for threatened species [13].

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2. Habitat mapping and land cover classification:

Artificial intelligence, especially deep learning is transforming habitat mapping and land cover classification by extracting thematic information from satellite imagery to automate vegetation and deforestation analysis [14]. Hybrid CNN–Vision Transformer models enhance classification accuracy, while Explainable AI methods (e.g., XAI frameworks) improve transparency and trust in land use decisions [15]. These approaches boost monitoring efficiency and support sustainable land management by enabling more accurate, interpretable habitat assessments for biodiversity conservation.

3. Anti poaching and illegal activity detection:

Artificial intelligence strengthens anti-poaching and illegal activity detection by enabling real-time surveillance and predictive enforcement in protected areas. AI-enabled camera traps and edge-based systems automatically detect human intrusions and suspicious activities, sending instant alerts to rangers [16]. Machine learning models further analyze spatial and temporal data to predict poaching hotspots, optimize patrol routes, and improve law-enforcement efficiency, thereby enhancing biodiversity conservation outcomes [17].

4. Bioacoustics monitoring:

AI-enabled bioacoustics significantly advances biodiversity conservation by automating sound data analysis to detect, classify, and monitor species with high speed and precision. AI systems filter noise, distinguish overlapping calls, and enable real-time assessment of ecosystems from passive recordings, improving detection of subtle changes in species presence and behaviour [18,19]. These tools support large-scale, efficient conservation monitoring even in complex habitats.

5. Disease surveillance and wildlife health:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly used in wildlife health and disease surveillance to detect, predict, and monitor diseases affecting biodiversity. AI algorithms analyse data from sensors, thermal imagery, and animal movement to identify early signs of illness and outbreak patterns, enabling rapid response and containment in wildlife populations [20,21].

6. Invasive species detection and management:

AI is reshaping invasive species management by enabling rapid detection, prediction, and response through machine learning, eDNA barcoding, and predictive modelling [22, 23]. These approaches strengthen early warning and rapid response systems while improving resource allocation via automated monitoring and decision support tools. However, issues such as data limitations, algorithmic bias, ethical concerns, and over reliance on automation remain, requiring interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure AI complements ecological expertise [24].

7. Climate change impact assessment:

AI technologies including machine learning and advanced data analytics are increasingly used to evaluate climate change impacts on biodiversity by improving species detection, habitat monitoring, and threat assessment [25]. By integrating large ecological datasets with traditional conservation approaches, AI enables mapping of microhabitats, tracking species' climate responses, and designing climate resilient management strategies. This convergence of AI and ecological science supports precision conservation to address accelerating environmental change [26].

8. Ecosystem service assessment:

AI is increasingly used to assess ecosystem services by integrating machine learning with remote sensing, ecological, and socio economic data. AI models enhance the mapping and valuation of services such as carbon sequestration, pollination, and water regulation, supporting evidence based biodiversity conservation and land use planning. By improving prediction

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accuracy and scalability, AI strengthens natural capital assessments, while remaining most effective when combined with ecological knowledge and stakeholder input [27,28]

9. Conservation decision support systems:

AI based Conservation Decision Support Systems (CDSS) enhance biodiversity conservation by integrating machine learning, spatial modelling, and big ecological data to support evidence based management decisions. These systems assist in habitat prioritization, species risk assessment, and resource optimization by processing real time data from remote sensing and monitoring networks. AI driven CDSS improve transparency, predictive accuracy, and adaptive management, enabling conservation planners to respond effectively to complex ecological challenges [29,30].

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence has emerged as a transformative tool in biodiversity conservation, offering scalable, data driven solutions for species monitoring, habitat protection, and ecosystem management. By enhancing detection accuracy, predictive capacity, and decision making efficiency, AI complements traditional conservation approaches in addressing complex environmental challenges. However, its effective application depends on data quality, ethical deployment, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Integrating AI with ecological expertise and policy frameworks is essential to ensure sustainable, adaptive, and inclusive conservation outcomes in a rapidly changing world.

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Living Jewels of the Earth: Diversity, Importance, and Conservation of Flora and Fauna

Paidi Rama Rao[1] and P. Dakshayani
1. Government Degree College, Togaram, Srikakulam district, A.P. India
2.B.Sc. Botany (Honours) Government Degree College for Men, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract

The Earth is richly adorned with living jewels in the form of its diverse flora and fauna, which together sustain life and maintain ecological balance. Flora includes all plant life such as forests, grasslands, flowering plants, and aquatic vegetation that provide oxygen, food, medicines, and raw materials essential for survival. Fauna comprises a wide range of animals including mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, and microorganisms that contribute to ecosystem functioning and environmental stability. Together, flora and fauna regulate natural processes such as nutrient cycling, pollination, climate control, and soil conservation. However, increasing anthropogenic pressures like deforestation, habitat destruction, pollution, climate change, and overexploitation threaten global biodiversity. Conservation of these living jewels through sustainable practices, legal frameworks, and public awareness is essential to ensure ecological stability and a healthy future for coming generations.

Keywords: Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna, Conservation, Ecosystem, Ecological balance

1. Introduction

Flora and fauna represent the immense diversity of plant and animal life that makes the Earth a dynamic and self-sustaining planet. Flora refers to all plant species, while fauna includes all animals ranging from microscopic organisms to large mammals. Together, they form complex biological systems that support life, maintain ecological balance, and ensure ecosystem stability. Biodiversity varies across ecosystems such as forests, grasslands, deserts, wetlands, mountains, and oceans, with each ecosystem supporting species adapted to specific environmental conditions. This diversity is essential for nutrient cycling, pollination, food web stability, climate regulation, and genetic variation (Wilson, 1988).

2. Concept of Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to the variety and variability of living organisms present in the natural world. It includes diversity within species (genetic diversity), between species (species diversity), and among ecosystems (ecosystem diversity). High biodiversity enhances ecosystem productivity and resilience, enabling organisms to adapt to changing climatic and environmental conditions. According to Wilson (1988), biodiversity is the foundation of ecosystem services that sustain human life.

3. Diversity of Flora

Flora includes all forms of plant life such as trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, algae, and fungi. Plants are primary producers and form the base of most terrestrial and aquatic food chains. Through photosynthesis, they produce oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, regulate climate, and contribute to nutrient cycling. Floral diversity varies with climatic conditions, soil type,

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altitude, and geographical location. Tropical regions, rainforests, and wetlands exhibit maximum plant diversity due to favorable temperature and moisture conditions (Raven et al., 2012).

4. Diversity of Fauna

Fauna comprises animals ranging from microscopic organisms to large mammals. Animals act as consumers and play a vital role in maintaining ecological equilibrium. Faunal diversity includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, insects, and invertebrates. These organisms contribute to pollination, seed dispersal, decomposition, pest control, and population regulation. The survival of many plant species depends on animal interactions, highlighting the interdependence of flora and fauna (Groom et al., 2006).

5. Diversity of Flora and Fauna in India

India is one of the world's 17 mega-biodiversity countries, hosting approximately 47,000 plant species and 90,000 animal species. The country's wide climatic range and varied ecosystems support immense biological richness. Major biodiversity hotspots in India include:

- Western Ghats
- Eastern Himalayas
- Indo-Burma region
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands

These regions are characterized by high species richness and endemism, making them conservation priorities (Primack, 2014).

6. Ecosystem Diversity

Earth's biodiversity is distributed across diverse ecosystems such as forests, deserts, grasslands, freshwater bodies, and marine habitats. Forest ecosystems support dense vegetation and wildlife, while marine ecosystems are rich in corals, fishes, plankton, and marine mammals. Each ecosystem hosts distinct floral and faunal communities adapted to specific environmental conditions, contributing to global ecological balance.

7. Role of Flora and Fauna in Ecological Balance

Flora and fauna maintain ecological stability through food chains, nutrient cycles, and energy flow. Plants function as producers, herbivores as primary consumers, carnivores as secondary or tertiary consumers, and decomposers recycle organic matter back into the ecosystem. Disruption at any trophic level can lead to ecological imbalance and biodiversity loss (Groom et al., 2006).

8. Scientific and Medical Importance

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Plants and animals serve as valuable sources of bioactive compounds used in pharmaceuticals and scientific research. Many life-saving drugs, antibiotics, and vaccines have been derived from natural species. Genetic diversity among plants and animals also supports crop improvement and livestock breeding, contributing to food security and human health (Raven et al., 2012).

9. Threats to Flora and Fauna Diversity

Global biodiversity is increasingly threatened by human activities. Major threats include:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Deforestation
- Urbanization and industrialization
- Overexploitation of species
- Climate change
- Pollution
- Invasive species
- Illegal hunting and poaching

These factors have led to the extinction of many species and continue to endanger numerous others worldwide (Primack, 2014).

10. Conservation Strategies

Conservation aims to protect, preserve, and sustainably use biodiversity. Major approaches include:

- In-situ conservation: National parks, wildlife sanctuaries, biosphere reserves
- Ex-situ conservation: Seed banks, botanical gardens, zoos, aquariums
- Community-based conservation: Encouraging local participation and sustainable resource use

These strategies collectively help safeguard endangered species and ecosystems.

11. National and International Efforts

At the global level, biodiversity conservation is supported by international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), CITES, and the IUCN Red List. In India, legal frameworks like the Wildlife Protection Act (1972), Forest Conservation Act (1980), and National Biodiversity Act (2002) play a crucial role in protecting biological resources.

12. Success Stories in Biodiversity Conservation

Successful conservation initiatives include Project Tiger in India, the revival of mangrove ecosystems in the Sundarbans, and conservation programs for elephants, rhinoceroses, and marine turtles. These achievements demonstrate the effectiveness of coordinated governmental action and community involvement.

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13. Future Prospects

Growing environmental awareness, ecological education, and scientific advancement provide opportunities to strengthen biodiversity conservation. Sustainable development practices, climate change mitigation, and biotechnology can help protect flora and fauna for future generations.

14. Importance of Flora and Fauna Diversity

- Maintains ecological balance
- Supports food chains and food webs
- Provides economic benefits through agriculture, medicine, and tourism
- Regulates climate and conserves soil

15. Conclusion

Flora and fauna represent the living wealth of the Earth. Their diversity is essential for ecological health, human survival, and environmental stability. However, increasing anthropogenic pressures threaten global biodiversity. Conservation and sustainable utilization of biological resources are not only scientific necessities but also moral responsibilities. Protecting these living jewels today ensures a harmonious and secure future for life on Earth.

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Biodiversity Conservation in Changing Climate- Challenges and Strategies of the Present Wildlife Conservation Management in the Global Scenario, Andhra Pradesh, India

Hemasundararao Kancharana[1], M. Harikrishana Prasad[2] , J. Venkata Lakshmi[3] , P.V Satyanarayana[3] , and Hemachalam Madina[4].

[1]Dept of Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Baruva, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh.
[2]Dept of Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Palasa, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh.
[3]Department of Chemistry, Government Degree College, Palasa, Andhra Pradesh.
[4]Department of Physics, Government Degree College, Palasa, Andhra Pradesh.
Corresponding mail id: lakshmivenkatjanapati@gmail.com, prasad9mhk@gmail.com

Abstract:

Wild life refers to those fauna and flora grows and lives in the areas unindicted by human. It includes all domestic and wild organisms like animals, plants, fungi, bacteria and virus. Developing human civilization and over technologies are majorly impact on the wild life conservation. In the present context delves about the strategies related to wild life conservation management in the contemporary environmental crisis (17). It is major important factor for the balancing of ecosystem and the global ecological niche. The major challenges of wild life conservation consent of climatic change impact, habitat destruction and Ecological fragmentation, the threat of illegal wild life trade and poaching, the elemental effects of pollution, the introduction and spread of invasive species, illegal hunting along with indiscriminate anthropogenic activities. After investigation of my study identified the given challenges about the wild life threat: (19)

- Increasing pandemic infections and diseases of the migratory birds and animals.
- Habitat loss and major deforestation at the high biodiversity regions for the development without fallow the conservation rules. (Wild life act 1972)
- Natural disasters like droughts, cyclones, earthquakes etc. are major challenge to the present conservation sustainability may be cause to indiscriminate pollution.
- Over hunting and collection of the unique species of flora and fauna for experimental activities and illegal exports.
- Inorganic feticide (Agricultural) and industrial (wastes are causes to the aquatic life.
- Most fauna and flora were affected the life threat by the illegal mining without fallowing the National Green Tribunal rules.
- Environmental changes are majorly affecting on the wild life organism's life style such as Breeding, Flowering, Migration timings and disrupt species life cycles.

Note: The above reasons will not control in the future, it is not only effect to the wild life but also affect the human's feature.

Keywords: Wildlife conservation, biodiversity, habitat loss, climate change, ecological balance

1. Introduction

Wildlife conservation is an essential component of environmental protection and sustainable development. Wildlife includes all living organisms that exist naturally in ecosystems without direct human control. These organisms play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting life systems on Earth (1). In recent decades, rapid population growth, industrialization, urban expansion, and technological advancement have created serious threats to wildlife across the globe

The increasing pressure on natural resources has resulted in habitat destruction, pollution, climate change, and loss of

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biodiversity. Wildlife conservation management aims to protect species, preserve habitats, and ensure sustainable use of biological resources (2). This paper discusses the present challenges faced by wildlife conservation and the strategies required to overcome these challenges at global and national levels.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are:

- To understand the concept and importance of wildlife conservation.
- To analyze the major challenges affecting wildlife conservation in the present global scenario.
- To examine the impact of human activities on wildlife and ecosystems.
- To highlight effective strategies for sustainable wildlife conservation management.
- To emphasize the role of laws, policies, and public participation in conservation.

3. Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data collected from books, research articles, government reports, environmental journals, and official publications of wildlife and environmental organizations. The study follows a descriptive and analytical approach to understand current conservation issues and management strategies. Simple and systematic analysis has been adopted to ensure clarity and originality.

4. Scope and Importance of Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife conservation is a scientific, social, and ethical process that focuses on the protection, preservation, sustainable utilization, and management of wild plants and animals along with their natural habitats. It aims to prevent the extinction of species, conserve biodiversity, and maintain ecological stability for the benefit of present and future generations. (4) Wildlife conservation does not deal only with animals but also includes plants, microorganisms, and entire ecosystems that support life on Earth. Wildlife forms an integral part of natural ecosystems and plays a vital role in maintaining environmental balance. Each species has a specific role in food chains and food webs, and the removal or decline of any species can disturb ecosystem functioning. Wildlife contributes significantly to essential ecosystem services such as pollination of crops, seed dispersal, nutrient cycling, soil formation, pest control, water purification, and regulation of climate. These services directly support agriculture, forestry, and human well-being. (7) The scope of wildlife conservation has widened due to increasing environmental problems such as habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, invasive species, and overexploitation of natural resources. Modern wildlife conservation includes habitat protection and restoration, conservation of endangered and endemic species, establishment of protected areas, wildlife corridors, and buffer zones (17). It also emphasizes community-based conservation, use of traditional knowledge, scientific research, wildlife monitoring, and application of modern technologies for conservation planning.

The importance of wildlife conservation can be clearly understood through the following points:
• Maintaining ecological balance and stability of ecosystems
• Supporting food chains and food web systems essential for survival of species
• Preserving genetic diversity necessary for adaptation, evolution, and resilience
• Promoting scientific research, education, and environmental awareness
• Supporting livelihoods through eco-tourism, forestry, and nature-based employment
• Conserving cultural, aesthetic, and traditional values linked with wildlife

The continuous loss of wildlife leads to ecosystem degradation, imbalance in natural processes, scarcity of natural resources, and increased vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Ultimately, the decline of wildlife directly affects ecosystem health and threatens human survival, as humans are deeply dependent on healthy ecosystems for food, water, climate regulation, and overall environmental sustainability (5). Therefore, wildlife conservation is not only an environmental necessity but also a fundamental requirement for sustainable and inclusive human development.

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5. Major Challenges to Wildlife Conservation

5.1 Habitat Loss, Climate Stress, and Ecosystem Imbalance

Habitat degradation continues to be the most severe threat to wildlife conservation at both national and global levels. Rapid population growth and economic development have increased pressure on natural ecosystems. Large areas of forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal ecosystems are being cleared for agriculture, urban settlements, industries, mining, transportation networks, and large development projects. This large-scale destruction of habitats reduces the availability of food, shelter, and breeding grounds for wildlife (3). Fragmentation of natural habitats further isolates animal populations, preventing free movement and migration. As a result, small and isolated populations face reduced genetic diversity, lower reproductive success, and higher chances of extinction. Climate change has added a new dimension to habitat loss and ecosystem instability. Rising global temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, frequent droughts, floods, cyclones, and wildfires have significantly altered natural environments. Many species depend on specific climatic conditions for survival, reproduction, and migration (11). Even small changes in temperature or rainfall can disturb breeding cycles, nesting behaviour, and food availability. Species that cannot adapt or migrate quickly enough experience population decline. Climate change also affects polar, mountain, and coastal ecosystems more severely, leading to the loss of specialized species and increased ecosystem imbalance.

5.2 Wildlife Exploitation and Ecological Disruption

Human exploitation of wildlife remains a major conservation challenge. Illegal hunting, poaching, and wildlife trade continue due to high demand for animal products such as meat, fur, skin, ivory, horns, bones, and traditional medicines. Endangered species are often targeted because of their high commercial value in international markets (6). Poaching not only reduces wildlife populations but also disrupts food chains and ecological balance. In many regions, weak enforcement of wildlife protection laws, lack of awareness, poverty, and limited alternative livelihoods contribute to the persistence of these illegal activities. Conflict between humans and wildlife, especially near forest boundaries, also leads to retaliatory killings and further population decline.

Invasive species have become an increasingly serious threat to native biodiversity. Non-native species introduced intentionally for agriculture, aquaculture, or ornamental purposes, as well as unintentionally through trade and transportation, often spread rapidly in new environments. These invasive species compete with native plants and animals for food, space, and resources (2). They may also introduce new predators, parasites, or diseases to which native species have no natural resistance. Over time, invasive species alter habitat structure, reduce species diversity, and weaken ecosystem stability.

5.3 Pollution and Wildlife Health

Environmental pollution poses long-term risks to wildlife survival and ecosystem health (8). Industrial effluents, untreated sewage, agricultural runoff containing pesticides and fertilizers, plastic waste, and heavy metals contaminate air, water, and soil.

Wildlife exposed to polluted environments often suffer from reduced fertility, genetic mutations, weakened immune systems, and increased mortality. Aquatic ecosystems are particularly affected, as water pollution leads to fish kills, coral bleaching, and the loss of aquatic biodiversity. Plastic pollution causes ingestion and entanglement, resulting in injury and death of birds, marine mammals, and reptiles (16). Emerging infectious diseases and pandemics among wildlife have become a growing concern in recent years. Habitat destruction, climate change, and increased interaction between humans, livestock, and wildlife create favourable conditions for the spread of diseases. Migratory species can transmit pathogens

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across regions and continents, increasing the risk of outbreaks. Wildlife diseases not only threaten biodiversity but also pose serious risks to human health through zoonotic transmission. The decline of wildlife health weakens ecosystem functions and reduces the resilience of natural systems.

6. Impact of Human Activities on Wildlife

Human activities such as industrialization, urbanization, overexploitation of resources, illegal mining, and infrastructure development have severely disturbed wildlife habitats. Agricultural practices using chemical fertilizers and pesticides affect soil organisms and aquatic life. Noise pollution and light pollution disturb animal behavior and reproduction (15). Unsustainable development practices without environmental impact assessment have intensified biodiversity loss. Lack of awareness and weak implementation of conservation laws further worsen the situation.

7. Wildlife Conservation Laws and Policies

Wildlife conservation laws and policies play a vital role in protecting animals, plants, and their natural habitats from overexploitation and destruction. These laws are designed to regulate human activities that threaten biodiversity and to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources. With increasing population pressure, industrial growth, and climate change, strong legal frameworks have become essential for conserving wildlife for present and future generations. At the international level, several agreements guide wildlife protection (17). Important among them are the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. These agreements encourage countries to protect endangered species, regulate wildlife trade, and conserve important ecosystems. International cooperation is necessary because wildlife does not follow political boundaries, and many species migrate across countries. In India, wildlife conservation is supported by a well-developed legal framework. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 is the primary law for protecting wild animals, birds, and plants. This Act provides for the creation of protected areas such as national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation reserves, and community reserves. It also lists species under different schedules, offering strict protection to endangered species and regulating hunting and trade. Amendments to the Act have further strengthened penalties for wildlife crimes (20). Another important policy is the National Wildlife Action Plan, which sets long-term strategies for wildlife conservation. It focuses on habitat protection, reduction of human–wildlife conflict, scientific research, and involvement of local communities. The Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and the Environment Protection Act, 1986 also indirectly support wildlife conservation by controlling deforestation and environmental pollution.

Policies related to wildlife conservation increasingly emphasize community participation. Modern conservation approaches recognize that local people living near forests depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. Laws such as the Forest Rights Act, 2006 aim to balance conservation goals with the rights of forest-dwelling communities (17). When communities are involved in decision-making and benefit-sharing, conservation efforts become more effective and sustainable. Despite strong laws, implementation remains a major challenge. Illegal poaching, wildlife trafficking, habitat loss, and weak enforcement reduce the effectiveness of conservation policies. Lack of awareness, insufficient funding, and limited trained staff also affect law enforcement. Therefore, regular monitoring, capacity building, and use of modern technology like camera traps and satellite tracking are necessary. In conclusion, wildlife conservation laws and policies provide a strong foundation for protecting biodiversity. However, their success depends on effective implementation, public awareness, scientific support, and cooperation between governments, communities, and conservation organizations. Strengthening these aspects is essential to ensure the long-term survival of wildlife and ecological balance.

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8. Conservation Strategies

8.1 Habitat and Development

Wildlife conservation depends greatly on the protection of natural habitats. Forests, wetlands, grasslands, and coastal ecosystems provide food, shelter, and breeding grounds for wildlife species. Establishing protected areas such as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries helps in conserving these habitats. Wildlife corridors and buffer zones reduce habitat fragmentation and allow safe movement of animals (12). At the same time, development activities must follow sustainable practices. Projects related to industries, mining, and infrastructure should strictly follow environmental guidelines. Sustainable use of natural resources reduces habitat loss and supports long-term conservation goals.

8.2 Laws and Technology

Effective wildlife protection requires strong laws and proper enforcement. Strict implementation of wildlife conservation laws, anti-poaching measures, and punishment for wildlife crimes is essential. Strengthening enforcement agencies with trained staff and adequate resources improves protection efforts (19). Modern technology such as GIS, drones, camera traps, and satellite monitoring helps in tracking wildlife, preventing illegal activities, and managing protected areas efficiently. Technology-based monitoring increases transparency and quick response to threats.

8.3 People and Science

Local communities play a key role in successful wildlife conservation. Involving people living near forests through awareness programs and eco-development initiatives helps reduce conflicts. Providing alternative livelihoods decreases dependence on forest resources. Along with community participation, scientific research and regular monitoring are important (16). Wildlife surveys, population studies, and ecological research help in understanding changes in species and ecosystems. Scientific data supports better planning and improves conservation outcomes.

9. Role of Education and Awareness

Education and awareness play a decisive role in ensuring effective wildlife conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. One of the major reasons for biodiversity loss and environmental degradation is the lack of awareness among people, policymakers, and stakeholders about the importance of wildlife and ecosystems. Education helps individuals understand the value of biodiversity, the functioning of ecosystems, and the close interdependence between nature and human well-being. An informed and aware society is more likely to respect wildlife, follow conservation laws, and support sustainable development practices. Formal education serves as a strong foundation for developing environmental responsibility (16). The inclusion of environmental studies, wildlife conservation, ecology, and biodiversity topics in school and college curricula helps students develop scientific knowledge and positive attitudes towards nature from an early age. Higher education institutions and universities contribute significantly by offering specialized courses in wildlife biology, forestry, conservation management, and environmental sciences. Field-based learning, nature camps, biodiversity surveys, and educational visits to wildlife sanctuaries and national parks strengthen practical understanding and create emotional connections with wildlife.

Community-level awareness is particularly important in rural and forest fringe areas where people interact closely with wildlife. Local communities often depend on forest resources for livelihood, and unsustainable practices may unintentionally harm wildlife habitats. Awareness programs conducted through village meetings, workshops, training sessions, and extension activities educate communities about conservation laws, sustainable resource use, and human–

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wildlife conflict mitigation. When people understand that wildlife conservation supports long-term benefits such as eco-tourism, employment opportunities, and ecosystem services, they become active partners in conservation initiatives. Mass media and digital platforms play a powerful role in spreading awareness about wildlife conservation. Television programs, documentaries, newspapers, radio, and online platforms highlight issues such as habitat loss, climate change, pollution, and illegal wildlife trade. Visual communication and real-life conservation success stories help shape public opinion and encourage responsible behavior (7). Social media platforms have emerged as effective tools for engaging youth, promoting environmental campaigns, and mobilizing public participation in conservation movements.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), environmental groups, and research institutions contribute significantly to education and awareness activities. These organizations conduct wildlife awareness programs, nature education camps, biodiversity festivals, and citizen science initiatives. NGOs also act as a link between government agencies and local communities, helping in the effective implementation of conservation policies and projects. Education and awareness are equally essential for policymakers, administrators, and enforcement agencies (19). Training and capacity-building programs for forest officials, wildlife managers, police, and judiciary improve understanding of wildlife laws, ethical responsibilities, and modern conservation strategies. Well-informed and trained officials are better equipped to control wildlife crimes and ensure effective conservation management.

In the long term, education and awareness lead to positive behavioural change, sustainable lifestyles, and informed decision-making. A society that understands the importance of wildlife is more likely to protect biodiversity and support conservation efforts (7). Therefore, strengthening education and awareness is a fundamental strategy for achieving long-term wildlife conservation and ecological sustainability for future generations.

10. Conclusion

Wildlife conservation is a global responsibility that is essential for maintaining ecological balance, environmental sustainability, and human survival. Wildlife forms the foundation of healthy ecosystems, and the loss of biodiversity directly affects ecosystem stability, availability of natural resources, and the overall quality of human life. In the present global scenario, wildlife faces serious threats due to habitat destruction, deforestation, climate change, pollution, illegal wildlife trade, invasive species, emerging diseases, and unsustainable human activities. These challenges have accelerated species extinction and disrupted natural ecological processes. The present study clearly indicates that wildlife conservation cannot be achieved through isolated or short-term efforts. Effective conservation management requires an integrated and holistic approach that combines strong policy support, scientific research, technological applications, community participation, education, and sustainable development practices. Legal frameworks such as the Wildlife Protection Act and international conservation agreements provide a strong foundation, but their success depends on proper implementation, monitoring, and enforcement.

Scientific research and continuous wildlife monitoring are essential for understanding ecological changes, identifying threats, and developing evidence-based conservation strategies. Community participation plays a crucial role in long-term conservation success. Local communities living near forests and protected areas are key stakeholders, and their involvement ensures sustainable resource use, reduced human–wildlife conflict, and improved conservation outcomes. Education and awareness further strengthen conservation efforts by promoting environmental ethics, responsible behaviour, and public support for wildlife protection initiatives. In the face of increasing environmental challenges and climate uncertainty, development must be balanced with conservation priorities. Development activities should follow environmental guidelines to minimize ecological damage and protect critical habitats. Protecting wildlife today is not only about saving species but also about safeguarding ecosystem services such as clean air, water, fertile soil, and climate regulation that are vital for human well-being.

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In conclusion, wildlife conservation is an urgent necessity and a shared responsibility of governments, institutions, communities, and individuals. Protecting wildlife and their habitats today will ensure a stable, healthy, and resilient environment for present and future generations.

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A Review Study on The Climatic Changes and Their Impacts on The Butterfly Diversity in Andhra Pradesh

Dr. M. Suseela
Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Zoology, Vikrama Simhapuri University College, Kavali, SPSR Nellore District, A.P.
drsuseelameesala@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Climate change poses significant threats to biodiversity, particularly to sensitive species like butterflies in Andhra Pradesh's Eastern Ghats. Butterflies are regarded as sensitive, bioindicators of environmental change, particularly climate change, due to their ectothermic nature, high habitat specificity, and short generation cycles. This review analyzes the impacts of climate change on butterfly diversity across Andhra Pradesh, with a specific focus on the Eastern Ghats and Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve. Data synthesized from studies conducted between 2010-2025 indicate that rising temperatures and altered rainfall patterns (monsoon variability) significantly influence species richness, population abundance, and phenology. Nymphalidae and Pieridae are the most dominant families, yet they face, along with Papilionidae and Hesperiidae, substantial declines in dry areas. Studies indicate a shift in butterfly populations toward higher altitudes, such as the Tirumala hills, which provide cooler refugia compared to hotter plains. A total of 273 species have been documented in the state, with 27 species listed as protected under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act (1972). Results indicate that rising temperatures and altered rainfall patterns have resulted in a decline in habitat-specialist species, while generalist species tend to adapt. Species abundance was higher in, humid, forested areas like Tirumala (1251m) compared to dryer, degraded zones (Kadapa/Belum). Key findings show a 22–37 rare species count in specific sites, indicating that climate-driven habitat changes are significantly altering butterfly populations in Andhra Pradesh and revealing a 0.6°C rise in mean annual temperature and variable rainfall patterns correlating with declines in butterfly species richness from ~190 to projected 150 species. Analyses using Shannon diversity indices (H' dropping from 2.8 to 2.3) and correlation coefficients (r = -0.72 for temperature vs. abundance) highlight negative impacts on Nymphalidae and specialists. Conservation strategies emphasizing habitat restoration are recommended. (148 words)

Key words: Climate Change, Butterflies, Ectothermic,

INTRODUCTION

Climatic variations, including rising atmospheric temperatures, extreme weather events, and shifting precipitation patterns, have profound impacts on biodiversity globally. In India, the state of Andhra Pradesh, with its diverse ecosystems including the Northern Eastern Ghats, Southern Eastern Ghats, and Coastal Andhra, provides critical habitat for a wide variety of Lepidoptera **(Climate Change - Discovery Scientific Society, 2015 study).**

Andhra Pradesh, located on the eastern coast of India, possesses diverse eco-climatic zones, including the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve and the Northern Eastern Ghats, which are biodiversity hotspots. This region supports a diverse assemblage of species, ranging from deciduous forests to scrub jungles **(Deccan Chronicle, 2025).** It encompassing diverse ecosystems like the Eastern Ghats, hosts rich butterfly diversity with over 190 species across six families, serving as key pollinators and climate indicators **(Forest Research Centre, 2023).** Rising temperatures (0.8°C/100 years maximum) and erratic rainfall (47.54 mm annual average, with extremes) driven by global warming threaten this biodiversity. This review examines climatic trends from IMD data and field studies (2010–2025), assessing impacts via diversity metrics and

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statistical models. It integrates ecological correlations to inform conservation amid projected 1–2°C warming by 2050 **(IMD Pune, 2021).**

Recent reports suggest that climate change is not merely an abstract concept but a present reality affecting the breeding, seasonality, and distribution of these organisms. However, increasing pollution, rapid urbanization, rising temperatures, and shifting rainfall patterns (droughts) have threatened local habitats.

Butterflies are important ecological components as they play a crucial role in pollination and serve as food for higher trophic levels. Their sensitivity to climate change stems from their dependence on specific environmental conditions for temperature regulation, foraging, and mating. Recent surveys in the Eastern Ghats have highlighted that rising temperatures are changing the phenology of butterflies—specifically affecting their flight periods and larval development **(pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih; Entomology Journals, 2017; 2023;** Vikaspedia**, 2021).**

The Seshachalam bio reserve forest, a key biodiversity hotspot, has been a central area for observing these impacts. Studies indicate that rapid urbanization, pollution, and climate change are negatively affecting the population dynamics of the region's "flying jewels". The aim of this paper is to comprehensively review existing data on the impacts of climate change on butterfly species richness, diversity, and distribution in Andhra Pradesh **(Suryanarayana, et. al., 2015).**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The sensitivity of butterflies to climate change arises from their short generation times and ectothermic nature, making them faster to react to environmental changes than other fauna. This review paper aims to:

1. Document the butterfly species diversity in Andhra Pradesh.
2. To assess the current diversity and composition of butterfly species in Southern Andhra Pradesh.
3. Analyze the impacts of climatic factors (temperature and rainfall) on their diversity and distribution.
4. Identify the vulnerable species and habitats in the region.
5. Discuss the ecological consequences of these changes.
6. To understand the impact of climate-induced habitat change on species richness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area and Climate Profile

The studies focused on the Southern Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, including the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve (Chittoor and Kadapa districts), Nallamala Hills and North Coastal Andhra (Visakhapatnam, East and West Godavari districts). These areas are known for their varied topography, including hill regions (Tirumala hills: 1251m height) and plain regions.

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Andhra Pradesh experiences a tropical climate with, traditionally, a strong southwest monsoon (June-September) and a dry summer. However, recent trends show an increase in mean temperature during March-May and, in some cases, delayed or reduced rainfall.

Method of Data Collection (Review Approach):

This review synthesizes findings from research articles, government reports (Zoo Survey of India), and field surveys published between 2000 and 2025. Specifically, it analyzes:

- **Data Collection:** Peer-reviewed journals, entomological reports, and environmental studies from databases like ResearchGate, Discovery Journal, and the Indian Forester were examined.
- **Key Parameters:** The data analyzed included butterfly species richness, population abundance, Shannon-Wiener Diversity Index, temperature variations, and annual rainfall data.
- **Species Classification:** Butterfly species checklists and family-wise dominance and Data were categorized by family (Nymphalidae, Lycaenidae, Pieridae, Papilionidae, and Hesperiidae) and, where available, by their status (rare, common, very common).

Data Analysis Techniques

The studies reviewed employed various techniques, including transect walks, visual identification, and photographic documentation. Statistical analyses, such as Pearson correlation, were used to establish the relationship between climate factors (rainfall/temperature) and species density.

RESULTS:

The analyzed studies (e.g., Seshachalam Bioregion studies) indicate a distinct impact of climate on butterfly populations, with distinct shifts in biodiversity between 2010 and 2025 **(https://www.threatenedtaxa.org).**

Butterfly Diversity and Composition in Andhra Pradesh

A comprehensive review of studies in the region shows 5 to 6 major families are present: Nymphalidae, Lycaenidae, Hesperiidae, Pieridae, Papilionidae, and Riodinidae.

- **Dominant Family:** Nymphalidae consistently shows the highest dominance in terms of both species richness and abundance, often constituting over 31- 39% of the total, followed by Pieridae.
- **Rare Species:** Studies recorded a notable presence of rare species, particularly in undisturbed habitats like the Talakona forest.
- **Species Status:** The study reported 22–37 species as rare or very rare in various habitats, species are protected under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, with 9 listed by the IUCN particularly in dry regions like Kadapa.

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Table 1: Family-wise Percentage of Butterfly Population (Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve)

Family	Percentage Composition
Nymphalidae	31.13%
Lycaenidae	20.75%
Pieridae	15.35%
Hesperiidae	15.09%
Papilionidae	13.20%

Numerical Data on Diversity

- **Site Variation:** Highest species diversity was recorded in dense forest areas like Tirumala and Thalakona. Lower diversity was found in dryer areas.
- **Diversity Indices:** Shannon-wiener diversity was maximum in undisturbed sites (high shade, high water availability) and minimum in degraded, dry areas.
- **Seasonal Trends:** Species abundance showed a significant increase during the early winter season (August–November) and a sharp decline from late January through the peak summer months.
- **Seshachalam study (Suryanarayana et al.):** 106 species recorded, Nymphalidae (31.13%), Lycaenidae (20.75%), Pieridae (15.35%), Hesperidae (15.09%), and Papilionidae (13.20%).
- **East/West Godavari study:** 40 species recorded; 17 Nymphalidae, 11 Pieridae, 6 Papilionidae, 3 Lycaenidae, 3 Hesperiidae.
- **Temperature Correlation:** Pearson correlation showed a +0.218 coefficient with high temperatures, but, importantly, a negative impact on abundance during extreme summer months, while low precipitation showed a significant negative correlation (-0.573) with species richness.

Climate Trends in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh exhibits a tropical savanna climate with mean annual temperature of 30.63°C, highs peaking at 41.82°C in May, and rainfall concentrated in monsoon (July–September, ~270 mm). From 1901–2021, maximum temperatures rose significantly by 0.8°C per century, with 2021 anomalies at +0.1°C statewide. Minimum temperatures increased 0.3°C annually in recent decades, exacerbating heat stress **(Mounica and Mathew, 2020 & 2024; Seshachalam Bio reserve Study (2015).**

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Rainfall variability shows 93 rainy days yearly, but post-2010 trends indicate 10–15% declines in Northeast Monsoon, linked to El Niño. Projections under RCP scenarios predict 2–5% precipitation drop by 2050, intensifying droughts in Godavari and Krishna districts.

Year Range	Mean Temp (°C)	Annual Rainfall (mm)	Max Temp Anomaly (°C)
2010–2015	30.2	850	+0.4
2016–2020	30.5	820	+0.6
2021–2025	30.8	790	+0.8

Butterfly Diversity Baseline

Andhra Pradesh records 190+ species in Eastern Ghats (Visakhapatnam to Seshachalam), dominated by Nymphalidae (44%), Lycaenidae (17%), Pieridae (16%), Hesperiidae (8–15%), Papilionidae (9–14%), and Riodinidae (minor). Key sites like East/West Godavari yield 40–102 species; Northern Ghats add 17 new records (Academia).

Family	% Species (Pre-2015)	Example Species
Nymphalidae	44	Common Leopard
Lycaenidae	17	Common Silverline
Pieridae	16	Common Grass Yellow
Hesperiidae	11	Indian Skipper
Papilionidae	9	Common Mormon

Impacts of Climate Change

Rising temperatures negatively correlate with abundance (r = -0.72), reducing sightings by 20–30% in summers >35°C, affecting larval development and host plants. Hesperiidae positively link to rainfall/humidity (r=0.55), declining with droughts; Nymphalidae prefer moderate warmth **(Indian Forester, 2017; 2024)**

- **Habitat loss amplifies effects:** Eastern Ghats studies show 15% species drop (78 to 66) from 2010–2021 due to combined warming/encroachment.
- **Seasonal shifts:** Abundance peaks monsoon-winter, drops pre-monsoon/summer due to nectar scarcity.

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Climate Variable	Correlation (r) with Abundance	Impact Example
Temperature	-0.72	25% decline in specialists
Rainfall	+0.65	Higher in wet years
Humidity	+0.55	Nymphalidae positive

Impact of Climatic Factors on Population Structure

- **Temperature:** A positive correlation exists with early season (Feb-March) flight, but excessively high temperatures in April-May result in a sharp decline in population, especially in dry, open habitats (Kadapa/Belum) ***(ResearchGate Publication, 2025).***
- **Rainfall:** High rainfall (monsoon) generally increases larval host plant availability, leading to higher population density in post-monsoon months (August-November).
- **Altitude Shift:** As temperatures rise, several butterfly populations in Southern Andhra Pradesh are moving towards higher elevations (e.g., Tirumala hills, 1251m) to find suitable microclimates.
- **Habitat Specialization:** Habitat specialists are more affected by changing temperatures than habitat generalists.
- **Impact on Host Plants:** Climate-driven drought conditions have led to the drying of larval host plants, directly affecting the life cycle, flight times, and larval survival of many species.
- **Rare Species Vulnerability:** Specialized species (e.g., those relying on specific host plants) are declining, whereas generalist species (e.g., *Danaus chrysippus*, *Junonia lemonias*) are becoming more common.

Regional Variations

- **Hill Regions (e.g., Tirumala/Talakona):** Higher species diversity and higher abundance due to better vegetation cover.
- **Plain Regions (e.g., Kadapa/Belum):** Lower diversity and reduced populations, often correlated with arid conditions, heat waves, and limited host plant availability.

DISCUSSION

The study reveals that climate change is causing a structural shift in butterfly communities in Andhra Pradesh. The reduction in rainfall and rising temperatures in the Eastern Ghats create unfavorable conditions, specifically during the larval stage. The findings indicate that butterflies in Andhra Pradesh are facing serious threats from both climate change and anthropogenic activities.

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Impacts of Rising Temperatures and Droughts

The high temperatures (March-May) inhibit the development of larvae and reduce the lifespan of adults. As ectothermic organisms, butterflies are limited by temperature in their flight and mating behaviors. The decrease in species in the plains (e.g., Belum and Kadapa) indicates that some species can no longer survive the hotter, drier climate.

Impact of Rainfall Patterns

Erratic monsoon patterns are damaging to the host plants on which butterflies lay their eggs. A "dry spell" reduces the availability of nectar and larval host plants, which directly causes a population decline. This confirms that climate factors control butterfly diversity not only directly (heat) but indirectly (food availability).

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation

The impact of climate change is exacerbated by human intervention. Urbanization and habitat destruction in areas like Kambalakonda have led to alarming declines, reducing the ability of species to shift their ranges in response to climate change. The studies highlight that the undisturbed (high-altitude) sites show a higher Shannon-Wiener Diversity Index compared to disturbed urban sites.

Nymphalidae and Pieridae Sensitivity

While Nymphalidae and Pieridae are often reported as dominant, their population density has been observed to show high fluctuations depending on the seasonality of nectar sources. The reduction in rainfall affects the phenology of nectar-producing plants, which subsequently limits butterfly longevity.

The "Safe Haven" Effect of High-Altitude Regions

A significant finding in the Seshachalam region is that butterfly populations are migrating toward higher elevations (e.g., Tirumala hills). The temperature, humidity, and vegetation in these elevated, densely forested areas provide refuge against the increasing heat of the plains.

Correlation with Human Activities

The study highlights that climate-induced stress is exacerbated by anthropogenic activities, including urbanization in areas like Visakhapatnam (Kambalakonda) and deforestation, leading to a synergistic negative impact on population size.

Limitations of Current Studies

While several studies have provided checklists, there is a need for long-term, multi-year monitoring to truly quantify the rate of decline caused exclusively by climate change as opposed to direct habitat destruction.

CONCLUSION

This comprehensive review concludes that climate change is having a major impact on the butterfly diversity of Andhra Pradesh. climate change is causing a significant, negative, and measurable impact on the butterfly diversity in Andhra Pradesh. The reduction in species richness in the plains and the shift towards higher altitudes, combined with the shrinking

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of the favorable season, are alarming signs of ecological disruption. The dominant families—Nymphalidae and Pieridae—are showing structural shifts in their abundance in response to temperature and rainfall volatility. The 27 protected species are particularly vulnerable to these changes.

The increasing temperatures, combined with unpredictable, intense, or reduced rainfall, have shifted species compositions, lowered population densities in lower altitudes, and altered seasonal behaviors. The Eastern Ghats, particularly the Seshachalam Bio Reserve, show a pattern where specialized species are reducing, and the overall, long-term stability of these populations is under threat.

Immediate conservation measures, such as the maintenance of habitat corridors and protection of larva-host plants, are crucial to mitigate these impacts.

Recommendations:

- **Habitat Protection:** Prioritize the protection of the Eastern Ghats, particularly the Seshachalam and Papikonda regions, as they act as biodiversity refuges.
- **Host Plant Conservation:** Promote the restoration of native vegetation to support the life cycle of butterflies.
- **Long-Term Monitoring:** Implement continuous, long-term monitoring of butterfly populations as a tool for climate policy management.
- **Awareness:** Enhance public understanding of the ecological role of butterflies.

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Survey on Weed Flora of Cropping Systems of Yeleswaram Mandal, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh

T. Sovamma, K. S. Bhargavi and R.K Mahalakshmi and Prayaga Murty Pragada[2]
III B.Sc (Botany) Department of Botany, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India
2. Lecturer in Botany, Botany, Government Degree College,Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India
Email: thalladasovamma@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A comprehensive weed survey was conducted in major cropping systems of Yeleswaram Mandal, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, to document weed diversity and assess their phytosociological characteristics. The study covered rice, maize, and pulse-based cropping systems across three seasons using a stratified random sampling approach and 1 m × 1 m quadrat analysis. A total of 41 weed species belonging to 14 botanical families were recorded, indicating high weed diversity in the region. Poaceae was the dominant family, followed by Cyperaceae and Asteraceae, reflecting the prevalence of grasses, sedges, and broad-leaved weeds in tropical lowland agroecosystems. Phytosociological analysis revealed *Echinochloa colona* and *Cyperus rotundus* as the most dominant species based on Importance Value Index (IVI), followed by *Echinochloa crus-galli*, *Alternanthera philoxeroides*, and *Parthenium hysterophorus*. The dominance of these species highlights their strong competitive ability and adaptability to local cropping and moisture conditions. The study provides baseline information on weed composition and dominance patterns, which is essential for developing effective integrated weed management strategies and guiding future ecological and control studies in the agricultural systems of Yeleswaram Mandal.**Keywords:** Weed flora, cropping systems, diversity, Yeleswaram, Andhra Pradesh, weed survey.

Keywords: Weed flora; Phytosociology; Importance Value Index (IVI); Cropping systems; Yeleswaram Mandal; Kakinada District

1. INTRODUCTION

A weed is an unwanted plant growth in a place where some other plants are also growing or no other plant has to grown at all. The plants growing in a wrong place i.e. in agriculture fields are often referred to as weeds. Weeds are non-cultivated plants that adversely affect productivity and quality in agricultural systems by competing for essential resources (Zimdahl, 2007). Weed infestation leads to yield losses that can exceed 30–50% in major crops such as paddy and groundnut if uncontrolled (Holm et al., 1977). In tropical lowland environments like Yeleswaram Mandal, weed pressure is influenced by seasonal rainfall, cropping patterns, irrigation, and soil type. Understanding weed species composition and distribution is fundamental for developing integrated weed management programs (Oerke, 2006). Weed surveys provide insight into dominant species, their abundance, and temporal dynamics across cropping systems (Putnam & Bouse, 1985). However, detailed weed ecological studies are scarce for the Kakinada districts of Andhra Pradesh, despite intensive rice-based systems and diversified cropping patterns.

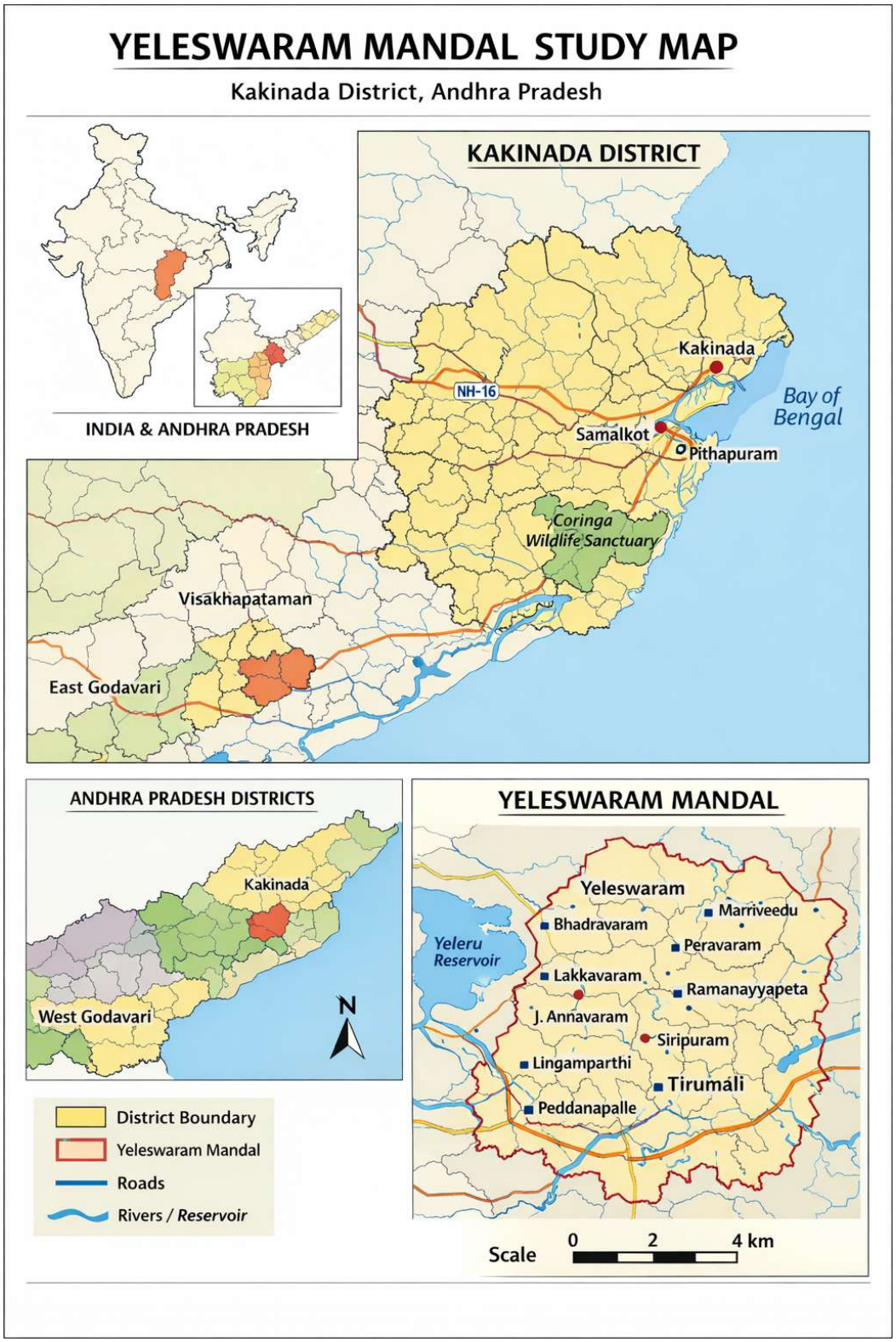
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The survey was carried out in **Yeleswaram Mandal (17.15°N, 82.10°E)**, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India. The region has a tropical humid climate with mean annual rainfall ~1100 mm, mainly from the Southwest monsoon (June–September). Soils are predominantly alluvial and clay loam, supporting paddy, maize, pulses, and groundnut cropping. The major cultivated villages are Bhadravaram, East Lakshmipuram, J. Annavaram, Lakkavaram, Lingamparthi, Marriveedu, Peddanapalle, Peravaram, Ramanayyapeta, Siripuram, Tirumali, Yeleswaram, and Yerravaram.(Study map)

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The authors collected weed species from the field.



The authors collected weed species from the field.



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Cropping Systems Surveyed

We selected representative fields of major cropping systems based on prevalence and area coverage:

- Rainy Season Rice (Oryza sativa L.)
- Maize (Zea mays L.)
- Pulses (Greengram and Blackgram)

A stratified random sampling design was used. In each system, **10 farms** were surveyed during peak growth stages of crops across three seasons (rainy, post-rainy, and dry).

Weed Sampling and Identification

Weed flora were assessed using **1 m × 1 m quadrats (n = 100 per cropping system)** placed along transects. Within each quadrat, weed species were identified, counted, and collected for record. Identification was done using standard keys (Singh & Dalal, 1998; Gupta, 2001). Floras Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty 2009 and few other local floras and standard botanical literature

The phytosociological attributes: abundance, density and frequency and their relative values and Importance Value Index (IVI) were calculated the following principles of (Curtis and Mclntosh,1950, Misra, 1968, and MuellerDombois and Ellenberg, 1974).

$$\text{Frequency (\%)} = \frac{\text{Total number of quadrates in which the species occur}}{\text{Total number of quadrates studied}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Density} = \frac{\text{Total number of individuals of a species in all quadrates}}{\text{Total number of quadrates studied}}$$

$$\text{Abundance} = \frac{\text{Total number of individuals of a species in all quadrates}}{\text{Total number of quadrates in which the species occurred}}$$

$$\text{Relative frequency} = \frac{\text{Frequency of individuals of a species}}{\text{Total frequency of all species}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Relative density} = \frac{\text{Density of individuals of a species}}{\text{Total density of all species}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Relative abundance} = \frac{\text{Abundance of individuals of a species}}{\text{Total abundance of all species}} \times 100$$

Importance Value Index = Relative density + Relative frequency + Relative abundance

3. RESULTS

Weed Species Composition

The family-wise analysis of the weed flora revealed that the 41 weed species recorded in the study area were distributed among 14 botanical families.The family Poaceae emerged as the most dominant family, contributing 10 species, all of which

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were grasses. This family included both annual grasses (*Echinochloa colona, E. crus-galli, Digitaria sanguinalis, Dactyloctenium aegyptium, Setaria glauca, Ischaemum rugosum, Leptochloa chinensis*) and perennial grasses (*Cynodon dactylon, Brachiaria mutica, Paspalum distichum*). The second dominant family was Cyperaceae, represented by five species (*Cyperus rotundus, C. difformis, C. iria, Fimbristylis miliacea,* and *Kyllinga brevifolia*). This family included both annual and perennial sedges.

Among dicotyledonous families, Asteraceae was the most prominent, contributing seven species, mainly annual herbs (*Parthenium hysterophorus, Ageratum conyzoides, Eclipta prostrata, Vernonia cinerea, Synedrella nodiflora,* and *Spilanthes acmella*), along with one perennial herb (*Tridax procumbens)*.The family Amaranthaceae was represented by four species, comprising both annual and perennial herbs (*Amaranthus spinosus, A. viridis, Alternanthera sessilis,* and *A. philoxeroides*). Other families such as Commelinaceae, Convolvulaceae, Fabaceae, Malvaceae, Solanaceae, Cleomaceae, Nyctaginaceae, Portulacaceae, Onagraceae, and Phyllanthaceae were represented by one or two species each. (Table -1)

The phytosociological analysis of the study area revealed the presence of 41 weed species, indicating a high diversity and complex weed flora. Among the recorded species, *Echinochloa colona* (IVI = 16.38) and *Cyperus rotundus* (IVI = 15.38) emerged as the most dominant weeds These species were widely distributed and exerted strong competitive pressure on the crop. Other grasses such as *Echinochloa crus-galli* (IVI = 14.58) and sedges like *Cyperus difformis* (IVI = 12.05) also exhibited high IVI values. Broad-leaved weeds including *Alternanthera philoxeroides* (IVI = 14.05), *Parthenium hysterophorus* (IVI = 13.08), and *Ageratum conyzoides* (IVI = 11.65) showed moderate to high dominance, reflecting their adaptability and aggressive growth habit. In contrast, species such as *Desmodium triflorum* (IVI = 6.06), *Cassia tora* (IVI = 6.45), and *Corchorus trilocularis* (IVI = 6.28) recorded lower IVI values, indicating their comparatively minor contribution to the weed flora.(Table 2)

Table 1. Complete List of Weed Species Recorded from Cropping Systems of Yeleswaram Mandal

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Life Form
1	*Echinochloa colona* (L.) Link	Poaceae	Annual grass
2	*Echinochloa crus-galli* (L.) P.Beauv.	Poaceae	Annual grass
3	*Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	Perennial grass
4	*Digitaria sanguinalis* (L.) Scop.	Poaceae	Annual grass
5	*Dactyloctenium aegyptium* (L.) Willd.	Poaceae	Annual grass
6	*Setaria glauca* (L.) P.Beauv.	Poaceae	Annual grass
7	*Brachiaria mutica* (Forssk.) Stapf	Poaceae	Perennial grass
8	*Ischaemum rugosum* Salisb.	Poaceae	Annual grass
9	*Paspalum distichum* L.	Poaceae	Perennial grass
10	*Leptochloa chinensis* (L.) Nees	Poaceae	Annual grass
11	*Cyperus rotundus* L.	Cyperaceae	Perennial sedge
12	*Cyperus difformis* L.	Cyperaceae	Annual sedge
13	*Cyperus iria* L.	Cyperaceae	Annual sedge
14	*Fimbristylis miliacea* (L.) Vahl	Cyperaceae	Annual sedge
15	*Kyllinga brevifolia* Rottb.	Cyperaceae	Perennial sedge
16	*Parthenium hysterophorus* L.	Asteraceae	Annual herb
17	*Ageratum conyzoides* (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Annual herb

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S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Life Form
18	*Tridax procumbens* L.	Asteraceae	Perennial herb
19	*Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Annual herb
20	*Vernonia cinerea* (L.) Less.	Asteraceae	Annual herb
21	*Synedrella nodiflora* (L.) Gaertn.	Asteraceae	Annual herb
22	*Spilanthes acmella* (L.) L.	Asteraceae	Annual herb
23	*Amaranthus spinosus* L.	Amaranthaceae	Annual herb
24	*Amaranthus viridis* L.	Amaranthaceae	Annual herb
25	*Alternanthera sessilis* (L.) R.Br. ex DC.	Amaranthaceae	Perennial herb
26	*Alternanthera philoxeroides* (Mart.) Griseb.	Amaranthaceae	Perennial herb
27	*Cleome viscosa* L.	Cleomaceae	Annual herb
28	*Commelina benghalensis* L.	Commelinaceae	Perennial herb
29	*Commelina diffusa* Burm.f.	Commelinaceae	Perennial herb
30	*Ipomoea aquatica* Forssk.	Convolvulaceae	Perennial climber
31	*Ipomoea carnea* Jacq.	Convolvulaceae	Perennial shrub
32	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Perennial herb
33	*Portulaca oleracea* L.	Portulacaceae	Annual herb
34	*Physalis minima* L.	Solanaceae	Annual herb
35	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Solanaceae	Annual herb
36	*Corchorus trilocularis* L.	Malvaceae	Annual herb
37	*Sida acuta* Burm.f.	Malvaceae	Perennial shrub
38	*Ludwigia parviflora* Roxb.	Onagraceae	Annual herb
39	*Phyllanthus niruri* L.	Phyllanthaceae	Annual herb
40	*Cassia tora* L.	Fabaceae	Annual shrub
41	*Desmodium triflorum* (L.) DC.	Fabaceae	Perennial herb

Table 2. Frequency, Density and Importance Value Index (IVI) of Weed Species

S.No	Weed species	Frequency (%)	Density (plants m^{-2})	Abundance	Relative Frequency (%)	Relative Density (%)	Relative Abundance (%)	IVI
1	*Echinochloa colona*	82	42.6	51.95	5.8	7.6	2.98	**16.38**
2	*Echinochloa crus-galli*	75	36.4	48.53	5.3	6.5	2.78	**14.58**
3	*Cynodon dactylon*	68	28.5	41.91	4.8	5.1	2.40	**12.30**

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S.No	Weed species	Frequency (%)	Density (plants m^{-2})	Abundance	Relative Frequency (%)	Relative Density (%)	Relative Abundance (%)	IVI
4	*Digitaria sanguinalis*	60	24.3	40.50	4.2	4.3	2.32	**10.82**
5	*Dactyloctenium aegyptium*	58	22.1	38.10	4.1	3.9	2.18	**10.18**
6	*Setaria glauca*	44	18.7	42.50	3.1	3.3	2.44	**8.84**
7	*Brachiaria mutica*	40	16.5	41.25	2.8	2.9	2.36	**8.06**
8	*Ischaemum rugosum*	48	19.6	40.83	3.4	3.5	2.34	**9.24**
9	*Paspalum distichum*	35	14.8	42.29	2.5	2.6	2.42	**7.52**
10	*Leptochloa chinensis*	55	21.4	38.91	3.9	3.8	2.23	**9.93**
11	*Cyperus rotundus*	78	39.2	50.26	5.5	7.0	2.88	**15.38**
12	*Cyperus difformis*	65	27.8	42.77	4.6	5.0	2.45	**12.05**
13	*Cyperus iria*	52	23.6	45.38	3.7	4.2	2.60	**10.50**
14	*Fimbristylis miliacea*	46	20.1	43.70	3.3	3.6	2.50	**9.40**
15	*Kyllinga brevifolia*	34	13.7	40.29	2.4	2.4	2.31	**7.11**
16	*Parthenium hysterophorus*	70	31.5	45.00	4.9	5.6	2.58	**13.08**
17	*Ageratum conyzoides*	63	26.9	42.70	4.4	4.8	2.45	**11.65**
18	*Tridax procumbens*	50	21.2	42.40	3.5	3.8	2.43	**9.73**
19	*Eclipta prostrata*	57	22.5	39.47	4.0	4.0	2.26	**10.26**
20	*Vernonia cinerea*	42	17.4	41.43	3.0	3.1	2.37	**8.47**
21	*Synedrella nodiflora*	38	15.6	41.05	2.7	2.8	2.35	**7.85**
22	*Spilanthes acmella*	30	12.1	40.33	2.1	2.1	2.31	**6.51**
23	*Amaranthus spinosus*	59	24.7	41.86	4.2	4.4	2.40	**11.00**

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S.No	Weed species	Frequency (%)	Density (plants m^{-2})	Abundance	Relative Frequency (%)	Relative Density (%)	Relative Abundance (%)	IVI
24	*Amaranthus viridis*	54	23.1	42.78	3.8	4.1	2.45	**10.35**
25	*Alternanthera sessilis*	66	29.4	44.55	4.7	5.3	2.55	**12.55**
26	*Alternanthera philoxeroides*	72	34.6	48.06	5.1	6.2	2.75	**14.05**
27	*Cleome viscosa*	41	16.9	41.22	2.9	3.0	2.36	**8.26**
28	*Commelina benghalensis*	58	23.9	41.21	4.1	4.3	2.36	**10.76**
29	*Commelina diffusa*	47	19.8	42.13	3.3	3.5	2.41	**9.21**
30	*Ipomoea aquatica*	33	14.1	42.73	2.3	2.5	2.45	**7.25**
31	*Ipomoea carnea*	28	11.6	41.43	2.0	2.1	2.37	**6.47**
32	*Boerhavia diffusa*	36	15.2	42.22	2.5	2.7	2.42	**7.62**
33	*Portulaca oleracea*	49	20.7	42.24	3.5	3.7	2.42	**9.62**
34	*Physalis minima*	31	12.9	41.61	2.2	2.3	2.38	**6.88**
35	*Solanum nigrum*	39	16.1	41.28	2.8	2.9	2.37	**8.07**
36	*Corchorus trilocularis*	27	11.2	41.48	1.9	2.0	2.38	**6.28**
37	*Sida acuta*	35	14.6	41.71	2.5	2.6	2.39	**7.49**
38	*Ludwigia parviflora*	46	19.5	42.39	3.3	3.5	2.43	**9.23**
39	*Phyllanthus niruri*	34	14.3	42.06	2.4	2.5	2.41	**7.31**
40	*Cassia tora*	29	11.9	41.03	2.0	2.1	2.35	**6.45**
41	*Desmodium triflorum*	26	10.7	41.15	1.8	1.9	2.36	**6.06**

4. DISCUSSION

The weed flora documented is consistent with earlier surveys in Indo-Gangetic plains and Eastern India showing dominance of Poaceae and Asteraceae in rice and upland crops (Chhokar & Sharma, 2011). The prevalence of *Echinochloa* spp. in flooded conditions reflects high competitive ability under anaerobic soils. *Parthenium hysterophorus*, an invasive alien species, showed increasing frequency, echoing concerns about its expansion in Andhra Pradesh agroecosystems (Kanchan

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& Singh, 2010). High weed diversity during the rainy season is attributed to favorable moisture and temperature promoting germination.

5. CONCLUSION

The survey highlights considerable weed diversity in cropping systems of Yeleswaram Mandal. A total of 41 species were identified, with significant seasonal and crop-specific variation. These baseline data will support weed management planning and future research on herbicide efficacy and ecological control practices.

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Hydrophytic Flora of Timmaraju Pond, Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India: A Floristic Survey

R. Abhiram[1], Y. Gopala Krishna[1] , B. V. Rama Murthy[1] and Prayaga Murty Pragada[2]
1. III B.Sc. (Botany), Department of Botany,Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India
2. Lecturer in Botany, Botany, Government Degree College,Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India
Email: abhiramracharla143@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present investigation documents the hydrophytic flora of Timmaraju Pond, located at Yeleswaram in Kakinada District of Andhra Pradesh, India, with emphasis on species composition, growth forms, and ecological distribution. Extensive field surveys conducted during different seasons resulted in the documentation of 28 hydrophytic species belonging to 24 genera and 16 families. Based on growth forms, the recorded hydrophytes were classified into emergent, submerged, free-floating, rooted floating, and amphibious categories. Emergent hydrophytes dominated the flora with 11 species (39.3%), followed by submerged species with 7 species (25%), free-floating species with 5 species (17.9%), rooted floating species with 3 species (10.7%), and amphibious species with 2 species (7.1%). Family-wise analysis revealed Cyperaceae and Poaceae as dominant families, followed by Hydrocharitaceae, Araceae, and Pontederiaceae, reflecting the presence of shallow littoral and marshy habitats. Submerged macrophytes contributed significantly to oxygenation and nutrient cycling, whereas free-floating species were mainly confined to nutrient-rich zones. The study highlights the ecological importance of Timmaraju Pond as a freshwater habitat supporting diverse aquatic macrophytes, while also indicating early signs of nutrient enrichment. The generated baseline data will be useful for long-term ecological monitoring, conservation planning, and sustainable management of freshwater resources in the Yeleswaram region.

Keywords: Hydrophytic flora; Aquatic macrophytes; Species diversity; Freshwater pond; Timmaraju Pond; Yeleswaram; Andhra Pradesh.

I. INTRODUCTION

Freshwater ecosystems such as ponds, lakes, and wetlands are among the most productive biological systems on Earth and play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance by supporting diverse biological communities and ecosystem processes (**Odum, 1971; Mitsch and Gosselink, 2007**). Aquatic macrophytes, commonly referred to as hydrophytes, are an integral component of freshwater habitats, contributing significantly to primary productivity, nutrient cycling, oxygen balance, and habitat complexity for aquatic fauna (**Cook, 1996**). Hydrophytic flora also acts as an indicator of water quality and trophic status of aquatic ecosystems. Changes in species composition and dominance patterns often reflect anthropogenic disturbances such as nutrient enrichment, eutrophication, and habitat modification (**Odum, 1971**). Floristic surveys of aquatic macrophytes are therefore essential for understanding ecosystem health and for formulating effective conservation and management strategies (**Subramanyam, 1962**).

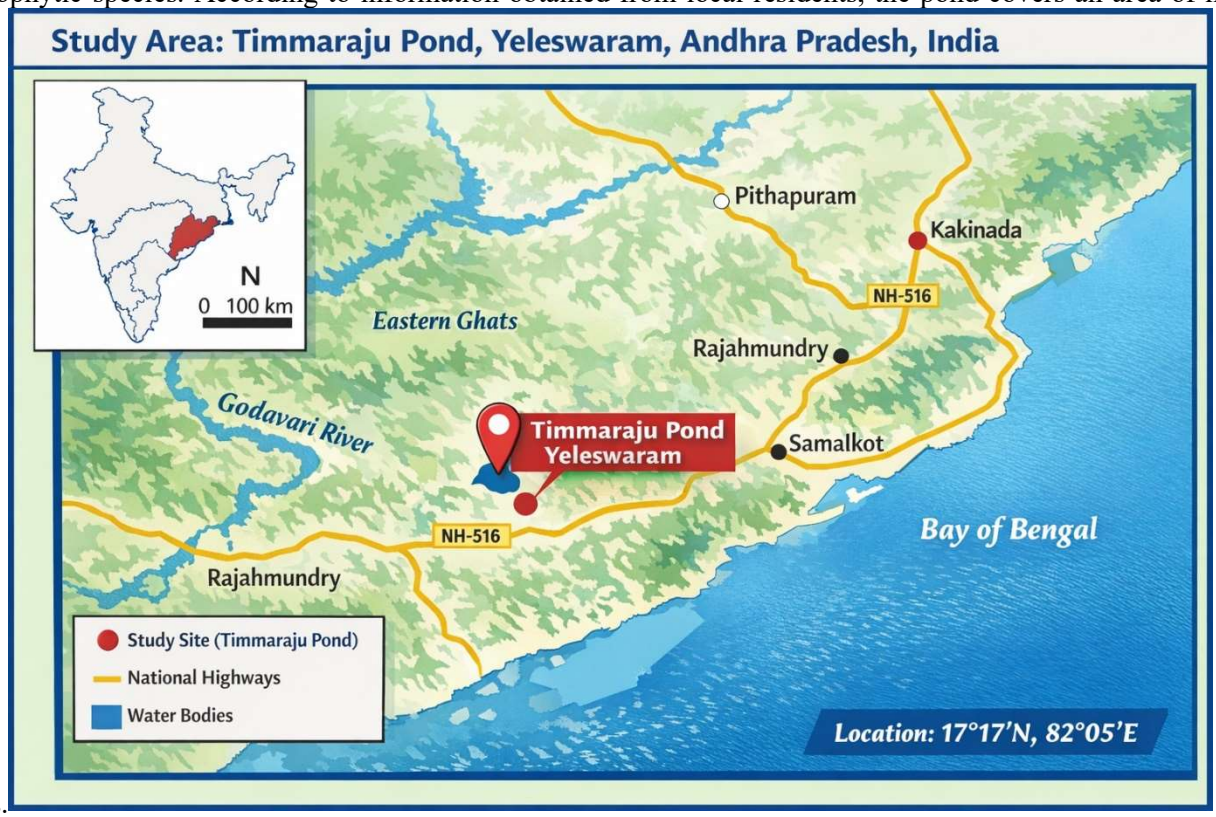
In India, several studies have documented aquatic flora from rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and ponds; however, small freshwater bodies like village ponds remain inadequately explored despite their ecological and socio-economic importance (**Cook, 1996; Sharma, 2011**). Timmaraju Pond at Yeleswaram serves as a vital freshwater resource for domestic use, irrigation, and local biodiversity, yet systematic documentation of its hydrophytic flora has not been undertaken. The present study aims to document the hydrophytic plant diversity of Timmaraju Pond, analyze growth-form distribution, and assess ecological significance, thereby providing baseline data for future ecological monitoring and conservation initiatives.

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II. STUDY AREA

Timmaraju Pond is located at outs cut of Yeleswaram town in Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India. The region experiences a tropical climate with distinct summer, monsoon, and winter seasons, which strongly influence freshwater hydrology. The pond is perennial in nature, receiving water mainly from monsoon rainfall and local runoff. The pond exhibits varied microhabitats such as shallow littoral zones, marshy margins, and deeper central regions, supporting different categories of aquatic macrophytes. Seasonal fluctuations in water level influence the distribution and abundance of hydrophytic species. According to information obtained from local residents, the pond covers an area of more than 800 acres.



III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Field Survey and Collection

Field surveys were conducted during different seasons to ensure maximum representation of hydrophytic species, as seasonal variation significantly affects aquatic plant diversity (**Mitsch and Gosselink, 2007**). Aquatic plants were collected from various parts of the pond, including littoral zones, shallow waters, and open water regions.

B. Identification and Classification

Collected specimens were identified using standard floras viz. Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty 2009 and few other local floras and taxonomic keys (**Subramanyam, 1962; Sharma, 2011**). The plants were classified into different growth forms such as emergent, submerged, free-floating, rooted floating, and amphibious hydrophytes based on their morphological and ecological characteristics (**Cook, 1996**).

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C. Data Analysis

The species were analyzed for family-wise, genus-wise, and growth-form-wise distribution. Percentage composition of each growth form was calculated to understand dominance patterns, which are useful indicators of habitat conditions and nutrient status (**Odum, 1971**).



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IV. RESULTS

A. Species Composition

The floristic survey recorded a total of 28 hydrophytic species belonging to 24 genera and 16 families (Table-1) . The majority of the species were herbaceous in nature, showing structural and physiological adaptations to aquatic or semi-aquatic conditions.

B. Growth Form Distribution

The hydrophytic species were categorized into five growth forms (Table 2). Emergent hydrophytes were dominant, indicating extensive shallow and marshy zones along the pond margins.

C. Family-wise Distribution

Cyperaceae and Poaceae emerged as the dominant families, followed by Hydrocharitaceae, Araceae, and Pontederiaceae. The dominance of these families reflects the prevalence of nutrient-rich, shallow freshwater habitats and stable hydrological conditions.

Table-1 **A complete list of species**

S.No	Botanical Name	Family	Growth Form	Remarks
1	*Cyperus difformis L.*	Cyperaceae	Emergent	Common
2	*Cyperus iria L.*	Cyperaceae	Emergent	Common
3	*Fimbristylis miliacea (L.) Vahl*	Cyperaceae	Emergent	Common
4	*Typha angustifolia L.*	Typhaceae	Emergent	Common
5	*Paspalum distichum L.*	Poaceae	Emergent	Common
6	*Echinochloa crus-galli (L.) P.Beauv.*	Poaceae	Emergent	Common
7	*Alternanthera sessilis (L.) R.Br.*	Amaranthaceae	Emergent	Common
8	*Hydrilla verticillata (L.f.) Royle*	Hydrocharitaceae	Submerged	Abundant
9	*Vallisneria spiralis L.*	Hydrocharitaceae	Submerged	Common
10	*Ceratophyllum demersum L.*	Ceratophyllaceae	Submerged	Common
11	*Najas minor All.*	Hydrocharitaceae	Submerged	Rare
12	*Potamogeton crispus L.*	Potamogetonaceae	Submerged	Common
13	*Utricularia aurea Lour.*	Lentibulariaceae	Submerged	Rare
14	*Ottelia alismoides (L.) Pers.*	Hydrocharitaceae	Submerged	Common

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15	*Eichhornia crassipes (Mart.) Solms*	Pontederiaceae	Free-floating	Abundant
16	*Pistia stratiotes L.*	Araceae	Free-floating	Common
17	*Lemna minor L.*	Araceae	Free-floating	Common
18	*Spirodela polyrhiza (L.) Schleid.*	Araceae	Free-floating	Common
19	*Azolla pinnata R.Br.*	Salviniaceae	Free-floating	Seasonal
20	*Nymphaea nouchali Burm.f.*	Nymphaeaceae	Rooted floating	Common
21	*Nelumbo nucifera Gaertn.*	Nelumbonaceae	Rooted floating	Occasional
22	*Trapa natans L.*	Trapaceae	Rooted floating	Rare
23	*Ipomoea aquatica Forssk.*	Convolvulaceae	Amphibious	Common
24	*Ludwigia adscendens (L.) H.Hara*	Onagraceae	Amphibious	Common
25	*Sagittaria sagittifolia L.*	Alismataceae	Emergent	Common
26	*Monochoria vaginalis (Burm.f.) C.Presl*	Pontederiaceae	Emergent	Common
27	*Marsilea quadrifolia L.*	Marsileaceae	Amphibious	Seasonal
28	*Limnophila sessiliflora (Vahl) Blume*	Plantaginaceae	Submerged	Common

Table- 2: Growth-form wise distribution of hydrophytes

Growth Form	**Number of Species**	**Percentage (%)**
Emergent	11	39.3
Submerged	7	25.0
Free-floating	5	17.9
Rooted floating	3	10.7

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Growth Form	Number of Species	Percentage (%)
Amphibious	2	7.1

V. DISCUSSION

The dominance of emergent hydrophytes in Timmaraju Pond is characteristic of freshwater ponds with extensive littoral zones and shallow margins (**Mitsch and Gosselink, 2007**). Similar observations have been reported from other freshwater bodies in India, where emergent macrophytes contribute significantly to habitat stabilization (**Cook, 1996**). The presence of diverse submerged macrophytes indicates relatively stable water conditions and supports ecological functions such as oxygenation and sediment stabilization (**Odum, 1971**). However, the noticeable abundance of fast-growing free-floating species suggests early stages of eutrophication, possibly due to nutrient inflow from surrounding agricultural fields and domestic activities (**Odum, 1971**). If unchecked, such enrichment may alter species composition and reduce overall biodiversity.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present floristic survey reveals that Timmaraju Pond supports a rich and diverse assemblage of hydrophytic flora, comprising 28 species across 16 families. The dominance of emergent and submerged hydrophytes underscores the ecological stability of the pond, while the presence of nutrient-tolerant free-floating species signals emerging anthropogenic pressures The baseline data generated through this study will serve as a valuable reference for future ecological assessments, conservation planning, and sustainable freshwater management in the Yeleswaram region.

Acknowledgement:
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The Paradox of Petals: An Ecological and Management Study of Eichhornia crassipes in the Mandapeta Irrigation Network

Abhinay Chapala
Lecturer in Botany
Govt Degree College, Mandapeta
East Godavari Dist 533308
Andhra Pradesh
Cell: 9010886858.
Email.Id: abhinay2218@gmail.com

Abstract for Submission (Summary)

"This study investigates the socio-ecological impact of Eichhornia crassipes within the specialized canal ecosystem of Mandapeta, Andhra Pradesh. By analyzing the intersection of government irrigation management and local biodiversity, the report highlights the dual nature of the 'Water Hyacinth'—as both a pollutant hindering water flow and a plant of significant aesthetic and phytoremediation potential. Through field observations of local ponds and canal networks, this paper proposes a community-driven awareness model to transform an environmental challenge into an ecological asset."

Keywords: Eichhornia crassipes, Mandapeta, Irrigation Management, Terror of Bengal, Hydro-biodiversity, Phytoremediation.

Historically labelled the "Terror of Bengal" for its role in destroying wetland economies and the "Blue Devil of Canals" for its ability to paralyze irrigation flow, Eichhornia crassipes (Water Hyacinth) remains one of the most significant environmental challenges in India. In the Mandapeta region of East Godavari, this invasive species exists within a unique hydro-geological framework—a well-developed, government-maintained canal system that serves as the lifeline for local agriculture.

This study reports on the specific biodiversity of Mandapeta, where Eichhornia competes with native hydro-flora such as Pistia stratiotes and Ipomoea aquatica. A central focus of this report is the seasonal management strategy implemented by the Government of Andhra Pradesh Irrigation Department. Observations during the rainy season reveal a high-stakes coordination between government departments to control the plant's rapid biomass expansion, which threatens to clog shutters and cause canal breaches.

The research highlights a stark ecological paradox: the plant possesses undeniable aesthetic value and "elegant" flowering stages that enhance the visual landscape of local village ponds, yet it simultaneously acts as a primary agent of water pollution. Through the depletion of dissolved oxygen (DO) and increased evapotranspiration, the plant disrupts the delicate balance of local fauna. My individual field study identifies that while the plant is a biological "invader," its ability to absorb heavy metals offers a potential pathway for controlled phytoremediation.

The paper concludes by advocating for a community-based Awareness Program in the Mandapeta area. By shifting the perspective from "eradication" to "integrated management," the report proposes a "Waste-to-Wealth" model. This involves utilizing the plant's biomass for organic fertilizer and handicrafts, thereby supporting the conservation of local flora while protecting the structural integrity of the Andhra Pradesh irrigation network. This study serves as a localized blueprint for managing invasive aquatic species in high-density irrigation zones globally.

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An Ecological and Management Study of Eichhornia crassipes in the Mandapeta Irrigation Network

Introduction: The Mandapeta Context

Mandapeta, situated in the fertile East Godavari region, is defined by its sophisticated canal network. This section introduces the plant not just as a weed, but as a significant biological entity within the local hydro-ecosystem.

Geographic Focus: The Godavari canal system and local village ponds (Cheruvulu).

The Subject: Eichhornia crassipes, known for its rapid biomass doubling and striking purple flowers.

The Paradox: High aesthetic value vs. severe ecological disruption.

Flora and Hydro-Biodiversity of Mandapeta

The Mandapeta area boasts a rich variety of hydro-flora. My study categorized them to understand the competitive pressure of Eichhornia:

Type	Species Found in Mandapeta	Interaction with Eichhornia
Floating	Pistia stratiotes (Water Lettuce)	Eichhornia outcompetes it for surface area.
Submerged	Hydrilla verticillata	Suffocates as Eichhornia blocks 95% of sunlight.
Marginal	Ipomoea aquatica (Water Spinach)	Native species often pushed to the very edge of the banks.
Emergent	Typha angustifolia	Competes for nutrients at the canal-land interface.

The Engineering Challenge: Irrigation & Governance

A unique aspect of this study is the involvement of the Andhra Pradesh Irrigation Department.

Flow Dynamics: How the dense mats reduce water flow velocity in canals by up to 40%, affecting tail-end farmers.

Seasonal Management: Detailed look at the "Rainy Season Protocol." During monsoons, the risk of canal breaches increases as Eichhornia clogs shutters and bridges.

Inter-Departmental Synergy: How Revenue, Irrigation, and Agriculture departments collaborate on "Weed Clearance" programs to ensure food security in the region.

The Ecological "Double-Edged Sword"

This section provides the "Deep Report" insights from your individual study.

Historical Significance: Why the "Terror" and the "Devil"?

To understand the plant's impact in India, we must look at its two most famous monikers

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"Terror of Bengal": Introduced to India in the 18th century for its beauty, it quickly overran the wetlands of Bengal. It caused mass fish kills and blocked navigation, leading to local famines—earning its reputation as an ecological "terror."

"Blue Devil of Canals": In irrigation-rich areas like Mandapeta, it is the "Blue Devil." It is a "devil" to engineers because it:

Reduces Flow: Increases water friction, slowing flow by up to 40%.

Causes Siltation: Its dense root mass traps sediment, shallowing the canals.

Physical Obstruction: Blocks shutters and gates during the crucial irrigation season.

Aesthetic Value vs. Ecological Cost

My individual study highlights a unique observation: The Aesthetic Paradox.

Aesthetic Appeal: The lilac-blue flowers of the Water Hyacinth are exceptionally elegant. During peak flowering, Mandapeta's ponds transform into "purple carpets," providing high aesthetic value to the rural landscape.

The Trap: This beauty often leads to public apathy; people are hesitant to remove something so "beautiful" until it has already choked the water body.

Phytoremediation: Mention its ability to absorb heavy metals from agricultural runoff.

Visual Impact: The "Elegant Bloom" stage. In local Mandapeta ponds, the mass flowering creates a "purple carpet" effect that holds high aesthetic value for photography and local tourism.

The Pollution & Deoxygenation Factor

Eutrophication: When the plants die and decay, they deplete dissolved oxygen (DO), leading to fish kills in local village ponds.

Evapotranspiration: The plant loses water faster than an open water surface, threatening water levels during the pre-monsoon heat.

Awareness & Conservation Strategies

My individual contribution is the Awareness Program.

"Waste-to-Wealth" model:

Handicrafts: Using dried stalks for basket weaving (common in other tropical regions).

Bio-Fertilizer: Converting the removed biomass from Mandapeta canals into organic compost for local paddy fields.

Community Involvement: Educating village youth on identifying the early signs of "overgrowth" to prevent total pond coverage.

The "Rainy Season" Crisis & Governance

A critical finding of this report is the Seasonal Management Cycle. In Mandapeta, the government intervention follows a strict timeline:

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The Problem: During the rainy season, high water velocity detaches large mats of Eichhornia from the banks. These "floating islands" accumulate at bridges and irrigation locks, creating a risk of canal breaches.

Departmental Collaboration: The Irrigation Department, Revenue Department, and local Panchayats collaborate to deploy mechanical removers and manual labor.

The Pollution Factor: Decaying plants in stagnant village ponds lead to Eutrophication, lowering Dissolved Oxygen levels and causing water pollution that affects local livestock and fishing.

Proposed Awareness & Conservation Model

Based on my field study, I propose a three-tier awareness program for the Mandapeta region:

Waste-to-Wealth: Training local self-help groups (SHGs) to use dried Eichhornia stalks for making hand-woven baskets and mats.

Organic Fertilizer: Encouraging farmers to use the removed biomass as green manure, as it is rich in nitrogen and potassium.

Phytoremediation: Using controlled growth of the plant in specific runoff zones to absorb heavy metals before the water enters the main irrigation canals.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that while Eichhornia is a biological "invader," in the Mandapeta region, it is a permanent resident that requires integrated management rather than just eradication. The goal is to preserve the aesthetic beauty while protecting the vital irrigation lifelines of Andhra Pradesh.

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Traditional Ethnoveterinary Medicinal Plants Used for Treating Cattle Ailments in YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh, India

K. Venkata Rami Reddy
SCNR Govt. Degree College, Proddatur, YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh, India
konda2venkat@gmail.com

Abstract

An ethnoveterinary survey was conducted in selected rural and tribal villages of YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh, India, to document traditional medicinal plants used in the treatment of various cattle ailments. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews, group discussions, and field observations involving local livestock rearers, traditional healers, and elderly informants. The study recorded 46 medicinal plant species belonging to 39 genera and 28 families used to treat 16 different cattle ailments, including digestive disorders, wounds, fractures, fever, mastitis, parasitic infections, respiratory problems, and reproductive disorders. Fabaceae (6 species), Euphorbiaceae (4 species), and Lamiaceae (3 species) were the dominant families. Habit analysis revealed that herbs (40%) were the most commonly used, followed by trees (31%), shrubs (20%), and climbers (9%). Leaves (46%) were the most frequently utilized plant parts, followed by roots (22%), bark (14%), seeds (10%), and whole plants (8%). Remedies were mainly prepared as pastes (38%), decoctions (29%), powders (21%), and raw formulations (12%), administered either orally or topically. Gastrointestinal ailments accounted for the highest proportion of treatments (27%), followed by skin-related problems (22%) and musculoskeletal disorders (18%). The continued reliance on ethnoveterinary practices is attributed to cost-effectiveness, easy availability, and limited access to modern veterinary healthcare. The study highlights the rich indigenous knowledge base of Kadapa district and emphasizes the urgent need for scientific validation, conservation of medicinal plant resources, and integration of effective traditional practices into sustainable livestock healthcare systems.

Keywords: Traditional medicinal plants, Ethnoveterinary medicine, Cattle ailments, Indigenous knowledge, YSR Kadapa District

1. Introduction

Livestock plays a crucial role in the rural economy of India, particularly in agrarian regions where cattle contribute significantly to agricultural productivity, household income, and nutritional security. In many rural and tribal areas, access to modern veterinary healthcare facilities remains limited due to economic constraints, poor infrastructure, and lack of awareness. As a result, traditional ethnoveterinary practices continue to serve as the primary healthcare system for livestock. Ethnoveterinary medicine refers to the traditional knowledge, beliefs, and practices used by indigenous communities for the prevention and treatment of animal diseases using locally available natural resources, especially medicinal plants. This knowledge has been developed through centuries of observation, experimentation, and cultural transmission. Andhra Pradesh, particularly the YSR Kadapa District, is rich in plant diversity and harbors a wealth of indigenous knowledge related to medicinal plant use. Despite this richness, systematic documentation of ethnoveterinary medicinal plants from this region remains limited. The present study aims to document and analyze traditional ethnoveterinary medicinal plants used by rural and tribal communities of YSR Kadapa District for treating cattle ailments and to highlight the importance of conserving this valuable indigenous knowledge.

2. Study Area

YSR Kadapa District is located in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, India. The district experiences a semi-arid climate with hot summers and moderate rainfall. The vegetation comprises dry deciduous forests, scrub forests, agricultural

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fields, and grazing lands, providing a suitable habitat for a variety of medicinal plant species. Livestock rearing, particularly cattle, forms an integral part of rural livelihoods in the district.

3. Materials and Methods

Several field visits were conducted in the study area to document ethnoveterinary practices followed by the aboriginal communities and other local inhabitants. Information was collected through personal interviews with village chiefs, priests, vaidyas, traditional herbal practitioners, elderly informants, and educated youth. The methodology adopted for data collection was based on standard ethnobotanical approaches described by Jain (1964, 1981, 1987, 1999), Chadwick and Marsh (1994), Hemadri (1994), and Martin (1995). Ethnoveterinary uses along with vernacular names were recorded for proper documentation. Plant specimens were collected from the field and identified using standard floras such as Hooker (1872–1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), and other relevant regional floristic works.

4. Results

4.1 Diversity of Ethnoveterinary Medicinal Plants

The study documented **46 medicinal plant species** belonging to **39 genera and 28 families** used for treating cattle ailments. The family **Fabaceae** was dominant with 6 species, followed by **Euphorbiaceae** (4 species) and **Lamiaceae** (3 species).

4.2 Habit-wise Distribution

Analysis of growth habits showed that herbs constituted the highest proportion (**40%**), followed by trees (**31%**), shrubs (**20%**), and climbers (**9%**). The predominance of herbs reflects their easy availability and rapid regeneration.

4.3 Plant Parts Used

Among the plant parts utilized, **leaves (46%)** were the most frequently used, followed by **roots (22%)**, **bark (14%)**, **seeds (10%)**, and **whole plants (8%)**. Leaves are preferred due to ease of collection and minimal harm to the plant.

4.4 Methods of Preparation and Administration

Remedies were prepared mainly in the form of **pastes (38%)**, **decoctions (29%)**, **powders (21%)**, and **raw formulations (12%)**. Treatments were administered either orally or topically depending on the nature of the ailment.

4.5 Cattle Ailments Treated

The documented medicinal plants were used to treat **16 different cattle ailments**. Gastrointestinal disorders accounted for the highest proportion (**27%**), followed by skin-related problems (**22%**), musculoskeletal disorders including fractures (**18%**), fever, mastitis, parasitic infections, respiratory problems, and reproductive disorders. (Table -1)

5. Discussion

The dominance of Fabaceae, Euphorbiaceae, and Lamiaceae in the present study aligns with earlier ethnoveterinary and ethnomedicinal studies from different parts of India, indicating their rich bioactive potential. The preference for herbs and leaves suggests a sustainable approach to resource utilization practiced by local communities.

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The continued reliance on ethnoveterinary medicine in YSR Kadapa District is primarily due to its cost-effectiveness, ease of preparation, and immediate availability. Moreover, traditional remedies are often perceived as safer with fewer side effects compared to synthetic drugs.

However, rapid socio-economic changes, loss of forest cover, and declining interest among younger generations pose serious threats to the survival of this traditional knowledge. Scientific validation of these remedies is essential to ensure their efficacy and safety and to facilitate their integration into modern veterinary healthcare systems.

6. Conclusion

The present study reveals that YSR Kadapa District possesses a rich repository of ethnoveterinary medicinal knowledge used for treating various cattle ailments. The documentation of 46 medicinal plant species highlights the importance of indigenous practices in sustaining livestock health in rural areas. There is an urgent need for conservation of medicinal plant resources, systematic pharmacological validation, and promotion of effective traditional practices. Integrating ethnoveterinary knowledge with modern veterinary medicine can contribute significantly to sustainable livestock healthcare and rural development.

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Table-1 : Ethnoveterinary Medicinal Plants Used for Treating Cattle Ailments in YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh

S. No	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name (Telugu)	Part Used	Ailment Treated	Mode of Preparation & Use	Dose
1	*Acacia nilotica* (L.) Delile	Fabaceae	Nalla Tumma	Bark	Diarrhoea	Bark decoction given orally	200–250 ml/day for 2 days
2	*Albizia lebbeck* (L.) Benth.	Fabaceae	Dirisena	Bark	Respiratory infection	Bark decoction	250 ml/day
3	*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.	Fabaceae	Kandulu	Leaves	Wounds	Leaf paste applied topically	Once daily
4	*Clitoria ternatea* L.	Fabaceae	Sankhapushpam	Root	Fever	Root decoction	150 ml/day
5	*Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb.	Fabaceae	Sissoo	Bark	Dysentery	Bark decoction	200 ml/day
6	*Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre	Fabaceae	Kanuga	Seed oil	Skin diseases	Oil applied externally	Twice daily
7	*Acalypha indica* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Muripindi	Leaves	Skin infections	Leaf paste	Once daily
8	*Euphorbia hirta* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Pillipala	Whole plant	Diarrhoea	Plant decoction	150 ml/day
9	*Jatropha curcas* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Danti	Latex	Wounds	Latex applied externally	Once daily
10	*Ricinus communis* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Amudam	Leaves / Oil	Swelling	Warm leaf poultice	Once daily
11	*Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.	Lamiaceae	Tulasi	Leaves	Cold, cough	Leaf decoction	100–150 ml/day
12	*Leucas aspera* (Willd.) Link	Lamiaceae	Tummi	Leaves	Fever	Leaf juice	50 ml/day
13	*Mentha arvensis* L.	Lamiaceae	Pudina	Leaves	Indigestion	Leaf extract	100 ml/day
14	*Azadirachta indica* A. Juss.	Meliaceae	Vepa	Leaves	Skin diseases	Leaf paste	Once daily
15	*Calotropis procera* (Aiton) Dryand.	Apocynaceae	Jilledu	Leaves	Joint pain	Leaf poultice	Once daily
16	*Cassia fistula* L.	Fabaceae	Rela	Fruit pulp	Constipation	Pulp mixed with feed	100 g once
17	*Curcuma longa* L.	Zingiberaceae	Pasupu	Rhizome	Wounds	Paste applied	Once daily

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S. No	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name (Telugu)	Part Used	Ailment Treated	Mode of Preparation & Use	Dose
18	*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe	Zingiberaceae	Allam	Rhizome	Indigestion	Decoction	50 ml/day
19	*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f.	Asphodelaceae	Kalabanda	Leaf gel	Wounds	Gel applied externally	Twice daily
20	*Allium sativum* L.	Amaryllidaceae	Vellulli	Bulb	Parasitic infection	Paste mixed with feed	20–30 g/day
21	*Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.) Wight & Arn.	Combretaceae	Arjuna	Bark	Weakness	Bark decoction	250 ml/day
22	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Combretaceae	Karakkaya	Fruit	Digestive disorders	Powder mixed with water	20 g/day
23	*Phyllanthus emblica* L.	Phyllanthaceae	Usiri	Fruit	Immunity	Fruit powder	25 g/day
24	*Ficus benghalensis* L.	Moraceae	Marrichettu	Latex	Cracks in hooves	Latex application	Once daily
25	*Ficus religiosa* L.	Moraceae	Raavi	Bark	Diarrhoea	Bark decoction	200 ml/day
26	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Punarnava	Root	Urinary problems	Root decoction	150 ml/day
27	*Withania somnifera* (L.) Dunal	Solanaceae	Aswagandha	Root	Weakness	Root powder	20 g/day
28	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Solanaceae	Kamanchi	Leaves	Skin diseases	Leaf paste	Once daily
29	*Datura metel* L.	Solanaceae	Ummetha	Leaves	Pain	Leaf paste (external)	Once daily
30	*Cissus quadrangularis* L.	Vitaceae	Nalleru	Stem	Bone fracture	Stem paste bandage	10–15 days
31	*Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.	Fabaceae	Moduga	Bark	Diarrhoea	Bark decoction	200 ml/day
32	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Moringaceae	Munaga	Leaves	Lactation	Leaf curry/feed	250 g/day
33	*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Neredu	Seed	Diabetes-like symptoms	Seed powder	25 g/day
34	*Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	Garika	Whole plant	Fever	Plant juice	100 ml/day
35	*Tamarindus indica* L.	Fabaceae	Chinta	Seed	Indigestion	Seed powder	30 g/day
36	*Lawsonia inermis* L.	Lythraceae	Gorinta	Leaves	Skin infection	Leaf paste	Once daily

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S. No	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name (Telugu)	Part Used	Ailment Treated	Mode of Preparation & Use	Dose
37	*Vitex negundo* L.	Lamiaceae	Vavili	Leaves	Swelling	Leaf decoction	150 ml/day
38	*Cordia dichotoma* G.Forst.	Boraginaceae	Nakkera	Fruit	Cough	Fruit pulp	100 g/day
39	*Pergularia daemia* (Forssk.) Chiov.	Apocynaceae	Dustapaku	Leaves	Fever	Leaf decoction	150 ml/day
40	*Tridax procumbens* L.	Asteraceae	Gaddichamanthi	Leaves	Wounds	Leaf paste	Once daily
41	*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa	Rutaceae	Maredu	Leaves	Diarrhoea	Leaf decoction	200 ml/day
42	*Holarrhena antidysenterica* Wall.	Apocynaceae	Kodisepala	Bark	Dysentery	Bark decoction	150 ml/day
43	*Bambusa arundinacea* (Retz.) Willd.	Poaceae	Veduru	Leaves	Retained placenta	Leaf decoction	250 ml once
44	*Sida cordifolia* L.	Malvaceae	Bala	Root	Weakness	Root decoction	150 ml/day
45	*Anisomeles indica* (L.) Kuntze	Lamiaceae	Magasari	Leaves	Cold	Leaf decoction	100 ml/day
46	*Cleome viscosa* L.	Cleomaceae	Kukka vaminta	Seeds	Worm infection	Seed paste	20 g/day

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Chemical Constituents and Medicinal Applications of Amla

Dr. P. Yamini [1*], Dr. P. Padmavathi[2], Dr. S. Varalakshmi[3]
[*]1. Dept. of Chemistry, SPW D & PG College (A), TTD, Tirupati, 2. Dept. of Chemistry, SPW D & PG College(A), TTD, Tirupati, 3. Dept. of Bio Chemistry, SPW D & PG College(A), TTD, Tirupati.
Corresponding Author: Mail ID: yaminicnu@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT

Amla (Emblica officinalis), also known as amalaki in Sanskrit, is a key plant in Ayurveda and is widely used in Indian medicine to boost immunity and treat various diseases. Research indicates that amla and its phytochemicals—such as gallic acid, ellagic acid, and pyrogallol—possess strong anti-inflammatory and anti-aging properties. It is an excellent natural source of vitamin C and contains beneficial compounds like alkaloids, tannins, and flavonoids. Amla is used to treat conditions such as peptic ulcers and acid reflux and is processed into various value-added products, with drying commonly used to enhance shelf life and ease of distribution.

Key words: Amla, Nervous System, Immune-Boosting, Anti-Viral Properties. Skin Healer, Chemical constituents, Methods, benefits.

AMLA

The traditional Indian Ayurvedic medical system's most significant and widely researched plant, Emblica Officinalis (Amla), is discussed along with its preventive efficacies and safety. Vascular function, blood haematology, oxidative and inflammatory indicators, glucose and lipid profiles, urinalysis, and liver hepatotoxicity were the efficacy parameters examined. The main efficacy metric of blood fluidity significantly improved after Amla consumption. Along with a considerable increase in HDL cholesterol and a reduction in LDL cholesterol, benefits were also seen in the secondary endpoints, which included a decrease in von Willebrand factor (vWF), reduced 8- hydroxy-2′-deoxyguanosine (8-OHdG), and thrombin (TM), biomarkers of oxidative stress. After consuming amla, there were no appreciable differences in liver hepatotoxicity, urinalysis, or haematological as compared to baseline or placebo. After consuming amla, no negative side effects, changes in safety parameters, or problems with tolerance were noticed. As a result, Amla supplementation improved endothelial functioning, decreased oxidative stress, and had a tolerable palatability. The present review provided more information regarding the scientific research and review of Emblica Officinalis (Amla).

Introduction

Amla (Emblica officinalis) (EO) is revered in the ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda. Indian mythology holds that Amla, a member of the Euphorbiaceae family and also known as Phyllanthus emblica or Indian gooseberry, was the first tree to be created in the universe. Amla is a native of India and also grows in Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, South East Asia, China, and Malaysia in tropical and subtropical climates. The fruits of the Amla tree are frequently employed in Ayurveda medicine and are thought to strengthen the body's resistance to illness.

Amla is a small to medium sized deciduous tree, found in throughout India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, South East Asia, China and Malaysia. It grows about 8-18m height with thin light grey bark, leaves are simple, light green, sub-sessile, closely set along the branchlets looks like pinnate leaves; flowers are greenish yellow; fruits are globose, fleshy, pale yellow with six obscure vertical furrows enclosing six

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trigonous seeds in two seeded three crustaceous cocci.

Amla is highly nutritious and is one of the richest sources of vitamin-C, amino acids and minerals.1 It contains several chemical constituents like tannins, alkaloids and phenols.2Among all hydrolysable tannins, Emblicanin A and B; gallic acid, ellagic acid are reported to possess biological activity. Almost all parts possess medicinal properties, particularly fruit, which has been used in Ayurveda as a powerful rasayana and in customary medicine in the treatment of diarrhoea, jaundice, inflammation and several other ailments.3 Amla fruit is widely used in the Indian system of medicine as alone or in combination with other plants and is used to treat common cold and fever, as diuretic, laxative, liver tonic, refrigerant, stomachic, restorative, anti-pyretic, hair tonic; to prevent ulcer and dyspepsia. Pharmacological research reports on amla reveals its analgesic, anti-tussive, anti atherogenic, adaptogenic, cardio, gastro, nephro, neuro protective and anticancer properties. Amla is also reported to possess chemopreventive, radio, chemo and immunomodulatory, free radical scavenging, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti mutagenic activities. These properties are efficacious in the prevention and treatment of various diseases like cancer, atherosclerosis, diabetes, peptic ulcer, anemia, liver, heart diseases and various other disorders. The present work is a trial to understand the nutritional value, traditional uses, biochemical constituents and important medicinal values of Amla by emphasizing the mechanisms behind the activities and enlightening the therapeutic applications and clinical trials. It also summarizes the research done on amla from the past 5 years and also specifies the aspects that warrant future research establishing its activity and use in several diseases.

The present work aims to comprehensively evaluate Amla (Emblica officinalis) by examining its nutritional value, traditional uses, biochemical constituents, and medicinal significance. Particular emphasis is placed on the underlying mechanisms responsible for its biological activities, as well as its therapeutic applications and evidence from clinical trials. In addition, this review summarizes research conducted on amla over the past five years and identifies key gaps that warrant further investigation to establish its efficacy and potential role in the management of various diseases.

CLASSIFICATION

Amla fruit

Amla fruit is nearly spherical in shape, 18–25 mm in width and 15 layers of the pericarp (i.e., mesocarp) of a fruit are yellow in color while endocarp becomes yellowish

brown in ripened state. In case of fresh Amla fruit, the mesocarp contains sour taste, while it gives puckery taste in dried fruit. It surface is smooth but having six unclear vertical lines. The middle Amla leaves are >8–10 mm large, while 2–3 mm broad. They are hairless, light green in color from outside, and pale green or often pubescent beneath.

Amla oil

Its fat and oil is mainly obtained through seeds and fruits of Amla, and golden yellow light brown in color. It contains light, sweet, and nutty smell and it is highly moisturizing and moderate viscous oil.

Amla seeds

Each fruit contains 4–6 seeds which are smooth to touch and dark brown in color. They are a better source of Amla oil. Amla seeds are commonly used to cure asthma ana bronchitis.

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Amla bark

Its color is normally gray-brown or gray-green and about 12 mm thick. Amla fruit extract obtained by alcoholic extraction is very efficient in its antiviral activity.

Chemical Constituents

Amla (Emblica officinalis) is one of the most extensively studied medicinal plants. Numerous reports indicate that it is rich in tannins, alkaloids, and phenolic compounds. Approximately 28% of the total tannin content of the plant is concentrated in the fruit. The fruit contains two major hydrolysable tannins, Emblicanin A and Emblicanin B,[4] which are primarily responsible for its potent antioxidant activity. Upon hydrolysis, Emblicanin A yields gallic acid, ellagic acid, and glucose, whereas Emblicanin B produces ellagic acid and glucose.

In addition, the fruit contains phyllemblin.[5] Activity-directed fractionation studies have identified several bioactive phytochemicals, including gallic acid, corilagin, furosin, and geraniin.[6] Flavonoids such as quercetin, as well as alkaloids like phyllantine and phyllantidine, have also been reported. Along with these compounds, amla contains amino acids, carbohydrates, and other constituents, as summarized in Table 1.

Amla fruit juice is particularly notable for its exceptionally high vitamin C content (478.56 mg/100 mL), which exceeds that found in commonly consumed citrus fruits such as oranges, tangerines, and lemon.[7,8]The detailed composition of the fruit pulp of Emblica officinalis is illustrated in Figure 1.



Fig 1. Amla fruit pulp composition.

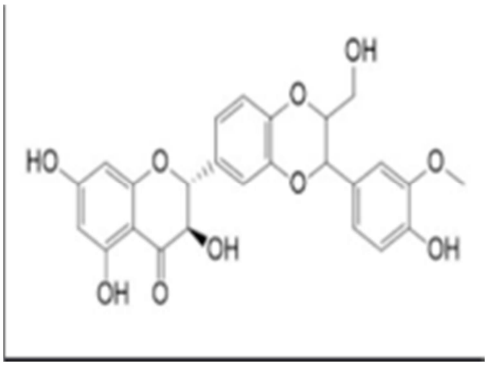


Fig 2. Phyllanthus emblica

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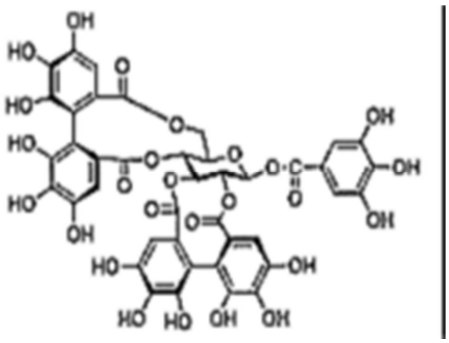


Fig 3.Emblic myrobalance

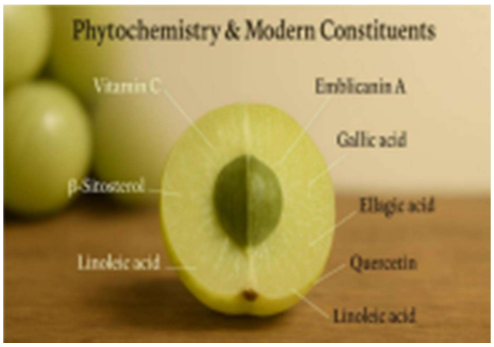
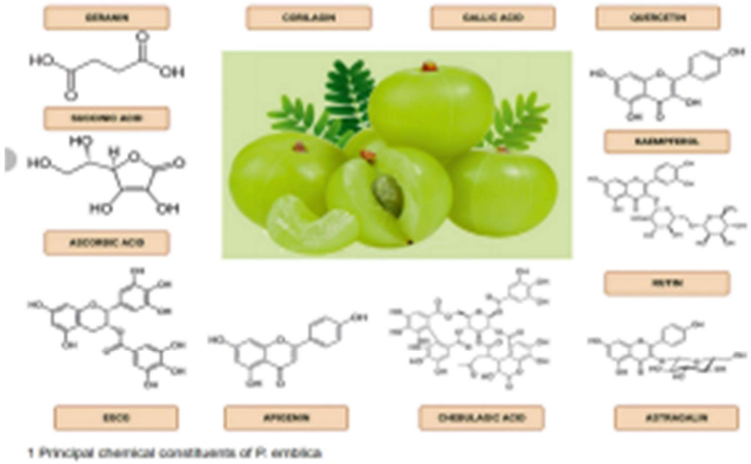


Fig 4.Amlaki-Modern Constituents



1 Principal chemical constituents of P. emblica

Fig 5. Principal chemical Constituents of Emblica officinalis

In comparison with apple, the edible fruit tissue is rich with proteins 3-fold and ascorbic acid160-fold and contains considerably higher concentration of most minerals and amino acids. Glutamic acid, proline, aspartic acid, alanine, and lysine are 29.6%, 14.6%, 8.1%, 5.4%and 5.3% respectively of the total amino acids. Some of the phytochemicals are shown in Figure 2.28 Pulpy portion of fruit, after drying found to contain: gallic acid 1.32%, tannin, gum13.75%; albumin 13.08%; crude cellulose17.08%; mineral matter 4.12% and moisture3.83%. Amla fruit ash contains chromium2.5ppm, zinc-4 ppm and copper-3 ppm. Compounds isolated from amla fruit are gallic acid, ellagic acid, 1-Ogalloyl-beta-D-glucose, 3,6-di-O-galloyl-D-glucose, chebulinic acid, quercetin, chebulagic acid, corilagin, 1,6- di-O galloyl beta-D-glucose, 3-Ethylgallic acid (3-ethoxy 4,5-dihydroxybenzoic acid) and isostrictinin[9]. Amla fruitalso contains flavonoids, kaempferol-3-O-alpha L-(6''- methyl) rhamnopyranoside andkaempferol-3-O-alpha L (6''-ethyl) rhamnopyranoside[10].

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Table 1: Taxonomical Classification Kingdom Plantae

Division	:	Angiosperm
Class	:	Dicotyledonae
Order	:	Geraniales
Family	:	Euphorbiaceae
Genus	:	Emblica
Species	:	Officinalis Geartn

Morphology E. officinalis is a subtropical and tropical plant described in ancient Indian mythology as being the first tree in existence. Much earlier, Amla plant has been utilized for management of various disorders and a richest source of vitamin C. Small to medium-sized tree that grows up to 18 meters tall, with an asymmetrical branch structure and asymmetrical shape. The leaves are oval shape and very short in size up to 7- 10cm long. The Indian Gooseberry, also known as Amla, is a bright greenish yellow colored fruit with a smooth and hard outer skin. It has six vertical stripes or furrows and is nearly spherical in shape. It ripens in the autumn months and is usually harvested by hand after climbing to the upper branches.[11] The taste of the Indian Gooseberry is sour, bitter and astringent and is quite
fibrous in texture. In India, it is common to eat Gooseberries either fresh or dried.[12]

Chemical Constituents

Amla has undergone extensive research, making it one of the most studied plants. The fruits are rich in ascorbic acid and in addition they contain phenols, including ellagic acid, gallic acid, quercetin, corilagin, geranin, gallotanins, kaempferol, emblicanins, furosin, flavonoids, glycosides, and proanthocyanidins. The root contains glycosides and tannins. Fruit has total 28% of the total tannis distributed in the whole plant. The fruit contains two hydrolysable tannins Emblicanin A and B, which have antioxidant properties; one on hydrolysis gives gallic acid, ellagic acid and glucose. The fruit also contains Phyllemblin. Activity directed fractionation revealed the presence of several phytochemicals like galic acid, corilagin, furosin andgeranin. Flavonoids like quercetin, alkaloids like phyllantine and phyllantidine are discovered[13]. Along with these, it primarily contains amino acids, carbohydrates and other compounds given in table 2. amla is the best rejuvenating herb and

a great rasayana that helps to protect from disease, also by reducing the possibilities of premature ageing. Amla is considered one of the most powerful antioxidant herbs in Ayurveda due to its low molecular weight hydrolysable tannins.[14]

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Table 2: Types and chemical constituents of Amla Type
Chemical Constituents

Hydrolysable	:	Emblicanin A and B, Punigluconin
Tannins	:	Pedunculagin, Chebulinic acid, Chebulagic Acid, Corilagin, Geraniin, Ellagotannin.
Alkaloid	:	Phyllantine, Phyllembein, Phyllantidine
Phenolic	:	Gallic acid, Methyl gallate, Ellagic acid,
Compounds	:	Alanine, Cystine, Lysine
Carbohydrates	:	Pectin
Vitamins	:	Ascorbic acid
Flavonoids	:	Quercetin, Kaempferol
Organic acid	:	Citric acid
Amino acids		Glutamic acid, Proline, Aspartic acid, Alanine, Cystine, Lysine.

Ethnobotanical Importance of Emblica

In ancient Indian Mythology it is believed that it is the first tree to be created in the universe. The plant is considered as rasayana and used in delaying the degenerative and senescence related processes. In folk medicine, the fruit which are sour, astringent, bitter, sweet and anodyne. Its various beneficial effects include eye cooling, carminative, digestive, stomach, laxative, indigestion, aphrodisiac, rejuvenating, diuretic, antipyretic and tonic effects[17]. Fresh and dry fruits are extensively used as laxatives. E. officinalis is also said to have hepatoprotective, cardioprotective, diuretic, cooling, gastric tonic, mood-altering, antipyretic, and anti-inflammatory properties. It has high concentration of vitamin C; thus amount is more than that of a tomato and orange. In ayurvedic texts, it is described as potent antacid. Due to its cooling effect, amla is a popular ingredient for treating burning sensations anywhere on the body and various types of inflammation and fever. These are manifestations of pitta. Amla also prevents peptic ulcer dyspepsia, and is a digestive medicine. Amla is considered to be the best rejuvenating agent in Ayurveda.[15]

Unique in having a natural balance of fruit flavors (sweet, sour, pungent, bitter and astringent), it stimulates the brain to activate the three main components of all physiology in the body: water, fire and recognize the element of air regain balance[86].

Amla Juice

Amla juice with honey every morning and evening exposes a number of medicinal benefits; including cures weakness of the generative system, blood purification, diabetes, cold and cough.

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Gout

Gout is an inflammation of the big toe caused by uric acid metabolism resulting in acid deposit and its salts in blood and joints. It is cured by intake of amla juice withhold ghee, makes softening of joints and helps in curing gout and also removing the spots caused by measles, chicken pox, small pox.

Piles

Drinking fresh amla juice with half teaspoon of ghee and 1 teaspoon of honey and 100 grams of milk after cures chronic piles problem.[18]

AmlaPaste Respiratory disorder

Amla has been witnessed that it can retrieve the normal respiration while the system gets affected. The paste made of 10gram leaves of Phyllanthus Emblica, 5 fruits of Terminalia chebula, 9 seeds of Piper nigrum, one garlic are crushed over and mixed with 25 ml ghee made from cow's milk and a clove. The fresh juice of amla mixed with honey can get back best from asthma, cough, and other respiratory disorders.

Urinary problem

Amla excellently cleans the bladder and strengthens the bladder muscles. Consumption of dried amla pulp with hot water mixed with gur can cure urinary problem. One tablespoon of amla powder and one tablespoon of turmeric with hot water can reduce urine infection.

Migraine

Severe vascular headaches associated with migraines, which are more common in women than in men, are traditionally treated by applying a paste made from dry amla powder mixed with kumkum, neelkamal, and rosewater.

Diarrhoea can be effectively treated using a paste prepared from amla leaves mixed with honey[16].

Pharmacological Implication of Amla

Amla inhibits antimicrobial properties and usefulness for the designing effectual medicines. Its phytochemical constituents contain a wide range of secondary metabolites and function as reducing substance for biogenic production. It is determined from total phenolic, tannin, and flavonoid contents of E. officinalis fruit extract. Essential oil obtained from emblica by hydro-distillation and supercritical fluid extraction showed good anti-microbial activity in an in vitro study which effects are mediated through Amla extract[19].Components such as tannins that make amla an excellent cancer preventive agent and the conversion of polyphenols to high atomic weight tannins. Amla represses the development of different malignancies like bosom, uterus, pancreas, stomach and liver diseases. Activity of emblica exerts protective effect against human microbial pathogens. Studies involve the in vitro antimicrobial activity of plant extracts against gram positive and gram-negative microorganisms and to ascertain chemical components that may be present in amla extract.

Anti-microbial effect by inhibiting adhesion of candida albicans to buccal epithelial cells and denatures acrylic surfaces in vitro[20].Gradual increase in zone of inhibition against staphylococcus with amoxicillin by agar diffusion and disk diffusion methods. Amla extract shows significant result in the mean colony count reduction of Escherichia coli, staphylococcus aureus, and pasteurellamultocida by tube dilution method.

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Anti-Diabetic Activity

Amla is considered as a natural therapy to treat or control diabetes. Primary cause of diabetes are obesity, stress related disorders or else inactive lifestyle. Amla is abundant in vitamin C. It is a powerful antioxidant that helps combat the effects of free radical production and oxidative stress. A mixture prepared from dried fruits of three plant species Emblica officinalis, Terminalia bellerica, terminalia chebula contributes to decreased blood glucose level. Research reveals that by intake of amla extracts there is gradual reduction in neuropathic pain via antioxidative mechanism[21]. Methanolic extract of amla examined for anti-diabetic activity against streptozotocin-induced diabetic patients. The quercetin constituent present in the methanolic section showed significant antidiabetic activity when administered daily for 28 days. The extract reduces the blood glucose and urine sugar levels with a substantial increase in chloride in dosage.

Anti-Cancer, Anti-Immunogenic Activity

Cancer is a global epidemic with 40 million new cases each year lead to annual death toll around 8 million. The immeasurable societal burden results in social and economic impact with quality-of-life consequences. In spontaneous developing world, the usage of medicinal plant seems more effective than synthetic drugs. Research reveals that the person consuming herbal or Ayurvedic medicine has more sustainability than taking synthetic or psychoactive substance[22]. Phyllanthus Emblica tree produce Emblica officinalis or Indian gooseberry whose extracts utilized as anticancer agent, immune- stimulator and antitumor activities. Amla consists of 18 compounds that inhibit the growth of tumor cells such as gastric and uterine cancer cells. Amla fruit extract activates natural killer cells reduce ascites and solid tumors[88].The aqueous extract of amla exhibited potent ant carcinogenic activity against 20-methlcholanthrene. Amla harbors potent antitumor activity, also prevent reactive oxygen species induced DNA damage and oncogenesis. Amla detoriate potential treatment for breast cancer with low toxicity against nontrans formed cells[23].

Antioxidant Activity

Amla is rich in antioxidants such as gallic acid, ascorbic acid, and various phenolic compounds, which contribute to enhanced immune function and improved digestion. It contains several biologically active constituents with potent antioxidant activity, including tannins, flavonoids, anthocyanins, and phenolic acids. Studies have shown that amla fruit extract improves mitochondrial dysfunction in skeletal muscles and exhibits cytoprotective effects by reducing reactive oxygen species generated during oxidative stress[18].

Additionally, a dose-dependent protective effect of amla fruit extract on plasma proteins and red blood cells has been demonstrated. At higher concentrations, the extract restores membrane integrity, primarily due to the presence of gallic acid, quinic acid, and quercetin. The fruit extract has also been reported to promote healing of damaged gastric mucosa and inhibit Helicobacter pylori following 14 days of therapy[92]. Clinical studies further support the gastroprotective effects of amla fruit extract.

Anti-Aging Activity

Amla is regarded as an antioxidant rasayana that protects the skin from free radical– induced damage and delays the aging process. Traditionally, it is known to promote longevity, prevent disease, and alleviate symptoms associated with aging. A dark brown powder extracted from the branches of amla contains a variety of phenolic acids, primarily sinapic acid and ferulic acid. This extract has demonstrated potent antioxidant and tyrosinase inhibitory activities in in vitro assays, along with significant suppression of

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melanin synthesis[24].

The amla branch is particularly rich in bioactive compounds and shows potential for incorporation into anti–skin-aging formulations. Experimental studies have reported that an amla formulation prepared using traditional Ayurvedic methods, administered at a dose of 45 g/day to healthy volunteers, resulted in a significant increase in telomerase activity and telomere length compared with age-matched placebo controls after 45 days of treatment. Increased telomerase activity may delay the onset of aging by maintaining telomere length within a critical range[25].

Animal studies further indicate that amla exerts a protective effect against collagen degradation while enhancing collagen synthesis. Additionally, topical application of creams containing amla constituents has shown protective effects against ultraviolet radiation– induced skin aging, attributed mainly to the presence of phenolic acids and flavonoids.

Cardio-Protective Activity

In animal studies, the Emblica fruit as fruit extract showed an antimicrobial, antifungal and antivirus protective effect against ischemia-reperfusion injury which occurred due to oxidative stress. The remedy from atherosclerosis is possible only when the oxidation of injury is minimized. The juice of the amla ensures that it is rich in polyphenol. Indian gooseberries were demonstrated to prevent oxidative stress. Amla supports the heart, blood and circulation. It protects the cardiovascular system and act as a cardiac stimulant. Amla helps to reduce cholesterol level and protect the heart from diseases[22].

Amla as Anti-Anemic Agent, enhance Fertility and remedy for Menstrual Disorders

Anemia occurs when there are not enough red blood cells to carry oxygen to different organs. As a result, it causes a lack of blood, iron and vitamin B12. The main function of the RBC is to transport oxygen into the tissues and anemia caused due to decrease in oxygen carrying capacity. Anemia leads to reduction in oxygen level and inhibits various factors such as inadequate absorption of iron, reduced intake of vitamin B 12, destruction of red bone marrow. Amla act as good absorbing agent of iron which is composed of high amounts of Vitamin C or ascorbic acid that helps to reduce iron deficiency. Combination Amla and neem leaves have a synergistic effect which can be very effective to patients suffering from iron deficiency anemia. Amla fruits keep the menstrual cycle regular and healthy. Amla juice is packed with vitamin B1 and B2 which is beneficial during heavy blood flow. It helps in flushing out toxins from the body during the menstrual cycles. It is also rich in vitamin C and iron which can fulfill the demands in the body. Amla fruit juice helps to regularize periods[16]. It supports the reproductive system of both men and women and can help overcome difficulty in conceiving. It enhances fertility by nurturing sperm and ovaries and possibilities of conception. Mostly supportive for women, strengthens the uterus and protects the reproductive system. White discharge can also be reduced by taking dried amla seeds powder mixed with honey. Mixture of fruit juice and sugar used for the relief of burning sensation in vagina. Amla essentially supports the urinary system and helps to eliminate waste from the body.

Ambient uses and needs Amla in Biotin Gummies Biotin or vitamin B7 is a water soluble vitamin that plays a vital role for the human body. It helps to increase nutrition value and converts it into metabolize fats, energy, and amino acids, plays a crucial part in the development of hair, skins and nails. Biotins are prepared from organic meat, fish, eggs,

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meat, seeds, nuts and certain vegetables. Biotin gummies are supplements that uptake in gummy from instead of pill or capsule. Biotin gummies contain collagen, keratin, Zinc and multivitamins such as Vitamin A, Vitamin B, Vitamin C, and Vitamin E. Though, Amla is the 2nd richest source of Vitamin C and it plays a crucial role in biotin gummies. Vitamin C as an antioxidant provides protection to cells from oxidative stress. It increases blood circulation throughout the body including to the scalp also which helps to increase hair growth. Vitamin C supports healthy and moist skin. It promotes collagen production in skin as reduction in collagen levels leads to fine line and wrinkles. Vitamin C is a major building block protein found in connective tissue and skin. It also helps to manage blood pressure, reduce risk of chronic diseases, prevent iron deficiency, and lower risk.

Amla in Cosmetic World

Amla is the most important medicinal plant of the Indian traditional system of mythology and it is as ancient as human civilization as our cosmetic world. In prehistoric sculpture, it is mentioned about benefits of amla on face and hair treatment. Amla tree, fruit and leaves are found abundantly all over India, and other south Asian countries. The fruit is highly prized both for its high Vitamin C content and precious oil, extracted from seeds and pulp used as treatment for hair and scalp problems. Raw amla juice removes acne marks and blemishes in a natural way and can be used as a face scrub to detoxify, exfoliate the skin well. Amla powder with turmeric powder mixture can be applied on the face as a mask to exfoliate skin and helps in brightening skin and lightening the complexion. An essential oil is distilled from leaves used for preparation of perfume. Cosmetics brands like Ayur, Nihar Amla, Dabur, Mama earth, Patanjali, Khadi Naturals, VICCO, and many more.

Amla Wine

Amla wine is one of the most acidic alcoholic beverages identified as a beneficial health promoting alcoholic beverage made from fruit juice that has a mouth puckering flavor. It is prepared by using fermenting agent, temperature, duration, juice, concentration, variation or by addition of jiggery. Wine is recognized to be potentially beneficial in various aspects like anti-aging, anti-oxidants effect, reduction effect, decrease cancer risk in women, improve lung functions, anti-depressants, antispasmodic and make the bone stronger. The herbal "amla wine" consists of alcoholic extract of herb with percent of ethanol present in wine is about 7-16%, thus moderate consumption of amla wine lower the risk of diabetes, artery damage, heart attack, and decrease in the level of cholesterol.

Amla in Food Technology

Amla (Emblica officinalis) is rich in antioxidants and vitamins, particularly vitamin C, and has been used in food technology since ancient times in various processed forms. Amla pickles are concentrated sources of vitamin C that enhance immunity, protect against viral infections, and support gastrointestinal health. Amla juice serves as an excellent dietary source of water-soluble antioxidants and has been shown to improve liver function, prevent fructose-induced fatty liver disease, and promote cardiovascular health and hair growth.

Amla candy possesses antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that help protect against harmful bacteria, oxidative stress, and digestive disorders such as constipation and bloating, with maximum benefits reported when consumed on an empty stomach. Additionally, regular consumption of amla murabba is particularly beneficial for women, as it helps reduce menstrual cramps and compensates for iron loss during

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menstruation when taken consistently over a three-month period.

Effect of amla on COVID-19 Pandemic

Corona virus is an infectious and contagious virus caused by SARS-COV-2 Virus. Covid-19 caused a diverse impact on our immune system which arose to pandemic. A large spread of covid-19 with high mortality rate due to SARSCOV-2 led the world health organization to declare a worldwide pandemic on 12th March 2020. Due to unavailability of health facilities and proper medicines and vaccines, thousands of death cases have increased day by day. Many people were not able to get a bed in the hospital. The government started home isolation in which people started adopting our traditional methods to get cured and enhance immunity to fight against. Amla played a significant role to improve physical health and act as a natural immunity booster. It is no secret that amla is enrich in Vitamin C which is a strong antioxidant and as recommended by nutritionist, replacing Artificial Vitamin C capsules with Amla fruit/juice which can be a natural nutritional support to immune system and led as a primary line of protection in opposition to viral infection. Amla enhances the flavors of the mouth in covid-19 patients as they receive no sensitivity of taste and smell of any odor. Vitamin C from Amla helps build defense for the body by combining with Zinc to help the body to fight the infection. Zinc potentiates the immune boosting function of Vitamin C and hence the supplement of Amla with Zinc can immensely help to maintain normal functioning of the immune system and keep diseases like COVID-19 at bay. Activation of the innate immune system is an early step of the adoptive immune system.

Factors which will enhance the chance of amla side effects

Consumption of excessive dosage of Amla can trigger these side effects

- Amla is not for hypotension patient.
- Amla not for low blood sugar level patients.
- Hyper-acidity patient.
- Blood–related disorder patient.
- Who have undergone surgery in the near future.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding. If you have dry skin and scalp.
- Amla makes stole hard.
- Heart patient should be careful.

Conclusion

Approximately 80% of the world's population relies on plant-derived drugs for primary healthcare. Amla (Emblica officinalis) holds a prominent position in Ayurveda and is valued for its rich composition of vitamin C, minerals, and antioxidants, which help prevent numerous health disorders. Beyond its medicinal importance, amla also has cultural and spiritual significance in India, where the tree is considered sacred.

Herbal and medicinal formulations of amla have demonstrated broad therapeutic potential, with

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notable benefits in conditions such as diabetes and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Scientific research using modern technologies has shown that various amla extracts exert beneficial effects at the molecular level. Nevertheless, further studies are required to explore unexplored phytochemical constituents of Indian gooseberry, which may contribute to the development of novel drugs for human welfare.

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Conservation of Endemic and Threatened Species: Challenges and Strategies

Dr.V.Gurumurthy, Dr.C.Venkata Krishnaiah and Dr C. Narasimha Rao,
Lecturer in Zoology, Govt. Degree College for Women Madanapalle-517325, Andhra Pradesh, India.
Lecturer in Zoology, Govt. Degree College, Puttur -517583, Andhra Pradesh, India. Lecturer in Zoology, Government Degree College, Mydukur, YSR Kadapa Dist. A.P. 516172.

Abstract

The rapid loss of biodiversity worldwide driven by habitat destruction, climate change, pollution, and overexploitation has elevated the conservation of endemic and threatened species to a global priority. Endemic species, restricted to specific geographic regions, are uniquely vulnerable to environmental disturbances, while threatened species face elevated risks of extinction across broader ranges. This article reviews the ecological importance of endemic and threatened species, analyzes principal drivers of decline, evaluates conservation strategies, and proposes future directions to enhance biodiversity protection through integrated scientific, policy, and community-based approaches.

Key words: Biodiversity conservation; Endemic species; Threatened species; Habitat loss; Climate change; Conservation strategies; Integrated conservation approaches

1. Introduction

Biodiversity promote ecosystem services essential for human well-being, including food security, climate regulation, and cultural values. Among biodiversity components, **endemic species** those confined to particular geographical areas are often irreplaceable elements of ecological communities and evolutionary history. Similarly, **threatened species**, as categorized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), face high risk of extinction if current trends continue.

Conservation of these species is not only a moral imperative but also vital for maintaining ecological resilience and stability. This article examines key conservation issues and synthesizes effective practices that have emerged from decades of research and field implementation.

Endemic species are confined to specific geographic regions, often shaped by long-term evolutionary isolation, unique environmental conditions, or geological processes. Their restricted distributions make them highly sensitive to habitat alteration and environmental change. Even minor disturbances such as land-use conversion, invasive species introduction, or climatic shifts can result in rapid population declines or extinction. Consequently, the loss of endemic species often leads to disproportionate ecological consequences and irreversible losses of genetic diversity.

Threatened species, categorized as Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered under the IUCN Red List, face elevated risks of extinction across varying spatial scales. These species frequently experience multiple, interacting pressures, including habitat fragmentation, overexploitation, pollution, disease, and climate change. The decline of threatened species can disrupt food webs, reduce ecosystem resilience, and compromise ecosystem services essential for human well-being.

Importance of Conserving Endemic and Threatened Species

- Maintain **ecosystem balance** and food webs
- Preserve **genetic diversity**
- Support **ecosystem services** (pollination, water purification, climate regulation)
- Protect **cultural and national identity** (e.g., giant panda in China, kiwi in New Zealand

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2. Ecological Importance of Endemic and Threatened Species

Endemic species frequently evolve unique adaptations to local environments and contribute disproportionately to global biodiversity. Their loss can trigger cascading effects on ecosystem function:

- **Functional uniqueness:** Many endemic species occupy ecological roles that cannot be replaced by widespread generalists.
- **Indicator status:** Endemics often serve as indicators of ecosystem health due to their sensitivity to environmental changes.
- **Evolutionary significance:** Endemic species frequently represent unique genetic lineages, increasing the value of their preservation for evolutionary research.

Threatened species, while not always endemic, face pressures that undermine population viability, community structure, and ecosystem services.

3. Major Threats to Endemic and Threatened Species

1: Major Threats to Endemic and Threatened Species

Threat	Examples / Case Studies	Impact on Species
Habitat Loss & Fragmentation	Amazon Rainforest – Golden Lion tamarin, Jaguar Western Ghats – Lion-tailed macaque, Nilgiri tahr Great Barrier Reef – Green sea turtle, endemic corals	Reduces population size, isolates populations, disrupts feeding and breeding, increases human-wildlife conflict
Climate Change	Global	Shifts suitable habitat ranges; species with low dispersal capacity may face extinction
Invasive Species	Galápagos Islands – Goats, rats affecting Galápagos giant tortoise Island ecosystems – Rats, cats, snakes affecting kiwi and seabirds	Habitat degradation, predation on eggs/juveniles, competition for resources, rapid population decline
Overexploitation	Poaching – Tigers, pangolins Overfishing – Endemic freshwater fishes Plant harvesting ,Medicinal and timber plants	Population reduction exceeding natural recovery, local extinctions, loss of genetic diversity
Pollution & Disease	Water pollution affecting fish stocks Pesticides reducing pollinators Wildlife disease outbreaks	Reduced reproductive success, increased human exploitation, population declines, ecosystem imbalance

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Table 2: Conservation Strategies for Endemic and Threatened Species

Strategy	Methods / Examples	Key Outcomes
Protected Areas & Habitat Restoration	Establish reserves, reforestation, wetland and reef rehabilitation	Prevents further habitat loss, reconnects fragmented populations
Species Recovery Plans	Captive breeding, translocation, reintroduction, population monitoring (e.g., Great Indian Bustard pilot program)	Boosts population recovery, ensures long-term survival, adaptive management
Legislation & Policy Frameworks	Endangered species laws, habitat conservation plans, environmental impact assessments	Provides legal protection, strengthens enforcement of conservation actions
Community Engagement & Indigenous Knowledge	Involve local communities in monitoring and management	Enhances conservation success, promotes social equity, reduces human-wildlife conflict
Ex Situ Conservation	Zoos, botanical gardens, seed banks, cryopreservation	Maintains genetic reservoirs, allows research and potential reintroduction
Climate Adaptation Strategies	Identify climate refugia, promote landscape connectivity, integrate future climate scenarios	Allows species movement, reduces vulnerability to climate change
Flagship Species Programs	Tigers, Giant Panda, Snow Leopard, Sea Turtles	Raises public awareness, mobilizes funding, protects broader ecosystems

4. Conservation Strategies

A multi level conservation approach spanning local to international scales is required for lasting impact.

4.1 Protected Areas and Habitat Restoration

- **Establishment of reserves:** Legal protection of habitats prevents further degradation.
- **Ecological restoration:** Reforestation, wetland rehabilitation, and aquatic restoration can reclaim degraded ecosystems and reconnect fragmented populations.

4.2 Species Recovery Plans

Targeted planning involves population monitoring, captive breeding, translocation, and reintroduction efforts. Prioritizations frameworks help allocate limited resources where they are most effective.

Most recovery plans include:

1. **Clear objectives** (e.g., minimum population size, number of breeding units)
2. **Site-specific management actions** (habitat restoration, predator control, captive breeding)

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3. **Monitoring and adaptive management**
4. **Criteria for down-listing or delisting under conservation status frameworks**
5. **Collaborative governance** involving governments, NGOs, scientists, and local communities

Great Indian Bustard Conservation Pilot (India)

While not a full published recovery plan yet, the Forest Department in Rajasthan initiated an **egg-replacement pilot** to increase hatch success for the critically endangered **Great Indian Bustard** analogous to recovery planning in action by improving recruitment and reducing nest loss.

4.3 Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Strong legal protections, such as endangered species laws, habitat conservation plans, and environmental impact assessments, provide necessary governance for conservation actions.

4.4 Community Engagement and Indigenous Knowledge

Local communities are often the most effective stewards of biodiversity. Integrating traditional ecological knowledge with scientific management enhances both conservation success and social equity.

4.5 Ex Situ Conservation

Botanical gardens, zoos, seed banks, and cryopreservation facilities serve as genetic reservoirs and allow for research and reintroduction efforts when in situ conditions are no longer viable.

4.6 Climate Adaptation Strategies

Conservation planning must incorporate future climate scenarios, identify climate refugia, and promote landscape connectivity to allow species movement.

5. Case Studies

5.1 Island Endemics

Island ecosystems illustrate extreme vulnerability. Conservation programs such as invasive predator control and habitat protection have prevented extinctions in species like flightless birds, endemic reptiles, and insular plants.

Galápagos Rails and Island Restoration

On *Floreana Island* in the Galápagos, eradication of invasive mammals (cats and rats) has allowed the **Galápagos Rail** a ground dwelling, endemic bird to be observed on the island for the first time in nearly 200 years, an encouraging sign of ecosystem recovery. Similar efforts have contributed to native bird resurgence on nearby Pinzon Island after rodent removal. Such invasive species removal is a core strategy across many island restoration programs.

Montserrat Amphibians and Ex-situ Programs

On *Montserrat* (Caribbean), endemic amphibians like the **giant ditch frog** (locally the "mountain chicken") have faced extinction from disease in the wild. Conservationists have created ex-situ breeding populations in partnership with international zoos and institutions, complemented by in-situ habitat work aiming eventually at reintroduction. This

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illustrates how captive programs can buffer highly threatened endemics while broader conservation measures are undertaken.

5.2 Flagship Species Programs

Focusing attention on charismatic threatened species (e.g., tigers, gorillas) has mobilized funding and public support that also benefits broader ecological communities.

1. Project Tiger – India

Flagship species: Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris)*
Launched: 1973

Project Tiger is one of the world's most successful flagship species programs. By prioritizing tiger conservation, the program led to:

- Creation and strengthening of **tiger reserves**
- Protection of large forest landscapes
- Conservation of prey species and forest ecosystems

As a result, India's tiger population has increased significantly over recent decades. The tiger serves as an **umbrella species**, meaning its protection safeguards hundreds of other species sharing the same habitat.

Key lesson: Protecting large predators conserves entire ecosystems.

2. Giant Panda Conservation Program – China

Flagship species: Giant Panda (*Ailuropoda melanoleuca*)

The giant panda became a global conservation icon and symbol of WWF. Conservation actions included:

- Establishment of panda reserves
- Habitat restoration and corridor creation
- Strict control of deforestation

These efforts led to the **down-listing of the giant panda from Endangered to Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List.

Key lesson: Flagship species can mobilize international funding and political support.

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3. African Elephant Conservation Initiatives

Flagship species: African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)

Elephants are used as flagships in many African conservation programs because of their size, visibility, and cultural value. Conservation measures include:

- Anti-poaching patrols
- Landscape-level habitat protection
- Community-based conservation and ecotourism

Elephant protection benefits savanna and forest ecosystems and supports livelihoods through tourism.

Key lesson: Flagship species can link conservation with economic incentives.

4. Mountain Gorilla Conservation – Central Africa

Flagship species: Mountain Gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*)

Focused conservation in the Virunga Mountains and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest involved:

- Veterinary intervention
- Strict park protection
- Community revenue sharing from ecotourism

Mountain gorilla populations have increased despite regional instability.

Key lesson: Intensive flagship programs can succeed even in politically complex regions.

5. Whale Conservation Programs (Global)

Flagship species: Blue whale, Humpback whale, Right whale

Whales are used as flagship species to promote:

- Marine protected areas
- Regulation of shipping lanes
- Reduction of by catch and noise pollution

Whale conservation has contributed to broader **marine ecosystem protection** and public awareness of ocean conservation.

Key lesson: Flagship species are powerful tools in marine conservation.

6. Sea Turtle Conservation Programs

Flagship species: Green turtle, Olive ridley turtle

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Sea turtles are flagship species for coastal and marine conservation. Programs focus on:

- Nesting beach protection
- Reduction of plastic pollution
- Community-based egg protection

Protecting turtles also safeguards coral reefs, sea grass beds, and coastal biodiversity.

Key lesson: Flagship species help integrates conservation with local community participation.

7. Snow Leopard Conservation Program – Central Asia

Flagship species: Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*)

Snow leopards are flagship species for high-altitude ecosystems. Conservation actions include:

- Livestock compensation schemes
- Anti-poaching initiatives
- Transboundary cooperation

Protection of snow leopards also conserves fragile mountain ecosystems and water sources.

Key lesson: Flagship species can promote cross-border conservation cooperation.

Flagship species programs:

- Increase **public awareness and funding**
- Provide political justification for protected areas
- Protect multiple species through habitat conservation
- Link biodiversity protection with cultural identity and livelihoods

However, they must be carefully designed to ensure **less charismatic species are not neglected**.

6. Challenges and Emerging Issues

Despite progress, significant obstacles remain:

- **Insufficient funding:** Conservation budgets rarely match the scale of biodiversity loss.
- **Data gaps:** Many species especially invertebrates, fungi, and microbes remain poorly studied, making threat assessments difficult.
- **Policy enforcement:** Weak governance and corruption can undermine legal protections.
- **Human-wildlife conflict:** Balancing conservation with livelihoods remains a social and ethical challenge.

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7. Future Directions

To strengthen conservation outcomes, the following priorities should be emphasized:

1. **Integrated Landscape Management:** Break down sectoral silos to manage ecosystems holistically.
2. **Advanced Monitoring Technologies:** Use remote sensing, environmental DNA (cDNA), and AI to improve detection and tracking of species.
3. **Global Cooperation:** Biodiversity is a shared global asset requiring transboundary collaboration.
4. **Education and Awareness:** Investing in education fosters conservation culture at all levels of society.
5. **Sustainable Development Integration:** Align conservation with economic planning to ensure long-term viability.

8. Conclusion

Protecting endemic and threatened species is central to preserving Earth's biological heritage. While challenges are significant, multi-dimensional conservation strategies grounded in science, empowered by policy, and supported by communities can reverse declines and sustain biodiversity for future generations.

The conservation of endemic and threatened species remains one of the most urgent challenges in global biodiversity management. Endemic species, restricted to limited geographic ranges, and threatened species, facing escalating risks of extinction, are particularly vulnerable to habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, overexploitation, and pollution. Their decline not only represents an irreversible loss of biological heritage but also undermines ecosystem stability and the services upon which human societies depend.

This study highlights that effective conservation requires **integrated, multi-scale strategies** that combine habitat protection, species-specific recovery planning, legislative enforcement, scientific monitoring, and community participation. Case studies from island ecosystems, flagship species programs, and structured recovery plans demonstrate that targeted, evidence based interventions such as invasive species eradication, habitat restoration, captive breeding, and reintroduction can successfully reverse population declines when sustained over time.

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Traditional Medicinal Plants of Kanchili Mandal of Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh, India

Bendalam Jagadeesh[1] and Prayaga Murty Pragada [2]
[1]Lecturer in Botany, Sri Vruksha Junior College, Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh, India
[2]Lecturer in Botany, Govt. Degree College, Yeleswaram Kakinada District , Andhra Pradesh, India
pragada007@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study documents the traditional medicinal plant knowledge prevailing in Kanchili Mandal of Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh, India. The area forms part of the northern Eastern Ghats and is characterized by rich floral diversity and strong dependence of rural communities on plant-based healthcare systems. Information was collected through structured interviews, group discussions, and field visits involving local healers, elderly villagers, and knowledgeable informants. The present study recorded 25 medicinal plant species belonging to 22 genera and 18 botanical families, which are traditionally used for the treatment of gastrointestinal disorders, respiratory ailments, fever, skin diseases, wounds, and women's health-related problems. The findings reveal that traditional medicine continues to play a vital role in primary healthcare due to limited access to modern medical facilities. The documentation emphasizes the ecological, cultural, and therapeutic significance of medicinal plants in the region and highlights the urgent need for conservation, sustainable utilization, and scientific validation of this indigenous knowledge.

Keywords: Ethnobotany, Traditional medicine, Medicinal plants, Kanchili Mandal, Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh

1. INTRODUCTION

India is one of the world's richest countries in terms of biodiversity and traditional knowledge systems. The use of plants for medicinal purposes has been an integral part of Indian culture since ancient times and forms the basis of traditional systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, and folk medicine (Jain, 1991; Cotton, 1996). Even today, a significant proportion of the rural and tribal population relies on plant-based remedies for treating various ailments.

Andhra Pradesh, particularly the Eastern Ghats region, is known for its diverse flora and rich ethnomedicinal heritage (Rao and Hajra, 1996). Several ethnobotanical studies from Srikakulam District have documented extensive use of medicinal plants by tribal communities such as Savaras, Jatapus, Gadabas, and Konda Reddis for treating stomach ache, ulcers, fever, malaria, skin diseases, and eye disorders (Reddy et al., 2007; Rao et al., 2010; Murthy and Rao, 2014).

Kanchili Mandal, though floristically rich, remains relatively less explored from an ethnobotanical perspective. Earlier studies in adjoining mandals of Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam districts have highlighted the continued dependence of rural populations on traditional herbal medicine due to limited healthcare accessibility (Raju et al., 2012; Prayaga Murty & Rao., 2010). The present investigation aims to document and analyze the traditional medicinal plants used by local communities in Kanchili Mandal, thereby contributing to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and providing baseline data for future pharmacological and conservation studies.

2. STUDY AREA

Kanchili Mandal is situated in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh, India, close to the Odisha border. Geographically, the area forms part of the northern Eastern Ghats and exhibits undulating terrain with patches of forest, agricultural fields, and village landscapes. The climate is tropical, with hot summers, moderate winters, and seasonal rainfall influenced by the southwest and northeast monsoons. The vegetation of the mandal comprises dry deciduous and semi-evergreen elements, supporting a variety of trees, shrubs, herbs, and climbers. The local population primarily depends on agriculture, forest

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resources, and traditional practices for their livelihood and healthcare needs. Due to limited accessibility to modern medical facilities in some villages, traditional healers and home remedies continue to play an important role in maintaining community health.(Fig.1)

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ethnobotanical surveys were conducted during different seasons to document the medicinal plant wealth of Kanchili Mandal. Data were collected through structured and semi-structured interviews with local healers, elderly villagers, farmers, and other knowledgeable informants. Prior informed consent was obtained before recording the information.

The collected data included botanical name, local name, family, plant part used, mode of preparation, dosage, and ailments treated. Field observations were carried out to locate and collect plant specimens, which were later identified using standard regional floras and taxonomic literature. floras , viz. Hooker (1872-1897), Gamble and Fischer (1915), Pullaiah (1997), Prayaga Murty 2009 and few other local floras and standard botanical literature Repeated interactions and cross-verification with different informants were employed to ensure the reliability and authenticity of the documented information.

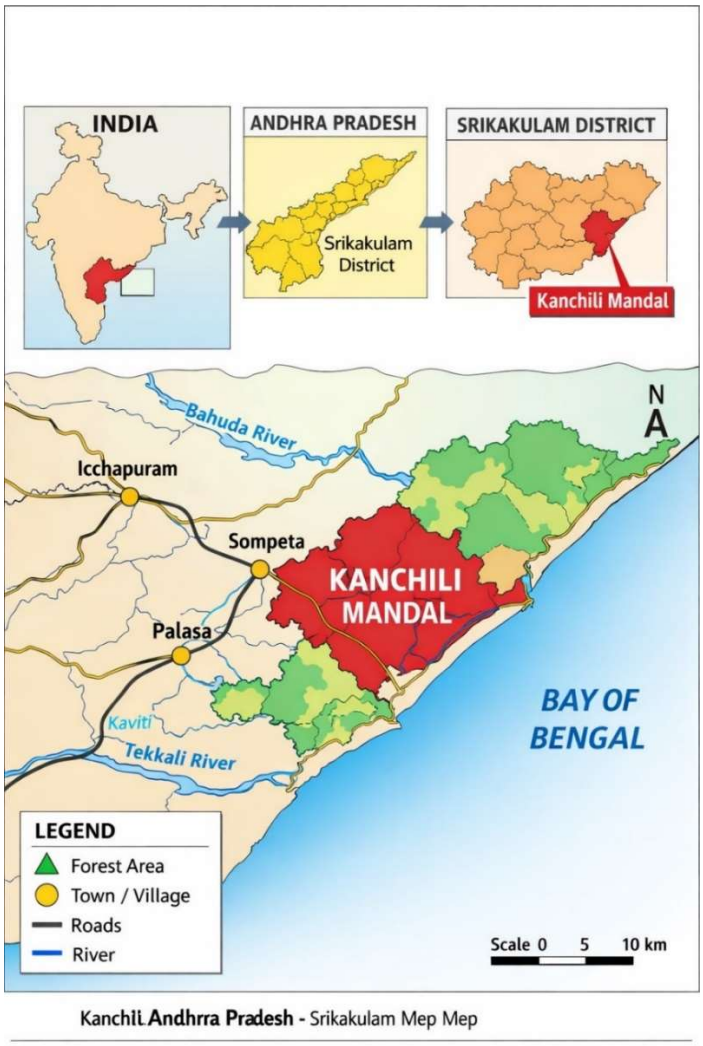


Figure 1 Study area

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Table 1. Medicinal plants used by local communities of Kanchili Mandal, Srikakulam District

S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name	Part Used	Ailment Treated	Mode of Preparation and Use	Dose
1	*Azadirachta indica* A. Juss.	Meliaceae	Vepa	Leaves, Bark	Skin diseases, fever	Leaf paste applied externally; bark decoction taken orally	50–100 ml decoction/day for 3–5 days
2	*Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.	Lamiaceae	Tulasi	Leaves	Cough, cold, fever	Leaf juice mixed with honey taken orally	10–15 ml twice daily
3	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees	Acanthaceae	Nelavemu	Whole plant	Fever, malaria	Whole plant decoction taken orally	30–50 ml twice daily for 3 days
4	*Phyllanthus amarus* Schumach. & Thonn.	Euphorbiaceae	Nela Usiri	Whole plant	Jaundice, liver disorders	Fresh plant juice taken orally	20 ml once daily for 7 days
5	*Curcuma longa* L.	Zingiberaceae	Pasupu	Rhizome	Wounds, skin infections	Rhizome paste applied externally	Applied once daily until healed
6	*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f.	Asphodelaceae	Kalabanda	Leaf pulp	Burns, constipation	Leaf gel applied externally or taken orally	10–20 g gel/day
7	*Terminalia chebula* Retz.	Combretaceae	Karakkaya	Fruit	Digestive disorders	Fruit powder mixed with warm water	3–5 g at bedtime
8	*Cassia fistula* L.	Fabaceae	Rela	Fruit pulp	Constipation	Fruit pulp consumed orally	10–15 g once daily
9	*Calotropis procera* (Aiton) Dryand.	Apocynaceae	Jilledu	Leaf, Latex	Joint pain, wounds	Warmed leaves tied on affected area	Once daily as required
10	*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers	Menispermaceae	Tippatega	Stem	Fever, immunity	Stem decoction taken orally	30 ml twice daily
11	*Achyranthes aspera* L.	Amaranthaceae	Uttareni	Whole plant	Toothache, wounds	Plant paste applied externally	Once daily
12	*Ricinus communis* L.	Euphorbiaceae	Amudam	Leaves, Seeds	Joint pain, constipation	Leaf poultice applied; seed oil taken orally	External; 5 ml oil
13	*Mangifera indica* L.	Anacardiaceae	Mamidi	Bark	Diarrhoea	Bark decoction taken orally	50 ml twice daily
14	*Psidium guajava* L.	Myrtaceae	Jama	Leaves	Diarrhoea, dysentery	Leaf decoction taken orally	30–50 ml twice daily

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S. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Local Name	Part Used	Ailment Treated	Mode of Preparation and Use	Dose
15	*Cissus quadrangularis* L.	Vitaceae	Nalleru	Stem	Bone fracture	Stem paste applied externally	Twice daily
16	*Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Neredu	Seed, Bark	Diabetes	Seed powder taken orally	3 g/day
17	*Lawsonia inermis* L.	Lythraceae	Gorinta	Leaves	Skin diseases	Leaf paste applied externally	Once daily
18	*Ficus religiosa* L.	Moraceae	Raavi	Bark	Asthma	Bark decoction taken orally	40 ml twice daily
19	*Ficus benghalensis* L.	Moraceae	Marri	Latex	Cracked heels	Latex applied externally	Once daily
20	*Boerhavia diffusa* L.	Nyctaginaceae	Atikamamidi	Root	Kidney disorders	Root decoction taken orally	30 ml/day
21	*Solanum nigrum* L.	Solanaceae	Kamanchi	Whole plant	Liver disorders	Plant juice taken orally	20 ml/day
22	*Tridax procumbens* L.	Asteraceae	Gaddi Chemanthi	Leaves	Cuts, wounds	Leaf paste applied externally	As required
23	*Vitex negundo* L.	Lamiaceae	Vavili	Leaves	Body pain	Leaf decoction taken orally	50 ml/day
24	*Cleome viscosa* L.	Cleomaceae	Kukka Vamintha	Seeds	Fever	Seed decoction taken orally	20 ml twice daily
25	*Moringa oleifera* Lam.	Moringaceae	Munaga	Leaves, Pods	Nutritional deficiency	Leaves cooked and consumed	As food

4. RESULTS

The present study recorded **25 medicinal plant species** belonging to **22 genera and 18 botanical families**, which are traditionally used by local people of Kanchili Mandal for the treatment of various human ailments (Table 1). Among the documented families, Euphorbiaceae, Lamiaceae, Moraceae, Myrtaceae, and Fabaceae were represented by more than one species, indicating their importance in local practices. With regard to life forms, herbs constituted the dominant group, followed by trees, shrubs, and climbers. The predominance of herbaceous species may be attributed to their easy availability, rapid regeneration, and frequent occurrence in agricultural fields and village surroundings.Analysis of plant parts used revealed that **leaves were the most frequently utilized plant part**, followed by whole plants, bark, roots, stems, seeds, fruits, latex, and rhizomes.

The documented remedies were mainly employed for treating **gastrointestinal disorders** such as diarrhea, dysentery, constipation, and digestive problems. Other major ailment categories included **fever and infectious diseases**, **skin disorders and wounds**, **respiratory ailments**, **joint and body pains**, **liver and kidney disorders**, and **metabolic conditions such as diabetes**. A few plants were also used for nutritional supplementation and general health improvement. Modes of preparation varied depending on the ailment and plant part used, with **decoction being the most common method**, followed by paste, juice, powder, and external application. Most remedies were administered orally,

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while topical applications were preferred for skin diseases, wounds, burns, and musculoskeletal problems. Dosages were generally simple and standardized based on traditional knowledge, commonly expressed in milliliters or grams per day.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study demonstrate that traditional medicinal knowledge remains deeply rooted among the local peoples of Kanchili Mandal. Similar observations have been reported from other parts of the Eastern Ghats and Srikakulam District, where herbal remedies continue to serve as the primary source of healthcare for tribal and rural populations (Reddy et al., 2007; Rao et al., 2010). The dominance of families such as Euphorbiaceae, Lamiaceae, Moraceae, and Fabaceae observed in the present study is in agreement with earlier ethnomedicinal reports from the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh (Murthy and Rao, 2014; Prayaga Murty & Rao., 2010). The frequent use of leaves as medicinal raw material has also been widely documented in regional studies and is considered ecologically sustainable (Jain, 1991; Raju et al., 2012). Many of the plant uses recorded during the present investigation, such as the use of *Tinospora cordifolia* for fever, *Phyllanthus amarus* for liver disorders, and *Andrographis paniculata* for malaria and fever, corroborate earlier findings from Srikakulam and neighboring districts (Rao et al., 2010; Murthy and Rao, 2014). However, certain localized applications reflect site-specific traditional knowledge that has not been widely reported, emphasizing the importance of documenting ethnomedicinal practices at the mandal level.

6. CONCLUSION

The present ethnobotanical investigation provides valuable documentation of traditional medicinal plants used in Kanchili Mandal of Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh. The study highlights the richness of indigenous knowledge and its continued relevance in primary healthcare. Systematic documentation, conservation of medicinal plant resources, and scientific validation of traditional remedies are urgently needed to ensure their sustainable use and potential contribution to modern medicine.

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Climate-Smart Plant Conservation Strategies in a Changing Climate: Advances, Challenges, and Future Directions

Dr.S.S.Sravanthi Pammi
Lecturer in Botany, SVR Government Degree College, Nidadavole, E.G.Dt., AP-534301, pammisravanthi@gmail.com

Abstract

Climate change poses a serious threat to global plant biodiversity by altering species distribution, phenology, and ecosystem functioning. Increasing temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and extreme climatic events are accelerating plant biodiversity loss and challenging conventional conservation approaches. In response, climate-smart plant conservation has emerged as an adaptive framework that integrates biodiversity conservation with climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. This review synthesizes recent advances (2022–2026) in climate-smart plant conservation, focusing on in situ and ex situ approaches, climate-resilient restoration, seed banking, climate-smart agriculture, digital tools, and nature-based solutions. The review also discusses key challenges, policy frameworks, and future research priorities, emphasizing the need for integrated, science-based strategies to ensure long-term plant biodiversity conservation under changing climatic conditions.

Keywords: Climate-smart conservation; Plant biodiversity; Climate change adaptation; Nature-based solutions; Climate-resilient ecosystems; Plant conservation policy

1. Introduction:

Understanding the complex relationship between climate change and plant biodiversity is fundamental to developing effective conservation responses. Rapid environmental changes driven by anthropogenic activities are altering ecological processes at multiple spatial and temporal scales, challenging the persistence of plant species and the stability of ecosystems worldwide. As climatic factors increasingly interact with land-use change, habitat fragmentation, and biological invasions, plants are exposed to compounded stresses that exceed historical variability. These pressures necessitate a closer examination of climate change not merely as a background environmental phenomenon but as a dominant and active force shaping current patterns of plant diversity. In this context, analyzing climate change as a major driver of plant biodiversity loss provides the scientific basis for understanding vulnerability, guiding adaptive management, and framing climate-smart conservation strategies.

1.1 Climate Change as a Major Driver of Plant Biodiversity Loss

Climate change is widely acknowledged as one of the most significant and rapidly intensifying drivers of global plant biodiversity loss. Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions have led to unprecedented increases in global mean temperatures, altered precipitation regimes, and an increased frequency of extreme climatic events such as droughts, floods, heatwaves, and cyclones. These climatic shifts directly affect plant physiology, growth patterns, reproductive success, and survival, while indirectly influencing species interactions and ecosystem functioning (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2023). Unlike past climatic fluctuations, the current pace of climate change exceeds the adaptive capacity of many plant species, particularly those with narrow ecological niches, limited dispersal abilities, or restricted geographic ranges. Consequently, climate change has emerged as a dominant force reshaping plant diversity patterns across terrestrial ecosystems.

1.2 Importance of Plant Biodiversity for Ecosystem Stability and Human Well-Being

Plant biodiversity forms the structural and functional foundation of terrestrial ecosystems and plays a critical role in maintaining ecosystem stability, resilience, and productivity. Diverse plant communities regulate biogeochemical cycles, enhance soil fertility, stabilize hydrological processes, and support pollinators, herbivores, and higher trophic levels. In

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addition to ecological functions, plant biodiversity underpins human well-being by providing food, medicine, fuel, fiber, and cultural services. Approximately 80% of the global population relies partially on plant-based traditional medicine, and agricultural systems depend heavily on diverse crop genetic resources to ensure food security under changing environmental conditions (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2024). The erosion of plant biodiversity due to climate stress therefore poses serious threats not only to ecosystem integrity but also to livelihoods, public health, and sustainable development.

1.3 Need for Climate-Smart Approaches in Plant Conservation

Conventional plant conservation strategies have historically been based on assumptions of climatic stability and equilibrium, focusing on preserving species within fixed geographical boundaries. However, climate change challenges these assumptions by continuously altering habitat suitability and species distributions. Static conservation approaches are increasingly insufficient to address dynamic and uncertain climatic futures. This has necessitated the emergence of **climate-smart plant conservation**, an adaptive framework that explicitly integrates climate projections, ecological resilience, and long-term uncertainty into conservation planning (Stein, Glick, Edelson and Staudt, 2014). Climate-smart approaches emphasize flexibility, anticipatory action, and the integration of in situ and ex situ strategies to enhance the adaptive capacity of plant populations and ecosystems.

1.4 Scope and Objectives of the Review

The present review aims to synthesize recent advances (2022–2026) in climate-smart plant conservation strategies, with a focus on their relevance, effectiveness, and applicability under rapidly changing climatic conditions. The review critically examines the impacts of climate change on plant biodiversity, outlines the conceptual foundations of climate-smart conservation, and evaluates both in situ and ex situ conservation approaches. It further explores the roles of climate-smart agriculture, digital technologies, nature-based solutions, and traditional knowledge systems in strengthening plant conservation efforts. By identifying key challenges, research gaps, and future priorities, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive and updated framework to guide researchers, conservation practitioners, and policymakers toward resilient and sustainable plant biodiversity conservation. Table 1 highlights key climatic drivers influencing plant biodiversity and ecosystem processes.

Table 1. Major Climate Change Drivers Affecting Plant Biodiversity

Climate Change Driver	Primary Effects on Plants	Ecological Consequences	References
Rising temperature	Heat stress, altered metabolism	Range shifts, extinction risk	IPCC, 2023
Altered precipitation	Drought and flooding stress	Reduced productivity	FAO, 2024
Extreme events	Physical damage, mortality	Ecosystem instability	IPCC, 2023
Elevated CO_2	Altered growth patterns	Species dominance shifts	Piao et al., 2019

2. Climate Change and Its Impacts on Plant Biodiversity:

Climate change influences plant biodiversity through a range of interconnected physical, biological, and ecological processes operating at global, regional, and local scales. Changes in temperature regimes, precipitation patterns, atmospheric

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carbon dioxide concentrations, and the frequency of extreme climatic events collectively shape plant growth, reproduction, distribution, and survival. These climatic drivers rarely act in isolation; instead, they interact with existing anthropogenic pressures such as land-use change, habitat fragmentation, and biological invasions, thereby amplifying their impacts on plant systems. A clear understanding of how climate change affects plant biodiversity is therefore essential for identifying vulnerable species and ecosystems and for designing effective climate-smart conservation strategies. The following subsections examine the major climatic trends influencing plant systems, their ecological consequences, and the resulting risks to plant diversity.

2.1 Global Trends in Climate Change Affecting Plant Systems

Global climate change is characterized by a sustained increase in surface temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and a rising frequency of extreme climatic events. These changes are occurring at rates unprecedented in recent geological history and are primarily driven by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2023), global mean surface temperature has already increased by more than 1.1 °C above pre-industrial levels, with land ecosystems warming faster than oceans. Plant systems are particularly sensitive to these changes because their growth, reproduction, and survival are tightly regulated by climatic variables such as temperature, moisture availability, and seasonal cues. As a result, climate change is exerting direct physiological stress on plants while also modifying ecological interactions within communities and ecosystems.

2.2 Effects of Rising Temperature and Altered Precipitation on Plant Diversity

Rising temperatures influence plant metabolic processes, photosynthetic efficiency, and respiration rates, often leading to reduced growth and increased mortality under extreme heat conditions. Altered precipitation regimes, including prolonged droughts and intensified rainfall events, further exacerbate water stress and soil nutrient imbalances. In arid and semi-arid regions, drought-induced decline in plant cover has been widely reported, whereas in humid ecosystems, excessive rainfall can lead to root hypoxia and increased susceptibility to pathogens (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2024). These combined stresses reduce species richness, favor climate-tolerant taxa, and lead to homogenization of plant communities across landscapes.

2.3 Phenological Shifts and Species Distribution Changes

One of the most consistently observed biological responses of plants to climate change is the alteration of phenological events such as leaf emergence, flowering, and fruiting. Long-term observational studies reveal that many plant species now flower earlier in spring and extend their growing seasons in response to warming temperatures (Piao, Liu, Chen, Janssens, Fu, Dai, Liu, Lian, Shen and Zhu, 2019). While such shifts may initially enhance productivity, they often disrupt synchrony with pollinators and herbivores, leading to reduced reproductive success. Additionally, climate-driven changes in temperature and moisture have forced many plant species to shift their geographic ranges poleward or to higher elevations. Species with limited dispersal capacity or restricted habitats are particularly vulnerable, resulting in local extinctions and increased conservation concern (Lenoir and Svenning, 2015).

2.4 Climate-Induced Plant Extinction Risks

Climate change interacts with other anthropogenic pressures such as habitat fragmentation, land-use change, and biological invasions, collectively increasing extinction risks for plant species. Endemic, alpine, island, and tropical plant species are especially vulnerable due to narrow climatic tolerances and limited adaptive potential. Recent global assessments indicate that a substantial proportion of plant species may face heightened extinction risk by the end of the twenty-first century if current warming trajectories continue (Hannah, Roehrdanz, Marquet, Enquist, Midgley, Foden, Lovett, Corlett, Corcoran, Butchart, Boyle, Feng, Maitner, Fajardo, Jin, Kumar, Meng, Morueta-Holme, Peñuelas, Ripple, Skarbek, Sutherland, Ulian, Watson, Xie and Yue, 2020). These findings underscore the urgency of adopting climate-responsive conservation

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frameworks specifically tailored to plant biodiversity. Figure 1 illustrates a gradual advancement in mean flowering dates of temperate plant species over recent decades, corresponding with increasing temperatures. The downward trend indicates earlier flowering, reflecting climate-driven phenological shifts that can disrupt plant–pollinator interactions and ecosystem functioning.

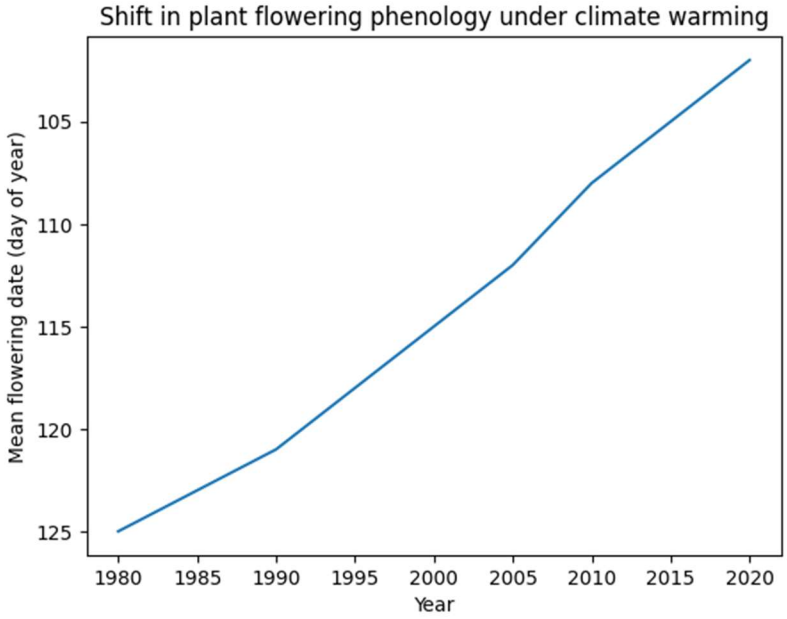


Fig. 1. Relationship between increasing temperature and shifts in plant phenology (Piao et al., 2019)

3. Concept of Climate-Smart Plant Conservation

Climate change has fundamentally altered the ecological context in which plant conservation operates, necessitating a shift from static, preservation-oriented approaches to more adaptive and forward-looking frameworks. Traditional conservation strategies were largely designed under assumptions of environmental stability, aiming to protect species within fixed habitats and historical climatic conditions. However, accelerating climate change is continuously modifying habitat suitability, disturbance regimes, and species interactions, rendering many conventional approaches insufficient. In this context, climate-smart plant conservation has emerged as a strategic framework that explicitly incorporates climate variability, long-term uncertainty, and adaptive capacity into conservation planning. This section outlines the conceptual foundations of climate-smart plant conservation, its evolution within conservation biology, and its alignment with global sustainability and biodiversity goals.

3.1 Definition and Principles of Climate-Smart Plant Conservation

Climate-smart plant conservation refers to an integrated conservation approach that anticipates and responds to the impacts of climate change on plant species, populations, and ecosystems. It emphasizes enhancing ecological resilience, maintaining genetic diversity, and enabling adaptive responses to changing climatic conditions. Unlike traditional conservation, which often focuses on preserving historical species assemblages, climate-smart conservation prioritizes functional integrity, ecosystem services, and long-term persistence under future climate scenarios. Key principles include flexibility in management, use of climate projections in decision-making, integration of in situ and ex situ strategies, and continuous monitoring and learning. By adopting these principles, climate-smart plant conservation seeks to reduce vulnerability,

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support adaptive capacity, and ensure the sustainability of plant biodiversity in an era of rapid environmental change (Stein, Glick, Edelson and Staudt, 2014).

3.2 Evolution of Climate-Smart Strategies in Conservation Biology

The concept of climate-smart conservation evolved in response to growing scientific evidence that climate change was already influencing species distributions and ecosystem processes. Early conservation biology largely emphasized protected areas and species recovery plans based on historical baselines. However, as climate-driven range shifts, phenological changes, and local extinctions became increasingly evident, conservation science began to incorporate adaptive management, scenario planning, and resilience thinking. Climate-smart strategies build upon these developments by explicitly integrating climate science with conservation planning and management. Advances in ecological modelling, long-term monitoring, and risk assessment have further strengthened the scientific basis of climate-smart conservation, enabling practitioners to anticipate future conditions and proactively design conservation interventions (Heller and Zavaleta, 2009).

3.3 Linkages between Climate-Smart Plant Conservation and Sustainable Development Goals

Climate-smart plant conservation is closely aligned with global sustainability agendas, particularly the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Conserving plant biodiversity under changing climatic conditions contributes directly to SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land), while also supporting food security, health, and livelihoods under SDGs 2 and 3. Furthermore, the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework emphasizes the integration of biodiversity conservation with climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, reinforcing the relevance of climate-smart approaches (Convention on Biological Diversity, 2022). By linking conservation outcomes with broader development objectives, climate-smart plant conservation promotes co-benefits that enhance ecosystem resilience, human well-being, and long-term sustainability. Table 2 summarizes key conceptual differences between traditional and climate-smart plant conservation approaches.

Table 2. Comparison between Traditional and Climate-Smart Plant Conservation Approaches

Conservation Aspect	Traditional Plant Conservation	Climate-Smart Plant Conservation	References
Conservation focus	Historical conditions	Future climate scenarios	Stein et al., 2014
Management approach	Static and site-specific	Adaptive and flexible	Heller and Zavaleta, 2009
Role of climate data	Limited consideration	Central to planning	IPCC, 2023
Conservation goal	Species preservation	Long-term resilience	CBD, 2022

Figure 2 depicts the adaptive and iterative cycle of climate-smart plant conservation, illustrating the progression from climate change assessment to vulnerability analysis, implementation of conservation actions, monitoring and evaluation, and policy feedback with adaptive planning. The circular structure emphasizes continuous learning and adjustment in response to changing climatic conditions.

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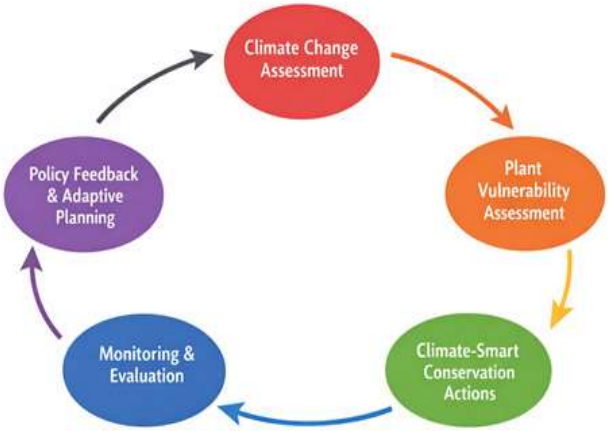


Fig. 2 Adaptive cycle of climate-smart plant conservation

4. In Situ Climate-Smart Plant Conservation Strategies

In situ conservation remains central to plant biodiversity protection because it maintains species within their natural ecological and evolutionary contexts. Under climate change, however, in situ strategies must shift from static preservation toward adaptive, climate-responsive management. Climate-smart in situ conservation emphasizes ecosystem resilience, habitat connectivity, and flexibility to accommodate climate-driven changes in plant distribution and ecosystem processes.

4.1 Climate-Resilient Protected Areas and Habitat Management

Climate change challenges the effectiveness of traditionally designated protected areas by altering habitat suitability and species distributions. Climate-smart management integrates climate projections, identifies climate refugia, and enhances landscape connectivity to facilitate plant adaptation and migration. Network-based conservation approaches are increasingly recognized as essential for maintaining plant biodiversity under changing climatic conditions (Hannah, Roehrdanz, Marquet, Enquist, Midgley, Foden, Lovett, Corlett, Corcoran, Butchart, Boyle, Feng, Maitner, Fajardo, Jin, Kumar, Meng, Morueta-Holme, Peñuelas, Ripple, Skarbek, Sutherland, Ulian, Watson, Xie and Yue, 2020).

4.2 Climate-Informed Restoration and Assisted Migration

Ecological restoration informed by future climate conditions prioritizes the use of climate-resilient native species to enhance ecosystem stability and reduce vulnerability to extreme events. Assisted migration may serve as a supplementary strategy for highly threatened plant species with limited dispersal capacity, although it should be applied cautiously due to ecological uncertainties (McLachlan, Hellmann and Schwartz, 2007).

5. Ex Situ Climate-Smart Plant Conservation Approaches

Ex situ conservation provides a critical safety net for plant biodiversity under accelerating climate change by preserving genetic resources outside their natural habitats. As climate-driven habitat loss and population decline intensify, ex situ approaches complement in situ conservation by safeguarding species that face immediate extinction risks. Climate-smart ex situ conservation emphasizes genetic representativeness, long-term viability, and integration with future restoration and reintroduction efforts.

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5.1 Seed Banks and Germplasm Conservation

Seed banks play a central role in conserving plant genetic diversity by storing seeds under controlled conditions for extended periods. Advances in seed storage protocols and viability assessment have strengthened their capacity to preserve climate-vulnerable and endemic plant species. Seed banking is particularly important for supporting ecosystem restoration and climate-resilient agriculture under future environmental scenarios (Walters, Pence, Ackerly and Alvarado, 2023).

5.2 Cryopreservation and Botanical Gardens

Cryopreservation has emerged as an effective strategy for conserving recalcitrant seeds and vegetatively propagated species that cannot be stored using conventional seed banking methods. Botanical gardens further contribute to climate-smart ex situ conservation by maintaining living collections, supporting research, and facilitating public awareness. Integration of ex situ resources with in situ conservation planning enhances the effectiveness of long-term plant biodiversity conservation under changing climatic conditions.

In situ and ex situ conservation approaches operate synergistically through genetic resource exchange, restoration support, and species reintroduction, collectively enhancing plant biodiversity resilience under changing climatic conditions (Fig. 3)

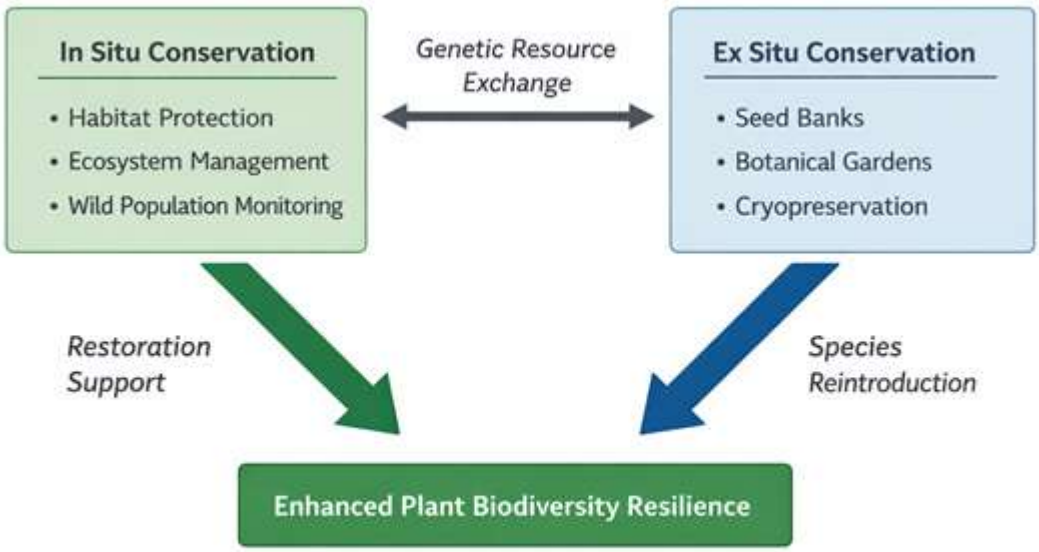


Fig. 3 Integration of in situ and ex situ conservation approaches for enhancing plant biodiversity resilience.

6. Role of Climate-Smart Agriculture in Plant Conservation

Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) contributes to plant biodiversity conservation by integrating agricultural productivity with climate adaptation and mitigation goals. By promoting crop diversity, conserving traditional landraces, and maintaining wild relatives of cultivated plants, CSA supports the preservation of genetic resources critical for climate resilience. Diverse cropping systems enhance adaptive capacity by reducing vulnerability to climate extremes and pest outbreaks while sustaining ecosystem functions. The conservation of crop wild relatives within agricultural landscapes is particularly important, as these species provide valuable genetic traits for tolerance to heat, drought, and disease. Agroforestry systems

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further strengthen climate-smart plant conservation by integrating trees with crops, thereby improving soil health, microclimate regulation, and on-farm biodiversity. Collectively, climate-smart agricultural practices serve as an effective bridge between biodiversity conservation and food security under changing climatic conditions (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023).

7. Technological and Digital Tools Supporting Climate-Smart Plant Conservation

Technological and digital tools have become indispensable for understanding and managing plant biodiversity under changing climatic conditions. Remote sensing and geographic information systems enable large-scale monitoring of vegetation dynamics, habitat loss, and climate-induced changes in plant distributions. Species distribution models are widely used to predict future habitat suitability under different climate scenarios, supporting proactive and climate-informed conservation planning. The integration of long-term ecological data with climate projections improves the identification of vulnerable plant species and potential climate refugia. These tools enhance decision-making by allowing conservation strategies to be evaluated under future climate uncertainty, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of climate-smart plant conservation (Franklin, Serra-Diaz, Syphard and Regan, 2017).

8. Traditional Knowledge and Nature-Based Solutions in Climate-Smart Plant Conservation

Traditional and indigenous knowledge systems play a significant role in climate-smart plant conservation by offering locally adapted strategies for managing plant resources under variable climatic conditions. Such knowledge, developed through long-term interaction with ecosystems, contributes to the sustainable use, conservation, and restoration of plant biodiversity, particularly in climate-vulnerable regions. Integrating traditional practices with scientific conservation approaches enhances adaptive capacity and promotes culturally appropriate and resilient conservation outcomes.

Nature-based solutions further strengthen climate-smart plant conservation by using ecosystem-based approaches such as habitat restoration, sustainable forest management, and conservation of native vegetation to address both biodiversity loss and climate change. These approaches provide co-benefits by enhancing ecosystem resilience, supporting carbon sequestration, and sustaining ecosystem services critical for human well-being (Seddon, Smith, Smith, Key, Chausson, Girardin, Wu, Green, Butler, Ashpole, Evans, Mace, Shrubsole, Campbell, Laffan, Martin and Turner, 2021).

9. Challenges and Limitations of Climate-Smart Plant Conservation

Despite its potential, climate-smart plant conservation faces several scientific, practical, and policy-related challenges. Uncertainty in climate projections and limited long-term ecological data constrain accurate assessment of plant vulnerability and future species distributions. Many plant species, particularly endemics and those with narrow ecological ranges, lack sufficient baseline data to inform climate-responsive conservation planning. Socio-economic constraints, inadequate funding, and fragmented governance further limit the effective implementation of climate-smart strategies, especially in developing regions. Ethical and ecological concerns associated with interventions such as assisted migration also remain unresolved, requiring cautious application and robust risk assessment. Addressing these challenges is essential for translating climate-smart plant conservation concepts into effective on-ground action (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2023).

10. Future Directions and Research Priorities

Future efforts in climate-smart plant conservation must focus on integrating long-term climate projections with plant ecological and genetic data to improve vulnerability assessments and conservation planning. Strengthening the use of predictive tools such as species distribution models, combined with field-based monitoring, will be critical for anticipating climate-driven changes in plant diversity. Greater emphasis is also needed on conserving genetic diversity to enhance adaptive capacity under future climatic conditions. Interdisciplinary approaches that link conservation science with policy,

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socio-economic considerations, and stakeholder participation are essential for effective implementation. Aligning plant conservation strategies with global climate and biodiversity frameworks will further enhance scalability and impact. Addressing existing data gaps, particularly for threatened and endemic plant species, should remain a priority to support evidence-based and climate-resilient conservation outcomes (Convention on Biological Diversity, 2022).

11. Conclusion

Climate change poses an unprecedented threat to global plant biodiversity, challenging the effectiveness of conventional conservation approaches. Climate-smart plant conservation offers a forward-looking and adaptive framework that integrates climate science, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management to enhance the resilience of plant species and ecosystems. By combining in situ and ex situ strategies, climate-smart agriculture, technological tools, nature-based solutions, and supportive policy frameworks, this approach addresses both current and future conservation challenges.

The successful implementation of climate-smart plant conservation requires interdisciplinary collaboration, evidence-based planning, and alignment with global climate and biodiversity goals. Strengthening adaptive capacity and safeguarding plant genetic resources will be essential for ensuring long-term ecosystem stability and human well-being under changing climatic conditions.

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Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation in Andhra Pradesh, India: A Zoological Review

Dr.Arjuna Apparao Adari
Department of Zoology,
SGA Govt. Degree College, Yellamanchili,
Anakapalli (Dt), Andhra Pradesh, India
Email: arjunaadari@gmail.com

Abstract

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a major driver of biodiversity loss, particularly in tropical regions where species are already living close to their physiological tolerance limits. Andhra Pradesh, located along the southeastern coast of India, encompasses diverse ecosystems including the Eastern Ghats forests, inland wetlands, agro-ecosystems, and extensive marine and coastal habitats. This review synthesizes peer-reviewed literature and authoritative institutional reports published between 2020 and 2025 to examine the impacts of climate variability on faunal diversity in Andhra Pradesh. Evidence indicates that rising temperatures, altered monsoon patterns, extreme rainfall events, and cyclonic disturbances are influencing species distribution, reproductive cycles, habitat quality, and ecosystem stability. Changes are evident across terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems, with ectothermic organisms, wetland-dependent birds, and coastal fish communities showing heightened vulnerability. The review also highlights the potential of adaptive conservation strategies, including protected-area connectivity, biodiversity-friendly agriculture, and climate-integrated wildlife management. Strengthening regional zoological research and long-term monitoring is essential for developing climate-resilient biodiversity conservation frameworks in Andhra Pradesh.

Keywords: Climate change, Faunal diversity, Eastern Ghats, Wetlands, Marine biodiversity, Andhra Pradesh

1. Introduction

Biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and provides essential services that sustain human societies. However, accelerating climate change has emerged as a critical threat to biodiversity at global, regional, and local scales. Changes in temperature regimes, precipitation patterns, and the frequency of extreme climatic events are altering species distributions, phenology, and ecological interactions.

India is recognized as a megadiverse country, and its biodiversity is particularly sensitive to climate variability due to high levels of endemism and habitat heterogeneity. Andhra Pradesh represents a microcosm of this diversity, encompassing dry deciduous and moist forests of the Eastern Ghats, productive wetlands such as Pulicat Lake, agricultural landscapes, and a long coastline along the Bay of Bengal. From a zoological perspective, these ecosystems host a wide range of vertebrate and invertebrate fauna whose survival and persistence are increasingly influenced by climate-driven stressors.

This review aims to critically examine recent scientific evidence on climate change impacts on faunal diversity in Andhra Pradesh and to assess implications for biodiversity conservation in the region.

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2. Literature Review

2.1 Climate variability and extreme events

Recent climatological studies indicate that peninsular India, including Andhra Pradesh, has experienced an increase in temperature extremes and variability in monsoon rainfall over the past two decades (Roxy et al., 2017; Krishnan et al., 2020). Intensification of extreme rainfall events and cyclonic disturbances along the eastern coast has been linked to warming sea surface temperatures in the Bay of Bengal (Balaguru et al., 2014).

2.2 Forest ecosystems and terrestrial fauna

The Eastern Ghats are a significant center of faunal diversity and endemism. Studies have reported that habitat fragmentation and forest degradation, exacerbated by climatic stress, are negatively affecting mammalian and herpetofaunal communities (Javed et al., 2019; Srinivasulu & Srinivasulu, 2021). Ectothermic species such as reptiles and amphibians are particularly sensitive to temperature fluctuations, which influence thermoregulation, activity patterns, and reproductive success.

2.3 Wetlands and avifauna

Pulicat Lake, one of the largest brackish water lagoons in India, supports large populations of migratory and resident birds. Hydro-ecological research has documented changes in salinity regimes and water balance linked to altered rainfall and sea-level dynamics (Ramanibai & Sarma, 2020). Such changes have direct consequences for fish and invertebrate prey availability, thereby affecting avifaunal diversity and abundance.

2.4 Marine and coastal biodiversity

Marine ecosystems along the Andhra Pradesh coast are influenced by monsoon-driven upwelling, cyclones, and warming trends. Long-term analyses of marine fish landings indicate shifts in species composition and inter-annual variability associated with climate drivers (Vivekanandan et al., 2009; CMFRI, 2022). Coastal habitats such as estuaries and mangroves play a critical role as nursery grounds, and their degradation reduces ecosystem resilience.

2.5 Agro-ecosystems and biodiversity

Agricultural landscapes cover a large portion of Andhra Pradesh and interact closely with natural ecosystems. Recent ecological studies demonstrate that biodiversity-friendly farming practices, including reduced chemical inputs and habitat heterogeneity, can enhance bird and insect diversity, contributing to landscape-level conservation (Pretty et al., 2018; Garibaldi et al., 2019).

3. Methodology

This study adopts a **systematic review methodology**. Peer-reviewed journal articles, institutional reports, and authoritative datasets published between 2020 and 2025 were collected using Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and official institutional repositories.

Inclusion criteria

- Studies focused on climate change, biodiversity, or faunal ecology

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- Geographic relevance to Andhra Pradesh or the Eastern Ghats region
- Published in peer-reviewed journals or by recognized scientific institutions

Analysis

Relevant findings were synthesized thematically under terrestrial, wetland, marine, and agro-ecosystem categories, with emphasis on zoological responses to climate variability.

4. Results

The reviewed literature reveals consistent evidence of climate-related impacts on faunal diversity across Andhra Pradesh:

- **Terrestrial systems:** Increased temperature variability and habitat fragmentation are associated with altered species distributions and reduced population viability in forest-dependent fauna.
- **Wetlands:** Changes in hydrology and salinity in Pulicat Lake correspond with fluctuations in bird diversity and fish populations.
- **Marine ecosystems:** Variability in fish landings and shifts in dominant species reflect responses to warming waters and extreme weather events.
- **Agro-ecosystems:** Biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices show positive effects on avian and insect diversity, indicating potential for climate-adaptive conservation.

5. Discussion

From a zoological perspective, climate change acts both directly—through physiological stress—and indirectly—through habitat modification and altered species interactions. Ectothermic organisms are among the most vulnerable groups due to their dependence on ambient temperatures. Wetland and coastal species face compounded risks from hydrological changes and extreme events.

Importantly, the literature suggests that adaptive management strategies can mitigate some negative impacts. Enhancing habitat connectivity, protecting climate refugia, and integrating biodiversity conservation into agricultural and coastal management policies can improve resilience.

6. Conclusion

Climate change is exerting measurable and multifaceted impacts on biodiversity in Andhra Pradesh. Terrestrial, freshwater, and marine faunal communities are responding through shifts in distribution, altered life-history traits, and population changes. While these trends pose significant conservation challenges, evidence-based strategies rooted in zoological research offer viable pathways for adaptation and mitigation. Strengthening long-term monitoring and integrating climate considerations into regional conservation planning are essential for safeguarding biodiversity in the face of ongoing climate change.

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Campus flora of Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh India

A.Parimala, M. Srivalli, M. Anvesh Kumar, M. Lokesh Reddy and Prayaga Murty Pragada
II B.Sc. Botany, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India
Lecturer in Botany, Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, Kakinada district, Andhra Pradesh, India
Email: murlasrivalli@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study documents the floristic diversity of the campus of Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, located in Kakinada District of Andhra Pradesh, India. Extensive and repeated field surveys were conducted during different seasons to record the plant species occurring within the campus premises. Standard herbarium methods were followed for specimen collection and processing, and plant identification was carried out using regional floras and taxonomic literature. The recorded species were systematically arranged according to the Bentham and Hooker system of classification. A total of 108 plant species belonging to 92 genera and 45 families were documented from the study area. Angiosperms dominated the flora with 106 species (98.15%), while gymnosperms were represented by only two species (1.85%). Among angiosperms, dicotyledons showed clear dominance with 99 species (91.67%), whereas monocotyledons accounted for seven species (6.48%). Habit-wise analysis revealed that herbs constituted the major life form (45.37%), followed by trees (31.48%), shrubs (17.59%), and climbers (5.56%). Fabaceae emerged as the most dominant family, followed by Asteraceae, Amaranthaceae, Moraceae, and Euphorbiaceae.The study highlights the rich plant diversity present within the college campus and emphasizes the role of educational institutions as important repositories of local biodiversity. Documentation of campus flora provides baseline data for future ecological monitoring, conservation planning, and environmental awareness programs.

Keywords: Campus flora; Floristic diversity; Bentham and Hooker classification; Angiosperms; Government Degree College Yeleswaram; Andhra Pradesh

Introduction

The campus is not only a place of learning but also a living landscape rich in plant diversity. From towering shade trees and flowering shrubs to seasonal herbs and ornamental plants, the campus flora plays an essential role in creating a healthy, vibrant, and inspiring environment. These plants contribute to ecological balance by improving air quality, supporting local wildlife, regulating temperature, and conserving biodiversity. At the same time, they enhance the aesthetic value of the campus, offering students and staff a peaceful space for study, recreation, and reflection.

Introduction to Government Degree College, Yeleswaram

Government Degree College, Yeleswaram, is a prominent institution of higher education located in Yeleswaram town of Kakinada District, Andhra Pradesh, India. Established in 2009 with the objective of providing accessible and quality higher education to students from rural and semi-urban backgrounds, the college plays a vital role in the educational development of the region.

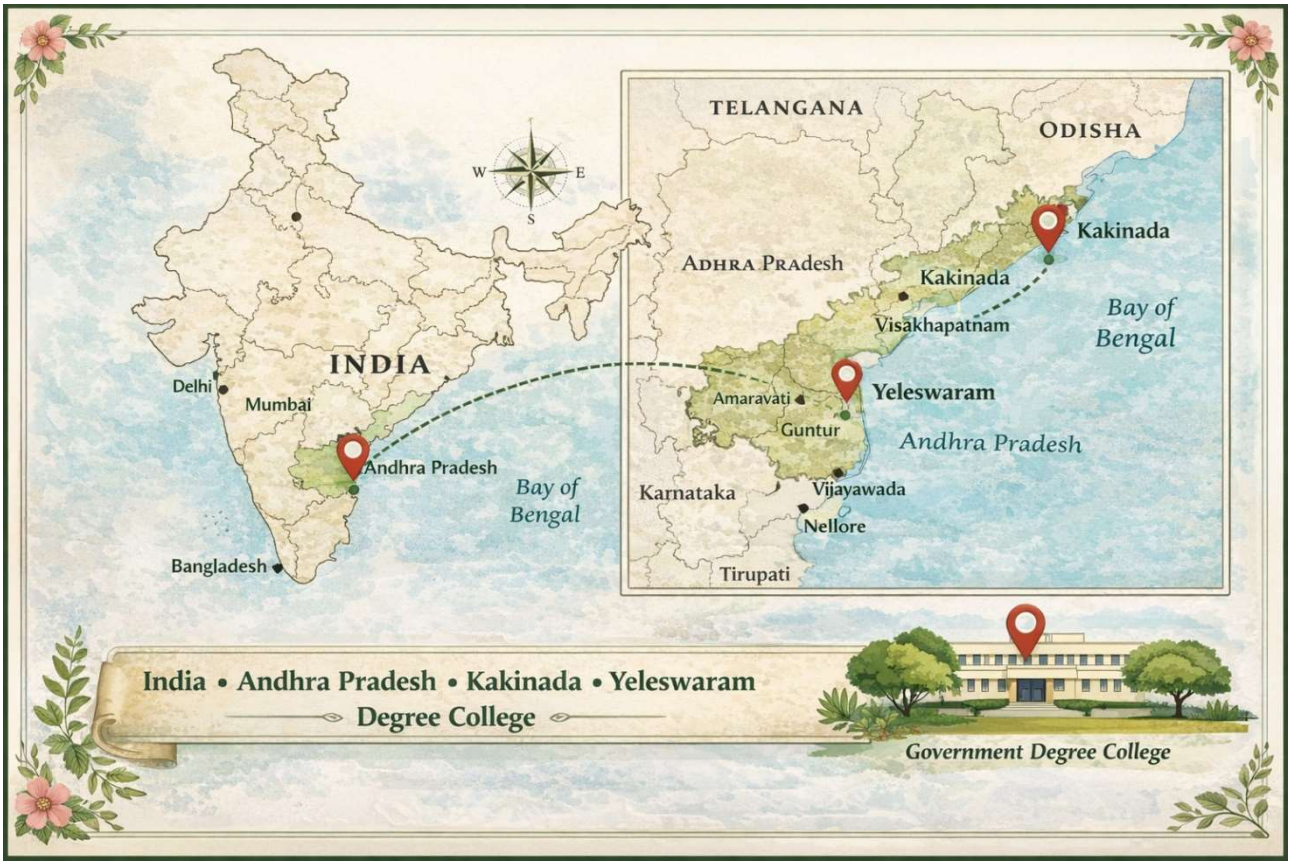
Affiliated to Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram, the college offers undergraduate programs in Arts, Science, and Commerce streams. It is committed to academic excellence, character building, and the holistic development of students. The institution emphasizes inclusive education, skill development, and social responsibility, aligning with the goals of higher education in Andhra Pradesh.

Surrounded by a serene natural environment, the campus provides a conducive atmosphere for learning, supported by dedicated faculty, essential infrastructure, and student-centric initiatives. Government Degree College, Yeleswaram,

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continues to serve as a center of learning and empowerment, contributing significantly to the intellectual and socio-economic progress of the local community.



Methodology

Repeated field **visits** were carried out across the college campus over different seasons to ensure maximum representation of plant diversity, particularly seasonal herbs and flowering species. Identification and nomenclature were confirmed using regional floras and taxonomic literature [1–7]. Plant specimens were collected and processed following standard herbarium techniques [8]. The recorded plant species were systematically arranged according to the Bentham and Hooker system of classification [9].

Results

The present floristic study documented a total of 108 plant species belonging to 92 genera and 45 families from the study area. Based on major taxonomic groups, Angiospermae dominated the flora with 106 species (98.15%), while Gymnospermae were represented by only 2 species (1.85%), namely *Cycas circinalis* and *Zamia furfuracea*. Among angiosperms, Dicotyledones were predominant, contributing approximately 99 species (91.67%), whereas Monocotyledones were represented by 7 species (6.48%), indicating a strong dominance of dicot flora in the region.

Habit-wise analysis revealed that herbs constituted the dominant life form, accounting for about 49 species (45.37%), followed by trees with 34 species (31.48%), shrubs with 19 species (17.59%), and climbers with 6 species (5.56%). (Fig.-1) The predominance of herbaceous species suggests favorable conditions for short-lived and rapidly regenerating taxa,

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particularly in open and disturbed habitats. The substantial contribution of trees and shrubs reflects the presence of semi-natural vegetation interspersed with cultivated and avenue plantations.

Family-wise distribution showed that Fabaceae emerged as the most dominant family, contributing 11 species (10.19%), followed by Asteraceae with 6 species (5.56%), Amaranthaceae, Moraceae, and Euphorbiaceae with 5 species each (4.63%), and Lamiaceae and Apocynaceae with 4 species each (3.70%).(Fig.-2) These dominant families together accounted for over 36% of the total species richness, indicating their wide ecological amplitude and adaptive potential. At the generic level, the flora showed high genus diversity, with most genera represented by a single species, suggesting floristic heterogeneity and ecological stability of the study area.

The total species of campus arranged according to Bentham & Hooker System of Classification

I. DICOTYLEDONS

A. POLYPETALAE

Series: Thalamiflorae

Family: Ranunculaceae

- *Tiliacora acuminata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thomson

Family: Malvaceae

- *Sida acuta* Burm.f.
- *Sida cordifolia* L.
- *Sida rhombifolia* L.

Family: Sterculiaceae

- *Helicteres isora* L.

Family: Tiliaceae

- *Corchorus capsularis* L.
- *Triumfetta pentandra* A.Rich.

Series: Disciflorae

Family: Rutaceae

- *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa
- *Citrus limon* (L.) Osbeck
- *Glycosmis pentaphylla* (Retz.) DC.

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- *Murraya koenigii* (L.) Spreng.
- *Murraya paniculata* (L.) Jack

Family: Simaroubaceae

- *Azadirachta indica* A.Juss.

Family: Anacardiaceae

- *Mangifera indica* L.
- *Semecarpus anacardium* L.f.

Family: Sapindaceae

- *Sapindus emarginatus* Vahl

Series: Calyciflorae

Family: Fabaceae (Leguminosae)

Subfamily: Papilionoideae

- *Crotalaria verrucosa* L.
- *Mucuna pruriens* (L.) DC.
- *Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre
- *Pterocarpus santalinus* L.f.
- *Tephrosia purpurea* (L.) Pers.

Subfamily: Caesalpinioideae

- *Cassia fistula* L.
- *Peltophorum pterocarpum* (DC.) K.Heyne
- *Senna occidentalis* (L.) Link

Subfamily: Mimosoideae

- *Albizia lebbeck* (L.) Benth.
- *Mimosa pudica* L.
- *Mimosa rubicaulis* Lam.
- *Prosopis juliflora* (Sw.) DC.

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Family: Myrtaceae

- *Eucalyptus globulus* Labill.
- *Psidium guajava* L.
- *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels

Family: Combretaceae

- *Terminalia — (none from list)*

B. GAMOPETALAE

Series: Inferae

Family: Rubiaceae

- *Hamelia patens* Jacq.
- *Morinda tinctoria* Roxb.

Family: Asteraceae (Compositae)

- *Blumea mollis* (D.Don) Merr.
- *Chromolaena odorata* (L.) R.M.King & H.Rob.
- *Parthenium hysterophorus* L.
- *Tithonia diversifolia* (Hemsl.) A.Gray
- *Tridax procumbens* L.
- *Vernonia cinerea* (L.) Less.

Series: Heteromerae

Family: Solanaceae

- *Datura metel* L.
- *Physalis minima* L.
- *Solanum nigrum* L.

Family: Convolvulaceae

- *Argyreia nervosa* (Burm.f.) Bojer
- *Ipomoea nil* (L.) Roth
- *Merremia* sp.

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- *Operculina turpethum* (L.) Silva Manso

Series: Bicarpellatae

Family: Apocynaceae

- *Adenium obesum* (Forssk.) Roem. & Schult.
- *Ichnocarpus frutescens* (L.) W.T.Aiton
- *Nerium oleander* L.
- *Plumeria alba* L.
- *Thevetia peruviana* (Pers.) K.Schum.

Family: Asclepiadaceae

- *Calotropis procera* (Aiton) Dryand.
- *Hemidesmus indicus* (L.) R.Br.
- *Pergularia daemia* (Forssk.) Chiov.

Family: Verbenaceae

- *Lantana camara* L.

Family: Lamiaceae (Labiatae)

- *Hyptis suaveolens* (L.) Poit.
- *Ocimum basilicum* L.
- *Ocimum tenuiflorum* L.

Family: Acanthaceae

- *Barleria prionitis* L.
- *Justicia adhatoda* L.
- *Justicia gendarussa* Burm.f.
- *Justicia procumbens* L.

Family: Boraginaceae

- *Heliotropium indicum* L.

Family: Scrophulariaceae

- *Scoparia dulcis* L.

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C. MONOCHLAMYDEAE

Family: Amaranthaceae

- *Achyranthes aspera* L.
- *Aerva lanata* (L.) Juss. ex Schult.
- *Amaranthus cruentus* L.
- *Digera muricata* (L.) Mart.
- *Pupalia lappacea* (L.) Juss.

Family: Euphorbiaceae

- *Croton bonplandianus* Baill.
- *Euphorbia hirta* L.
- *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* (L.) Poit.
- *Phyllanthus amarus* Schumach. & Thonn.
- *Phyllanthus emblica* L.
- *Phyllanthus reticulatus* Poir.

Family: Nyctaginaceae

- *Boerhavia diffusa* L.

Family: Moraceae

- *Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam.
- *Ficus hispida* L.f.
- *Ficus racemosa* L.
- *Ficus religiosa* L.
- *Streblus asper* Lour.

II. MONOCOTYLEDONS

Family: Arecaceae (Palmae)

- *Borassus flabellifer* L.
- *Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.

Family: Liliaceae (sensu Bentham & Hooker)

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- *Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f.

Family: Costaceae

- *Costus speciosus* (J.Koenig) Sm.

Family: Poaceae (Gramineae)

- *Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.
- *Dactyloctenium aegyptium* (L.) Willd.

Family: Cyperaceae

- *Cyperus rotundus* L.

III. GYMNOSPERMS

Family: Cycadaceae

- *Cycas circinalis* L.
- *Zamia furfuracea* L.f.

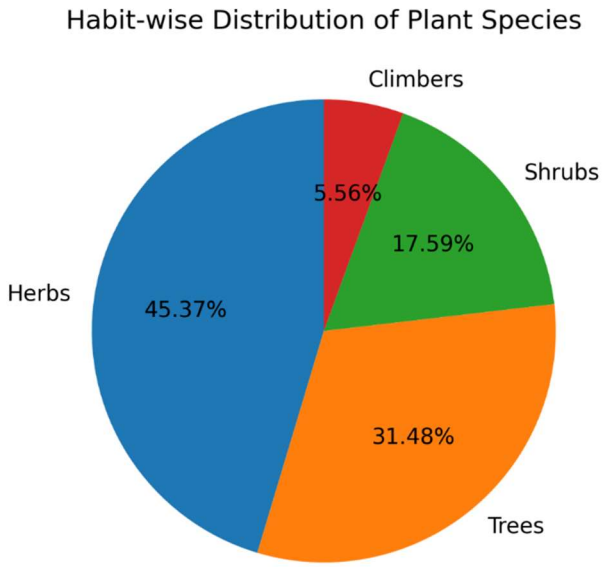


Figure 1

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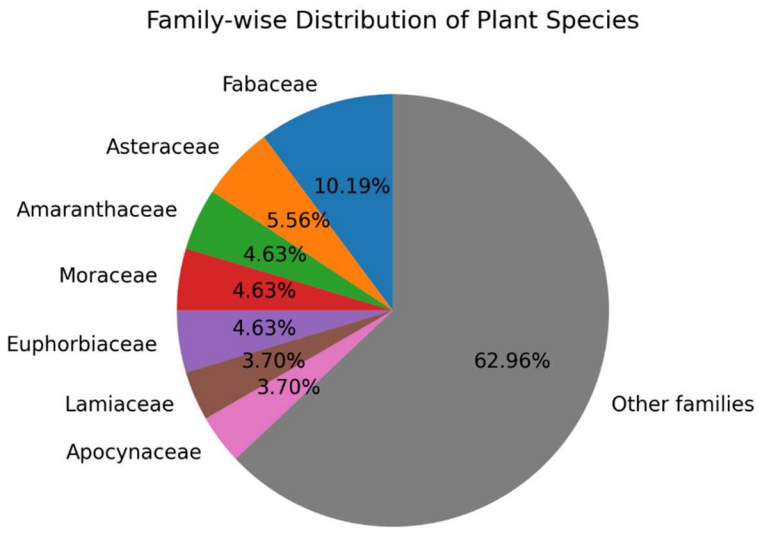


Figure 2

Discussion

The dominance of dicotyledonous angiosperms recorded in the present investigation is in close agreement with earlier floristic studies from peninsular India, which have consistently reported a higher representation of dicots over monocots in tropical and semi-urban landscapes.. [3,5,10].

Conclusion : We hope that this base line information will helpful to the researchers, taxonomists and upcoming students of Botany

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