

Present status of mangrove ecosystem in and around Mumbai (West Coast of India)

B.G. Kulkarni¹, A. Babar¹, A. Jaiswar² & B. Desai-Chavan¹

¹Department of Biological Oceanography, The Institute of Science, Mumbai 400 032, India. E-mail: balasaheb@gmail.com

²Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Versova, Andheri, Mumbai 400 062, India.

Abstract

Mumbai is one of the metropolitan of India located on western coast at 18° 53' north to 19° 16' north latitude and from 72° E to 72° 59' E longitude. Mumbai endowed with coast line of 100km which is intended with creek and estuaries. Once upon a time plentiful density and diversity of Mangroves was present on most of the coastal area of Mumbai. At present patches of mangroves exist at Mahim and Gorai creek, and at coastal belt of Versova, Sewri, Colaba, and Bandra. Moderate mangrove patches are also present around Mumbai in coastal areas of Elephanta Island, Uran, Vashi, Vasai, Thane and Bhyander creeks. Although 15 species of mangroves identified in and around Mumbai, most of the coastal areas harbor *Avicennia marina*. It has been noticed *A. marina* tolerate polluted coastal water at Mahim creek and other coastal zones in Mumbai. Due to heavy development of housing construction, most of the mangrove density in and around Mumbai is reducing day by day. Recent oil spill incidences in coastal waters of Mumbai found to damage the mangrove ecosystem. In marshy areas of Sewri, Elephanta Island and Vashi heavy coating of oil on leaves and lower part of mangrove tree is recorded. Further, young mangrove trees found dead at some of these areas. Efforts are in progress to save the mangrove ecosystem in and around Mumbai by adopting various means. The state Government of Maharashtra recently declared 3000 hectares of Mangrove as protected forests. Detailed account of present status of mangroves ecosystem of Mumbai has been given in this paper.

Keywords

Mumbai, India, Mahim, creek