

VII.B.4. Environmental Governance and Institutions: A Study of Tribal People in Karnataka

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Prior to the introduction of HYVs, farming systems in South India were replete with rich - bio-diversity around farms and irrigation tank system, which was performing various environmental functions and a balance existed between agriculture and environment. The present commercial agriculture is being practised totally against tenets of ecology and environment compounding further environmental problems. However, in Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple [BRT] Wild Sanctuary Area in Karnataka, tribal people are practising farming systems that are environmentally friendly. The tribal community known as 'Soliga' is on a strong ecological system with diverse crop and supplementary activities that support the self reliant rural community and the environment. The livelihood patterns are in tandem with environmental protection, through their own informal institutions and community action. On the contrary, the modern farming systems thriving outside BRT sanctuary are practising agriculture that is non-environmentally friendly and beset with a plethora of problems and dependencies. The study proposes to compare the environmental governance in the two regions and institutions that sustain or discourage environmental governance. The specific objectives of the proposed study are : (a) To document awareness about the need for environmental protection among the tribal people in BRT and the people outside the BRT sanctuary, (b) to document and analyse the patterns and nature environmental governance in practice in the BRT sanctuary [Tribal people] vis-a-vis outside the sanctuary.

Historical, institutional and participatory rural appraisal approaches were used to collect the data. Data pertaining to environmental governance, institutions and other factors influencing it were collected from 50 farmers each from the two regions. Simple tabular analysis, functional analysis and logic regression analyses were carried out to will be used to analyse the data.