

M. P. SINGH

BIODIVERSITY IN INDIA

IMPLEMENTATION AND BARRIERS OF
REGULATORY ACTS



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**INTEGRATING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN HORNBILL CONSERVATION:
BRIDGING THE PAST AND FUTURE**

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ABSTRACT : This chapter, explores the importance of community participation and traditional knowledge in hornbill conservation and portrays the intergenerational connections centering on community and helping in bringing the past and future together. Habitat loss and hunting threaten hornbills, which are regarded widely as important cultural and ecological icons. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) rooted in local customs gives very important insight into practices that could be complementary to scientific conservation approaches. This approach encourages an ownership of conservation goals through the engagement of indigenous communities as active stakeholders. The chapter presents successful case studies, challenges and innovative strategies towards integrating the TEK into modern conservation efforts to conserve biodiversity while protecting cultural heritage. This synthesis highlights the need for inclusive, community driven approaches to safeguard these keystone species and these constrained ecosystems.

Key words : Hornbill conservation, traditional ecological knowledge, community participation, biodiversity, cultural heritage, habitat protection, indigenous practices.

Introduction

“The disappearance of hornbills from an ecosystem is a forewarning of forest degradation. These birds are silent gardeners, whose role in seed dispersal ensures the continuation of forest growth” (Datta and Rawat, 2003).

Assessment for hornbill conservation should include an indigenous knowledge system and active community participation in regions rich in biodiversity such as the Terai and tropical forest regions. Oriental Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris* and other hornbill species) are considered keystone species in forest ecosystems because of the seed dispersal role it plays and provides for forest diversity. Participation of community members, and integrating traditional knowledge, are of staggering importance for hornbill conservation.

In regions of hornbill habitat loss and poaching, their conservation is built on the integration of community participation and traditional ecological knowledge, which has become a cornerstone in their conservation. Biodiversity conservation benefits from traditional knowledge, which can be too nuanced for today's wetland conservation practices, because it is often passed through generations. In areas such as Southeast Asia and India, collaborative work