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## Vrikshayurveda - A Capital for Conservative Agronomy

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### ABSTRACT

Nature conservation has changed from an idealistic philosophy to a serious technology understanding of the nature of plant conservation is very much need of the hour that has elaborately mentioned in the literatures of *Ayurveda*. The interrelationships between conservation and sustainable use are considered, as well as the impact of the development of the discipline of conservation biology should be understood by the common man to save the Plant Kingdom. Traditional knowledge is vital for sustainability of natural resources including medicinal plants. Biodiversity conservation can be learnt from the context - specific local knowledge and intergenerational transmission of knowledge, skills and strategies, concern for well-being of future generations. The ancient text of *Vrikshayurveda* consists of about 170 different plant species including herbs, shrubs and trees. The text deals with Agri horticulture, home gardening, intercropping and storage etc. This paper intends to understand the traditional knowledge on biodiversity, practices and principles of *Varahamihira's, Brhat Samhita - Vrikshayurveda* the text of 9<sup>th</sup> century AD in Growth, Conservation, Pest control and in-turn to check the diseases in Medicinal plants.

**Key words:** *Varahamihira, Vrikshayurveda, Conservation, Agri Horticulture, Intercropping.*

### INTRODUCTION

Today, when people throughout the world are disturbed by the degradation of the environment and disastrous consequences; traditional ethics of nature conservation could be looked upon as a source of inspiration and guidance for the future. *Vrikshayurveda*, recognizing the significance of plant bio- resources of varied values in ancient India, emphasis has been laid on conservation of flora, deals with various tree and plant species and ensure the healthy growth and productivity. Ancient texts contain

many descriptions of the uses and management of forests and highlight sustainability as an implicit theme. Treatise called *Vrikshayurveda* mentions in depth about the plants, its importance, diseases, treatment, protection from external factors, increasing the yield, conservation techniques like protection of plants from mist, pests etc. Chemical fertilizers show dramatic short-term benefits, but in the longer run they adversely impact the soil, water and nutritional quality of the plants. Hence there is great scope to integrate traditional practices for better productivity of quality planting materials. Cultivation, germination and storage process in general were described and specifically for few medicinal plants by preparing *Kunapajala* (Biofertilizer - which is an organic product derived from animal and plant products).

### Contribution of *Vrikshayurveda* towards Conservation of Plant species

Soil management is done by cultivating *Tila* plants initially, when once it starts flowering the entire crop is then ploughed off so as to take out the hardness followed by planting of few tree species initially like *Arishta, Ashoka, Punnaga, Shirisha & Priyangu* etc.

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after growing to certain height, planting of Herbs or Climbers to be planned.

The technique of Vegetative propagation was also very well-known and elicit few plants like *Kadali*, *Lakucha*, *Dadima*, *Ashoka*, *Panasa* etc. for propagation. The author also gives the appropriate time for transplanting trees at various ages so that the environmental factors contribution is high towards their growth like, if the plants are too young with few or no branches, should be planted during early winter, whereas plants with emerged branches in late winter and plants with well-developed branches during rainy season.

Before planting the tree in the soil, it should be anointed with the paste of mixture of *Tila*, *Kshaudra*, *Usheera*, *Ghritha*, *Vidanga*, *Ksheera* & *Gomaya* the individual should follow all the sacred rituals with pure body and soul. It should be watered twice regularly during summer, alternate days in winter and when soil dries up in rainy seasons. The distance between the trees should be maintained ideally as *Vimshatihasta*, if not properly planned it will result in improper growth and falling of fruits during their respective season.

In order to cure or prevent the pathological conditions initially the infected part should be cut off, apply the paste of *Vidanga*, *Ghritha*, *Kunapa Jala* & Silt (Mud mixed with plenty of water) subsequently. To increase flowering & fruiting the plant or tree it should be treated sprinkled with the mixture of *Kulattha*, *Masha* & *Mudgara*. To increase the growth of trees author mentions to prepare the manure using 2 parts of dried powdered dung of *Aja* & *Avika*, one part of *Tila* with small quantity of *Saktu* (Zinc) and few grams of *Gomamsa* with sufficient quantity of water should be kept in vessel for 7 days and on the eighth day the paste should be smeared on trees which subsequently increases the yields of flowers and fruits; the author also stated the seed treatment before sowing.

#### Seed Treatment

Before sowing, the seeds are smeared with *Ghee* and immersed in milk for some time, later it should be removed from milk, dried and again the process is repeated for 10 consecutive days. Subsequently the

seeds should be mixed with cow dung, flesh of pig, deer and then sown in the soil. The soil should be watered and mixed with milk.

#### CONCLUSION

*Vrikshayurveda* illustrates several significant aspects which are similar to the use of Green Manure or Organic Manure, Vegetative Propagation, Transplantation techniques etc. which are similar to modern Agricultural techniques of plant growth & conservation. References of pathological condition of plant and trees and the treatment of these are uniquely mentioned in *Vrikshayurveda* where the author is very much beholding in controlling if done in a classical way. The symptoms of *Pandupatrata* (chlorosis), *Pravalaavridhi* (Falling of Buds), *Shakhashosha* and *Rasaasruti* (Exudation of Sap or Gummosis - which is the self defence mechanism of plant species) points out the Observational Capacity and high Inquisitiveness of ancient Acharyas. The Elucidation of Environmental factors are responsible for the plant disease and the presaging to avoid close planting indeed gives us a distant vision and discoveries that were subsequently made in modern Agri-Techniques.

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