



Rapid Urbanization: A Threat to Natural Habitat of Plants Calling a Need for Conservation

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People around the globe are moving from rural to urban setup at a very fast pace. It is expected that about 60 % population of the world will be living in urban setup by 2030 [1]. Migration of people in large numbers puts pressure on cities resulting in expansion, especially of metropolitan cities of the world. Which results in the establishment of societies, resorts and other real estate properties in the suburbs of large cities. For this purpose, the forests and other habitats are being demolished on a large scale. Further, modern lifestyle, heavy vehicles and development of more industries along with cities leads to the drastic increase in pollution, altered water and nutrient cycles and heat balance [2]. All these factors sum up to disturb the natural habitat of various plant and animal species, decreases species richness and ultimately leads to loss of biodiversity [3]. Many medicinal and economically important plant species like *Commiphora wightii*, *Ginkgo biloba*, *Araucaria Araucana*, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, *Tecomella undulata* and various cycads are now endangered or threatened either due to loss of their habitat or increased pollution.

To overcome this issue, in vivo and in vitro conservation strategies should be expanded to a large scale. Among them national parks, conservatories, seed banks and tissue culture to propagate endangered and near to extinct species are the steps taken worldwide but its time to increase the extent of these activities. Moreover, laws of protected areas (national parks) should be implemented strictly all over the world to protect the natural habitats. Development in areas with high plant diversity or endangered species should be restricted and lost habitats should be restored to aid the recovery of endangered species. Whereas, in cities, people should use native plants for aesthetic purposes. Establishment of urban forests in cities is comparatively a new trend with positive impact.

Further, invitro culture, cryopreservation and molecular markers are the biotechnological tools for the conservation of plant germ plasm [4].

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