

Home Gardens and Management of Key Species in the Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve of India

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ABSTRACT Growing and maintaining of plant species by household members in the vicinity of dwelling places dates back to antiquity. A study was conducted in the Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve (PBR) - one of the 15 biosphere reserves of India, with the major aim of understanding the perceptions of tribal communities, especially with respect to the home gardens and role of home gardens in their livings. Through questionnaire survey the information was collected from the buffer zone villages of PBR on the species planted, purpose and perceptions of raising home gardens and interrelated traditional knowledge of local people. The study documented 47 ethno-botanical species ranging from forestry to horticulture and agricultural as grown in the home gardens. These species were used for multiple purposes including food, medicine, vegetables, nutraceutical, fodder and cultural significance. The practice of raising home gardens was based on centuries of cumulative traditional knowledge, practices and beliefs with respect to the species and its environmental and ecological requirements.