

Review of Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Management in Maharashtra

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Abstract

Maharashtra is characterized by diverse ecosystems, including the Western Ghats, coastal regions, forests, wetlands, grasslands, and freshwater ecosystems, which support a wide range of plant and animal species. Rapid urbanization, industrial development, agricultural expansion, infrastructure projects, deforestation, habitat fragmentation, pollution, and climate change have created significant challenges for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation in the state. This review examines the major approaches, policies, institutions, and conservation practices associated with environmental protection and biodiversity management in Maharashtra. Particular attention is given to protected areas, wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, biodiversity heritage sites, community participation, forest conservation, coastal ecosystem management, and sustainable utilization of natural resources. The review also considers the importance of biodiversity documentation, habitat restoration, environmental impact assessment, and conservation education in maintaining ecological stability. Maharashtra's biodiversity management increasingly requires coordination among government agencies, local communities, researchers, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders. Community-based conservation is particularly important because local communities possess valuable traditional knowledge and depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The study further highlights the need to balance economic development with ecological sustainability through effective implementation of environmental regulations and scientifically informed conservation strategies. Overall, integrated biodiversity management, stronger institutional coordination, public participation, and long-term ecological monitoring are essential for protecting Maharashtra's natural heritage and ensuring sustainable development for future generations.

Keywords: Maharashtra, Environmental Protection, Biodiversity Conservation, Biodiversity Management, Western Ghats, Protected Areas, Wildlife Conservation, Forests, Ecosystem Management, Sustainable Development.

