

Awareness of the students regarding wetland in Goalpara District of Assam: A Study

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ABSTRACT

The paper will highlight the knowledge and awareness of the under graduate students about the importance of wetland in Goalpara district of Assam. Wetland is a natural home for many species, it provides many resources to us and also plays a very important role in maintaining a balance in our environment. For example it works as a pollution filter, it can control flood etc. Assam has 3,513 Wetlands, among them one wetland (Deepor Beel) in Kamrup district has been listed as a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention in November 2002. In the present study descriptive survey method has been used and 100 under graduate students (arts stream) from Lakhipur College are selected as a sample by using purposive sampling method. Two Self constructed questionnaires are used to collect the required data for the study. The study is based on primary data. Suggestions are also given to create awareness among the students regarding the importance of the wetlands.

Key words- knowledge, awareness, wetlands etc

Introduction

Wetlands occur where water meets land. It includes mangroves, marshes, peat lands, rivers, lakes, floodplains, deltas, flooded forest, and coral reefs ad rice-fields. February 2 is celebrated as the world wetland day to create awareness about the importance of wetland. In the Iranian city of Ramsar ,in the year 1971,on the shores of the Caspian Sea, the convocation on wetland was adopted, which is known as the Ramsar convention. Every year the wetland day is celebrated with a theme for conservation of wetland resources. The theme for this year is wetlands ad water. The theme highlights the importance of wetlands as a source of freshwater and encourages action to conserve them and stop their loss. Wetland in India- India has 42 Ramsar wetland site (as on December, 2020) of which three are from North-East India. These are- Deepor Beel of Assam, Rudrasagar Lake of Tripura and Loktak lake of Manipur. Renuka wetland of Himachal Pradesh is the smallest wetland and Chillika Lake is the largest wetland of India Wetlands in Assam- Assam has 3513 wetlands, among them only Deepor Beel of kamrup District has been included under the Ramsar Convention list. Deepor Beel is also selected as one of the Important Bird Area (IBA) sites by Birdlife International. Deepor Beel is a permanent fresh water lake in Assam. But Deepor Beel is facing various environmental threats like illegal hunting, trapping and killing birds and animals etc. So there is a very urgent need of creating awareness among the people of Assam about the conservation of the wetlands.

Need of the study

Wetlands are the natural home of many species and also habitat of many threatened and endangered species. Wetland plays an important role regarding flood control. Wetland soaks up water that comes from flooding rivers or with the tides. Wetland also works as a pollution filter. It can reduce nitrates, phosphorus and availability of clean water also depends on healthy wetlands. Wetland provides fertile farm land; many commercially important species can harvested in wetlands. Wetland provides storm protection services and can store carbon for many years and it can play an important role in fighting climate change. Wetland provides opportunities like hiking, biking, kayaking, bird watching to enjoy the nature and accordingly it becomes a place of recreation and tourism. Wetland renders precious resources for the survival of mankind and also plays a great role in order to maintain a good balance of our ecosystem. So

effective and concrete measures should be taken for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands and public awareness is very much needed for conservation and protection of wetlands for the future generation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the knowledge of the students regarding wetland.
2. To examine the awareness of the students about the importance of wetlands.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitation is set as the boundaries of the enquiry. Delimitations are set so that goals of the study do not become impossibly large to complete. The study is delimited on the following head

1. The study is conducted in Lakhimpur College, Goalpara district, Assam
2. Undergraduate Arts discipline.
3. Undergraduate students (Degree first and second year)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. It is the study or description of methods. It can properly refer to the theoretical analysis of methods appropriate to a branch of knowledge. A research methodology involves specific techniques that are adopted in research process to collect, assemble and evaluate data. It defines those tools that are used to gather relevant information in a specific research study.

METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

Descriptive survey method will be used for the study. Descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and whenever possible, to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

a) POPULATION

Concept of Population- A population refers to any collection of specified group of human beings or of non-human entities such as objects, educational institutions, time units, geographical areas. Some statisticians call it universe. All the colleges of Goalpara district are the population of the present study.

b) SAMPLE

A sample is a subset of a population that is used to represent the population. A sample is a small proportion of population selected for observation and analysis.

Purposive sampling method is used for collecting data. For the present study 100 undergraduate students (arts discipline) are selected from Lakhimpur College.

c) TOOLS

In every research work the investigator requires some data gathering tools or techniques in order to collect the required data. The tools are the weapons for gathering data. There are a large number of tools and techniques available for data collection. The selection of suitable tools are vital important for successful research for collection various kinds of information for various purposes.

For the present study the investigator will use the following tools

1. Two self structured questionnaires have been developed for the present study. One is used to assess the knowledge of the students about wetland and the second is used to examine the awareness of the students regarding the importance of the wetlands.

d) PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The investigator has visited the College and collect the required data from the under graduate students of Arts discipline (Degree first and second year students).

DATA INTERPRETATION

1. Assess the awareness of the students regarding wetland.

<u>Sl.no</u>	<u>Questions</u>	<u>Correct answer</u>	<u>Incorrect answer</u>
1	What do you mean by wetland?	90	10
2	World wetland day is celebrated on which day?	5	95
3	On which year convention on wetlands (Ramsar convention on wetlands) was adopted?	4	96
4	What is the theme for this year on wetlands conservation?	5	95
5	Name one wetland of Assam which is included in the Ramsar Convention list?	5	95
6	How many wetlands are declared as a Ramsar site from the North-East India	5	95

The above table represents the knowledge of the students regarding the wetland.

The table reveals that 90% of the total population knows the meaning of wetland, 5% respondents know the date on which world wetland day is celebrated, 4% respondents correctly respond the year on which convention on wetland (Ramsar convention on wetlands) was adopted, 5% respondents know the theme for this year on wetland conservation, out of 100 respondents 5% respond the name of one wetland of Assam which is included in the Ramsar Convention list, 95% respondents did not know the number of wetlands which is declared as a Ramsar site from the North-East India.

2. Examine the awareness of the students regarding the importance of the wetlands.

Sl.no	Statements	Yes	No
7	We need to protect wetlands for the conservation of our ecosystem.	80	20
8	Aware about the present status of services of wetlands at your locality.	35	65
9	Wetland provides us resources.	45	55
10	Wetland is the habitat of many species.	60	40
11	Wetland can control flood.	33	67
12	Wetland works as a pollution filter.	30	70
13	Wetland provides storm protection services.	25	75
14	Wetland provides fertile farm land.	60	40
15	Aware about wetlands degradation.	67	33
16	Aware about the dangers of destroying the wetlands.	46	54

The above table represents the awareness level of the students regarding the importance of the wetlands. The table shows that 80% of the total respondents are of the opinion that we need to protect wetlands for the conservation of ecosystem, 35% students are aware about the present status of services of wetlands at their locality. 45% respondents said that wetlands provides us resources, 60% respond that wetland is the habitat of many species, out of 100 respondents 33% respondents have reveal that wetland can control flood and 30% said that wetland works as a pollution filter. 25% of the total respondents are of the opinion that wetland provides storm protection services. 60% respond that wetland provides fertile farm land. 67% respondents are aware about the wetland degradation. Only 46% respondents are aware about the dangers of destroying the wetlands.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the study it has been found that most of the student knows the meaning of wetland but very few students knows about the date on which world wetland day is celebrated, the year on which convention on wetland was adopted. Most of the students did not know the theme for this year on wetlands conservation. Only few students know the name of one wetland of Assam which is included in the Ramsar convention list and the number of wetlands which is declared as a Ramsar site from the North-East India.

Most of the students are aware that we need to protect wetlands for conservation of our ecosystem, wetland is the natural home for many species, wetland provides fertile farm land and also aware about the wetland degradation. But most of the students are not aware about the dangers of destroying the wetlands and they are also not aware about the resources and services that we are getting from the wetlands.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The units of environmental subjects of B.A course must contain the importance of wetland and its services towards the mankind.
2. Seminars and discussions should be organized by the colleges on wetland to develop the knowledge and awareness of the students.
3. The teachers can also discuss about the environmental issues with the students in their leisure time or in the other normal classes to make the students aware about the various environmental issues.
4. Experts in the field of environment should invite in the college programs to give a speech on environmental problems.
5. Field visits should organized by the college authority to visit the wetlands of the local area, so that the students can get the practical knowledge of the wetlands and its impact on our environment.
6. Environmental teachers of B.A course can also give assignment on wetlands and its services to raise the knowledge of the students about the importance of the wetlands.

CONCLUSION

In order to protect the wetlands for the future generation we have to make aware our present generation about the importance of wetlands. For this purpose the teachers can play a great role to make the students aware about the important resources and services which the wetlands provide to us. By organizing discussion, seminar, excursion etc the teachers can make the students aware about the importance of wetlands as well as the dangers of destroying the wetlands.

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