

The Chandubi Beel Of Kamrup District, Assam : Present Status And Change

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ABSTRACT

The Chandubi beel in Kamrup district of Assam occupies an important position in the wetland environment of the state because of its unique geo-ecological characteristics. This beel, which originated after the 1897's great earthquake, has been contributing immense role towards maintain the ecological balance of the concerned area as well as to the life and livelihood of the people of the neighbouring villages of the beel. However, with the changing environmental conditions and alarming rate of human dependency on the beels, the geo-ecological characteristics of the beel have been deteriorating. The present study, therefore, is an attempt to analyse the recent status of the beel and its changing geo-ecological characteristics over time caused by natural and anthropogenic factors. The study is based on personal field observation and investigation with the help of primary and secondary data collected from the field and the laboratory test of water and soil parameteres. The change in size of the beel has been analysed taking help of toposheets of Sol and satellite image of different years.

KEYWORDS : Chandubi beel, changing environmental conditions, human dependency

INTRODUCTION

Wetlands are the most important component of fluvio-geomorphic landscape of a region which perform as transitional habitats between the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Wetlands are an essential fraction of human civilization, meeting many crucial needs for life. Wetland plays a significant role in regional ecosystem, such as the regulation of climate, cleansing of environment and balancing of regional water. The wetland provides critical habitat for a large number of flora and fauna. (Keddy, 2010, Deka and Bhagabati, 2015). Being endowed with a large variety of floral and faunal species and naturally being static water body the wetlands of a region become ecologically very rich on the one hand and sensitive habitats on the other hand. It is noteworthy that earlier the wetlands of the State of Assam were considered as wastelands as they were not used for productive purposes. However, after the 2nd half of the 20th century many ecologists, geographers and environmental scientists have been giving importance on the wetland studies keeping in view of their multiple ecological, physical and economic functions to the concerned areas (Barbier, Acreman and Knowler, 1997). All most all the wetlands of the district are under threat and many of them have been disappearing (Sahariah and Bora, 2008). The degradation of wetlands in the district has not only caused many environmental crises but also created many social and economic problems to the neighbouring communities. The Chandubi beel of Kamrup district (Fig.1) is one of the important wetlands of the district which has very recently faced big challenges from the ruthless and irrational human activities in the name of so-called development. The beel, once endowed with a wide variety of floral and faunal