



## TEMPORAL CHANGES IN LAND USE AND LAND COVER: A CASE STUDY OF ALIPURDUAR TOWN, WEST BENGAL

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### Abstract

Population growth and associated infrastructure development have altered the landscape; affecting land use and land cover patterns even in remote regions of developing countries. Alipurduar, being located at unique geographical location in the heartland of diversified floral and faunal assemblage also witnessed urban expansion. Land use change is unavoidable especially in this age of development and urbanization. Therefore, monitoring and measurement of land use and land cover is significant to find out the exact scenario of urbanization. This paper primarily aims to analyze the changing land use and land cover pattern of Alipurduar Town, West Bengal for last two decades. For this study different satellite images have been analyzed with GIS and Remote Sensing techniques to visualize the change in land use and land cover.

**Keywords:** Alipurduar, Land use, Land cover, Temporal Change.

### Introduction

Urbanization refers to the gradual process by which rural population starts to live in an urban area and this shifting of population is mostly associated with a shift in the livelihood pattern of the people. Being located in the Himalayan foothills, river dominated Dooars region has a great biodiversity in terms of flora and fauna, but deforestation has taken place in a large scale affecting this region in recent times. In case of Alipurduar it shows a diverse nature for last 60 years which is due to the natural growth rate of population and also for the external causes. In the discussion of Dooars historical transition many renowned historians termed this area as a *Migrators Area*. Starting of tea industry by Richard Haughton led to a foundation there after extraction of Dolomite from Buxa and Jayanti hill, forming a railway division in 1958, and 'Bongalkheda' movement made a huge impact in the population growth of this region. Although Alipurduar Municipality started its evolution as an urban centre long time back, yet studies related to the changing dynamics of Alipurduar Municipality is very limited. Alipurduar Municipality is a Class II town in the newly formed district of Alipurduar in West Bengal.

Therefore, urban development in the newly formed district will heavily depend on the development of Alipurduar Municipality. The urbanization process and availability of urban amenities in the district will also be revolving around Alipurduar town. Moreover, after its elevation as district