



Recognition by Govt. Authority

A successful conservation program can be developed by following certain steps –

- Inventory and Documentation at local level
- Awareness generation among local community and administrative level
- Revitalise the traditional practices of natural resource management
- Motivate younger generation towards sacred grove management
- Restoration and protection of the existing groves
- Legal framework establishment

### Organisations -

- Energy and Wetlands Research Group, CES, IISc, Bangalore-560012
- College of Forestry, Banavasi Road, Sirsi
- College of Forestry, Ponnampet, Kodagu
- Western Ghats Task Force, Govt. of Karnataka
- Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India

### Some useful links –

- CPREE sacred grove sources  
[http://www.ecoheritage.cpreec.org/Viewcontall.php?\\$mFiHPEyWNks6UXr4nWz](http://www.ecoheritage.cpreec.org/Viewcontall.php?$mFiHPEyWNks6UXr4nWz)
- Sacred groves and sacred trees of Uttara  
Kannada  
[http://www.ignca.nic.in/cd\\_08008.htm](http://www.ignca.nic.in/cd_08008.htm)
- Sacred grove: Nature conservation tradition of the ancient world  
[http://wgbis.ces.iisc.ernet.in/biodiversity/sahyadri\\_ews/newsletter/issue32/index.htm](http://wgbis.ces.iisc.ernet.in/biodiversity/sahyadri_ews/newsletter/issue32/index.htm)
- Bird diversity in Sacred groves of Cherrapunjee  
<http://www.aaranyak.org/Reports/Birds%20of%20Cherrapunjee%20Final%20Technical%20Report.pdf>
- Sacred Groves of West Bengal: A Model of Community Forest Management  
<http://www.cintdis.org/images/PDF/SG-UEA.pdf>
- Sacred Dimensions: Understanding the cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas  
<http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sacredheritagesites2.pdf>

## Sacred grove

Peoples' participation in natural resource management



Centre for Ecological Sciences  
Indian Institute of Sciences  
Bangalore

## Sacred Grove – gift from our ancestors

Devarabana or Sacred Grove is a part of our rural life. It is a place where local deities are worshipped by the villagers and the place itself is considered sacred by local tradition. Sacred groves are actually patches of vegetation or cluster of trees protect in the name of god. Groves exist from time immemorial and their history can trace back in local folklore, literature even in traditional practices.



Naga Devata

Chowdamma

Uttara Kannada district, belongs to the central Western Ghats region, is bestowed with Sacred groves in various forms and names. Villages are dotted with Bhutappana Bana, Birappana Bana, Yakshi Bana, Marammana Bana, Nagara Bana and deities are Bhutappa, Birappa, Yakshi, Mariamma, Naga Devata accordingly.

Devarabana plays a major role in rural socio-religious life. It is a place for social gathering which strengthen bonding among people during festival and religious ceremonies, representing communal identity and harmony.

## Sacred Grove and our life

Sacred Grove is important for our livelihood too. Many of these places, although under various phases of transformation, are home for a good number of local plants and animals. Thus, help to maintain local biodiversity. Similarly, various economically important plant products (medicines, NTFPs, fuelwood, leaf manure etc.) have been reported from these areas. Important ecological functions like, soil and water conservation, nutrient cycling, microclimate maintenance, pollination, seed dispersal, pest regulation etc. are operating at various levels in and around these patches which have long term impact on local livelihood improvement.



Pollination

Fuelwood Collection

## Threats to Sacred Grove

This old system of nature conservation is at present under series of transformation both conceptually and physically. It is the rapid change in our community structure and social norms, traditional believes and practices which were once the stronghold for sacred grove, are fading nowadays. In addition to that, practical issues like, population increment, agricultural

intensification, developmental activities also play major role in degradation of this system which is visible through

- Change in religious practices which are mostly oriented towards icon based, temple centric culture rather than nature centric believes
- Poor management and negligence
- Encroachment (agriculture land, areca / banana plantation, settlement)
- Invasion by exotic species
- Construction of permanent structure



Land Conversion

Invasive Species

## Conservation of Sacred Grove

Conservation activities on sacred grove have been increased manifold nowadays. Government agencies, researchers and conservationists recognise the importance of these protected patches both from ecological and social perspectives. This tradition is one of the best examples of community based natural resource management.