

Urban Biodiversity and Green Spaces in Delhi: A Case Study of New Settlement and Lutyens' Delhi

Priya Bhalla and Prodyut Bhattacharya*

*University School of Environment Management, GGS Indraprastha University,
Dwarka, Sector 16-C, New Delhi, India*

KEYWORDS Avenue Trees. Delhi Green Spaces. Landscape Planning. Livelihood. Urban Ecology. Urban Forestry

ABSTRACT The paper presents a comparative scenario of green space planning in Lutyens' Delhi, an old colonial area, with the Dwarka sub-city of Delhi. A mixed methods approach using field based surveys and questionnaires for randomly selected residential areas, parks and roads was employed to understand the urban tree species distribution, its planning and management practices and the people's perception regarding urban forestry. Urban trees encountered in Lutyens' Delhi appeared quite diverse, with 125 species as compared to 26 species in Dwarka. In Dwarka, *shisham* (*Dalbergia sissoo*) and *jamun* (*Syzigium cumini*) together constitute about three-fourth of the total population of the sampled avenue trees, whereas *neem* (*Azadirachta indica*) and *imli* (*Tamarindus indica*) constitute about half of the total sampled avenue trees in Lutyens' Delhi. Further, species selection is compromised in lieu of fast growing tree species. Though awareness related to benefits of urban trees was found high among sampled residents, low faunal biodiversity remains a bigger concern. Census and periodic monitoring of urban trees besides expansion of green spaces, while formulating infrastructure related policies can improve the urban forestry status of Delhi.