Contribution of Wild Vegetation in Rural Employment of Unnao District

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Abstract

Human being has been depending on plants and their byproducts for many of his basic needs since the beginning of civilization. Various types of food material, medicines, material of various usage and raw material for cottage and small industries is gained from forests or self-grown plants. The present study is based on the role of self-grown plants in rural employment in rural and remote areas of Unnao district. These wild plants are found self-grown in different climatic and atmospheric conditions. Since the means of employment in rural areas are very limited, therefore a number of villagers earn their livelihood by collecting these medicinal plants and selling them in local market. The present study deals with 57 plants and their products. Some of these plants are used as vegetables, fruits or medicins while others are used for various purposes. Most of these plants and their products are abundantly found in rural and remote areas, and they are playing a vital role in providing livelihood to the villagers that are weak and old, and deprived of agricultural land.

Key words- Rural employment, Wild vegetation, self-grown plants.
INTRODUCTION

Wild plants provide a huge diversity of products of livelihood value. Millions of people around the world depend directly on wild plant resources for at least part of their livelihoods, be it for food, medicine, building materials, fuel wood or as a source of cash income. With the general global loss of biodiversity caused by habitat loss, the spread of invasive species and global climate change, the availability of the range and abundance of plant resources of livelihood value is under threat.

The impact of harvesting of wild plant resources, whether for subsistence use or trade, may additionally be directly detrimental to the species or its habitat, or both, if the extraction exceeds the capacity of the species to recover or if the habitat is badly damaged in the process. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment highlighted over-exploitation as one of the five main drivers of biodiversity loss impacting on the conservation status of species.

In a recent study supported by the UK Government, BGCI has researched the sustainable management and commercialisation of wild flora and its products in Brazil, China, India and Mexico. The study set out to provide guidance to policy-makers and conservation practitioners on ways to enhance integration of poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation through sustainable plant use.

The findings of the study will help to shape BGCI’s role in the conservation of useful plant resources working with botanic gardens and other conservation partners around the world, specifically in the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC).
Plants and Animals as Food

Human beings hunted animals and gathered plants for food long before the formation of permanent settlements. Some of the earliest animals used for food by humans were insects, fish, wild pigs, and deer or antelope. Plants used for food included berries, mushrooms, and various seeds and nuts. Before the invention of agriculture or farming, gathering and eating plants was just as dangerous, in a sense, as hunting animals for meat. Many plants are toxic to humans, and simply picking the wrong berries or mushrooms for a meal could seriously injure or kill that person.

Humans also domesticated a variety of animals for use as food. Pigs, cattle, goats and sheep were raised by people and diminished and eventually eliminated the need for constant hunting. Today, these same animals are used for meat, milk and cheese.

Plants and Animals Put to Work

Plants and animals have been used by people to help with a variety of tasks for millennia. Plants were used to create clothing, such as straw hats and woven cotton textiles. Clothing helped to shield human skin from the sun and to help regulate body temperature. Animal fur and pelts were also used to create clothing that allowed people to safely hunt, work and live outdoors, especially in colder climates.

Animals played an important part in all sorts of labor-intensive tasks up until the development of advanced technology. Horses provided fast transportation before the development of cars. They could pull trees from the ground, pull plows to till fields and carry building materials long distances, allowing people to build tougher homes and barns in a
wider variety of places. Dogs assisted people in hunting. Certain breeds were developed to hunt in different ways, from terriers that dug up rodents and other small pests from the ground to pointers that helped hunters locate birds or deer in tall brush. In some cases, dogs could even be trained to chase, kill and retrieve animals at a hunter's command, making it unnecessary for humans to risk injury in order to obtain meat.

In parts of the world where the latest technology is unavailable, animals are still used to perform tasks that would otherwise be difficult or impossible.

**Plants and Animals Used as Tools**

Animal bone could be carved into knives, spears and other useful instruments. Animal bladders were sometimes used to create bags, while hollowed-out horns from animals like rams could be used to transmit sounds over long distances. Wood from trees was used to build everything from the bodies of spears to hunting bows. Later on in human history, wood was used in the creation of the first guns. Bird feathers were often used to balance arrows, or to add warmth to clothing, especially moccasins.

Early hunters usually tried to use every part of an animal's body, if possible, to maximize its usefulness. If an animal such as a buffalo was killed, the buffalo's own horns and skull fragments might be used to remove fur from the hide so that the hide could be tanned.

**Plants and Animals Welcomed as Companions**

Human beings are social creatures that crave companionship. In addition to providing us with food, labor and tools, plants and animals have given
us their company over generations, helping to comfort us and make us more productive.

Of all domesticated animals, dogs and cats have offered mankind by far the most companionship over generations. Dogs were originally domesticated to help humans hunt, but quickly became like members of the family for their owners. Cats were domesticated to kill mice, rats and other pests. But soon their companionship led humans to keep cats inside their homes, even if there was no need for the animals to hunt. This newfound domesticated animal companionship was good news for mankind, since scientists have now shown that pet owners, especially dog owners, live longer than those who do not keep animals as companions.

Humans still use plants and animals for food, labor, tools and companionship nowadays, though in different capacities. Without these partnerships, the world would be vastly different.

References