IMPACT OF ECOTOURISM (THEOTOURISM) ON FOREST OF PARASNATH HILL

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Abstract: The present study in entitle “Impact of Eco-tourism (Theo-tourism) on forest of Prasnath Hill” is conducted at Parasnath hill with the objectives to know the impact of ecotourism on forest and growth parameters effect on the biodiversity. The Parasnath Hill is “located in Giridih District of Jharkhand” which is a religious places of Jain pilgrimage and is the most sacred place for Jains in the the World. The Parasnath hill is surrounded on all side with sub-tropical mixed deciduous forest. The Jain people call Parasnath hill as well as Sammet Sikhar. Amazing landscape of the hill has attracted a number of tourists including British over the years. Some of the popular attractions of Parasnath hill are five ecotourist places, which are selected for study included (a) Madhuban which are located at the base of the Parasnath Hill,(b) Usrifall located at east of giridih town on Tundi road, (c) Khandoli Park and Dam located at North-east of giridih towards Bengabad,(d) Harihar Dham located at G.T. Road at Bagodar and(e) Jharkhandi Dham located at Dhanwar near Giridih District. The data are collected through cross section interaction and discussion, survey as well as direct measurement with respect tourists, and other infrastructural facility available. The data were collected both on vegetation as well as on various aspects of ecotourism being held at each selected spots. Pertaining to the ecotourism at different spots, the parameters like number of visitors, Person visiting on each spot during Peak and Off season, facilities available at each spot like motarable road, hotels, canteen etc., Lodging and fooding facilities with tariff for visitors on each spot where recorded. The nature of stay at each spot, facilities to perform activities done by tourists at each spots like camping, trekking, celebration of birthday facilities available were also recorded. This data on Plant biodiversity was recorded from the old working Plan of Giridih District by direct identification of the species. For study of Biodiversity of the study area, the study area was surveyed and collected data through quadrate using random sampling. All individuals of each plant species was counted and recorded. The documentation of the existing species where done with respect to the different tree species, shrubs, grasses or herbs, number of trees present of each species, measurement of height, diameter, basal area and volume was collected and recorded by systematically. Phytosociological studies of tree species was also recorded by applying standard methods to calculate Frequency, Density and Abundance, Relative Density, Relative Frequency, Relative Dominance and IVI value of each species recorded. Total number of tree species, shrubs and grasses were recorded as 15, 11 and 7 respectively. Total number of trees present in the study site was varied from spot to spot also from species to species. Total trees present in the sample area were 1578, out of which Shorea robusta were found maximum (159) followed by Tectona grandis (121) and least were Diospyros melanoxylon (84). Maximum height among tree species were recored for Shorea robusta (18.85 m) followed by Tectona grandis (17.32 m) whereas minimum height were recorded for Pongamia pinnata. Maximum basal area was observed for Shorea robusta followed by Tectona grandis which was 1.98 sq.m and 1.15 sq.m respectively. Minimum basal area was obtained for Diospyros melanoxylon, i.e 0.55 sq.m. Maximum volume was observed for Shorea robusta (37.32 cu.m) followed by Tectona grandis (19.19 cu.m), and minimum volume was obtained for Diospyros melanoxylon i.e 08.76 cu.m. Maximum frequency among the tree species was obtained for Shorea robusta (80%) in the study area in comparison to other species, followed by Tectona grandis (42%) and minimum values (24%) were found for Terminali tomentosa. Similar trend were also noticed for Relative Frequency and High Frequency value of Shorea robusta (14.92) suggesting wide dispersal of followed by Tectona grandis (7.83) and minimum values (4.47) were found for Terminali tomentosa. Similar to the Frequency; density of Shorea robusta (3.18) is found maximum followed by Tectona grandis (2.42) whereas Lowest density was observed for Diospyros melanoxylon (1.68) which indicated it presence in lesser number. Relative density of Shorea robusta (10.07) is found maximum followed by Tectona grandis (7.66) whereas Lowest density was observed for Diospyros melanoxylon (5.32). Maximum abundance among the tree species was obtained Terminalia tomentosa (7.91) in the study area in comparison to other species, followed by Azadirachta indica (7.73) and minimum values (3.97) were found for Shorea robusta. Similar trend were also noticed for Relative Dominance value of Shorea robusta (14.83) species followed by Tectona grandis (78.6) and minimum values (4.11) were found for Diospyros melanoxylon. Maximum Important Value Index among the tree species was obtained for Shorea robusta (39.82) were found followed by Tectona grandis (24.10) and minimum values (15.02) were found for Diospyros melanoxylon. This indicates dominance of Shorea robusta in study area.