



# New Approaches to Biodiversity Assessment and Conservation

**Sheikh Hilal Ahmad**

*LL.M Environmental law, University of Kashmir (India)*

## **ABSTRACT**

*Solving the problem of environmental threats and a dwindling biodiversity has been on the international agenda for some decades now. The formulation of environmental questions, however, is changing slowly. People have made unprecedented changes to ecosystems in recent decades to meet growing demand for food, fresh water, fibre and energy. The quality of life for billions of people has improved, but these changes have weakened nature's ability to deliver key services.*

*Assessing the status and trends of biodiversity is essential for sustainable development strategies at all levels, from village to nation to region. Biodiversity is crucial for the wellbeing of people and the Earth. Ecological communities maintain the ecological and evolutionary processes that sustain life. These are necessary to help maintain the planet's chemical balance, moderate climate, renew soil, and conserve species diversity. Plant animal and other species have intrinsic worth. They are also the source of all biological wealth—supplying food, raw materials, medicines, recreational resources, and a store of other goods and services worth many billions of dollars per year. The genetic stocks within crop varieties, livestock breeds and their wild relatives provide essential traits for increasing and improving agricultural production and the development of biotechnologies. In its pretext this paper recognizes that current practices in social and environmental affairs operate in isolation and this is already having a severe impact on human wellbeing and biodiversity. High export rates coupled with increasing overexploitation of nature are driving down the provisioning of ecosystem services, and this in turn is most affecting local and poor communities in developing countries. The environmental costs for the high standards of living of more developed countries are in many cases externalized and shifted towards poorer countries with high bio capacity. The more developed countries are saving their own resources due to international trade. Especially areas in the northern boreal hemisphere like Russia, Japan and northern Europe are importing agricultural products while they maintain high quantities of forest coverage. Since biodiversity and human development are constantly interacting and are mutually dependent, conservation has to be incorporated in human development policy much more consciously and actively. Equally, biodiversity conservation has to operate within the realistic expectations of social needs including growing demands on resources. The extreme affects of globalization on both ecology and social wellbeing demands a radical approach to future strategies of managing human and environmental sustainability.*

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