

## HABITAT DIVERSITY IN WET COASTAL ECOSYSTEM OF SINDHUDURG DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA STATE IN INDIA.

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### Abstract

The floral species in mangrove ecosystem can be categorized into true mangroves and mangrove associates. The species which are adapted to mangrove habitat and do not extend into other terrestrial plant communities are referred to as true mangrove species. Typical mangrove is another term, which is used since 1970s for intertidal species with visible adaptations. On contrary, plants that occur in the coastal environment and within the mangroves are referred to as mangrove associate species. Sometimes few species also extend in the terrestrial zone on getting congenial environment. The plants growing in wet coastal or mangrove-associated habitats are more than 200. There is no clear-cut distinction or classification of these plants. It depends upon the number of adaptations exhibited by the species. It is to be noted that the adaptations are not only morphological but they are at taxonomic, physiological, anatomical or at genetic level. Therefore, categorizing the coastal plants, which are in the close proximity of mangroves, based on habitats, may be easier and logical. In case of morpho-taxonomic literature of mangroves, it is observed that a single species is classified differently. Mangrove habitats are well studied and described by number of workers. The aspects like physicochemical properties, water relation and even geomorphology are well documented. As far as mangroves of Sindhudurg district are, considered they appear in patchy form. It is mainly due to bund construction by Kharland Development Board. These bunds literally divide mangrove ecosystem into two parts which results in modification of habitat. Therefore, in this mosaic of habitats on the basis of soil, water currents and geomorphology different micro habitats can be identified. During present piece of work 16 different microhabitats are identified and for these purpose parameters like microclimatic conditions in the form of humidity, light availability, physicochemical conditions in the form of soil status and water relations as well as general geomorphology are considered. Types as well as level of encroachment by human being is also taken into account