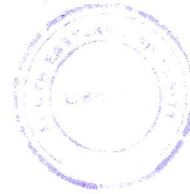


NATURE IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT: A Case Study of Mysore City

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Abstract

Preservation of nature is an integral part of urban planning. For a city or an emerging town to stay clean and green, less noisy and more wholesome and a better place to raise children, nature play a very important in any urban environment. Green spaces have immense social, economic, educational and ecological.

Mysore is popularly known as a 'City of Palaces and gardens'. It lies in a saucer shaped basin flanked by the Chamundi Hill on the southeast and a raised platform in the west. Mysore has a salubrious climate. It is a growing city with steady population increase, unbridled urbanization leading to a phenomenal horizontal expansion resulting in a deteriorating quality of life, over-crowding and a growing tendency to violate land use norms. As per the Comprehensive Development Plan, Mysore City has Local Planning Area of 233.13 sq. km. and conurbation area of 92.21 sq. km. The ratio of conurbation area and green belt works out to 1:2. This expansion is expected to continue unabated. However the area demarcated for greenspaces is expected to decline to 2,690 hectares from the existing 3,060 hectares by 2011. One of the adverse effects of rapid and relative by unplanned growth is the heavy encroachment leading to the problem

of shrinking green spaces. The Mysore City Corporation resources are inadequate to fully meet the green space needs of the city, their due maintenance and expansion.

This paper highlights the vital role played by natural and manmade natures like parks, residential gardens, institutional gardens, avenue trees, water bodies, zoological gardens, and thereby the significance of planning and management. It aims to assess the present state of green spaces in the city and evaluate its potential for sustainable development. The paper takes an overview of some of the green spaces and lakes. It has a total of 316 big and small parks in addition to a number of institutional open spaces and avenue plantations.

The measures suggested by the paper include the implementation of Comprehensive Development Plan, active involvement of the private sector and NGOs, improved maintenance of greenspaces, planting and caring for flowering avenue trees, preservation of agricultural zones, development of waterfront areas, identification of lake-specific activities, optimum utilization of lakes, usage of recycled sewage water for irrigation of parks, protection of natural valleys and drains to increasing the capacity of lakes during monsoon.

Key Words: Shrinking green spaces, City of Palaces, planning and management Comprehensive Development Plan.
