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Bamboo resources in the homegardens of Assam: A case study from Barak Valley

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Abstract

Bamboos form an important component of the rural landscape in Assam and the homegarden bamboos fulfil diverse needs of the rural populations. Villagers' priority bamboo species were studied in the Irongmara and Dargakona villages of Barak Valley, Assam through random sampling of 100 homegardens and 40 bamboo groves. Species inventory revealed that bamboo growers maintain seven species to fulfil their social, ecological, and economical needs. Of these, *Bambusa cacharensis*, *B. vulgaris*, and *B. balcooa* exhibited the highest frequency of occurrence both in the homegardens and bamboo groves signifying the villagers' preference for these species. Relative Importance Value (RIV) also was highest for *B. cacharensis*, followed by *B. vulgaris*, and *B. balcooa*. This study also emphasized the need for sustainable management of this socioeconomically valuable and ecologically important rural resource.

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