

PREFACE

Wetlands though have tremendous potential for environmental and socio-economic well-being is the most threatened of all ecosystems today. The significance of wetlands lies in their roles in the hydrological cycle, for food and biomass production, bio-geo-chemical functions, and as nutrient and pollution filters for water quality improvement. The researcher from his childhood days, being an inhabitant of the wetland area, has observed that the wetlands, irrespective of their size, are treated as an unproductive landmass. People either dump their wastes here or convert these so called unproductive lands into productive ones by transforming them into agricultural fields or residential and industrial sites and therefore, resulting in fast disappearance and degradation of wetlands. A study by the Wildlife Institute of India revealed that around 70-80% of fresh water marshes and lakes in the Gangetic floodplain region has been lost in the last 50 years. Sometimes the damages to the wetlands are unavoidable as a result of increasing pressure on land but a majority of it occurs because the true values of wetlands are misunderstood.

The study area of Koch Bihar district abounds in wetlands; however, these wetlands are facing a serious threat to its survival due to shrinkage of area, soil and water pollution through anthropogenic activities like urban developmental activities and agricultural practices. Indiscriminate conversion and encroachment of wetlands due to human habitation, agriculture, pisciculture and industrial purposes not only destroy wetland's physical and chemical characteristics but is also detrimental to the ecosystems in general.

The critical condition of wetlands shook the researcher to the core and thereby he decided to do something for the conservation of wetland, not only under academic interest but with a hope to curb the degradation of wetland and pave a path towards rejuvenation of wetlands.

During the research work, I have taken the help of many individuals, groups of people, organizations and institutions. At the very beginning, I have the pleasure to acknowledge my profound appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to my teacher and guide Dr. Sudip Kumar

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Lastly, I seek apology for unwilling mistakes in the preparation of the research work.

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