

Indigenous Population of India: Their Role in Environmental Protection

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Abstract

India is a diverse nation, home to numerous indigenous communities that have been living in harmony with their natural surroundings for centuries. These communities have been guardians of their ecosystems and have played a significant role in environmental conservation, often through sustainable practices and traditional ecological knowledge. India's indigenous communities have developed traditional ecological knowledge systems, which are time-tested practices that have evolved over generations to ensure the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources. These practices include agroforestry, mixed cropping, water harvesting, and community-based forest management. Moreover, many indigenous communities possess a deep-rooted cultural connection to the land and its resources, which has led to a strong sense of environmental stewardship. Indigenous communities also contribute to biodiversity conservation by protecting wildlife habitats and maintaining a rich variety of plant and animal species. Their traditional practices often involve low levels of resource extraction, resulting in reduced environmental degradation and deforestation. Furthermore, indigenous communities play a crucial role in climate change mitigation through the preservation of carbon-rich forests and by promoting sustainable agriculture and land management practices. However, the unique role of indigenous communities in environmental protection is under threat due to factors such as land dispossession, loss of traditional knowledge, and the impact of climate change on their livelihoods. Globalization, urbanization, and modernization have led to a decline in traditional practices, which has weakened the communities' ability to maintain their long-

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