

## **A contribution of Indian Legacy in Environment Conservation**

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### **Abstract:**

The existence of environmental pollution and ecological disturbance has recently emerged as a major problem or the burning problem. Pollution is increasing to such an extent that the administration has to order to wear a mask in schools is compulsory or even there were off in schools just because too pollute atmosphere outside.

This paper is written to discuss that environment is a point of concern since ages even in Vedas it is explicitly mentioned. And now it is a high time to invoke every individual to realize the need of this alarming situation. The paper has discussed many traditional practices followed since ages to protect the environment and tried to focus on how the seers of olden days were concerned about the environment that behind every tradition there is a hidden care for the environment.

Key WORDS: Environment, ecology, tradition. Culture, science,

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Hinduism has always been an environmentally sensitive philosophy. No religion, perhaps, lays as much emphasis on environmental ethics as Hinduism. It is in Hinduism only where trees are worshiped as it was a known fact that trees, plants, and herbs sustain man's life and above all the things plants supply us the oxygen that is praan Vaayu without which no life can be possible on earth. Our ancient seers and sages were very concerned about the environment that is why the ritual of HAVAN was also conducted for the purification of the environment and in turns, havan helps not only in cleansing the environment but in increasing the fertility of the soil also. The Bhagavad Gita advises us not to try to change the environment but to improve it. The worship of a giant peepal tree is just an act of paying respect and gratitude to nature.

### **Classical custom and Environment in the Indian context:**

The Indian forming of life is included in a reasonable cosmology -view in which all its condition abide in a state of interwoven similarity, being mastered by a planetary order that is returned in all range of anthropoid involvement. The human being is the section of a logical system in which all manner of entity and nature have their zone, and are not in antinomy, but in cooperation with each other. This cooperation between personage and environment is elemental to the Indian belief and ideology. (WWF-India for MoEFCC). Today, when humanity throughout the world are upset by the decline of the environment and the ill-fated residual of this, the classical conduct of outdoor preservation could be looked upon as an origin of vision and teaching for the after time. Feasibly no other culture can provide such a deep collection of cultural practices and geologically sound tie with nature as the Indian.

It is remarkable for home gardens to owner exclusive, even sacred plants used for distinct practice and customary c. Sometimes home gardens are the only remaining habitat of unique and lesser-known species. For most agronomic household, home gardens provide their families with supplementary food, fodder, fuelwood, medicine and other socio-cultural needs that might arise throughout the year. They act as a safety net, ensuring year-round income in case of crop failure. From a researcher's point of view, these gardens double as in situ conservation sites for many unique genetic resources for food and agriculture. The plants grown in home gardens are not static, but rather provide opportunities for experimentation and creativity. Home garden owners often attempt new experiments such as introducing new varieties, planting in different seasons and growing different companion mixtures to see how that might affect productivity. an heritage and environmental context:

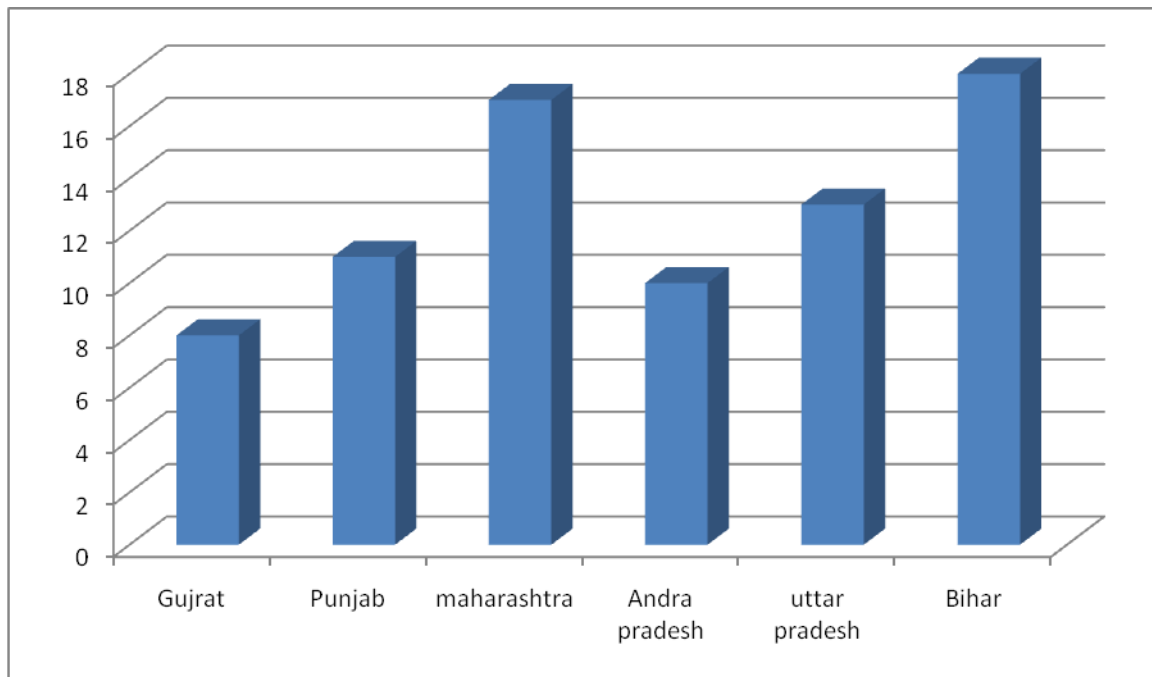
The classical setup of India can be analyzed in various form for example of holy traditions (temple forests, monastery forests), traditional tribal (sacred forests, sacred groves and sacred trees, royal traditions (royal hunting preserves, elephant forests and royal garden etc), living practice (forests and groves serving as cultural and social space and source of livelihood products and services. In the present condition, there are diverse humanistic practices that lift in protecting and taking care of the natural resources. The assemblage of wood and other forest products, old-line ethics, pattern, and system related reclamation of the forest, planting of helpful trees in developmental landscapes, creation, and conservation of traditional water harvesting arrangements such as tank along with plantation, ponds etc. The sensitivity and trust in classical customs, cultures are still secure our resources in distinctive part of the country. Hence, some of the essential traditions and culture which are still in custom are as follows: The tradition of neighborhood care prevalent even today in many areas of the Rajasthan state. It is classified by several Mandir, Banis, divine groves which are allied with temples and goddesses. Moreover, in Alwar district, an NGO named „Tarun Bharat“ has taken important footfall towards care. of resources. A study of eighty villages have been operating along the Arvari River and identified that regular meeting to review issues is very important. In this regard, villagers have fixed Arvari Sansad which has to perform a critical role in the conservation of forest and wildlife and persuaded the people to vacate encroachments on common land. Equality in Chamoli district of Uttrakhand state where if a rural girl gets married, the couple has to plant a sampling of a tree in the newlywed house. Thus, planting a tree seedling has become a cultural and traditional practice taken up by NGO in this region in the late eighties and created a lot of alertness among the locals. Another example of such maintenance is the care of trees named alpine plants through local custom and beliefs by linking these plants with local diety. No one was permitted from the village or outside to pluck the flower except the priest during specific day and time only.

In the Doonagiri village of Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, Uttrakhand state, Bhatia community has an ancient practice of care the medicinal plants which are attributed to their religious belief. Tribal people believed that if anyone from outside touch the medicinal plants from their village treated as an evil act which brings great misery to the inhabitants. Role of Traditional Practices in Conserving Environment: DOI: 10.9790/0837-2211101016 [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org) 12 | Page

The Khasis, Garos and Jaintias community of Meghalaya have a tradition of natural assets management with their religious belief. Therefore, there are lots of holy places like forest groves in India which have been saved under customary law. The Khasi Hills of Meghalaya describe by pockets of rich biodiversity that have been protected by the Khasi tribe and form the basis of nature worship habit in the area, illustrated in the trees, forests, groves, and rivers. The Khasi people believe that those who ruin the forest will die, and that sacred animals such as the tiger

bring prosperity, happiness, and well-being. In fact, the people of Training admit that the destruction of their forest by their forefathers has caused „good luck“ (i.e., the tiger) to leave, leading directly to suffering due to a lack of medicinal plants, wood, water, and fruitful soils. Sacred groves are often quite finite in size, but there are at least 40 of them in Meghalaya (out of a total recorded 79) that range from 50-400 ha, including the well-known Mawphlang sacred grove at 75 hectares.

**Traditional practice toward environment conservation in India:**



Graphical representation of Festival celebrations in different states of India toward environment conservation

Sr. No.	Resources	practices	Features	The traditional method of conservation	Issues
1	Food	Respect for food	Protection of animals, plants, energy and other natural resources	Utilizing the food waste, Indian diet is primarily plant-based, energy saving techniques of cooking (pickles, Aam-papad etc), locally grown and seasonal food.	Wastage of food, protection of animals
2	water	Water is precious	Cleaning of rivers,	In Chhath (festival of Bihar) the “dauras and	

			restriction on the use of synthetic material, protection of water resources	soops” are used which are bio-degradable. Namami Gange yojna developed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for cleaning of Ganga	
3	forest	Animal worship	Worship of Cow (as kamdhenu), ox (as Nandi), snake(associated with Lord Shiva), lion (associated with Maa Durga), Elephant (associated with Lord Ganesha)	Navratra, Ganesh Puja, Savanna etc offer protection to animals, and Many Gaushala are taking care by community	Teasing of animals, harm to noble animals like cow, elephant, camel, horse etc.
		Tree worship	Protection of sacred groves, trees, plants and spread awareness for plantation	Vat Savitri puja festival celebrated across India in different states such as Maharashtra, Karnataka Bihar Punjab Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh. On this day, wives pray to the Divine for their husband. In many states, on Saturday people worship peepal (also known as bodhi tree) tree and lighting the lamp. In Hinduism, the peepal tree represents the three supreme gods- Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva. Banyan tree is generally said to be the humble abode of Krishna. In Hinduism,	deforestation

				Ashoka tree is associated to the God of Love, also known as the Kama Deva. The bael leaves are always offered to Lord Shiva. The tradition of passing books and clothes to younger siblings	
5	Land	Sowing and harvesting of crops	Enjoy the season when rain starts, do prayers for getting the maximum yield and celebrate harvesting time, organize folk songs and in the moonlight for protecting crops from animals	Prevent soil erosion by collecting rainwater into the pond. Step wells of Gujarat, tanks of Tamil Nadu, johad of Rajasthan and Zabu system of Nagaland are few examples of traditional rainwater harvesting system in India. Use of paper bag and jute bag to carry goods.	Acid rain, loss of agriculture land

#### Environmental Protection in Veda:

One would be pleasantly surprised to know that our scriptures, Vedic literature (about 1500 BC) explicitly writes that there is an integral balance in Man, Nature and The God. Natural forces were considered to be expressions of the Lord Himself and are venerable entities. Vedas envisage a beautiful natural environment on earth and command the man not to pollute., Vedas have so many references in them for the environment conservation, ecological balance, water cycles, rainfall phenomena, hydrological cycles and other related entities that directly signals the level of awareness of the pantheists and saints of that age. Indian scriptures of vast knowledge express a full understanding of the undesirable effects of environmental degradation, caused by anything, human or natural.

In Rig Veda, it is explained that universe is consist of five basic elements namely Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and Space (Ether). Which are responsible for life in everything and man is bound to conserve them. It venerates deities like Mitra Varuna Indra and Aditya that are responsible for maintaining the requisite balance in the functioning of all entities of nature like mountains, lakes, heaven and earth, the forests or the water. Seer observed that uncontrolled activities of humans being could result in an imbalance of seasons, rainfall, crops and atmosphere and can degrade the quality of water air and other natural resources.

Yajur Veda writes about accommodation and peace of all components of the earth. It calls for kindness towards all creatures living on the earth, in the air and in the water.” you must not use

your god has given body for killing God's creatures, whether they are human, animal or whatever” Yajur Veda.

Atharvana Veda considers the earth to be the Mother and the creations are her offsprings. There is a command not to degrade the resources of Mother Earth. Water is considered to be the milk of the Mother Earth which fosters the growth of all its offsprings and makes them pure in 100 ways. Rivers are the source of power for life and water is the symbol of dignity. Veda commands the knowledgeable to keep the environment free from all impurities and that can be done by way of Yagnas or sacrificial fire. The Yagnas are done to worship the deity and to purify the air and keep the environment healthy. The ‘vid’ has been commanded to devote his life for the purpose of yagnas and thus balancing the interests of man and nature.

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