

Theme 7: Lakes, rivers, estuaries: water quality, biotic resources, sustainable management

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AVIFAUNAL DIVERSITY OF REGULARLY DISTURBED CURTORIM WETLAND, SALCETE, GOA, INDIA

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Avifaunal diversity and density of Regularly Disturbed Curtorim Wetland, Salcete, Goa, was investigated for a span of three years. Despite its continuous ecological disturbances, the uniqueness of this wetland since pre-Portuguese period is its socioeconomic importance and its cyclic alternate pattern of five months implementation of agricultural activity for Kharif crop and the remaining seven months of flooding, from Rai tollem lake, for Rabi crop. Cultivation in the low lying areas, concurrent to biotic enhancement for transfer of energy to higher trophic levels, had attracted 38 species of birds, comprising of residents, migratory and stop overs. The investigation indicated highest resident population of Lesser whistling teals, next highest were winter visitors Garganeys, several Cotton teals associated with whistling teals' presence. Rare birds were Caspian plovers and Wolly necked storks. Purple moor hens as biological indicators of eutrophic ponds were absent in all the three years of the study period, except for one or two purple moor hens that had strayed into the wetland at mid of April just prior to absolute release of water from the wetland. This pond did not become eutrophic because there was frequent flooding of water into the pond and also water was released out into the paddy fields which had taken away the nutrients. The pond water was completely drained out annually.